

Dear Discouraged - Part 7  
"Opportunity of Knocks"

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March 22, 2009

1 Peter 3:13-22

**Three kinds of suffering:**

"COMMON" suffering: because I am a human being.

"CARNAL" suffering: because I am a sinner.

"CHRISTIAN" suffering: because I am a believer.

**BIG IDEA:**

**When Facing Suffering,  
Set apart Christ as Lord in your heart!**

SUFFERING FOR GOOD IS AN **OPPORTUNITY** NOT **OPPRESSION**.

1. It is an opportunity to experience the power and peace of God.  
(vv. 14-16) *Peter quotes Isaiah 8:12*
2. It is an opportunity to express my faith to others. (vv. 15)  
I need answers individually prepared. "*always be prepared...*"

The best reasons I can give are the ones that mean the most to me.

*How do I get prepared?* Have an optimistic outlook based on powerful promises!

I need a gentle approach. (vv.15-16)

*How do I know if my attitude is right?* When my heart breaks for the things that break God's heart!

How? I need courageous confidence! (vv. 17-19)  
*"We fight FROM victory, not FOR victory!"*

Yeah...But..... (vv. 20-22)

**The story of Noah reminds us of three things:**

If Noah had Christ with him, so do I!

If Noah didn't have to produce results, neither do I!

If Noah could handle the insults and persecution, so can I!

**HOW DO I KNOW IF I HAVE COURAGEOUS CONFIDENCE?**

**When I commit to making Jesus my ONLY source of hope!**

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SHARPEN THE POINT  
March 22, 2009

*For further study of today's message*

**ENTRY POINT:** Noah was a righteous, God-fearing man. The *only* one living on earth at that time. Because of his faithfulness and obedience to God, Noah and his family were spared when the Lord destroyed every other living thing with floodwaters. Begin by reading **Genesis 6:9 – 9:17**.

Noah was obedient even when God's instructions were hard to understand. What is something God has asked me/us to do which was hard to understand? How difficult was it to obey with no clear understanding? Explain the situation/outcome.

How does my/your life express our faith to others? How well prepared am I/are we to speak our faith? Do our public lives match our private, spiritual lives?

Many people mocked Noah for building a boat so far from any water. But he did everything exactly as God had commanded him to do. When have I/you been ridiculed or held in contempt for doing what God has asked?

Through what kind of trials or suffering have I/you had the most trouble being patient and able to fully trust God's promises?

"Now faith is being sure  
of what we hope for and  
certain of what we do not see."  
*Hebrews 11:1*