

BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, August 30, 2009

Passage: 1Peter 4:1-11

Memory Passage: 1Peter 4:11

TODAY: *From your study this past week, what is one thing that impressed you that can be of help in your life?*

DAY 1 – PRAY FOR INSIGHT

READ THE WHOLE PASSAGE

(a) **Read 1Peter 4:1-2.** What mindset are we to have in light of Christ's suffering (Phil. 2:5-11)? How has Peter used Christ as a model for suffering earlier in the book (1Peter 2:21-25; 3:18)? What kind of suffering is Peter directly referring to (1Peter 3:11-17)? When was the last time you suffered like this?

(b) What does Peter mean by saying that those who suffer "have ceased from sin" (James 3:2; 1John 1:8)? What does Romans 6:1-11 say to this? Read Romans 8:12-15. What is our relationship now with sin? How does this affect the way in which we look at sin's power over us?

(c) *Think about it:* Does going through suffering guarantee that we will be free from sin? How is it that suffering with Christ's perspective helps us to be free from sin?

(d) *Family:* Read 1Peter 4:1-2. Talk about how Christ is an example for us. How does Christ's suffering help us to endure suffering? How does Romans 8:12-15 say we are to treat sin? How does suffering help focus us on God? Pray that God would give you a desire to be like Christ and seek after God's will.

DAY 2 – PRAY FOR INSIGHT

READ THE WHOLE PASSAGE

(a) **Read 1Peter 4:3-4.** Peter brings into contrast the will of God versus the will of the Gentiles. Are these things that were considered evil by others in society? Why or why not? What might be some parallels with things like these that are accepted in society but are not godly?

(b) Read Galatians 5:19-25. What is Paul's warning about engaging in such things? How does Paul instruct us to live contrary to the world? What comparison can we draw between the way in which Peter instructs us to live and the way Paul does?

(c) What is going to be the outcome of living this way? Have you ever had people surprised that you did not do something out of your beliefs? What happened? What would be some contemporary examples of things that Christians would be maligned for?

(d) *Family:* Read 1Peter 4:3-4. How would you describe in your own words what doing the will of the Gentiles looks like? Have you ever been insulted because you didn't do something you knew was wrong? What makes it so difficult to stand for what is right in such circumstances? Pray that God would give you the courage to stand for Him during such moments.

DAY 3 – PRAY FOR INSIGHT

READ THE WHOLE PASSAGE

(a) **Read 1Peter 4:5-6.** According to this passage, who will unbelievers give an account to? What does this mean that our relationship with them is supposed to be like (1Cor. 5:9-13)? How do we have relationships with people in the world but not be seen as participators in what they are doing (1Tim. 5:22; Eph. 5:3-12; Ps. 1:1-2)?

(b) When Paul says that "the living and the dead" will be judged, who is he referring to (Acts 10:41-42; 2Tim. 4:1)? So what might be the possible interpretations of verse 6 in light of this?

(c) In verse 6, what are the two characteristics mentioned? Could this passage be speaking of Christ having preached the gospel to those who were already dead giving them a second chance? Why or why not (Luke 16:26; Heb. 9:27)?

(d) *Think about it:* Why is it encouraging to know that those who are persecuting us will face judgment someday? How might this free us to suffer unjustly and even love those who persecute us?

(e) *Family:* Read 1Peter 4:5-6. What is going to happen to such people who continue to live like the people described in v. 3? What does it mean that God is the judge of "the living and the dead"? What does Peter say about what is going to happen to those who have died? How does this help us to endure persecution now? Thank God that He is faithful to bring new life and hope to all those who come to Him.

DAY 4 – PRAY FOR INSIGHT

READ THE WHOLE PASSAGE

(a) **Read 1Peter 4:7-9.** Do you think Peter is expecting Christ to return at any moment or is he merely stating that Christ's return could happen at any moment (Romans 13:12; 2Peter 3:9-11; James 5:8-9; Heb 10:25; Rev. 22:20)? Why would he encourage them to be sober minded and disciplined for prayer in light of this? Why would we not be?

(b) What role does love play in the Christian life (1Peter 4:8; 1Cor 13:1-13; Eph. 4:16; Phil. 1:9-10; 1Tim. 1:5)? Why is it that love is able to cover a multitude of sins (Prov. 10:12; 17:9; Eph. 4:32)? Read Ephesians 4:25. What is it that keeps us from earnestly loving one another?

(c) What does it mean to be hospitable (See a dictionary; Heb. 13:2; 3John 5-8)? Would you characterize yourself as hospitable? How do you show hospitality to fellow Christians? Do you invite them into your house? Do you seek to get to know others? Often time we fail to be hospitable because we become cliquish. What is something that you can do to begin showing hospitality to others in the church? Repeat all these questions with people who aren't believers.

(d) *Family*: Read 1Peter 4:7-9. Talk about the imminent return of Christ. How should we be motivated by Christ's return? What importance does Peter place on loving one another? What does 1Cor 13:1-13 say about love and its importance? What does it mean to be hospitable? How could your family be more hospitable? Pray that the Lord would give you the heart and means to open up your home and to be hospitable.

DAY 5 – PRAY FOR INSIGHT

READ THE WHOLE PASSAGE

(a) **Read 1Peter 4:10-11.** What are the spiritual gifts (Romans 12:6-8; 1Cor. 12:4-11; Eph. 4:7-12)? Do you think that these lists are exhaustive in the types of spiritual gifts? Which of these spiritual gifts also have offices in the church with the same titles (Rom. 1:1; 1Cor. 14:29; Acts 21:8; James 3:1)?

(b) How are we to use our gifts? How would practicing your gifts with this perspective change from how you practice them now? Are you intentional in developing and using your gifting (1Tim. 4:14; 2Tim 1:6)?

(c) *Think about it*: What are your spiritual gifts? Everyone has at least one. Spiritual gifts are best discovered by the affirmation of others and how you see God most using you to edify others. Are you constantly willing to serve? Are you able to explain things and people understand them? Do you take seriously the responsibility that God has given you with these gifts???

(d) *Family*: Read 1Peter 4:10-11; Romans 12:6-8; 1Cor. 12:4-11; Eph. 4:7-12. Make a list of all the Spiritual gifts. Which one do you think you have the most of? Now tell each other which one that you see most in each other? How are you cultivating that gift and how could you help each other cultivate it? What is the main purpose of the gifts? Do you have that mindset? Pray that the Lord would continue to develop your gifts and glorify Himself through them.

DAY 6 – PRAY FOR INSIGHT

READ THE WHOLE PASSAGE

(a) *Think back through what you have learned each day this week.* What has God taught you this week about your own character and actions toward others? Anything need some realignment? How are you and your family at practicing hospitality? How are you using your spiritual gifts? Do you practice your gifts flippantly or with the understanding that you are doing it in God's strength? Pray that God would help you to step out in faith and faithfully practice what He has gifted you to do. Also, take this Sunday to show hospitality to someone you don't know very well at church.

DATE: August 30, 2009

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The Joy of God's Gifts

"live no longer for the flesh but for God's will"