

CLOSING THE GAP
Longview FUMC Lenten Bible Study
Week 1: SUFFERING - 1 Peter 3:18-22

Theme/Focus: Christ has suffered sacrificially for the sins of all to bring us close to God! How do we experience suffering as Christians? How are we called to suffer in our discipleship?

Related Scriptures:

Matthew 10:38 – Take Up Cross and Follow Me

Romans 5:3-4 – Suffering → Perseverance → Character → Hope

Romans 8:18 – Hope in Suffering

2 Corinthians 1:3-11 – Consolation in Affliction/Reliance on God and Rescue

Philippians 1:27-30 – Worthy Living/Belief and Sacrifice

Philippians 3:4b-11 – Confidence in Christ/Share in Suffering

1 Peter 1:3-12 – New Birth through God’s Great Mercy/Salvation from Suffering

1 Peter 5:6-10 – Humility, Discipline, and Restoration from Suffering

Questions:

- How do we understand Christ’s suffering?
- How does Christ’s suffering offer us hope? How does it challenge us to faithfulness?
- How is suffering in general different from the suffering explored in this passage?
- How does Christ’s resurrection offer you hope in your suffering for Christ?
- How did early Christians suffer for their faith? How have other Christians suffered?
- How do we suffer for our faith? How can we suffer for our faith?
- How ready are we to accept the suffering that comes through faith in Christ?
- When have you felt close to God?
- How has closeness to God blessed you? How has it challenged you?
- Have you been challenged when making a commitment to Christ?

NEXT WEEK: Read Romans 4:13-25 – Closing the Gap: FAITH