

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church – Monongahela, Pa.
Adult Bible Study
The Apostles' Teaching – The Epistles of St. Peter
Session 4

*They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship
to the breaking of bread and the prayers. (Acts 2:42)*

I. CHAPTER 4:1-11

- A. From our first session, we examined what might have prompted St. Peter to write this letter. see **1:6** and **4:12**.
- B. In this section, he seems to address different kinds of suffering/persecution. What might they be?
- C. In v.4, what is the reaction of the people toward Christians who want to do “God’s will”?
- D. How can I keep my relationship with Christ in a world awash with sensuality, moral excesses, and the social pressures to join in the “world’s party”
- E. What is meant by **v. 6**? see **3:19**
- F. How does St. Peter’s command in **v. 7** help these Christians avoid what he lists in **v. 3**?
What other spiritual disciplines add in this battle?
- G. **V. 8** “...love covers over a multitude of sins” paraphrases **Proverbs 10:13** “Hatred stirs up strife but love covers all who are not lovers of strife.” What does v. 8 mean?

“Love unites us to God. Love hides a multitude of sins. Love puts up with everything and is always patient. There is nothing vulgar about love, nothing arrogant... Without love, nothing can please God.”
(St. Clement of Rome 101 A.D.)

H. In v. 10, St. Peter explains the concept of *stewardship*. Explain stewardship in your own words.

For reflection: What gifts have I received from God?
How am I using them to serve God and others?

“God has granted to each of us the special graces needed for the upbuilding of His Church, so that we will do what he has indicated should be done, not only without complaint but with joy.”
(Blessed Augustine of Hippo 430 A.D.)

I. How can I misuse the gifts I have received from God? see also **v. 11**.

II. CHAPTER 4:12-19

A. What does St. Peter say will help his readers endure the persecution they are experiencing?

*How will you be a partaker of Christ’s glory if you refuse to be a partaker of His shameful death?
It is in vain that you have left the world behind if you are unwilling to take up your cross,
as He commanded you to.*
(St. Symeon the New Theologian)

B. The Apostle St. James in his epistle gives similar advice. see **James 1:2-3** (p. 1674). What does St. James say will help his readers endure suffering of any kind?

C. What does the Epistle to the Hebrews say will help us bear suffering?
see **Hebrews 12:7-11** (p. 1669)

D. According to this passage, what kind of suffering does not produce blessings?

E. In a society where Christians are not persecuted by the government, how does suffering for Christ come?

F. V. 17 is a strong warning to us in the Church. What does St. Peter mean?