



Read I Peter 4:12-19

#### LOOK BACK

1. Take some time and share a highlight and a challenge from last week.
2. Spend a little time sharing how you're seeing God work in your life right now.

#### LOOK UP

v.12

Peter instructs the churches to whom he is writing to NOT be surprised at the fiery trial of suffering at the hands of others. See John 15:18

Would we be surprised by suffering at the hands of others for living counter-culturally?

These trials were to be viewed as tests. See 1:6-7.

How are we to regards these tests?

vv.13-14

Read Acts 5:27-42 and Acts 6:22-25

Do you think you would react this way to suffering?

vv.15-16

Not all who suffer can expect the blessing of God. Much suffering is due to our own sin. If the Christian suffers it should be the result of a break with the unbeliever's lifestyle not a fellowship with that lifestyle. Even in our suffering the focus should be on God's glory and not us!

Have you ever suffered for Christ? Would you share that with the group?

vv.17-18

Read Acts 14:22

The thought in these verses seems to be that Christian suffering is a harbinger of the judgment to come when Christ returns. This purifying act for the benefit of the church will be a time of great anguish for those who have rejected Christ. How are we to respond to this knowledge?

v.19

The idea that God gives life is a good indicator that God can protect that life. The idea that God is faithful means that he can be trusted. Peter seems to be saying, "Although you are being physically threatened you can trust the one who is your faithful Creator."

How would this have been received by Peter's hearers? How do you respond to this teaching?

**LOOK FORWARD**

- 1.** What from these passages change the way you see the upcoming week?
- 2.** What from this message will you share with someone who did not hear it?