

Fact Sheet for **“Summing Up”**
1 Peter 3:8-17

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1 Peter is the “go-to” book when you experience unjust suffering.

He wrote this book to Jewish believers who had been scattered throughout Asia Minor primarily because they were Christians. They had suffered unjustly at the hands of others. As I mentioned two weeks ago words that are found most frequently throughout this book are the verb “to suffer” and the noun “suffering”. And Peter particularly writes to them about their suffering at the hands of others even when they have done what is right.

Their problems could come at the hands of unbelievers, at the hands of those in authority over them (government, masters, a spouse who is disobedient to the Word), but it could also come at the hands of fellow believers. In short unjust suffering could come from anyone.

How should they react? How should we react?

ESV⁸ ¶ Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind.⁹ Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing.

“Finally” – To sum up

“unity of mind” – be harmonious

Thoughts like this show up several times in 1 Peter (1:22; 4:8-10; 5:5). You see, unjust suffering can also come at the hands of fellow believers.

“sympathy” – be sympathetic, understanding

“brotherly love” – be brother-loving

“a tender heart” – be tenderhearted, compassionate,
caring

“a humble mind” – be humble

“Do not repay... bless” – not repaying... but blessing

Now, Peter quotes from one of David's Psalms.

¹⁰ **For**

**"WHOEVER DESIRES TO LOVE LIFE
AND SEE GOOD DAYS,
LET HIM KEEP HIS TONGUE FROM EVIL
AND HIS LIPS FROM SPEAKING DECEIT;
¹¹ LET HIM TURN AWAY FROM EVIL AND DO GOOD;
LET HIM SEEK PEACE AND PURSUE IT.
¹² FOR THE EYES OF THE LORD ARE ON THE RIGHTEOUS,
AND HIS EARS ARE OPEN TO THEIR PRAYER.
BUT THE FACE OF THE LORD IS AGAINST THOSE WHO DO EVIL."¹**

Peter quotes just a few verses from Psalm 34, but that whole Psalm has got to be in his mind and in the mind of his readers.

Read all of Psalm 34 (an acrostic of the Hebrew alphabet). It begins with this note:

"Of David, when he changed his behavior before Abimelech, so that he drove him out, and he went away".²

(David was fleeing from King Saul.)

Peter was writing to Jewish believers who would have been familiar with this Psalm. Even though Peter didn't quote all of that Psalm the whole of it would have been in their thoughts.

¹³ ¶ **Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good?**

Peter is *not* saying that if we do good we will not be harmed by others, verbally or otherwise. We know this because he follows verse 13 with the first part of verse 14.

^{14a} **But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed.**

What if you should suffer in spite of being righteous?

^{14b} **Have no fear of them, nor be troubled,** ¹⁵ **but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy,** always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, ¹⁶ **having a good conscience, so that,** when you are slandered, **those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame.** ¹⁷ **For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil.**

This direction from God's Word can be difficult to apply at times, to be sure. What's likely to remind us that we haven't arrived yet is our response to unjust suffering on the spur of the moment. Do some thinking today about how you may respond tomorrow.

¹ Psalm 34:12-16.

² 1 Samuel 21:10-15.