

# Serving One Another

1 Peter 4:1-11

SS Lesson for 05/19/2013

**Devotional Scripture:** Gal 5:13-14

## OUTLINE

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*Commentary from A Study By: Bob Deffinbaugh From the Series: The Glory of Suffering--Studies in 1 Peter*

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Because suffering brings blessings from God (Matt 5:10-12)

Because suffering is rewarded by eternal life (Matt 19:29)

Because suffering strengthens (2 Cor 12:10)

Because suffering results in a crown of life (James 1:12)

Because suffering is commendable (1 Peter 2:19)

Because suffering should be rejoiced (1 Peter 4:13)

Because suffering should encourage us to praise God for bearing His Name (1 Peter 4:16)

*Do not live by the sinful nature (2-3)*

Because living according to the sinful nature means our mind is not set on what God desires (Rom 8:5)

Because living according to the sinful nature means we can't please God (Rom 8:8)

Because living according to the sinful nature means we are in conflict with the Holy Spirit (Gal 5:17)

Because living according to the sinful nature means we will not inherit the kingdom of God (Gal 5:19-21)

*Do not associate with the wicked (4-6)*

Do not associate with the wicked because they could corrupt character (1 Cor 15:33)

Do not associate with the wicked because association could bring downfall (Prov 6:27-28)

Do not associate with the wicked because it is commanded (Prov 4:14)

Do not associate with the wicked because there is no commonality (2 Cor 6:14)

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Serve in prayer by praying for everyone (1 Tim 2:1-3)

Serve in prayer by praying for a sinning brother (1 John 5:16)

Serve in prayer by having a powerful and effective prayer life (James 5:16)

Serve in prayer by praying in the Spirit with all kinds of prayers (Eph 6:18)

*Love one another (8)*

Love others by the gift of love (1 Cor 13:2-3)

Love others by asking God to increase our love (1 Thess 3:12)

Love others by loving as God taught us (1 Thess 4:9)

Love others by loving as a brother (Heb 13:1-3)

Love others with a sincere love (1 Peter 1:22-23)

Love others by turning a sinner from the error of their way (James 5:20)

*Practice Hospitality (9)*

Be hospitable by sharing (Rom 12:13)  
Be hospitable by entertaining strangers (Heb 13:2)  
Be hospitable by not forgetting to do good to others (Heb 13:16)  
Be hospitable by feeding the hungry, clothing the naked and looking after the sick (Matt 25:35-40)  
Be hospitable by helping others as we have the ability (Acts 11:29)  
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*Use gifts to serve (10)*

Serve by being a servant (Matt 20:26-28)  
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*Do all things for the glory and praise of God (11)*

Do all things for the glory of God (1 Cor 10:31)  
Do things so that others will praise God (2 Cor 9:13)  
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## **CONCLUSION AND OTHER THOUGHTS**

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS FROM BOB DEFFINBAUGH FROM THE SERIES: THE GLORY OF SUFFERING--STUDIES IN 1 PETER  
PRACTICAL POINTS FROM THE BIBLE EXPOSITOR AND ILLUMINATOR

# Introduction

## Overview and Approach to Lesson

The lesson examines how we should be **Serving One Another**. The **study's aim** is to stress that as Christians we are to prove our devotion to our faith through serving one another. The **study's application** is to devote our gifts to serving one another.

### Key Verse: 1 Peter 4:10

*10 As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.*

### Commentary from Barnes Notes

[*As every man hath received the gift*] The word rendered "the gift", without the article, means "endowment" of any kind, but especially that conferred by the Holy Spirit. Here it seems to refer to every kind of endowment by which we can do good to others; especially every kind of qualification furnished by religion by which we can help others. It does not refer here particularly to the ministry of the word-though it is applicable to that, and includes that-but to all the gifts and graces by which we can contribute to the welfare of others. All this is regarded as a gift, or charisma, of God. It is not owing to ourselves, but is to be traced to him. See 1 Tim 4:14.

[*Even so minister the same one to another*] In anything by which you can benefit another. Regard what you have and they have not as a gift bestowed upon you by God for the common good, and be ready to impart it as the needs of others require. The word "minister" here would refer to any kind of ministering, whether by counsel, by advice, by the supply of the needs of the poor, or by preaching. It has here no reference to any one of these exclusively; but means, that in whatever God has favored us more than others, we should be ready to minister to their needs. See 2 Tim 1:18; 2 Cor 3:8; 8:19-20.

[*As good stewards*] Regarding yourselves as the mere stewards of God; that is, as appointed by him to do this work for him, and entrusted by him with what is needful to benefit others. He intends to do them good, but he means to do it through your instrumentality, and has entrusted to you as a steward what he designed to confer on them. This is the true idea, in respect to any special endowments of talent, property, or grace, which we may have received from God. Compare 1 Cor 4:1-2 Luke 16:1-2 Luke 16:8.

[*Of the manifold grace of God*] The grace or favor of God evinced in many ways, or by a variety of gifts. His favors are not confined to one single thing; as, for example, to talent for doing good by preaching; but are extended to a great many things by which we may do good to others-influence, property, reputation, wisdom, experience. All these are to be regarded as his gifts; all to be employed in doing good to others as we have opportunity.

### Commentary from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator

Most of us would rather be served than serve others. Yet serving one another is exactly what our Lord had in mind when He brought us into His family. Be careful about laughing at the disciples for not understanding this concept in spite of walking daily with Jesus. Every time they thought they understood His teaching, Jesus threw another paradox at them: "The last shall be first, and the first last" (Matt. 20:16); "He that findeth his life shall lose it" (10:39); "Whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all" (Mark 10:44). Such comments truly confused them. They wanted greatness, but they could not comprehend finding greatness through serving. Perhaps we all have a difficult time understanding such a concept. Even when Jesus told them He had come to serve rather than to be served (vs. 45), His words seemed meaningless to them. Someone might remark, "A life of serving others is not natural. Looking out for number one is the only way to get to the top." Of course, such a comment is partially true. Serving others is not natural; it is supernatural! Jesus said there was one primary way people would recognize His disciples. It does not involve having a Christian

bumper sticker on your car or an open Bible on your coffee table. It is not a cross around your neck or a fish symbol lapel pin. The evidence of discipleship is love for one another (John 13:35). Christian love is not feelings driven. It is Spirit-empowered action performed for the sake of others. Service is love in action. If a person thinks he is incapable of serving others properly, he needs to take careful notice of this week's golden text. We have been specially gifted for this task. Whether someone has been given the spiritual gift of teaching, helps, administration, or giving, the purpose of that giftedness is not to promote himself but to benefit others. The marvel of this spiritual concept is that when believers are serving one another the way they should, someone is serving you with his gift as you are serving others with yours. Peter called this grace to serve others a "stewardship." Christians may have heard this term used in reference to giving to the church, but it is a broader term than that. A steward was one given administrative duties over a house or business. It was not his home or business, but he cared for it under the direction of the owner. A good steward followed the master's plans explicitly. God is the Owner of the worldwide organization known as the church. He has clearly laid out the plan and set the goals for the organization. In many earthly organizations, the company grows through the work of individual salespeople. As they build their commissions in competition with one another, the bottom line of the company improves. However, God's organization does not grow through individuals competing for commissions. There is but one purpose in building the kingdom: to glorify our Lord Jesus Christ. We build it by using our gifts to serve others, and God blesses that attitude of caring and sharing to build His church.

### **Approach to the Major Outlines in Lesson**

The concept of the major outlines came by reviewing the Scriptural Text.

| <b>Verse</b> | <b>Phrase</b>                            | <b>Major Outline</b>               |
|--------------|--|------------------------------------|
| 1            | Arm yourselves also with the same mind,  | Preparations For Christian Service |
| 7            | The end of all things is near. Therefore | Instructions For Christian Service |

### **Lesson Background**

#### **From the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary**

Today's text takes us back to 1 Peter to address the situation faced by its original readers. They were subjects of the Roman Empire, living in places and a time when the Romans were increasingly hostile to Christianity. With some localized exceptions (such as in Acts 18:2), Roman hostility did not extend to Jews as such. Roman respect for Judaism is traced to decisions and actions of Emperor Julius Caesar, who died in 44 BC. Roman suspicion of Christians grew as the Romans began to realize that Christianity was a new faith, not just a subset of Judaism. The result was increasing persecution of Christians (see the Lesson Background to Lesson 10). This is probably why Peter refers to Rome by the code word "Babylon" in 1 Peter 5:13. Identity was important to these Christians. It was their identity that had created the trouble they were experiencing. Could they maintain that identity, expressing it consistently in the face of pressure to abandon it? Their challenge was to be true to their Lord. Their lives were to reflect what he had done and promised to do, not simply enduring the pressure that they faced.

Peter begins by reminding his readers how their life with Christ began. It is first of all Christ's death that makes them his. By dying on the cross, he took the penalty for the sins of the world. Rising from the dead, he overcame and defeated sin. His death and resurrection therefore mean, in a very real and important sense, that sin is over. Its rule is finished. Christians are united with Jesus in his resurrection and its victory over sin (Romans 6:3-6). The resurrection life is, ideally, a life free from sin. That does not mean that sinful behaviors and temptations suddenly disappear. Sin and Satan remain active in this present age, though they are genuinely defeated. Those united with Christ in his death and resurrection have to fight deliberately against sin with the consciousness of a new life and the strength that Christ provides

## **Commentary from A Study By: Bob Deffinbaugh From the Series: The Glory of Suffering--Studies in 1 Peter**

Knowing His return was imminent, Jesus' disciples were to be ready and watchful and found doing those things He had given them to do. Peter reiterates these same principles in our text and actually spells out those things we should be found doing when our Lord returns. Because the "end of all things is at hand," the Christian should be found doing these things:

- (1) Being of sound judgment and sober unto prayer (verse 7b).
- (2) Keeping fervent in our love for one another (verse 8).
- (3) Being hospitable to one another, without complaint (verse 9).
- (4) Faithfully exercising our stewardship of the spiritual gifts which have been given to us (verses 10-11).

While still with His disciples, Jesus warned that times would get tough as the end drew nearer. Peter's instructions to his readers in verse 8 surely reflect the words of the Savior (Matt 24:3-14). Jesus told His disciples things would go from bad to worse as the end of all things approaches. There will be social and political upheaval and natural disasters. There will be an intensification of opposition toward Christians so that fellow Christians begin to turn on each other and family members betray one another (see also Mark 13:12-13). In such times of danger, love will wane and people will forsake the self-sacrifice of love for the sake of self-preservation. Peter therefore exhorts his readers to persevere in their love one for another: The faithfulness of the saints was evidenced, in part, by their hospitality shown to believers who were rejected and persecuted for their faith and the proclamation of the gospel. It is hard for us to grasp the difficulty and danger hospitality poses for those endeavoring to practice it in times of persecution. Some time ago a Romanian Christian visited our church, and I happened to be standing by as he spoke to another Romanian believer attending that day. They reminisced about the last time they had attended church together in Romania. The secret police stood outside the church taking down the names of all who entered. Church leaders and pastors were arrested and sometimes imprisoned. How easy we have it here compared to saints elsewhere. In those places hostile to the gospel, it can be very dangerous to be hospitable to Christians, for in so doing, one identifies himself with the believer and with Christ.

## **Major Theme Analysis**

*(Scriptural Text from the New King James Version; cross-references from the NIV)*

### **Preparations For Christian Service (1 Peter 4:1-6)**

- 1 Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,
- 2 that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God.
- 3 For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles — when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries.
- 4 In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you.
- 5 They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.
- 6 For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.

### **Prepare to suffer (1)**

*Because suffering brings blessings from God (Matt 5:10-12)*

10 Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. 12 Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

*Because suffering is rewarded by eternal life (Matt 19:29)*

29 And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life.

*Because suffering strengthens (2 Cor 12:10)*

10 That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

*Because suffering results in a crown of life (James 1:12)*

12 Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.

*Because suffering is commendable (1 Peter 2:19)*

19 For it is commendable if a man bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because he is conscious of God.

*Because suffering should be rejoiced (1 Peter 4:13)*

13 But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.

*Because suffering should encourage us to praise God for bearing His Name (1 Peter 4:16)*

16 However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name.

### **Do not live by the sinful nature (2-3)**

*Because living according to the sinful nature means our mind is not set on what God desires (Rom 8:5)*

5 Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.

*Because living according to the sinful nature means we can't please God (Rom 8:8)*

8 Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God.

*Because living according to the sinful nature means we are in conflict with the Holy Spirit (Gal 5:17)*

17 For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want.

*Because living according to the sinful nature means we will not inherit the kingdom of God (Gal 5:19-21)*

19 The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; 20 idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions 21 and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

### **Do not associate with the wicked (4-6)**

*Do not associate with the wicked because they could corrupt character (1 Cor 15:33)*

33 Do not be misled: "Bad company corrupts good character."

*Do not associate with the wicked because association could bring downfall (Prov 6:27-28)*

27 Can a man scoop fire into his lap without his clothes being burned? 28 Can a man walk on hot coals without his feet being scorched?

*Do not associate with the wicked because it is commanded (Prov 4:14)*

14 Do not set foot on the path of the wicked or walk in the way of evil men.

*Do not associate with the wicked because there is no commonality (2 Cor 6:14)*

14 Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?

### ***Instructions For Christian Service (1 Peter 4:7-11)***

7 The end of all things is near. Therefore be clear minded and self-controlled so that you can pray.

8 Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.

9 Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling.

10 Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms.

11 If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

### **Be Prayerful (7)**

*Jesus is the perfect example of prayer being a Christian service (John 17:20)*

20 "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message,

*Serve in prayer by praying that all live a life worthy of God (Col 1:10)*

10 And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God,

*Serve in prayer by praying for everyone (1 Tim 2:1-3)*

2:1 I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone- 2 for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. 3 This is good, and pleases God our Savior,

*Serve in prayer by praying for a sinning brother (1 John 5:16)*

16 If anyone sees his brother commit a sin that does not lead to death, he should pray and God will give him life. I refer to those whose sin does not lead to death. There is a sin that leads to death. I am not saying that he should pray about that.

*Serve in prayer by having a powerful and effective prayer life (James 5:16)*

16 Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.

*Serve in prayer by praying in the Spirit with all kinds of prayers (Eph 6:18)*

18 And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.

## **Love one another (8)**

*Love others by the gift of love (1 Cor 13:2-3)*

2 If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. 3 If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.

*Love others by asking God to increase our love (1 Thess 3:12)*

12 May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you.

*Love others by loving as God taught us (1 Thess 4:9)*

9 Now about brotherly love we do not need to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love each other.

*Love others by loving as a brother (Heb 13:1-3)*

13:1 Keep on loving each other as brothers. 2 Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it. 3 Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow prisoners, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.

*Love others with a sincere love (1 Peter 1:22-23)*

22 Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart. 23 For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.

*Love others by turning a sinner from the error of their way (James 5:20)*

20 remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of his way will save him from death and cover over a multitude of sins.

## **Practice Hospitality (9)**

*Be hospitable by sharing (Rom 12:13)*

13 Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

*Be hospitable by entertaining strangers (Heb 13:2)*

2 Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it.

*Be hospitable by not forgetting to do good to others (Heb 13:16)*

16 And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

*Be hospitable by feeding the hungry, clothing the naked and looking after the sick (Matt 25:35-40)*

35 For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, 36 I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.' 37 "Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? 38 When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? 39 When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' 40 "The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'

*Be hospitable by helping others as we have the ability (Acts 11:29)*

29 The disciples, each according to his ability, decided to provide help for the brothers living in Judea.

*Be hospitable by using the gifts God has given us (Rom 12:5-8)*

6 We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. 7 If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; 8 if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.

## **Use gifts to serve (10)**

*Serve by being a servant (Matt 20:26-28)*

6 Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, 27 and whoever wants to be first must be your slave- 28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

*Serve by being eager to help (2 Cor 9:1-2)*

9:1 There is no need for me to write to you about this service to the saints. 2 For I know your eagerness to help, and I have been boasting about it to the Macedonians, telling them that since last year you in Achaia were ready to give; and your enthusiasm has stirred most of them to action.

*Serve by helping God's people (Heb 6:10)*

10 God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them.

*Serve faithfully (1 Cor 4:1-2)*

4:1 So then, men ought to regard us as servants of Christ and as those entrusted with the secret things of God. 2 Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful.

*Serve by being God's fellow worker (1 Cor 3:8-9)*

8 The man who plants and the man who waters have one purpose, and each will be rewarded according to his own labor. 9 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building.

*Serve by devoting ourselves to service (1 Cor 16:15-16)*

15 You know that the household of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia, and they have devoted themselves to the service of the saints. I urge you, brothers, 16 to submit to such as these and to everyone who joins in the work, and labors at it.

*Serving gains excellent standing in faith (1 Tim 3:13)*

13 Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus.

## **Do all things for the glory and praise of God (11)**

*Do all things for the glory of God (1 Cor 10:31)*

31 So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.

*Do things so that others will praise God (2 Cor 9:13)*

13 Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, men will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else.

*Do things as if working for God (Eph 6:7)*

7 Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men,

*Do all things in the Name of God (Col 3:17)*

17 And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

*Do things that please God (Rom 14:17-18)*

17 For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, 18 because anyone who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and approved by men.

## **Conclusion and Other Thoughts**

### ***Concluding Thoughts from Bob Deffinbaugh From the Series: The Glory of Suffering-- Studies in 1 Peter***

Our text of Scripture has much to say to Christians today. It reminds us we are living in the latter days and that the return of our Lord and the consummation of His eternal plans and purposes are at hand. Perseverance in our love for fellow believers should be a matter of the highest priority for us. Rather than allowing hard times to produce contention, strife, and self-protection, we should continue to give ourselves sacrificially in the service of others. In so doing, we will deal with sin in a Christlike fashion and pursue holiness rather than persisting in the pursuit of sin and fleshly lusts as we formerly did. We must demonstrate our love for one another by practicing hospitality. We should realize that the only barrier to hospitality for us today is selfishness. We do not risk our property or possessions; we do not put our lives at risk as some do even today because they identify themselves with those who faithfully practice and proclaim the gospel. If we do not pursue the practice of hospitality now, how will we possibly do so in trying times? Let us happily open our homes and our lives to those whom we do not know, especially those who our brothers and sisters in Christ. Finally, we must in these final days make the most of the gifts of which God has made us stewards. If we are to be good stewards of these gifts, we must first know what God has endowed us to do—to serve others to His glory. It may not be as important for us to have the right label for our gift as to have a sense of what God has

gifted us to do. If our gift is in the area of speaking (and this means much more than preaching), we must be sure to speak the truth of His Word in a way that communicates the authority of the Word. If our gift is in serving, we must serve those whom God has set before us (it may be “the least of these, my brethren”—Matthew 25:40), and we must serve in the strength which produces both spiritual and eternal fruit.

***Practical Points from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator***

1. Suffering has the signal benefit of greatly weakening the hold of sin over those who endure it (I Pet. 4:1-2)
2. Those caught in the grip of sin cannot understand why anyone would want to avoid it (vs. 3-4)
3. Judgment holds terror for sinners but life for those who have been rescued from sin (vs. 5-6)
4. Prayer, love, and hospitality should mark our lives in the world (vs. 7-9)
5. Spiritual gifts must be used in service to others and for the glory of God (vs. 10-11)