

Like Him, The End is Near

1 Peter 4:1-19

Introduction:

This is merely a discussion guide for you and your Life Group. There is not any expectation for you to be a Bible scholar or the wisest person in the room. The expectation is that you would pray to God, asking Him to illumine your heart and mind as you walk through these verses. Life Groups are designed to cultivate an environment where reading Scripture, engaging in prayer, and being in biblical fellowship will flourish. Facilitating such an environment is all that we ask, we don't seek perfection. We trust that the Holy Spirit will guide you, and if you have any concerns after your group conversation, please reach out. When utilizing The Moody Bible Commentary for this passage, you can find the content on pages 1963-1964. - JF

Questions:

Consider a time when you were traveling to a desired destination - this could be Disneyland, the Grand Canyon, or your grandmother's house. What signs or images would be seen by you, indicating that you were nearing your destination? How did that make you feel (excited, nervous, happy, anxious)? As you approached your destination, were there any changes in your behavior, such as politeness, language, or how you combed your hair (*you know your grandmother didn't want messy hair walking into her house!*)? Why is it important to recognize the signs of getting closer to your destination? And why must there be appropriate behavior?

1 Peter 4 highlights three things – Christians must live with God's promises in view, Christians must exhibit mutual love in their living, and Christians will experience suffering. Similar to getting closer to your vacation destination, paying attention and behaving rightly is important for the Christian. What does Peter exhort these Christians to do in verses 1-2? Why is it important to arm oneself with the same thinking of Christ? What does Peter mean when he uses the term "will of God?" Based on your understanding of the Bible, why is it important to understand (and live out) the will of God? What does Peter warn these early Christians against in verses 3-5? The apostle lists several activities, why might he have highlighted these particular ones? In our current age, what are some of the prevalent passions and activities that demonstrate the lives of those who do not know Jesus as their Savior? How does engaging such activities show that one does not live with God's promises in view? If you were to assess yourself, how have you been doing with living with the end in view? What needs to change in your life?

In verses 7-11, Peter exhorts his readers to love one another. How does Peter tell them to exhibit that love? Of the ways he listed, what is the easiest for you? What is the most challenging? Is there one way that you would like to grow in? If so, share with the group how you plan on growing in love? Why is it important for Christians to demonstrate mutual love, especially in the context of knowing that "the end of all things is at hand (v 7)?"

In the last section of the chapter, verses 12-19, Peter spends time on the theme of suffering as a Christian. What is Peter's caution and exhortation in this pericope? Why would Peter need to offer these words to the early Christians? What does it mean to share in Christ's sufferings? In verses 14 and 15, Peter draws the distinction between suffering as a Christian and as one who has murdered, stolen, done evil, and/or has meddled. Why is it an important distinction for these Christians to learn the difference in suffering? Why is it important for us to learn that today? What other reasons might a person suffer, but that reason isn't glorifying to God? Why does our suffering glorify God? Spend time meditating upon verse 19 – *Therefore let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good.* What does Peter mean by this verse?

Pastor Brandon continued our Exiles series on Sunday. Is there anything that he said that stood out that you would like to discuss? Is there anything else from this chapter that you would like to discuss or gain clarity on?

Conclusion:

As you conclude, consider the most impactful thing you have received from Sunday's sermon, this discussion, or the reading of this chapter. Once you recognize it, what will you change or do because of coming to this new understanding? How can the group pray for, encourage, or hold you accountable in this area?