

Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. 2 Timothy 3:12 (ESV)

## **Why is Jesus called the cornerstone?**

As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious. 1 Peter 2:4 (ESV)

## **What is a cornerstone?**

For it stands in Scripture: "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame." 1 Peter 2:6 (ESV)

## **Those who reject Jesus will stumble over Jesus.**

As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, 1 Peter 2:4 (ESV)

So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe, "The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone," and "A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense." They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do. 1 Peter 2:7–8 (ESV)

## **Is Jesus your cornerstone or your stumbling stone?**

This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone. And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved. Acts 4:11–12 (ESV)

## **Why is suffering part of the church?**

you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 1 Peter 2:5 (ESV)

**Just as Jesus experienced suffering in this life before receiving glory from the Father, as living stones in his house, we will experience suffering in this life before we receive glory from the Father.**

Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church. Colossians 1:24 (ESV)

inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. 1 Peter 1:11 (ESV)

But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed. 1 Peter 4:13 (ESV)

Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you... knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world. And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. To him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen. 1 Peter 5:6–11 (ESV)

1. Remember we are not suffering alone.
2. Remember hard times do not last forever.
3. Remember God promises to restore, strengthen and establish us forever in his eternal glory.

## **God has a good purpose in hard times.**

1. We learn obedience through suffering.

Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. Hebrews 5:8 (ESV)

Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep your word. Psalm 119:67 (ESV)

2. Suffering puts an end to sin.

Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same way of thinking, for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin. 1 Peter 4:1 (ESV)

3. Suffering helps us comfort others.

For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too. If we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; ... 2 Corinthians 1:5–6 (ESV)

#### 4. Suffering teaches us to rely on God rather than ourselves.

*For we do not want you to be unaware, brothers, of the affliction we experienced in Asia. For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself. Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead.* 2 Corinthians 1:8–9 (ESV)

#### Why we want to be part of the suffering church.

#### The church is a chosen race.

*But you are a chosen race, ... that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.* 1 Peter 2:9 (ESV)

*the people whom I formed for myself that they might declare my praise.* Isaiah 43:21 (ESV)

#### The church is a royal priesthood and a holy nation.

*...you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel.* Exodus 19:5–6 (ESV)

#### The church is God's personal possession.

*Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine;* Exodus 19:5 (ESV)

*the people whom I formed for myself that they might declare my praise.* Isaiah 43:21 (ESV)

#### The church is God's restored bride.

*Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.* 1 Peter 2:10 (ESV)



## Why I Want To Be Part Of The Suffering Church

The suffering church, just like the cornerstone, will go through suffering before glory... but there is no better place to be.