Day 1:

Read 1 Peter from beginning to end.

1. As you read, underline in **red** every occurrence of the word "suffer/suffered/suffering" with a jagged line. How many sections of Peter's letter address suffering?

2. Spend some time committing to memory the verses you chose on Day 1 of last week.

3. Now look back at this week's section of text: **3:13-22**. What does this passage teach us about God? Note your observations below:

4. What do you think Peter wants to communicate in **3:13-22**? Boil down his point to three or four bullet points.

5. How does this section flow logically out of the previous one?

Day 2:

Look at **3:13-14a**.

1. At first glance, what would seem to be the answer to Peter's question in **3:13**?

2. Specifically, what kind of suffering is Peter talking about in **3:14**? What assurance does he give his listeners?

© 2012 Jennifer Wilkin

3. When might doing good keep us from being persecuted? When might it cause us to be persecuted? Give an example of each situation.

4. By doing good all the time, could we hope to avoid all persecution? Look up **2 Timothy 3:12** to help with your answer.

5. When he says "Have no fear of them, nor be troubled" (**3:14b**) Peter paraphrases **Isaiah 8:12-13**. Look up these verses and note the complete thought that Isaiah speaks. How do these verses add to your understanding of Peter's meaning?

6. How does our fear of the Lord affect our fear of persecution?

7. Look up **Matthew 5:10-12** and note whose teaching Peter is paraphrasing in **3:13-14a**. What similarities do you see between the two passages?

8. Both Peter and Jesus say that when we are persecuted we will be blessed. In what ways might someone persecuted for their faith experience blessing in the midst of their suffering? Has this ever been your own experience?

© 2012 Jennifer Wilkin

Day 3:

Now look at 3:14b-17.

1. In the chart below, note in the appropriate column every instruction Peter gives for our behavior under persecution:

heart	mind	speech	actions

2. Looking at your answers above, how do the inward behaviors of the heart and mind shape the outward behaviors of speech and actions?

3. What do you think Peter means by "in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy"? (**3:15**) Look at how the NIV translates this phrase to help with your answer.

4. What steps can we take to be prepared to make a defense of our faith? Think of three practices that would help us to be prepared.

5. Would you be ready to make a defense of your faith if you were called to do so? Would you be ready if you knew you or your family would be put at risk because of your words?

© 2012 Jennifer Wilkin

6. What is the difference between giving a defense and being defensive? (**3:15**) How hard is it to separate these ideas when you are under verbal attack? How would you advise someone to "keep their cool" when their belief is questioned?

7. Peter says to defend your belief with *gentleness and respect*. Is this our usual demeanor when answering an opposing view? How might following Peter's advice leave you with a good conscience?

8. Look up **Proverbs 15:1**. What other good reason for gentleness and respectful speech is found here?

9. Now look at what Paul says on this topic. Note how his instructions about speaking to unbelievers expand on Peter's instructions in **3:15-16**:

   2 Timothy 2:24-26

   Colossians 4:5-6

10. Have you ever been persecuted for doing good or defending your faith? How was your faith affected by that experience? How were your words or actions affected?

11. Rewrite **3:13-17** in your own words.

© 2012 Jennifer Wilkin

Day 4:

Now look at 3:18-22.

This is a famously (and obviously) difficult passage to understand, so let's find a way to examine it that makes sense.

1. Before we put the passage under the microscope, let's look at it from outer space. What is the big idea Peter wants to communicate in **3:18-22**? What does he want us to know Christ accomplished? Keep in mind Peter's purpose in writing this letter: to encourage those enduring suffering. Also, keep in mind what Peter just talked about in **3:13-17**.

Now let's get more detailed. We'll take a closer look at **3:18** today, and then we'll tackle **3:19-22** in tomorrow's homework.

2. How does the thought in **3:18** flow logically from the thought in **3:17**?

3. Why did Christ die on the cross? (**3:18**)

4. Why does Peter say "Christ also suffered *once* for sins"? (**3:18**, emphasis mine) Read **Hebrews 10:5-14** to help with your answer.

5. On Day 1 of this week, you marked every occurrence of the word "suffer" in the book of 1 Peter with a jagged red underline. Peter addresses not just the way followers of Christ suffer, but the way Christ himself suffered. Look up the following verses and note how they shape your understanding of the *purpose* of suffering.

Hebrews 5:7-8	Jesus learned _____ through what he suffered.
Hebrews 2:10	Jesus was made _____ (purified) through suffering.
2 Corinthians 12:7	Paul was allowed to suffer to keep him from becoming _____.
2 Corinthians 1:3-6	Sharing in suffering allows us to also share in _____.

© 2012 Jennifer Wilkin

6. Which of the above benefits have you found to be true in your own experience of suffering? Stop to pray and thank God for the good he has brought out of suffering in your life. Ask Him to give you assurance that current and future suffering are for your good.

Day 5:

1. What has been the overarching theme of our study for the past three weeks? (Glance at the table of contents if you need help.) _____

   In your opinion, does **3:18-22** continue this theme or move on to another one? Give reasons from the text for your answer.

Now let's see if we can make sense of **3:19-22**.

2. At this point in the study, you have read **3:19-20** multiple times. What is your best guess as to what these verses mean?

3. In **3:19**, what does "in which" refer back to? Who went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison?

4. There are several possible explanations for who these "spirits in prison" are. We will discuss them further during the teaching, but for now, here is a summary of the more common ones:

   1. The spirits are disobedient humans who lived in the time of Noah, now in Hell, whom Jesus proclaimed the gospel to between his death and resurrection.

   2. The spirits are the disobedient humans of Noah's day, whom Christ preached to *through* Noah before the flood.

   3. The spirits are fallen angels, who stirred up the wickedness in Noah's day, to whom Christ proclaimed his victory over sin.

   Which of these views seems like the best fit to you? Why?

© 2012 Jennifer Wilkin

5. Now let's look for some clues within the passage and from other places in scripture. Compare **3:19-20a** to **3:22**. What phrase in **3:22** might correspond to "spirits in prison" who "formerly did not obey"?

6. Now look up the following verses and note how they add to your understanding of "spirits in prison":

   Ephesians 6:12

   Colossians 2:15

   Revelation 20:1-3, 7

   Jude 1:6

   2 Peter 2:4 (note also who is referenced in verse 5)

   Based on these verses, how would you interpret the meaning of "spirits in prison" who "formerly did not obey"?

7. What does Peter say baptism corresponds to? (**3:21**)

   Think back to what you know of the story of Noah and the Ark. What parallels to baptism do you see? (If you need a memory refresher, read **Genesis 6:9-9:17**.)

8. What is baptism a picture of? Look up the following verses to help with your answer:

   Romans 6:4

   Colossians 2:12

© 2012 Jennifer Wilkin

9. What does Peter mean when he says baptism saves us? (**3:21**) What does he not mean? Explain your answer.

10. Now reflect over the past three weeks' discussion of submission. What reasons for submitting struck you as the most compelling? How will you change your approach to a key relationship because of what you have learned?

11. Rewrite **3:18-22** in your own words:

Wrap-up

What impacted you the most within this week's passage of First Peter? How has Peter challenged you to look beyond your current circumstances to a future inheritance? What are the words of Peter asking of you personally?

© 2012 Jennifer Wilkin

© 2011 Jennifer Wilkin