

A DEEPER DIVE

1 Peter 4

June 1, 2025

Monday: Reading – 1 Peter chapter 4

Prayer Focus – Spend today in personal prayer. What are you in need of? What is weighing on your heart? Health concerns? Financial issues? Dealing with sin? Are there family members and friends who are lost? Pray for them by name and ask the Lord to give you more opportunities to act in love and speak with grace to them. Lay everything you are dealing with before the Lord. Put 1 Peter 5:7 into purposeful practice.

As we approach the end of 1st Peter, consider these words from the Henri Nouwen society–

Too often I looked at being relevant, popular, and powerful as ingredients of an effective ministry. The truth, however, is that these are not vocations but temptations. Jesus asks, “Do you love me?” Jesus sends us out to be shepherds, and Jesus promises a life in which we increasingly have to stretch out our hands and be led to places where we would rather not go. He asks us to move from a concern for relevance to a life of prayer, from worries about popularity to communal and mutual ministry, and from a leadership built on power to a leadership in which we critically discern where God is leading us.

Tuesday: Reading – 1 Peter chapter 4:12-19

Consider this – 1 Peter 4:12

I have heard that Peter’s reference to a “fiery trial” is all about Emperor Nero. What do you know about Nero and his persecution of the church? Here’s a brief overview: <https://www.pbs.org/empires/romans/empire/christians.html>. A little more in depth here: <https://landmarkevents.org/neros-persecutions-begin-a-d-64/>.

Peter advises his readers to “not be surprised” when the “fiery trial” comes on them. He also says that we should not consider these trials to be “strange.” He seems to be saying that we should expect these kinds of trials and that the strange thing would be when they don’t happen.

Prayer Focus – Keep it local. Spend today in local prayer. Remember the prayer requests and needs from Sunday (refer to your prayer list if you keep one on Sundays). Lift up the fellowship at NUBF. Pray for your pastors and elders. Pray for the workers at the church and the ministries. Pray for financial blessing so that the reach of the church can increase. Remind the Lord about what you prayed for yesterday.

Wednesday: Reading – 1 Peter chapter 4: 12-19

Consider this – 1 Peter 4:13

So, when fiery trials come upon us we are not to be surprised, but we are to rejoice. How odd is this statement? Who does this? But if you read verse 13 carefully, the rejoicing is not because of the suffering necessarily, but it’s because as Christ suffered, we, as his disciples, participate in his suffering, and, in his glory. Wiersbe says that “The world does not persecute ‘religious people,’ but it does persecute righteous people.” Wiersbe cites 1 John 3:12. Pray that the Lord will give strength to the righteous who are being persecuted and who are suffering because of their faith.

Prayer Focus – Pray for our nation. Pray for our leaders. Pray for the victims and survivors of the fires, floods, hurricanes, and other disasters. Pray that in each community the churches can come together to show the grace and love of God

through helping the recovery. Remember to pray for your personal needs, and the local needs.

Thursday: Reading – 1 Peter chapter 4: 12-19

Consider this – 1 Peter 4:14

The same Spirit that rested upon Jesus (see Mathew 3:16; Isaiah 11:2) rests upon us—when we are insulted “for the name of Christ” (ESV). Have you experienced this Holy Spirit moment? Count how many times Peter says something in this section like rejoice, or be glad or some other positive statement about what our reaction to suffering should be. If our actions are righteous and we suffer for it, but rejoice in spite of the suffering, what do you think the response might be by those who we are in contact with? Might they ask why or how we can act in such a way? Maybe we should review 1 Peter 3:15 in light of this section.

Prayer Focus – Spend today in prayer for the world. Pray for those in war zones like Ukraine and Russia, Israel, Gaza, Lebanon, Sudan, and any other place you know of. Pray for our missionary partners. Pray for those in disaster areas. Pray for a united, active, and gospel preaching church all around the world. Remember to pray for your personal needs, the local needs, and our country.

Friday: Reading – 1 Peter chapter 4: 12-19

Consider this – 1 Peter 4:15

Peter concludes this section with a couple of sweeping statements. First, he says that we should not suffer due to our criminal or bad behavior. Review 1 Peter 1:13-21 and 2:1-4; 13-17; 4:1-6. This is the 4th or 5th time that Peter encourages his readers (us) to live holy and changed lives, not like those who surround us. If we do these things and suffer “as a Christian” (ESV) we should not be ashamed of our faith, but we should glorify God.

Prayer Focus – Spend today praying for the soon return of Christ. Pray that while Christ’s coming is still in the future, God will use you to expand His kingdom. Lift up all of the needs from the week and pray for wisdom and readiness.

Saturday: Reading – 1 Peter chapter 4: 12-19

Consider this – 1 Peter 4

Judgement begins “at the household of God” (ESV). According to the ESV study notes, this is not a judgement that is punitive, but is “purifying and cleansing.” Peter follows this up by saying that the “righteous is scarcely saved.” The ESV study notes is helpful here by saying that “scarcely” does not “mean that the righteous just barely receive salvation ...[it] means ‘with difficulty’ ... that the righteous are saved in the midst of suffering; their salvation is not easy and simple.” Think about this as you prepare for church tomorrow. How your salvation is here because of—yours, the suffering of believers around the world, through history, the martyrs, and the suffering of Christ himself.

N.T. Wright advises us to, “Pray that you will be able to keep firm in your love for others despite their shortcomings ... Pray that your attitude in suffering will not be surprise or resentment but trust in God and forgiveness toward others. If you are being mistreated for the name of Christ, ask God to help you see it as a blessing and give you profound joy that you are sharing the sufferings of the Messiah.”

Prayer Focus – Spend today praying for the Pastors of NUBF and the people who are making things happen on Sunday. Include the teachers, the behind-the-scenes workers, the worship team, the regular attendees, and that there will be new people who come to the service and maybe meet Jesus for the first time.

Sunday: Go to church with the anticipation of hearing from the Lord.

Questions? Comments? Email me, Steve Callaway, at stvc13@gmail.com.