

**The Problem of Suffering – COR@9**  
**October 20, 2019**

Opening questions:

“What does it mean to suffer?”

“What does it mean to suffer for one’s faith?”

**Focus Passage 1: 1 Peter 1:3-12 – A future, present, and past orientation for suffering**

1. Our Hope for the Future - A New Inheritance Based on a New Birth (1:3–5)
  - A. Our New Birth (v. 3)
    - because of God’s mercy caused us to be born again
    - to living hope
    - through Jesus’ resurrection
  - B. Our Eternal Inheritance (vv. 4–5)
    - imperishable, undefiled, unfading
    - protected by God’s power
2. Our Trials in the Present - Suffering that Tests Our Faith (1:6–9)
  - A. Joy Based on Our Salvation (v. 6)
  - B. Temporary Distresses (v. 6)
  - C. A Tested Faith (vv. 7–9)
    - an analogy from the created world (v. 7)
    - a reminder of the spiritual reality (v. 8)
    - the promised outcome: final salvation (v. 9)
3. Our Assurance from the Past - Earthly/Heavenly Witnesses to Salvation (1:10–12)
  - A. Past prophets sought to understand our salvation (vv. 10–11)

B. Heavenly angels long to see more clearly our salvation (v. 12)

**Focus Passage 2: 1 Peter 4:12-19 – In the Midst of Suffering . . .**

1. We can rejoice because we share in the suffering of Christ. (vv. 12-13)
2. We can glorify God because we are identified with the name of Christ. (vs. 14-16)
3. We can entrust ourselves to God because we are being purified. (vs. 17-19)

Some encouragement from “How Firm a Foundation”!

When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie  
My grace, all sufficient, shall be thy supply;  
The flames shall not hurt thee, I only design  
Thy dross to consume and thy gold to refine.

**Focus Passage 3: 1 Peter 5:6-11 – Our True Enemy in Suffering**

1. The Necessary Attitude: Humility (5:6–7)
2. The Required Action: Spiritual Alertness (5:8–9)
3. The Natural Result: Praise (5:10–11)