

**Read with reverence:** Heb. 11:35-38 (NIV) *"Others were tortured and refused to be released, so that they might gain a better resurrection. Some faced jeers and flogging, while still others were chained and put in prison. They were stoned; they were sawed in two; they were put to death by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted, and mistreated. The world was not worthy of them."*

Who is the writer speaking of here? What should our response be?

- *"...rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ..."*

How can someone rejoice in suffering? Does suffering for the things of Christ bring a connection to Christ? Explain.

- *If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.*

What's the benefit that comes from being insulted because of the name of Christ according to that verse?

- *If you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name.*

How do people "bear" the name of Christ? How can you bear his name?

**Walk - Voice of the Martyrs (VOM)** is an organization committed to helping those that are suffering from persecution due to their Christian faith. This week go to [www.persecution.com](http://www.persecution.com) and learn more about what is happening to our Christian brothers and sisters around the world.

**Memory Verse** - Matt 5:43-44 (NIV) *"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you..."*

## **Happiness In A High Tech World - Part 6** **Nine Attitudes To Build My Life On** **Matthew 5:1-12**

Matt 5:10-12 (NIV) *"Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you."*

**The Reality: Followers of Jesus will face harassment for their faith**

1 Pet 4:12-16 (NIV) *"Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler. However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name."*

## **HOW DO I G.R.O.W. THROUGH SUFFERING**

### **Grab On To It And Use It**

1 Peter 4:16 (NIV) *"...if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name."*

Rom 5:3-5 (NIV) *"Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us."*

**Suffering ultimately produces:** perseverance, character and hope

**Perseverance:** “The ability to remain”

**Character:** “Tested”

**Hope:** “Confidence”

## **Recognize That Jesus Suffered Too**

Hebrews 12:3 *"For consider Him who endured such suffering of sinners against Himself lest you be worried and faint in your hearts."*

John 15:20 *"If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you."*

## **Obtain Confidence From Other Examples**

Heb. 11:35-38 (NIV) *"Others were tortured and refused to be released, so that they might gain a better resurrection. Some faced jeers and flogging, while still others were chained and put in prison. They were stoned; they were sawed in two; they were put to death by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted, and mistreated. The world was not worthy of them."*

## **Willingly Demonstrate A New Way**

Matt 5:43-44 (NIV) *"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you..."*

Luke 23:34 (NIV) *"Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."*

John 16:33 *"In the world you will have tribulation but be of good cheer for I have overcome the world."*

## **SMALL GROUP GUIDE**

**Welcome - Question 1** – If you could build the ultimate sandwich what would be on it? Or what's your absolute favorite food of all time?

**Question 2** – Describe your first attempts at trying to ride a bike or learning to swim. Did you take right off or did it take time? If it took time, how long did it take?

**Worship** - In the early church, that is the group that formed after Jesus resurrection and ascension, there was great persecution. Discuss how that persecution caused the members to rely on God more and what part it played in the expansion of God's kingdom.

Can you see any harassment for your faith? How could God use that to strengthen your relationship with Him?

As an act of worship pray for any people in the group that are suffering harassment for their faith. Ask God to bless them through it and to draw them closer to Him. Also pray for those around the world that are suffering for their faith.

**Word** - In the message we looked at 1 Peter 4:12-16. Some have referred to this book as the suffering saints. Peter is referring to believers who were under immense pressure and persecution because of their faith. Some were tortured, eaten alive and beaten and more. There are a couple of interesting phrases in this passage, let's discuss each one.

- *"...do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you."*

Peter says don't be surprised, why would he say this? What are we to expect?