



WHAT DID YOU EXPECT?

SUMMARY: We live with a constant set of expectations, some of them based on truth and experience and some of them built on ideals. Where do our expectations fit into our faith? What do we expect as followers of Jesus?

Peter has for a large portion of his letter, spoken about the role and place of trials and suffering and here he adds another layer, don't be surprised by it. As he explains, in and through our suffering we share in the very experiences of Jesus. We participate in his suffering. Why? So that we might be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.

He focuses on this even further by identifying suffering for in Jesus name, showing that in it we are actually blessed. For in it, we see the proof of the spirit and glory of God at work in us. Suffering for Jesus sake is not something to be ashamed about, rather we should praise the fact that we bear his name.

Not all suffering is created equal though, because once again in verse 15, we are reminded that suffering as punishment is actually justice.

Then as Peter often does, he moves from suffering to judgement, identifying that God's chosen people will experience it first. The contrast is also set up between those who obey the gospel and those who do not. Yet through the quote from Proverbs, it's made clear that this will be easy for no one.

To those who suffer, he closes with a simple reminder, commit yourself to their faithful Creator and continue to do good.

1. When have you felt let down by unrealistic expectations?
2. Have you ever felt like your life as a Christian wasn't what you expected or what you deserved? Where?
3. What things does God promise us? What doesn't he?
4. How does our sufferings allow us to participate in the sufferings of Jesus? (v.13)
5. How hard is it to rejoice in suffering? Why?
6. Where have you been insulted for being a Christian?
7. Where have you seen or heard in your own life or in the lives of others the truth of verse 14?
8. Why do you think Peter throws in the reminder of verse 15?
9. Why does judgement begin with the household of God?
10. Why might we be ashamed to bear the name of Jesus?
11. In what way is it hard for the righteous to be saved?
12. Why is identifying God as our faithful Creator so important to persevere in times of trial?
13. Have you ever realised that when you speak and serve as a Christian, you do it on behalf of God with his power and authority? How should that change us? (v.11)





I PETER 4:12-19

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