

Women's Bible Study  
1Peter 4:14  
September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023, *Sharyn Balogh*

General Review – who is Peter writing to? Why?

Read [1Peter1:1-7](#).

1Peter 4 follows the instruction given in 1Peter 3 to live in a way pleasing and acceptable to God, regardless of negative feedback. We are ambassadors for Christ, and we *will* experience persecution of some sort, however we are to continuously respond in a manner which represents Jesus' example, keeping our focus on our purpose – to glorify God – and our reward, which is eternal life with our Savior.

Peter then gives a charge to believers to serve and love one another with the unique and individual strengths God has supplied each of His children. In the verses just preceding our text this morning, the reminder given is to ***not*** be surprised by the challenges and difficulties that enter our lives, but rather see them as ***an opportunity to prove our faith*** and in that assurance, have ***an attitude of rejoicing***.

[1Peter 4:12-13](#) Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation.

Now, on to our text. We will pick up where we left off in 1Peter Chapter 4.

[1Peter 4:14](#) If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.

No one likes to be made fun of; we want to be accepted and liked. To be 'reviled' in this verse means to be defamed [*charged falsely with malicious intent, name and reputation attacked*]; railed at [*criticized or have negative information spread about*], chided [*reproofed, scolded, dressed down*], taunted [*deliberately provoked by mocking or poking fun at*], reproached, and to suffer.

If we think back again to the recipients of Peter's instructions, they did not fit in with the norm. Perhaps you can imagine being the person who is different than the rest. When we think or speak differently, dress differently, and act differently, we are often exposed to ridicule. Consider being made fun of, or in the case of Peter's audience, to be persecuted, for your faith. There would be a struggle to remain steadfast. Yet, the instruction to those following Jesus, was to consider their suffering as a blessing. Adversity was an opportunity to prove their faith and move forward in the strength God supplied. We see the Apostle's encouragement threaded through his entire epistle. You can almost picture him coming alongside individuals, patting

them on the shoulder, praying with them, reminding them of their commission, and then sending them off to continue their work for the Kingdom.

This makes me think of the importance of encouraging one another in the ministries we are serving and the individuals with which we are connected. Praying for one another and asking how one another is doing in everyday life is so important. Asking how we might pray for one another is an important part of fellowship. ***How are you accomplishing this in your personal life?***

1Peter 2:19 For this finds favor, if for the sake of conscience toward God a person bears up under sorrows when suffering unjustly.

1Peter 3:14 But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed. AND DO NOT FEAR THEIR INTIMIDATION, AND DO NOT BE TROUBLED,

Isaiah 51:7 "Listen to Me, you who know righteousness, a people in whose heart is My law; do not fear the reproach of man, nor be dismayed at their revilings.

When I think of being intimidated by others or not wanting the disapproval of others, the words 'peer pressure' comes to mind. We are influenced to be like others, to fit in, to blend with the crowd. Sometimes we would rather just be like everyone around us because it is easier; we weaken and allow ourselves to be pulled along a path we wouldn't choose for ourselves. This is called 'going with the flow', instead of against it. However, this doesn't mean we look for opportunities to cause strife or voice our opinion at every turn.

***What do you do to remain strong in your decision to follow Jesus? What is your reaction to those who oppose your faith?***

Perhaps these are the thoughts we need to employ, ***"I will not succumb to those around me; rather I will persevere in the truth of the gospel choosing to honor God rather than follow men"***. Most of us will never experience *real* persecution for our faith, however we do need to take a stand as we find ourselves not fitting in because of our beliefs. Often 'taking a stand' might mean we quietly continue to act in a manner which pleases God.

***What is your response when your faith is questioned, and others make fun of you because you are a Christian? How should you respond?***

Our text reads, consider yourself blessed! ***'you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you'***. In other words, our happiness comes from knowing God is working in our life through His Holy Spirit – proof of our relationship with Him as His child. To be blessed means we are fortunate, well off, happy. ***Think! "Wow, I am God's child!"*** This is an amazing fact and should put a smile on our heart even through the most difficult times. We may be dishonored and rejected by the world, however we are honored to belong to Christ, to be received by Him, and to

give glory to His name. It is not that we find joy in being ostracized, but there is joy in being named with Christ, as His follower.

Matthew 19:29 "And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or farms for My name's sake, will receive many times as much, and will inherit eternal life.

*"To be reproached for the name of Christ is to be reproached for being a Christian, that is, for being like Christ. This is the highest honour to which any man can arrive in this world, and therefore the apostle says to such? Happy are ye", Adam Clarke's Commentary.*

Matthew 5:11-12 "Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. "Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

2Corinthians 12:10 Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.

James 1:12 Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

Consider the outcome of standing firm even through persecution for your faith. It is possible that others may be intrigued by your commitment; even to the point of wondering what it is you believe. Perhaps others might be saved because of your example. This is our commission, to represent Christ to the world in hopes that individuals come to a saving knowledge of God's grace and mercy. Through all sorts of trials – illness, death of loved ones, disappointments, loss of employment or possessions – we are sustained through the Spirit's guidance and work in us. When we recognize His work, undoubtedly knowing that supernatural strength to persevere does not come from us, we are blessed and encouraged. And sometimes others cannot help but recognize there is something 'bigger' in our lives than just what they see. Halleluiah for these opportunities!

Matthew 5:16 "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

1Peter 2:12 Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation.

1Peter 3:16 and keep a good conscience so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ will be put to shame.

*“... but He is eminently glorified by your patience and constancy, which are a proof of the power of the Spirit resting upon you, and working mightily in you”, Burkitt.*

*“In the meantime, while you are in this present world, and obnoxious to persecutions and injuries, if you are reproached for the name of Christ, {ye are} happy, and ought to reckon yourselves so, because the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you; which will support you under it, and spread a lustre around you; and {though} he, in whose cause ye suffer so unjustly, is blasphemed on their part, yet on yours he is glorified: it shows the excellence and sublime spirit of true religion, that it can support you under the opprobrious [offensive reproach] and cruel treatment which you endure, for adhering to it and defending it”, Doddridge.*

Think of what it means to have ‘[the Spirit of glory and of God rest on you](#)’. I can think of no better protection or encouragement than to know I am held in God’s hand and given His grace to accomplish His will. I am not left on my own to figure out everything, neither am I without help when circumstances become difficult. God will sustain us in suffering; God is always victorious even though we may not immediately see the result of His power. All reproach and shame hurled at God’s children is conquered by His Spirit – we are never made to suffer alone.

James 5:11 We count those blessed who endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome of the Lord's dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful.

Isaiah 11:2 The Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and strength, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.

John 14:16-17 "I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you.

Psalm 146:5 How blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the LORD his God,

### ***How will you respond to the truths in 1Peter 4:14?***

For myself, I first need to remember that I should expect difficulty because I am a believer. I will not fit into the world and will sometimes find myself quite alone in my thinking and responses. I can forget this and then wonder what is wrong, when in reality there is nothing wrong at all! Others may think all sorts of things about me that are not true; I may be unfairly attacked by words; I may be ostracized and even challenged because of my beliefs. All of this should come as no surprise! We need to be prepared in order to respond rightly.

Responding rightly may mean listening intently to another's complaint. It may mean being willing to seek to understand someone's concerns even if we don't share the same feelings. It is important to show patience with others just as God shows His patience towards us. We are not here to convince others of God's truths; we are here to show compassion for the lost and to communicate God's love through our words and actions. God does the miraculous work in a soul.

It helps me to consider how I might have reacted towards others before my eyes were opened to God's truths. No one likes to be different! I remember thinking that the people I knew who talked about Jesus were just plain weird. Imagine knocking on someone's door and asking if they knew Jesus! I was unable to comprehend why so much time and energy went into something or someone intangible. I also saw bad things happen to 'good' people, and this didn't make sense. I thought if God loves us and protects us why are seemingly innocent people hurt? Now, when I consider the answer to that question, I am reminded of what it truly means to be blessed and protected by God. His blessings don't necessarily imply that in this fallen world we are immune to the effects of sin. In fact, sin reigns all around us. God's blessings do not mean everything is butterflies and roses; however, God's blessings will supply His children with the strength to not be controlled by sin; and His protection will always keep our eternal future secure. Picture being a passenger in a car. When someone else is driving, even though *your* intentions may be to mind the laws, decisions made by the driver to disregard rules can totally affect you. If you are the driver and seek to be careful and courteous, someone else's flawed decisions may involve you in an accident. In the same way, because sin is in the world, we are affected by its consequences.

The text in 1Peter 4:14 is focused on being reviled because you stand for Christ. This is not the same as experiencing trouble because you have chosen to do the wrong thing or have made a poor decision. It is finding yourself ostracized in your attempt to follow Jesus; being ridiculed because you do not 'fit in', or because people don't like what you stand for or the message you try to share.

- In some way or another, we will be chided for our faith in Jesus.
- When we expect this to happen, then we will not be taken by surprise.
- The ultimate goal for our lives here on earth is to share truth so that others might come to know Jesus as their Lord and Savior.
- It is a blessing to have assurance that we are God's children.

Using your 'Apply It' bookmark, consider how the truths in this passage affect your thoughts and actions. ***How will you apply 1Peter 4:14?***