

Support through suffering

1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11

Peter reassures the Early Church communities that Christ is with them and cares for them in their suffering. Believers should be humble, resist evil and give their anxieties to God. Those who are steadfast in their faith will ultimately be rewarded.

Read this week's passage:



ACT

Plan a fundraiser for a charity like Marie Curie, Christian Aid, Oxfam, etc. as way to show God's love to those who are suffering.

Pray



Have a look around the Open Doors website and take time to pray for Christians who are suffering around the world. <https://www.opendoorsuk.org/>

Remember

Make a 'Pot of Encouragement'. Write down encouraging Bible verses and place them in a box or glass jar. The next time you are upset or worried, take out these pieces of paper and read them. For further instructions and suggested verses, scan the QR code.



Living Scripture

'Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you.' 1 Peter 5:7

'Mummy, do all fairy tales begin with "Once upon a time"?'
'No dear, some begin, "When I became a Christian, all my problems went away."'

It's an old joke heard in a sermon many years ago, but it highlights an issue that Christians are always facing: If God promises us peace, love and joy, then why am I still having such difficulty with 'X'?

Peter knew that the Christians he was writing to were having a hard time, persecuted for following Jesus and struggling to thrive in an oppressive and corrupt society. He doesn't tell them that they shouldn't be worried. Instead, Peter tells them to hand their worries over to God.

How do you cope with stress and anxiety? Are you quick to talk things over? Do you let things out in anger and frustration? Or do you try to push on through and cope so that you aren't a bother to anyone else? Sometimes we need to help each other to open up about the hard things before they become even bigger. Maybe over dinner you could ask each other to think of one good thing from the day and one difficult thing. Once you've all shared, one person could simply pray, 'God, please hold these joys and worries and give us what we need for tomorrow.'

First impressions

- How is this player being supported?
- How does God support and strengthen us in testing times?
- Can you challenge yourself to pray daily for the persecuted Church this week?



Pray



Mighty God, we have cast our burdens on you, trusting in your love and your strength. Be with us in our trials this week and help us to rejoice, knowing that we are becoming more like you. Amen.

Write

Write the names of three people you know who are suffering in any way on a sticky note and place it where you see it daily. Remember them in your prayers and seek inspiration on how to support them.

