

The Evangelistic Power of Eternal Security

1 Peter 3:13-17 - NCBC, August 12, 2018

Main Point: **Your satisfaction in Christ will fuel a willingness to suffer and witness for Him.**

- God's blessings to you fuel a willingness to suffer for Christ (9, 13-14a, 17)
 - God's gracious care & favor (3:12; 2:20)
 - A purified faith & eternal joy (1:7)
 - An opportunity to glorify God (4:14, 16)
 - God's total heavenly renewal (5:10)
 - A far better eternal reward (3:17; Mt 5:11-12)
- God's enthronement in you fuels a witness for Christ (14b-16)
 - Fearing God most (14b)
 - Treasuring God most (15a)
 - Desiring to proclaim your hope (15b)
 - Modeling your security in Christ (15c)
 - Keeping a clear conscience (16)

Application: **Always be ready to fearlessly share God's saving grace.**

Opening Announcements:

- Teacher Appreciation Sunday today! Thanks educators!!
- Church-wide Hymn Sing & Ice Cream Social 5:30pm Tonight (8/12)

<<In Christ Alone>>



What a joy to gather together with others who have faith in Christ alone to worship our great God this morning! After being away from the pulpit for a few weeks, I'm eager to open God's Word again with you, so I invite you to open your Bible to **1 Peter chapter 3** this morning as we continue our worship.



If you don't have a Bible today, simply raise your hand and we'd be delighted to give you one. **1 Peter chapter 3** is on page 1205 in the giveaway Bibles today.

I must express my deep appreciation and thanksgiving to Pastor Scott for his excellent mini-series on the memorial stones of Joshua at the end of July. I haven't yet stopped thinking about how my personal sin affects the entire body of this church. How about you? Will you lay down all resistance and self-justified rationalization of your own sin? Are you fleeing to Jesus every day for cleansing and forgiveness? Are you pursuing repentance in your own heart so that there might be less sin in our camp, and more freedom and power of His Spirit?¹

And then last week was a very special memorial in its own right, as our beloved Pastor Somers formally left his post preaching the Word of God. What a moving reminder that the church is God's dearest earthly possession, and we all have a role to play in God's glorious plan!

God has been so good to us New Castle. We have so many reasons to be thankful.

And so today we return to our study of **1 Peter**.

In the first half of this letter,² Peter has encouraged us with our secure gospel identity.³ By God's great mercy we have been caused to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead!⁴

¹ 1 Corinthians 4:20, cf. 18-21

² 1 Peter 1:1-2:10

³ 1 Peter 1:1, 18-19; 2:5, 9-10

⁴ 1 Peter 1:3

We now have a secure inheritance⁵ - and even though we may encounter fiery trials in our lives,⁶ we can set our hope fully on God's future grace!⁷

We've been set apart from the world,⁸ ransomed from our lives of sin,⁹ and had our hearts purified for a sincere brotherly love.¹⁰ God's sovereign grace has amazingly made sinners like me and you into a royal priesthood for God Himself¹¹ - so that we now live to offer up every part of our life and relationships in this world as spiritual sacrifices for the glory and praise of Jesus!¹²

The second half of Peter's letter starts in **chapter 2 verse 11**, and this latter half of the letter gives very practical instructions to suffering exiles on how God intends for them to respond to suffering. Some form of the word "Suffering" occurs 15 times in this last half of Peter's letter.¹³ Peter wants to equip us how to suffer well!

In **2:11**, Peter started by reminding us that our greatest enemy is always our own personal sin, and then urged us to demonstrate our living hope in Christ by our patient and God-fearing submission to sinful authorities.

⁵ 1 Peter 1:4

⁶ 1 Peter 1:7

⁷ 1 Peter 1:13

⁸ 1 Peter 1:15-16

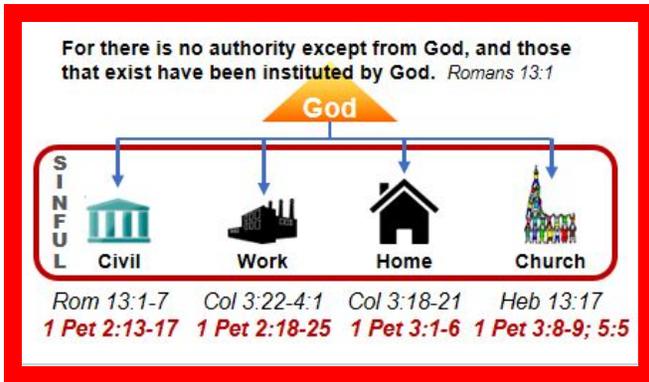
⁹ 1 Peter 1:18-19

¹⁰ 1 Peter 1:22; c.f. 3:8

¹¹ 1 Peter 2:9-10

¹² 1 Peter 2:5, 12

¹³ 1 Peter 2:19, 20, 21, 23; 3:14, 17; 4:1 (2x), 13, 15, 16, 19; 5:1, 9, 10



Peter calls every Christian to glorify God by doing good while submitting to God’s delegated authorities.

We left off our study in **chapter 3** with Peter quoting from **Psalms 34** to further validate his commands to overcome evil with good, and entrust ourselves to the blessing of unjustly suffering for righteousness.

So to help refresh our memories, I’d like to begin our reading today in **verse 8 of Chapter 3**.



Please stand in honor of God’s Word. I am reading from the **English Standard Translation**.

1 Peter 3:8,

⁸ Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind. ⁹ Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing. ¹⁰ For “Whoever desires to love life and see good days, let him keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit; ¹¹ let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it. ¹² For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayer. But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.”

¹³ Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good? ¹⁴ But even if you should suffer for righteousness’ sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, ¹⁵ but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, ¹⁶ having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. ¹⁷ For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God’s will, than for doing evil.

This is the word of our Lord. You may be seated.

Let’s Pray.

Peter writes this letter to help God's people not waste their suffering. No matter what kind of suffering you may experience – whether persecution or sickness ...your suffering in this present life is not just something to endure and get through – but it's an opportunity for witness and an opportunity for growth. By the Spirit of God, your suffering here and now is an opportunity for the glory of God!

Consider Peter's own life as a powerful "Exhibit A" of all he desires to teach our suffering hearts.

In **Acts chapter 3** Peter and John are entering the Temple for prayer when they see a man begging. He's over 40 years old¹⁴ and he's been lame since birth.¹⁵ Peter looks at him, and says, "I have no silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!"¹⁶ And everyone immediately starts to praise God in awe and profound joy as this man enters the temple – "walking, and leaping, and praising God!"¹⁷

When a crowd gathers, Peter boldly preaches a message of repentance and faith in the resurrected Christ for the salvation of sins. And nearly two thousand people believe and are added to the church!¹⁸

But not everyone was rejoicing with awe. The Jewish priests – the very authorities who had put Jesus to death

– were quite annoyed at this public delight in Christ's resurrection. So they arrested Peter and John and put them in prison overnight.¹⁹

Now it can be easy when you're reading the Bible to just read past verses like that...but just pause a moment and try to put yourself in Peter's shoes.

You didn't do anything wrong! In fact, you were pretty busy doing good! This was gross injustice.

Can you relate to what Peter must have been thinking and feeling that night in prison as his own wife²⁰ was spending an anxious and lonely night alone in her bed?

Have you ever been falsely accused or mistreated? Has someone else's sin ever caused you deep loss or pain?

How do you respond when you suffer – especially when you suffer wrongly for doing something good?

Consider Peter's mind that night as he lay in prison. In the morning he would stand before Caiaphas the High Priest. The last time he was in the High Priest's courtyard – just a couple of months ago in fact – he had cowardly denied His Lord and Savior three times.²¹ That night Peter had met some of these same temple officers with a flash of a knife blade as they came to arrest Jesus.²² How would he respond now in the morning, knowing that this was the exact same group of leaders who had corruptly

¹⁴ Acts 4:22

¹⁵ Acts 3:2

¹⁶ Acts 3:6

¹⁷ Acts 3:8-10

¹⁸ Compare Acts 4:4 with Acts 2:41

¹⁹ Acts 4:3

²⁰ 1 Corinthians 9:5

²¹ Luke 22:54-62

²² John 18:10-11; c.f. Matthew 26:51-56; Mark 14:47-50; Luke 22:50-51

ordered His Lord and Savior to be crucified!

Maybe Peter and John reminded themselves that Jesus prepared them for persecution?²³ ...and that they could trust the Holy Spirit to give them the right words?²⁴

Acts 4 records what actually happened in the morning. Follow along with me as I read from **verse 7**,

Acts 4:7-13 And when they had set them in the midst, they inquired, "By what power or by what name did you do this?"⁸ Then Peter, **filled with the Holy Spirit**, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders,⁹ if we are being examined today concerning a good deed done to a crippled man, by what means this man has been healed,

And when they had set [Peter and John] in the midst, they inquired, "By what power or by what name did you do this?"⁸ Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders,⁹ if we are being examined today concerning a good deed done to a crippled man, by what means this man has been healed,

Acts 4:7-13 ¹⁰ let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that **by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead**—by him this man is standing before you well. ¹¹ **This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone.**

¹⁰ let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead—by Him this man is standing before you well. ¹¹ This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone.

Acts 4:7-13 ¹² And **there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.**¹³ Now when they saw **the boldness of Peter** and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. **And they recognized that they had been with Jesus.**

¹² And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

²³ John 15:18-25

²⁴ Luke 12:11-12, 21:14-15; Mark 13:11; Matthew 10:17-20

¹³ Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus.

These were a couple of the rag-tag men who were part of Jesus' followers – who were in the garden of Gethsemane two months ago – who were scared of a servant-girl in the outer courtyard!!²⁵

And now these men were willing to suffer and witness boldly for Jesus. O what a difference the Holy Spirit makes in the satisfied child of God!

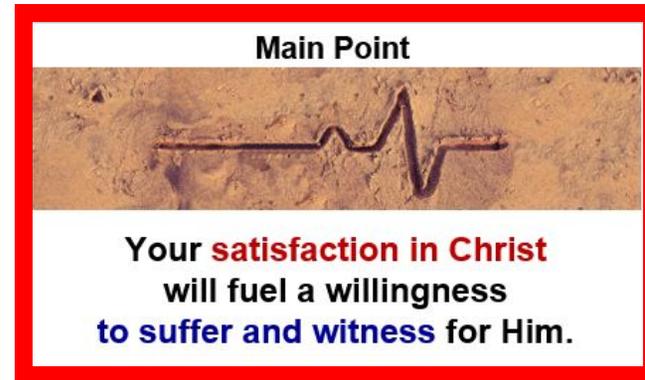
Loved ones Peter knows all about your fleshly temptations to lash out, hold grudges, and give people a piece of your mind when they slander you and mistreat you! Peter understands the temptations to violently take matters into your own hands when evil seems to be winning!

But once the promised Spirit of Glory²⁶ rested upon Peter, he became a new person. The true saving grace of God had fully satisfied Peter's soul, and given him great confidence and security in his new identity in Christ.

And as Peter continues teaching the suffering exiles of Asia Minor in **chapter 3 today**, that's his main point for us as well:

²⁵ Luke 22:56

²⁶ C.f. 1 Peter 4:14



Your satisfaction in Christ will fuel a willingness to suffer and witness for Him.

By the power of God's Spirit in you, through the grace of God, your entire outlook on trouble and distress and suffering can be transformed in such a way that your satisfaction in Christ will fuel a willingness to suffer and witness for Christ.

If you are willing to learn from Peter, he wants to teach you that suffering is not the opposite of God's blessings. That's right – in fact sometimes suffering is the very grace-gift God uses to increase our satisfaction in Christ, and show us more of His marvelous sufficiency.²⁷

So let's pick up Peter's instruction in **verse 13** as we first consider how,

²⁷ Philippians 1:29; 2 Corinthians 12:9-10



God's blessings to you fuel a willingness to suffer for Christ (9, 13-14a, 17)

The language of **verse 13** continues the thought from **verse 12**:

Since the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their prayers, and His face is against those who do evil...

Then who is there to do evil to you if you are zealous for what is good [or righteous]?

Peter is giving assurance to troubled souls – one of the blessings²⁸ that has been given to you is,

²⁸ 1 Peter 3:9



God's gracious care & favor (3:12; 2:20)

The Lord's eyes, or His sovereign all-knowing care, is always on the righteous. If you are eagerly devoted to doing good with your lips and your life,²⁹ you are always under God's watchful care and security.

Now ponder that conditional phrase carefully: *if you are zealous for what is good*. We know from **Romans 3**, *no one does good, not even one*.³⁰

So an inner zealous desire to do good and pursue righteousness is a sure evidence that one has tasted of the goodness of God,³¹ and been caused to be born again by the Spirit of God!³² Because only tasting the heavenly delights of Christ's righteousness and peace can cure the human heart of its cravings for the earthly filth of sin.³³

²⁹ 1 Peter 3:10-11

³⁰ Romans 3:10-12, 23; c.f. Psalm 14:1-3; 53:1; 143:2; Ecclesiastes 7:20; 14:17; 1 Corinthians 2:14

³¹ 1 Peter 2:3

³² John 3:6, 6:65

³³ 2 Corinthians 3:18; c.f. Ephesians 4:20-24

So if you have tasted true righteousness in Christ such that you now have a passion for goodness yourself – then you can be assured you are in Christ – and if you are secure in Christ – *then who is there to do evil to you?*

You see, **verse 13** is not teaching that God’s children will never suffer – for **verse 14** goes on to teach us that suffering brings blessing, and in fact the whole of **1 Peter** is written to suffering Christians. Rather **verse 13** is Peter’s way of saying, *If God be for us, who can be against us?*³⁴ Or as David prayed out of his distress in **Psalms 56**, *In God I trust; I shall not be afraid. What can flesh do to me?*³⁵

Church – you can fuel your willingness to suffer for Christ with the eternal security of **Romans 8**: *Who shall bring any charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn [us]? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that—who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us*³⁶ ...and hearing our prayers!³⁷

Now **verse 14** starts with the word, “But” ...but I believe a preferred translation would be “indeed” since **verse 14** is not intended to counter **verse 13** – but actually reinforce the assurance that is there. So **verse 14** reads,

Indeed even whenever you should suffer for righteousness’ sake, you will be blessed.

³⁴ Romans 8:31; Isaiah 50:9

³⁵ Psalm 56:4

³⁶ Romans 8:33-34

³⁷ 1 Peter 3:12

You must not be surprised when you are slandered or reviled for being Christ-like, as though something strange was happening to you.³⁸ (God is not out of control, asking Gabriel for an ice-tea and a fan! In fact, the middle of **verse 17** makes it clear that your undeserved suffering is actually God’s sovereign will for you.) So rejoice – because whenever you suffer on this earth for the sake of doing good – God promises blessings to you! And the more you comprehend these blessings, the greater will be your willingness to suffer for Christ!

Now someone might object: “So you mean to tell me that when my coworker slanders me – and spreads all kinds of rumors about me – and uses outright lies to turn other people against me ...all just because I was trying to befriend them and do the right thing...I’m being blessed?”

Yep – that’s what **verse 14** is teaching. Any time of suffering for righteousness’ sake is a time of blessing.

You see, contrary to how earth-bound minds think, God’s blessings are not just health, wealth, and prosperity. The word translated *blessed* means to be fully satisfied or made happy. It refers to receiving God’s favor ...regardless of circumstances.

So listen to the wisdom of one writer:

“a blessing is anything God gives that makes us fully satisfied in Him. Anything that draws us closer to Jesus. Anything that helps us relinquish the temporal and hold

³⁸ 1 Peter 4:12; 2 Timothy 3:12

on more tightly to the eternal.”³⁹

So yes, dear objector. The suffering itself is a blessing – for it is a means to greater happiness in God.

For example, look back at what Peter taught us in **chapter 1, verses 6-7:**

In this you rejoice, thought now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

In other words, whenever you suffer for doing good, you are receiving the blessing of,

God's blessings
to you fuel a willingness
to suffer for Christ (9, 13-14a, 17)

True Grace
Firm Hope 

- God's gracious care & favor (2:20; 3:12)
- A purified faith & eternal joy (1:7)

A purified faith & eternal joy (1:7)

What a blessing! Greater eternal praise, honor, and glory! Greater capacity to see and savor the sufficiency of Christ above all else! A more confident resting in God's unshakable promises! No wonder Peter writes with such willingness to suffer for righteousness' sake.

Now we would expect that Peter would mention something of the blessing of God's Spirit to us in this letter right? Since we know that God's Spirit made such a difference in his own willingness to suffer for Christ after Pentecost?⁴⁰

And that's exactly what we find in **1 Peter 4:14** which reads:

If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you!

The blessing of God's Spirit in you fills you with courage, wisdom, strength, and stamina to face evil threats, and still continue to make Christ and His character known.

In short, undeserved suffering for Christ's sake is a blessing since it is,

³⁹

⁴⁰ C.f. Peter's suffering for Christ's sake as described in Acts 4, 5, and 12.

God's blessings **True Grace**
Firm Hope 
to you fuel a willingness
to suffer for Christ (9, 13-14a, 17)

- God's gracious care & favor (2:20; 3:12)
- A purified faith & eternal joy (1:7)
- An opportunity to glorify God (4:14, 16)

An opportunity to glorify God (4:14, 16)

1 Peter 4:16 says it clearly, *if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in that name.*

Church – the time of the storm is not the time to strengthen the foundation of your home. Now is the time for us to fuel our willingness to suffer for Christ. The days will only continue to get more evil⁴¹ – we must prepare our hearts for any suffering God may will to bless us with for His greater glory and our greater satisfaction in Him.

So consider yet further **1 Peter 5:10** – part of our beloved benediction that we have been praying together throughout this sermon series.

After you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.

⁴¹ 2 Timothy 3:1, 12-13
Page **11a** of 15

God's blessings **True Grace**
Firm Hope 
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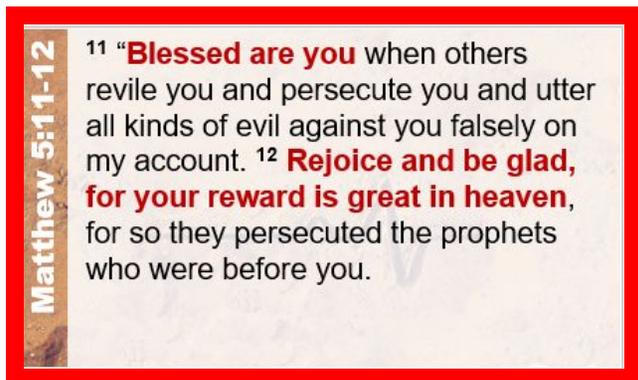
- God's gracious care & favor (2:20; 3:12)
- A purified faith & eternal joy (1:7)
- An opportunity to glorify God (4:14, 16)
- God's total heavenly renewal (5:10)

That verse highlights the blessing of **God's total heavenly renewal** for all of God's children who endure temporary suffering for a time on earth. Just consider these blessings honestly – do you desire to know that God is watching over you, and caring for you? Do you desire for your faith to be purified and your eternal joy to be multiplied? Do you seek opportunities to put God's sufficiency on public display? And would you be made happy to know that God Himself will restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish every part of you when you arrive in heaven?

Then you are understanding the blessed satisfaction experienced by all those who fear and treasure Christ above all. Peter wants us to have crystal clarity on this point – who can ultimately do you evil if you are secure in Christ? For indeed, even when you should suffer for righteousness sake, such suffering is a means of God's blessing to you!

Do you believe this is true? This is very different from how this world defines the blessed life, isn't it?

In fact, Peter's words sound a lot like Jesus' teaching from the sermon on the mount, don't they?



Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven!

Know this: if God should ever will you to suffer unjustly for doing good as a Christian – this suffering is blessing you with,



A far better eternal reward (3:17; Mt 5:11-12)

And the secure confidence of a superior reward fuels a willingness to keep enduring undeserved suffering here and now.

Verse 17 sums up Peter's assurance this way,

For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil.

Now many commentators interpret **verse 17** similar to Peter's warning in **4:15**,⁴² meaning if you're going to have to suffer, make sure you suffer for doing good, instead of suffering the natural consequences of doing evil. But in this context, I believe there's a better way to interpret **verse 17**.

Remember that **chapter 3 verse 12** divided the entire human race into two separate groups: the righteous who do good – who are under God's care, and the evil who do evil – who are under God's judgment. With this frame of reference, I believe **verse 17** is better understood to say,

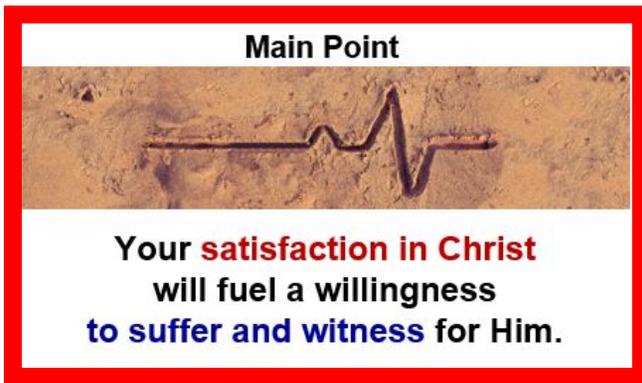
For it is better to suffer for doing good now, than it is to suffer on the day of judgment for practicing evil.

It is way more advantageous to belong to the first group – to the redeemed in Christ – even though God may will for us to suffer now. For our *eternal* reward is far better than the wicked who practice evil and seem to prosper now...only to ultimately end up separated from the glory

⁴² C.f. 1 Peter 2:20

of God forever.⁴³

How much more could our Heavenly Father have blessed us, church? No wonder the church of Jesus Christ from Pentecost today has been full of willing martyrs, joyful victims, and rejoicing sufferers. For our souls are truly satisfied in Christ.



And your satisfaction in Christ is what fuels a willingness to suffer and witness for Him.

Now **verses 14b-16** contain much important wisdom about our responsibility to witness for Christ after having been so assured of our eternal security. But that part of this message will have to wait until next time, because we're out of time this morning.

So let me just conclude this message by asking you to seriously ponder this question:

Are you satisfied in Christ? Have you been so blessed?

⁴³ Psalm 73:3-12, 16, 27-28
Page **13a** of 15

The goodness of God can only be known through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ. There is no other doorway to heaven's blessings!⁴⁴

So lay down all your personal rights. Quiet your thrashing tongue. Put away your violence...and learn from Peter. Rest in Christ – find your satisfaction in knowing Him through His Word by His Spirit. There is no greater blessing than knowing our beautiful Christ!⁴⁵



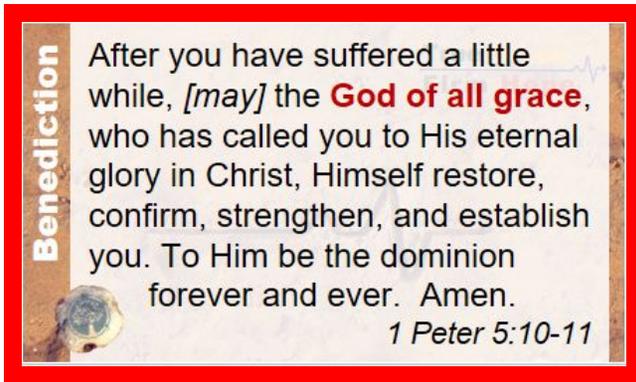
Let's pray.

<<Mighty to Save>>

Let's pray our benediction together as we dismiss.

⁴⁴ John 14:6

⁴⁵ John 17:3



*And after you have suffered a little while, [may] the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. ¹¹ To him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen. **1 Peter 5:10-11***

Recommended Resources on *The Evangelistic Power of Eternal Security*:

- Psalm 56:4; 91:7-10; 118:6
- Isaiah 8:12-15; 50:9
- Matthew 5:11-12; 10:26-33
- Luke 6:22-23, 28; 12:2-12; 21:14-19
- John 14:1, 27
- Romans 8:31-39
- 2 Corinthians 4:7-18; 12:10
- 1 Thessalonians 3:1-5
- 2 Thessalonians 1:4
- 2 Timothy 3:11-12

II.

- <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/if-god-is-with-me-why-did-this-happen>
- <https://www.desiringgod.org/labs/would-a-sovereign-god-ever-harm-us>
- <https://www.desiringgod.org/labs/how-does-god-bless-the-hurting>
- <https://www.desiringgod.org/labs/does-anyone-ever-ask-about-your-hope>
- <https://www.desiringgod.org/labs/treasure-jesus-more-than-safety>
- <https://www.desiringgod.org/labs/cleanse-your-conscience-of-guilt>
- <https://www.desiringgod.org/labs/does-god-will-sin-done-against-us>

III.

- *Trusting God Even When Life Hurts*, Jerry Bridges
- *Suffering and the Sovereignty of God*, John Piper & Justin Taylor
- *How Long O Lord?*, D.A. Carson
- *God's Grace in Your Suffering*, David Powlison

Growing Deeper: Life Group Questions

IV.

1. Compare 1 Peter 3:13, 17 with 2:20 and 4:19. Is it ever God's will for you to suffer? Specifically, does God ever will for you to suffer because of the sin of others? Using the persecuted believers' prayer from Acts 4:24-31 as a case study (esp. v. 28), discuss how the truth of God's sovereignty affects your view of God's goodness and your suffering?

V.

2. Compare 1 Peter 3:14 with 4:14 and Matthew 5:11-12. What kind of blessing does God promise you in suffering? Consider further how 1 Peter 1:6-7, 4:16, and 5:10 help you understand God's purposes and provisions for your suffering.
3. Read 1 Peter 3:14-15. In the context, what would cause someone to ask about your hope? When's the last time someone asked you about your counter-intuitive yet obvious hope in Christ? What does it mean to "honor Christ the Lord as holy" in your hearts? How might you answer someone who asked you for your reason for hope?

VI.

4. Compare Isaiah 8:12-15 and 1 Peter 3:14-15. What is something that you are prone to fear more than Christ? Since our fears expose our deepest treasures, what is the competing treasure beneath that fear?

VII.

5. Read 1 Peter 3:14-16. Why does Peter emphasize having a good conscience in this context? What effect does inner guilt and shame have on your outward witness? Confess to one another any guilt over personal sin that has been hindering your boldness for Christ, and pray for Christ's cleansing for one another (C.f. 3:18).