

# When Ridiculed

Believers honor God by faithfulness through persecution.



The Transformation for Adult LifeGroups

1 PETER 4:12-19

September 29, 2019

**TODAY'S TEXT**—open your Bible, use a Bible app on your phone, or follow along below

**Text: 1 PETER 4:12-19**

*Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you.<sup>13</sup> But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.<sup>14</sup> If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.<sup>15</sup> If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler.<sup>16</sup> However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name.<sup>17</sup> For it is time for judgment to begin with God's household; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God?<sup>18</sup> And, "If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?"<sup>19</sup> So then, those who suffer according to God's will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good.*

## FIRST THOUGHTS

Jesus made it clear there would be a cost for following him. For some it would be physical persecution, for others ridicule and shame. Nabeel Quereshi was a Pakistani American who grew up in a devout Muslim home. His family was extremely close. After college, Nabeel became convinced of the truth of Christianity and accepted Christ. He says he began mourning the decision he knew he had to make to accept Christ. He had to break the hearts of the two people who meant the most to him in the entire world, his parents. He went on to become the best-selling author of Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus and shared the gospel with many Muslims. In 2017, at the age of 34, Nabeel passed away from stomach cancer. Until the end, his faith in Christ was strong. He continued to maintain a relationship with his parents, although every time he saw them there were tears in their eyes over his decision to follow Christ. The question he was asked by a Christian in college that changed his life was "If Christianity is true and it meant you had to give up everything to follow God, would you want to know the truth?" Ultimately the answer was yes for Nabeel.

## EXPLORE THE TEXT

### EXPECT RIDICULE

> Read 1 Peter 4:12-14

- What potential difficulties might a person face for simply being a believer in this world? How are these difficulties different than the general suffering and pain that exists in the world that believers and non-believers experience?
- What should the Christian's attitude be when believers face ridicule? Think about Jesus, what are some particular ways he handled ridicule?
- What things have you seen God accomplish in your life or the lives of others through being persecuted for following Jesus?

### REPRESENT JESUS WELL

> Read 1 Peter 4:15-16

- What is the difference between consequences and persecution? Why does Peter make this distinction? What happens when we confuse the two?
- How do you respond to a person who is suffering consequences? How do you respond to a person who is suffering persecution?

## FOCUS ON THE CREATOR

> Read 1 Peter 4:17-19

- Knowing that some type of judgment awaits both the believer and the unbeliever, how should that impact the way we live as Christians?
- What is Peter's advice to us when we suffer (v. 19)? What does it mean to commit ourselves to our faithful Creator?
- What aspects of God as a "faithful Creator" are important to remember when we suffer or face persecution?
- When we commit ourselves to God, what are we trusting Him to do?
- How are we tempted away from "doing good" when we suffer? What is the "good" we should continue to do while suffering?

## SUMMARIZE AND CHALLENGE

**When you suffer a trial because of your faith, what attitude should you bring to this situation? What posture or action should you take in order to bring honor to God?** Whenever you experience a trial, first ask God for the wisdom to distinguish between suffering that stems from persecution or from the consequences of sin that you brought on yourself. If you are at fault, repent and seek to reconcile the situation. If you are being ridiculed for Christ's sake, commit your well-being to God, resting in the knowledge that God can change your circumstances any time He chooses—but also understanding that, just as Jesus had a mission on the cross, there will be a purpose for your suffering as Christ's follower.

**Pray:** Pray that God furthers your witness during any difficult situation.

## PREPARING FOR NEXT WEEK

- Read 1 Peter 5:1-11
- Peter describes the Devil here as a prowling lion. Think about how the Devil is portrayed in popular culture, churches, and the world today. Does it line up with this Biblical picture of Satan?

## READ THROUGH THE BIBLE

**29th** – Zechariah 4-6; Luke 12 | **30th** – Zechariah 7-9; Luke 13 | **1st** – Zechariah 10-12; Psalm 126; Luke 14 | **2nd** – Zechariah 13-14; Psalm 147; Luke 15 | **3rd** – Ezra 5-6; Psalm 138; Luke 16 | **4th** – Esther 1-2; Psalm 150; Luke 17 | **5th** – Esther 3-8; Luke 18

### Our Mission:

TO KNOW GOD AND BE  
CHANGED BY HIM IN A  
WAY THAT WILL CHANGE  
THE WORLD.

### Our Vision:

TO BE A CHURCH FOR  
THE UNCHURCHED,  
HERE AND AROUND  
THE WORLD.

### Adult LifeGroups:

INVITE AND INVEST IN  
THOSE WITHOUT CHRIST.  
CREATE COMMUNITY.  
MAKE DISCIPLES.