

# ANCHORED

*finding hope in life's deep waters*



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A Study in First Peter  
February 20 & 21, 2010  
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### "Finding Hope in Suffering"

1 Peter 3:8-22

*These questions will help you take home today's message and apply these truths throughout the week.*

*Harvest small groups use similar questions for discussion. Small groups meet at various times and locations and are designed to fit your stage of life. If you're interested in joining one, please contact us at 630.281.4800 or visit our website at*

[www.harvestnaperville.org](http://www.harvestnaperville.org).

### Core Truth

We find hope in suffering for Jesus when we base our endurance on what God's Word says about hardship and when we lean on each other.

### Getting Started

1. Read the passage from I Peter 3:8-22 aloud and listen with an open heart and an open mind to hear what the Holy Spirit wants to speak into your life.
2. When have you suffered because of doing what you believed to be right? In the context of these sufferings, how can the picture of Christ portrayed by this passage bring you hope?

### Going Deeper

3. We find hope in suffering when we stick together. In verse 8, Peter points out five attitudes needed for us to navigate the deep waters of suffering together. What are they and what do they mean? Look at the following Scriptures that help to emphasize Peter's encouragement – Isaiah 57:15, John 11:35, Romans 12:10, Romans 15:15, Ephesians 4:32.
4. The call for godly attitudes and behavior in the midst of suffering in verses 8 & 9 doesn't just happen to us by osmosis; we must be intentional in our living. Examine these passages: Romans 12:1-3, Romans 12:15-16, Philippians 2:1-5, James 1:27, I Peter 5:5. Read these verses and elaborate on how we must think and what we must do to live intentionally in the midst of persecution and suffering.
5. We are called to handle the difficulties thrown our way differently than the world around us. What does Peter set forth as a mandate for believers in verses 9-12. How does this stand in contrast to our world's values?
6. Peter's words in verse 14 are quite counter-cultural – "suffer and be blessed." Consider three biblical principles regarding suffering and discuss the passages that support these principles.
  - a. suffering for the sake of righteousness brings eternal reward - Matthew 5:10-12, Romans 8:18, II Corinthians 4:16-18
  - b. suffering brings Christ-like character – Romans 5:1-5, James 1:2-4, I Peter 1:6-7, I Peter 4:12-14
  - c. suffering opens the door with others for the Gospel – Acts 5:27-32, Acts 5:40-42, I Peter 3:15

7. Peter gives us instruction in how to answer those who persecute us in verses 15 & 16. What do these verses say and why is it significant?
8. The Gospel is clearly stated in verse 18 by Peter. Rehearse the truth contained in this significant verse with these reflective questions: Who suffered? Why did He suffer? When did He suffer? For whom did He suffer? Pause to rejoice in the salvation that Jesus provided for all who believe – yes, even you!
9. Baptism, in verse 21, is a symbolic act of one's faith in Jesus Christ. Baptism itself does not save a person. In the New Testament, most believers professed their faith and then were immediately baptized (see Acts 2:38-41; 8:36-38; 10:47-48; 16:33; 19:5; 22:16). Look at Ephesians 2:8-9 and Romans 6:4 and share briefly when these two verses became a reality in your own life.

### **Applying the Truth**

10. Consider the commands and reasons Peter gives in 3:8-22. Do any of them encourage you to concentrate on a particular area of your life for growth? Share with one another and pray for the ability to tackle that particular area for lasting change.
11. Share with another some ways that you have learned to seek and pursue peace with those who have mistreated you or ways that you have learned to give a blessing in response to insult. If you are unable to think of any examples, maybe you should talk about how this CAN be a possibility in your life in the days ahead with the support and encouragement of your group members and by the empowering of the Holy Spirit.
12. When was the last time you had an opportunity to talk about your faith with a nonbeliever? What happened? How did you feel afterward? In what ways could you have communicated more clearly?

### **Memorize**

*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.*  
*1 Peter 3:9 ESV*

### **FAMILY QUESTIONS: ASK YOUR KIDS**

Did you know that your kids are studying the same topics as you?

If you have a student in 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> grade, junior high, or high school, we're providing you with additional questions to ask them this week. These questions are meant to let you in on what they're learning and provide you with a way to come alongside your student and help them apply what they're learning on the weekends.

Here some questions to ask your kids following the weekend services:

#### **4th-5th Graders, Jr. High and Sr. High:**

- Look on the internet for some stories of Christians being persecuted right now for their faith in Jesus ([www.persecution.com](http://www.persecution.com)). What does the passage you studied this week say that these people should do in the face of persecution?
- How are you being mistreated at school or in your neighborhood?
- How does God expect you to respond to people when they mistreat you or do evil to you?

#### **Jr. High:**

- What is it that gives us hope that the best days are ahead?
- How do you show endurance through frustrating times?

#### **High School:**

- What do we need to remember about suffering?
- Why is suffering talked about so much (in the Bible/sermons)?
- How have you suffered in your life as a result of your faith?