

Resilient

Scripture and Background Information for March 26-April 1.

To prepare for your group discussion each week, group members should use the **Community Group Discussion Guide** to complete the **GOD'S WORDS** and **MY WORDS** columns using the scripture below.

1 Peter is written to help Christ-followers thrive in the midst of a world under pressure. They were struggling to navigate a world where they were a spiritual, political, and social minority. They were suffering to the point they had even started to turn on each other at home and at church. Peter wrote to show them how to live with resilience: why we need it, where to find it, what it looks like, and what to do with it when you've got it.

Background for 1 Peter 4:7-11:

Peter's audience was spread throughout the Roman Empire because of the persecution they faced. They were in new places, around new people, dealing with new problems so Peter writes them to encourage and guide them in this unfamiliar season of life. Because of this, suffering is mentioned in different ways throughout the book. However, chapter 4 begins to focus on it more specifically. Peter knows that the people he is writing face suffering from many different angles. He talks in this chapter about a good suffering (verse 1), an unjust suffering (verse 12-14), and an unnecessary suffering (verse 15). Peter discusses how they should respond when experiencing these different types of suffering and how God can be glorified as they persevere through the suffering they experience.

Our passage for today is right in the middle of Peter's discussion on these different types of suffering. Verses 7-11 talks about the way in which God's people are supposed to love each other as they experience these different forms of suffering. Peter doesn't want anyone to suffer in a lonely way, so he encourages his audience to love each other passionately by being hospitable to one another and to use their spiritual gifts to build each other up during these seasons of suffering. He reminds them at the end of this section to do all of this by the strength of God and for His glory because, ultimately, it will be His strength that gets them through these rough times.

Insights and questions to engage with the text:

1. How can God be glorified in our suffering? What about His strength can help people persevere in the midst of suffering?
2. Tell us about a time when you felt like you were suffering alone. How did you overcome this struggle? How did/could the church community have helped you as you were going through this trial?
3. How can you use the gifts God has given you to help people who are going through trials, struggles, and sufferings in their lives? How can we rely more on God's strength to persevere when we are suffering?