

1. Describe something you've done that turned out to be harder than expected. What would you have liked you to know, going into the activity, that might have helped you better navigate what was required of you?
2. Read 1 Peter 4:1-2. What does Peter mean by his imperative to "arm yourselves with suffering"? Why does he say, "whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin"?
3. What two contrasting ways of living does Peter present in v2? What does Peter mean by "in the flesh"? Why is it so easy to live for human passions and not the will of God while we are "in the flesh"?
4. Read 1 Peter 4:3. What does Peter mean by "Gentiles" in this reference? What kinds of things do Gentiles tend to do? What about their perspective makes them prone to this?
5. Read 1 Peter 4:4. Why are non-Christians surprised when Christians decline the invitation to join them in a "flood of debauchery"? Have you ever experienced "maligning" when you've chosen to abstain for sinful activities in which others are participating? How so? How did you respond?
6. Read 1 Peter 4:5-6. In what ways does God hold all people accountable? How does this give us hope for those who have already died and who knew Jesus personally? What does Peter say is the goal of gospel preaching?
7. Take a few moments to reflect on your life. Which way are you pursuing: the way of Christ or the way of the world? How has your suffering influenced the direction of your life? Why might suffering instead of sinning be the better option for you today? What can you adjust to change course and begin to live in the spirit the way God does?