

## Devotions: April 27th - May 1st



*Suffering is not all the same, and Scripture helps us tell the difference between pain we bring on ourselves and pain that comes from the sin of others. Over the next five days, you will reflect on both kinds of suffering through the lens of 1 Peter and the example of Jesus.*

*This devotional will guide you into repentance, where you have responsibility and endurance, where you lack control, and hope that your suffering will not define you, but only reveal to whom you belong.*

## **Monday, April 27th**

*1 Peter 2:19-21*

Not all suffering has the same source. Peter names a kind of hardship that comes from enduring sorrow while suffering unjustly, and he also implies a contrast: the consequences of wrongdoing. The first step toward wisdom is discernment; asking whether today's pain is the fruit of my own choices or the result of living in a broken world where others sin against me.

When suffering is self-inflicted, God does not shame you; He invites you to honesty and repentance. When suffering is unjust, God does not minimize it; He calls it what it is and then points you to Christ, who suffered without deserving it. Either way, God meets you with a pathway forward so that hardship does not become spiritual decay.

This week begins by naming your experience truthfully before God. Clarity is not condemnation; it is a doorway to healing. As you identify what kind of suffering you are carrying, you can respond with the right spiritual posture: repentance, where you have agency, and trust, where you do not.

Pray: Ask God for discernment to respond rightly rather than react impulsively.

Have a great week!

## **Tuesday, April 28th**

*1 John 1:8-9*

When we suffer consequences for sin, the most dangerous secondary damage is not the external fallout but the internal hardening: defensiveness, denial, or blame. Scripture offers a better way: confession that tells the truth and repentance that turns you toward life. God's promise is not that confession is painless, but that it is cleansing.

Repentance is not mere regret; it is a Spirit-empowered change of direction. Pastor Chris reminds us that self-inflicted suffering can be less terrifying in one sense because, by God's grace, you can stop feeding it. You are not trapped in old patterns when Christ offers forgiveness, and the Spirit supplies strength for new obedience.

The goal is not self-improvement as a badge of honor, but restored fellowship with God and repaired integrity with others. Where you have harmed someone, repentance moves beyond private sorrow to humble steps of truth-telling and making things right. God does not ask you to fix everything instantly. He calls you to begin walking in the light today.

Pray: Thank God for forgiveness in Christ, and ask for the Spirit's power to choose integrity today.

## **Wednesday, April 29th**

*1 Peter 2:22-23*

Unjust suffering often awakens a deep desire for immediate action: to fight back, to force accountability, to make what is wrong, right. That desire for justice is not evil; it reflects God's character. Yet Peter points to Jesus, who did not retaliate, not because injustice is acceptable, but because retaliation can hand your heart over to bitterness, resentment, and wrath.

Jesus suffered without deceit, threats, or revenge, entrusting Himself to the Father who judges justly. This is not passivity; it is spiritual strength. It refuses to let evil recruit you into becoming what hurt you. In unjust suffering, you may have little control over what is happening, but you still have a profound decision about what is happening inside you.

To follow Christ here is to resist the devil's favorite outcomes: cynicism, hatred, and the slow corrosion of hope. You can grieve what is wrong, seek help, and pursue wise steps toward safety and justice, while still entrusting your soul to God. The aim is not to pretend it doesn't hurt, but to refuse to let pain rewrite your identity.

Pray: Ask Jesus to guard your heart from spiritual decay and to teach you His strength under pressure.

## **Thursday, April 30th**

*Romans 12:17-19*

God does not call you to deny injustice; He calls you to refuse vengeance. Romans teaches that repaying evil for evil is not the path of God's people because judgment ultimately belongs to the Lord. This frees you from carrying a weight you were never designed to hold: the burden of final payback.

Refusing vengeance does not mean refusing justice. It means your pursuit of justice is guided by righteousness rather than rage. You can speak truth, report wrongdoing, seek protection, advocate for the vulnerable, and invite appropriate accountability without letting hatred become your fuel. When your heart is governed by Christ, even courageous action can remain clean.

Pastor Chris emphasizes practical tension. We want someone to take a stand, and often God invites us to take wise, faithful steps without becoming consumed. The Lord may use your voice, your presence, your giving, or your prayerful persistence, but He also calls you to rest in His final verdict. You can act without being devoured by the fight.

Pray: Release your demand for revenge to God and ask for courage to do what is right with a steady heart.

## **Friday, May 1st**

*1 Peter 2:24-25*

Peter anchors endurance in the gospel: Jesus bore our sins and carried our wounds so that suffering would not have the final word. The promise is not that tormentors always lose immediately in earthly terms, but that they cannot win the day for those who belong to Christ. Your identity is secured by One who was unjustly condemned and then vindicated by the Father.

This creates a decisive shift: suffering does not get to determine who you become. It can become a place where your belonging to Jesus is revealed; where you cling to Him, refuse to be reshaped by evil, and receive healing that reaches deeper than circumstances. Even when you cannot control what happens to you, you are not spiritually abandoned by it.

Christ also gathers the scattered parts of you. Like sheep returning to a Shepherd, you are invited to come back to His voice, His care, and His protection. Healing may be slow and layered, but it is real because it is rooted in His cross and resurrection. Today, your next step is to live as someone who belongs to Jesus, protected by His love and held by His promise.

Pray: Declare to God, in your own words, that you belong to Jesus Christ and ask for strength to live from that identity today.

Thanks be to God! Sunday's Coming!