

1 Peter Chapter 1 v 1

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[0 : 00] I'm going to read, we're not going to be thinking about this this morning, this evening, but it's going to be a help for us as we just come to worship once more. 1 Thessalonians chapter 1, verse 2.

We always thank God for all of you, mentioning you in our prayers. We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love.

Your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you because our gospel came to you not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction.

You know how he lived among you for your sake. You became imitators of us and of the Lord in spite of severe suffering. You welcome the message with the joy given by the Holy Spirit.

And so you became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. The Lord's message rang out from you, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, your faith in God has become known everywhere.

[1 : 10] Therefore, we do not need to say anything about it, for they themselves report what kind of reception you gave us. They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.

Let's continue adoring the Lord Jesus as we pray. Let us pray together. For those of us, O Lord, who have known your grace and continue to know it day by day, when we think of the price that your Son, the Lord Jesus, paid to accomplish such grace, such salvation, such blessing, such eternal life for us, there really is only one right and proper way in which we can consider him and think on him and view him.

Really, all that we can do is adore him, for he is so lovely to us. He is so wonderful to us. He is so marvelous and beautiful to us.

He is the very center of our hearts. He is the one who sets our hearts aflutter. He is the one who makes our hearts skip a beat when we think of him and his love and his beauty.

O Lord, we long that in our lives we may adore him more and more, and love him more and more, that we might be captivated with him more and more, that Jesus may fill our waking hours and our dreams at night.

[2 : 59] For we know, O Lord, that there will come that day when he returns in great glory and majesty, and every eye will see him. And those who have rejected him and hated him and despised him will mourn and grieve.

For then and only then will they truly see him as he is, not an object of their ridicule or of their unbelief or rebellion, but as the mighty, glorious King of the universe, who once descended from heaven to earth to be the Savior of sinners.

But for them it will be too late. But for us, O Lord, who in your mercy and loving kindness you have saved and rescued from darkness, death and blindness, for us the coming of the Lord Jesus will be the day in which all our Christmases come at once, when all the blessings of this life and all the joys of this life fade away, and we enter into the fullness and the everlasting blessings for which Jesus came and lived and died and rose again.

We shall welcome you, O Lord, with great tears flowing from our eyes and great joy and happiness overwhelming from our hearts.

For then, O Lord, we shall know, and we shall understand, and we shall see you as you truly are. But Lord, in these days where we still live, awaiting your coming, in these days in which you are preparing a people for yourself and saving a church for yourself, we ask again, O Lord, that you would help us and change us and equip us and fit us and make us, O Lord, instruments in your hand for the purposes you have set before us, those good works that you've prepared for us to do.

[4 : 59] We confess again, O Lord, that we struggle and faint at times and find the way weary, both physically and emotionally and spiritually, but, O Lord, we long that even as we meet together this evening, you would refresh us with those living waters from yourself, that you would breathe upon us again with your Holy Spirit, that we may be a people once more, reinvigorated and quickened, O Lord, to live for you in this age and in this day.

For, O Lord, it is for such a day as this that we are here. Our day is not tomorrow or next year. Our day was not just the days past, but our day is today.

Whoever we are and whatever our age and whatever our background and whatever our challenges, weaknesses and strengths, Lord, today, you have set us apart for yourself to live for you.

And so we ask as we come to worship you and hear your word, as we come to pray to you and we hear the word preached, we ask, O Lord, that you would do your work in us and equip us for your glory.

For Jesus Christ's sake and praise, we ask it. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[6 : 21] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Bewong
And He ignites my every joy. And I hope it overflows in joy.

My peace of His pure delight. And I will trust in You. And I will trust in You.

For Your endless blessing follows me. Your goodness will lead me home.

And though I walk the darkest hour, I will not fear the evil one.

[8 : 28] But You are with me and Your rod and scum. My comfort I need to know.

And I will trust in You. And I will trust in You. And I will trust in You.

For Your endless blessing follows me. Your goodness will lead me home.

And I will trust in You. God's Word. And we're going to read from the first letter of Peter, 1 Peter, and chapter 1.

And we'll read through to verse 12. But we're going to be having a bit of an overview of the letter this evening.

[9 : 31] And as I'll mention a bit later, really following on and keeping the theme of today and this week of the suffering church. So, 1 Peter, chapter 1, beginning at verse 1 and reading through to verse 12.

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ to God's elect, strangers in the world, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cepadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father through the sanctifying work of the Spirit for obedience to Jesus Christ, sprinkling by His blood.

Grace and peace be Yours in abundance. Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. In His great mercy, He's given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

And into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil, or fade, kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.

In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire, may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory, and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.

[11 : 15] Though you have not seen Him, you love Him. And even though you do not see Him now, you believe in Him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy.

For you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls. Concerning this salvation, the prophets who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing, when He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.

It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you, by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven.

Even angels long to look into these things. We read from 1 Peter and chapter 1 just a few moments ago, and I'd like you to turn to that letter.

We're going to not be just in that chapter but flicking through the whole letter as well as we go through particularly concentrating and thinking about this Suffering Church Sunday.

[12 : 35] I don't know how you read your Bible systematically. Perhaps you may have a set of readings to read through in a year or two years or three years, or perhaps you simply like to start the beginning of the Old Testament or start the beginning of the New Testament and read through in that way.

If you do read from Matthew through to Revelation, by the time you get to 1 Peter, you might feel like you're renewing an old friendship because Peter, of course, was so much to the fore in the Gospels.

He was always the one sticking his foot in his mouth and saying things he shouldn't say and sort of being the spokesman as well for many of the disciples.

And then, of course, in Acts, he's the one who was the main preacher on the day of Pentecost. But when we get to Acts 15 and the council at Jerusalem, he sort of disappears from the story.

And we don't get anything about Peter until we get to this letter. There's two references to him, one in 1 Corinthians where Paul just refers to him as Cephas.

[13 : 39] There's nothing said about him there. And then there's a little record of a disagreement that he and Paul had in Galatians in chapter 1. But really, that's all. And so when we get to 1 Peter, he suddenly, as it were, pokes his head up.

Those incidents from Acts were at least 20 or so years prior to the writing of this letter. And as far as we know, Peter wrote no other letters apart from these two.

We do know and we believe that Peter was the source of Mark's Gospel, that when Mark went to write down the life of Christ, he looked to Peter for his memoirs or for his recollections.

And so Mark acted as Peter's secretary in compiling that Gospel account. But as that was almost certainly the very first Gospel to be written, then that was probably 30 years prior to this letter.

So there's been this long silence, in one sense, from Peter. At least as far as the Scriptures are concerned. And so why does Peter now put pen to papyrus, as it were?

[14 : 52] Why does he now, in the year probably 62 AD, begin to write these two letters? Well, like every letter that we have in the New Testament, it's written with a reason.

There's something that has motivated Peter and moved Peter to write. Certainly we know that's the case with Paul's letters. He writes because of things that have happened, information that's come to him.

He tells us about troubles that are going on in 1 Corinthians 1 that have come to him through the grapevine, and certain people have told him. In Ephesians 1, he writes again because he's heard about the faith of the believers and what's going on.

And in 1 Corinthians 7, he tells us that they had sent him a letter asking for his advice and concerns about certain issues. So although this first letter of Peter has a lot of very similar teaching to some of Paul's letters, we have practical Christian living being taught here, don't we, about a relationship between husbands and wives, employees and employers, how we're to act as church leaders and so on in the world, there is one overwhelming theme that comes through in the letter, and for that reason I've chosen for us to consider it this evening for a moment.

It's because the Christians that Peter writes to are suffering that he is moved to write as he does. That word suffer or suffering or sufferings pops up 17 times through the letter.

[16 : 33] It is the main theme of the whole of the letter. How Paul came to know about their sufferings, we're not sure.

It could well be the case that actually Peter is writing to churches because he knew that persecution of the church was a global problem at that time.

It wasn't just happening in isolation here and there, but it was happening all through the Roman Empire. That's why many historians believe that it's around about 62, 63 AD that he writes because that's really when the Emperor Nero began his period of terrible cruelty and persecution of the church.

So suffering is the recurring theme. First crops up there in the reading, chapter 1, verse 6, where Paul says this, you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of troubles.

And all the way along, like bumps in the road, it's there until we get to the very end, chapter 5 and verse 10, after you have suffered a little while. And again, there's that bookend, isn't there?

[17 : 44] Because we're told that for a little while, you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of troubles, and then though you've had to suffer for a little while. And so I want us to think about this.

We're thinking about the reality of the suffering of God's people today. We're thinking about the reality that Christ's church is suffering persecution around the world 24-7, year after year after year.

And we looked at some of those experiences of that. If you weren't here this morning, it may be helpful to get the, I was going to say, the cassette. I'm getting old, aren't I?

Get the CD or listen to it on the internet, which is a lot easier. And of course the truth is that we do all suffer, all Christians suffer. There's no escape from that.

By living in this sinful world with sinful bodies, we suffer illness, we suffer old age, we suffer injustices, we suffer because of evil behavior in the world.

[18 : 45] But again, these are not the sufferings that Peter is thinking about. He's concerned rather with that suffering, which is particularly persecution.

Particularly because these are people living Christian lives in a Christless world. There in chapter 4 and verse 16, he speaks, if you suffer as a Christian.

And again in chapter 4, verse 14, where he says, if you are insulted because of the name of Christ. And then again, just earlier than the verse before, rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ.

And we thought about that this morning, how the reality is that if we are those who share in Christ's blessing, we must share in his sufferings. If we united to Christ in that spiritual union, which ultimately is the only thing that defines somebody as a Christian, then that means we must not only share in his resurrection, we've got to share in the cross.

Not just in the blessings of the cross, but in the sufferings of the cross. And that has been the experience of every Christian in every age, and always shall be.

[19 : 59] As Paul says to Timothy, in 2 Timothy, all who want to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. So Paul is writing to those Christians who are suffering.

He's writing to them because he wants them to have a right understanding of what they're going through. He wants them to see things from the right perspective.

As in all of our lives as Christians, we are to have a worldview which is radically different to those who are without Christ. When a non-Christian picks up his newspaper, when a non-Christian watches the television news, or hears about something going on in any sphere or scheme, he will have a worldview, a way of looking at that which is different to ours.

And as Christians, our view should not be one which is formed and fashioned by the world in which we live. We are to have a heavenly point of view, a heavenly perspective as we look at the world around about us.

More often than not, if we do not have that worldview, that heavenly view, then we cannot see the wood for the trees. We are bogged down in the now, in the immediate, in the present as it were.

[21 : 16] We are not able to stand back and see the big picture. We suffer from short-sightedness as the world suffers from short-sightedness.

But the Bible particularly gives us God's viewpoint on all things. It lifts us up from the immediate and the moment so that we can see the past, the present and the future so that we can, with better judgment, discern the right action in every situation and circumstance.

That's not only true of suffering. That's true of all things. That's why it's so essential again as a church and as individual believers that we are men and women of the book, men and women of the scriptures, because we will not understand the times.

We will not understand how we are to act. We will not know what is God's will except through his word. That's why in Romans in chapter 12 we have that exhortation, do not be conformed any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed in your mind that you might know God's good and pleasing and perfect will.

So what is it that Peter wants the believers here and wants us to understand about suffering? What is God's point of view when it comes to persecution and suffering?

[22 : 39] Well, what is certainly true, but is possibly the most difficult thing to accept, is that suffering is part of God's will for us.

Suffering is part of God's will for us. There it is in chapter 4 and verse 19. Those who suffer according to God's will.

It's hard, isn't it? Those who suffer according to God's will. Suffering, and this is where the wood and the trees come in, for many of us and for many people, they see suffering in the wrong way.

Even as Christians, we can see suffering as being God's punishment of us because of a particular sin or failing in our lives or God's judgment against us because of things that have happened in the past.

Even as Christians, it may be that we feel that God has been overcome by the devil to allow this suffering in our lives.

[23 : 44] All sorts of misunderstandings. All sorts of misconceptions. And to view our suffering in any other way than the way that Scripture declares it is destructive and harmful for our faith.

If we see that the problems or the suffering that we are going through, whether it be persecution or other, is part of God's judgment of us, then we will have a wrong understanding and viewpoint of the cross.

We'll have a wrong understanding and viewpoint of grace. And of course, we'll have a wrong understanding of God's love. To view our suffering as part of God's will is that alone which strengthens faith and comforts in struggle.

To recognize that nothing happens to us apart from the will of our Heavenly Father is a great comfort and encouragement to us. For that very reason, Jesus spoke, didn't he, in Mark in chapter 10, when he gave the illustration of the sparrows and the Heavenly Father.

Here's what he says, Matthew 10, verse 29. Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father.

[25 : 06] And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So don't be afraid. You are worth more than many sparrows. Every event in the life of a believer is under the sovereign rule and care of God, our Heavenly Father.

Nothing happens apart from his will. That does not mean, of course, that God commends evil or delights in evil or agrees with evil.

But even the actions of evil men he brings under his rule for the blessing and good of his church. When we think particularly of the Lord Jesus Christ upon the cross, Peter tells us in that Pentecost sermon, you, with the help of evil men, put to death the Son of God.

Yet it was God's will that he should suffer for us. Job, of course, a man who knew much in the way of suffering. And ultimately, when we look at the reason for his suffering, it was persecution from Satan against him.

And we thought about that this morning with the church in Smyrna, that the persecution and suffering they were enduring was driven by, motivated by, by Satan himself.

[26 : 23] We're not living in a neutral world. We're living in a world which is in a spiritual conflict. And we must certainly choose whose side we are on. But Job himself suffered for his faith and trust in the Lord.

And yet his understanding was such, even then, without the blessings of scriptures that we have, that it was the Lord's will. For he says in Job chapter 1, verse 21, the Lord gave and the Lord has taken away.

May the name of the Lord be praised. Christ. We are to recognize, as we thought this morning again, I'm sorry to keep referring back to that, but this is really in conjunction with what we shared and spoke about.

We're to see that suffering is not the exception, but the common experience of God's people. If we do not suffer and are not persecuted, it is not because that is the norm, because the norm is in fact that we should suffer.

In fact, to be called into the Christian life is to receive a calling unto holiness, unto obedience, unto joy, but a calling unto suffering.

[27 : 35] Here's what Peter writes in his letter. Verse 21. To this you were called. What?

Look at verse 20. If you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God to this you were called. We're called to suffering. We're called to suffer.

God has set us apart to be part of his people, part of the body of Christ, that we might suffer. And every Christian believer and every church has a share in it.

There at the end, chapter 5 and verse 9, speaking of the devil and his work, knowing that your brothers throughout the world undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

One of the comforts that he gave to the churches in those parts of modern day Turkey was this, you're not alone in your suffering. But what you're suffering, all the other churches are suffering as well.

[28 : 33] It's not just you who's being picked on. And so, that's why Paul says we should never be surprised if we are persecuted for Christ's name. We shouldn't be surprised if we suffer for him.

Chapter 4 and verse 12. Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering as though something strange were happening to you. Now, for those of us who've lived in the UK and the safety all these years when we do come across suffering, it is a surprise to us.

But in fact, it shouldn't be the case. Suffering is God's will for us. Secondly, we see from Poitier's letter and what he wants to encourage the believers is this.

Suffering is God's instrument to accomplish change in us. Suffering is God's instrument to accomplish change in us.

Chapter 1 and verse 7 which we read from, these sufferings, these trials, what are they? They have come so that your faith, greater worth than gold which perishes even though refined by fire may be proved genuine, may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.

[29 : 47] Paul uses the illustration of the refiner who uses fire to purify precious metal so that it becomes more valuable, becomes more precious and so it is with the believer.

In the fire of persecution and suffering, the faith of the believer is purified and he and she are changed. just think of it this way.

When we pray, do we pray for greater faith? I hope we do. I'm sure we do. We face troubles and trials. Well then, through suffering, our faith is strengthened and purified.

That's exactly what he's saying here. These have come so your faith may be proved genuine, may be cleansed and purified and strengthened. We know as well, Job said something similar, when he has tested me, I'll come forth as gold.

If we want greater faith, it must come through greater trials. You cannot grow faith without trial. It's a bit like the athlete.

[30 : 59] Can't become stronger or fitter or faster unless they train, unless they put their muscles to the test. So it is with us. Do you pray something like this?

Lord, I want to be more like Jesus. I want to be more holy and I want Jesus to be seen in my life. Well then, suffering is one area where the likeness of Jesus is seen in us.

There we have it in chapter 2, verse 21. To this you were called because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example that you should follow in his steps.

Our lives are to follow in the example and the steps of Jesus. He uses two illustrations there. First of all, leaving an example. It's a bit like a teacher teaching children to write.

He'll write the things on the board, the original, and they copy them. So we are to copy the life of Jesus from the original and then the secondly, he speaks about following in his steps.

- [32 : 04] Perhaps like following in the steps. Good King Wenceslas and his mate who went looking for sticks, didn't they, to feed the poor man. He put his footsteps in where the saint had gone before.

Or if you've ever learned to dance, the dance instructor might put the footsteps on the floor for you to put your feet in the right place. It's there in suffering that we imitate Christ and how we deal with it, how we act, how we respond.

So do you want to be more like Jesus? Suffering will do that. Perhaps you pray like this, Lord, I want an opportunity to speak for you. I want to share and testify and witness to you before others.

Well, dear friends, it may well be that through suffering that God gives us those opportunities. Chapter 3, verse 15. Again, in the context of suffering, of suffering for doing good.

In all your hearts, sorry, in your hearts set apart Christ Jesus as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.

- [33 : 14] But do this with gentleness and respect. So when people oppose us or slander us or persecute us, that's the opportunity that God has given us to witness for him.

We might like other different, more different opportunities. I'd really like an opportunity for somebody to come and sit beside me on the bus and say, what do I need to do to be saved? But God uses these opportunities and gives us these opportunities to witness for him.

Do you pray like this to your friends? Lord God, I long that you would be glorified in my life. I really want God to be glorified in my life. Well then again, suffering for Christ is a way in which he is glorified in your life.

Chapter 2, verse 12. Live such good lives amongst the pagans that though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds glorify God on the day he visits us.

So suffering is God's instrument by which he purifies our faith and answers our prayers and works change in us.

- [34 : 23] Thirdly, suffering is God's assurance to us that we are blessed. So Peter says here, doesn't he, in verse 14, do not fear what they fear, do not be frightened, sorry, make your pardon, go back, verse 14, but even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed.

Peter doesn't tell the churches who are suffering, you know, huddle down, you know, lock in tight, it's a hard thing, mourn over your suffering, count them as a terrible affliction, but rather he says that we are to rejoice when we're persecuted for Jesus.

Verse 13 of chapter 4, rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ and more than that we are to praise God.

Verse 16, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name. So suffering is something which we are blessed with.

That means to say, dear friends, that here in Whitby at this time we are not blessed in this way. And that those who suffer persecution, imprisonment and those terrible things, they are the blessed ones of God.

- [35 : 52] So when we say, Lord, bless this church, bless these people, it may be that God will answer our prayer for opposition and persecution.

But why should we rejoice? Why should the Christians here rejoice in their suffering? Why should they count themselves as blessed? And why should they praise God when they suffer?

Four reasons. Suffering is positive proof that certain blessings are ours. Suffering is positive proof that certain blessings are ours.

And I picked these randomly through the book here, through the letter here. Chapter 4, verse 14. It is the assurance and the promise that the spirit of glory and of God rests on us.

Verse 14. If you're insulted because of the name of Christ, chapter 4, 14, you are blessed. Why? For the spirit of glory and of God rests on you. God's Holy Spirit is upon you.

[36 : 59] In other words, you're a Christian. You're one of God's people. You belong to him. But more than that, surely it must be a sense in which God is declaring that he is giving to them of his spirit in a special manner and way.

The glorious spirit of God rests upon you if you're suffering. You're marked out for that blessing. Secondly, it is the proof positive that we are rescued sheep who've been brought into Christ's flock.

Chapter 2, verse 25. For you you were like sheep going astray but now have returned to the shepherd and overseer of your souls.

The evidence of that is that we suffer for Christ and follow his example. It's proof that we belong to him. We have the mark of the master upon us, don't we?

That we are his sheep. That we bear the resemblance of Christ. It is thirdly the positive proof that we have a wonderful inheritance yet to enjoy.

[38 : 09] Chapter 3, verse 9. Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult but with blessing because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.

Right back in chapter 1 we were told about this inheritance weren't we? Chapter 1, verse 4. An inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade kept in heaven for you.

This world is not the only world in which we live. This world does not contain our treasures. And for those who have been robbed and those who have had to flee and leave their homes and those who have had their possessions taken from them or confiscated, to be assured that they have an inheritance in heaven which is wonderful and secure is a great comfort.

proof of that is that they suffer for Christ. And fourthly of course that inheritance really is the truth that we shall have a joy unspeakable when Christ comes again in glory.

Chapter 4, verse 13. Rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ. Why? Because so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.

[39 : 27] When is the glory of Christ revealed? When he comes again. When he comes again, those who have suffered will rejoice with joy unspeakable, overjoyed at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

When all suffering will end. When they are ushered into the blessings and the joys of life in the presence of their Saviour. in all these things, whatever sufferings they may be, whatever opposition that we face, whatever persecution comes our way, our attitude and response to them is to be the same as our Lord Jesus Christ.

And it is simply this, to trust him. That's what we're told, aren't we? This chapter 2 where we're told about Jesus suffering, how he did not retaliate.

What did he do instead? He did this. He entrusted himself to him who judges justly. Verse 23. Jesus said, didn't he, I can call down a legions of angels to come and fight for me when they're about to arrest him.

We know that he says to Pilate, you have no authority except what's given to you to do anything. we know that he laid down his life of his own accord, but in all that he faced and all that he suffered, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.

[41 : 00] He had faith. He trusted his heavenly father. And that's exactly what we must do as well. For in chapter 4 and verse 19, that's what we're commended to do.

Those who suffer according to God's will should commit themselves entrust themselves to their faithful creator and continue to do good. Should we seek out suffering?

No, of course not. Should we pray that we'd be persecuted? Of course not. But if persecution comes as we seek to faithfully live for Christ, as we continue to do good and to do his will, there will be persecution and opposition.

Let us not stop doing those things. Let us carry on faithfully doing what Christ has committed us to do. And above all, of course, as we've been thinking throughout this day, let us recognize that we are one with every brother and sister in Christ around the world, that we are one with those who suffer.

And to share with them in their sufferings is our privilege and our duty. The God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm, and steadfast.

[42 : 39] To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.