

# STILL REJOICING

JULY 25 | 1 PETER 4:12-19

## DISCUSSING GOD'S WORD

1. What is Peter saying Christians (citizens of the heavenly kingdom) will likely experience on this earth?
2. How does Peter say we should think and act toward trials and persecution?
3. What is Peter warning against in verse 15?
4. Where does Peter say judgment will start (v. 17)? If this is surprising to you, how or in what way?
5. Who does Peter indicate is in control of suffering and trials (v. 19)? If that raises concern with you, why?

## APPLYING GOD'S WORD

1. Peter's position on suffering is not new to the Scriptures. Remember the words of Jesus in John 15:20. Does this surprise or bother you, and if so, in what way?
2. When you face difficulty as a result of your faith, or as a result of the general presence of sin in this world, what is your first reaction to it? What do you think we need to "do" in order to move to rejoicing (as indicated in verse 13)?
3. How is it possible that persecution would actually mean we are blessed? Why is this counter-intuitive to the world's way of thinking?
4. When you think about God's sovereign reign over all of life, how does that shape how we look at, experience, and embrace life's challenges?
5. How do you think chapter 1 (and in particular verses 3-9) play in to Peter's words here in Chapter 4? Why can we entrust ourselves to our Creator?

## PRAYING GOD'S WORD

1. Sovereign Lord, grant us the faith to entrust ourselves to You in spite of what this life might bring our way.
2. Help us to think on this life with sober judgment, realizing a fallen world does not readily submit itself to Your righteous rule, and train our hearts to rejoice in the face of persecution because our inheritance is kept safe in the heavenly places.
3. If You call us to a personal life of direct persecution because of our faith in You, grant us the strength to stand firm and trust in your faithfulness.
4. Strengthen the hands and the hearts of our brothers and sisters around the globe who even today may find their very lives in the balance because they believe in You. Hold them fast, and help us to pray without ceasing on their behalf.