

BATTLE READY

STANDING FIRM IN JESUS' STRENGTH

HomeGroup **LEADER** Discussion Questions

Week 2: Mar 14th [Boulder Campus]

Week 3: Mar 20th-26th [Online & Erie Campus]

Week 4: Mar 28th [Thornton Campus]

PLEASE VISIT <https://calvarybible.com/battleready/> IF YOUR HOMEGROUP HAS BOTH IN-PERSON SERVICE ATTENDERS AND OTHERS WHO MEET ONLINE. THIS SITE WILL SHOW YOU THE SERIES SCHEDULE FOR EACH CAMPUS THESE NEXT 3 WEEKS. YOU MAY NEED TO REVIEW TWO DIFFERENT SETS OF SERMON QUESTIONS AND PICK THE BEST FROM EACH.

Suffering takes our breath away. It can knock us off our feet and disorient our minds. But suffering is also a battleground. It's a battleground for our faith. Will it draw us closer to God? Or, will it cause us to drift away? Suffering is an experience we can't escape, but by God's grace, it is also something we can endure. In fact, it can draw us even closer to the God who promises to "restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish" us.

Main Texts: 1 Peter 5:6-11

CONNECT

1. Think of an experience of suffering from your own life or of someone close to you. What impact did it have on your (or their) faith?
2. What did you find most significant in this week's sermon? What questions did it leave in your mind?

LEARN

3. Read 1 Peter 5:6-11. These verses include promises that closely relate to the various commands Peter mentions. What are some of these "command-promise pairs"?

Answers could include:

"Humble yourselves...so that...he may exalt you." (v. 6)

"...casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you." (v. 7)

"Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion..." (v. 8)

"Resist him...knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced..." (vv. 9-10)

4. From verses 6-7, Pastor John pointed out that God is both mighty *and* caring. How should these qualities serve as a comfort to those who are suffering? Would it matter if God were only one and not the other?

His might shows us that God is able to deliver us. He's more powerful than what causes our suffering. His care shows us that God's concern is for us. He is not indifferent to our suffering. If you removed either, you'd lose a vital aspect of God's nature and character.

5. In verse 9, Peter commands his listeners to resist the devil. What do you think it means for a Christian to "resist" the one who "prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour"? There are multiple ways this could be answered. We might resist through praying fervently. We might confess to God and other believers how we're being tempted or have given in to temptation. We can engage in community with other believers in intentional discussions about matters of faith. We can read, memorize, and meditate on Scripture. We can choose to sing songs of praise to God even when it's difficult or we lack motivation. All of these can be effective forms of resistance.

6. Why do you think Peter wants his listeners to know that "the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world" (v. 9)? In other words, why is it important in suffering to remember that others are suffering as well?

Peter wants them to realize that they're not alone and that their suffering isn't unique. This can help combat the devil's lies that we are alone, that no one wants to hear about our problems, and that no one has faced what we're facing. All of these lies tend to isolate us rather than draw us into life-giving community.

APPLY

7. What examples of suffering from the Bible are most meaningful for you? Why?

This question implies that people are familiar enough with the Bible to be able to answer! That may not be a good assumption, depending on your group. You could supply answers and talk about why they're significant. Pastor John gives examples in the sermon.

8. When faced with your own suffering, how important is it to know that, as Pastor John emphasized, "You are not alone"? (See v. 9)

This is similar to #6 above. Satan would love to isolate us...or, almost as well, to make us feel and think we're alone. Suffering takes on a different dimension, though, when we know we're not alone and have others to journey alongside us through it.

9. How can the experience of suffering draw us closer to God? Consider sharing a story of how this has happened in your own life.

This is hopefully the experience of all our suffering. Hopefully suffering causes us to pray more fervently, to read our Bible's more consistently, and to engage in community more aggressively. If you have a story about this, please share!

If this has not been the case, it's ok to share that story as well. Someone may have experienced suffering as a challenge to faith. This could be an opportunity to help come alongside and encourage someone who is struggling in their faith.