1 Peter 4:16 "… if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you **bear that name**." (NIV)

THE SPECIFICS OF SUFFERING FOR CHRIST
1 Peter 4:12-19

1. Suffering for being a Christian IS TO BE EXPECTED.

1 Peter 4:12 "Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you."

John 15:18-25 "18 If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. 19 If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you. 20 Remember what I told you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also. 21 They will treat you this way because of my name, for they do not know the one who sent me. 22 If I had not come and spoke to them, they would not be guilty of sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin. 23 Whoever hates me hates my Father as well. 24 If I had not done among them the works no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin. As it is, they have seen, and yet they have hated both me and my Father. 25 But this is to fulfill what is written in their Law: 'They hated me without reason.'" (NIV)

Luke 10:34-39 "34 Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. 35 For I have come to turn 'a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law—36 a man's enemies will be the members of his own household.' 37 Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. 38 Whoever does not take up their cross and follow me is not worthy of me. 39 Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it." (NIV)

2. When we suffer, we can be confident it is WORTH IT in the end.

1 Peter 4:13 "But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when His glory is revealed."

Matthew 5:10-12 "10 Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. 12 Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you." (NIV)

Matthew 19:29 "And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life." (NIV)

3. Suffering means we are TRUE CHRISTIANS.

1 Peter 4:14 "If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you."

1 Peter 1:6-9 "6 In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. 7 These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. 8 Though you have not seen Him, you love Him; and even though you do not see Him now, you believe in Him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, 9 for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls." (NIV)

4. Suffering for BEING A JERK doesn't count.

1 Peter 4:15-16 "**15** If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler. **16** However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name."

Acts 5:41 "The apostles left the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name." (NIV)

5. Suffering helps us FORTIFY our faith.

1 Peter 4:17-18 "**17** For it is time for judgment to begin with God's household; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel God? **18** And, "If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?"

2 Thessalonians 1:3-10 "3 We ought always to thank God for you, brothers and sisters, and rightly so, because your faith is growing more and more, and the love you have for one another is increasing. 4 Therefore, among God's churches we boast about your perseverance and faith in all the persecutions and trials you are enduring. 5 All this is evidence that God's judgment is right, and as a result you will be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are suffering. 6 God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you 7 and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with His powerful angels. 8 He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. 9 They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His might 10 on the day He comes to be glorified in His holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed. This includes you, because you believed our testimony to you." (NIV)

BOTTOM LINE

1 Peter 4:19 "So if you are suffering in a manner that pleases God, keep on doing what is right, and trust your lives to the God who created you, for **He will never fail you**." (NLT)

Hebrews 10:32-39 "32 "Remember those earlier days after you had received the light, when you endured in a great conflict full of suffering. 33 Sometimes you were publicly exposed to insult and persecution; at other times you stood side by side with those who were so treated. 34 You suffered along with those in prison and joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property, because you knew that you yourselves had better and lasting possessions. 35 So do not throw away your confidence, it will be richly rewarded. 36 You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what He has promised. 37 For, "In just a little while, He who is coming will come and will not delay." 38 And, "But my righteous one will live by faith. And I take no pleasure in the one who shrinks back". 19 But we do not belong to those who shrink back and are destroyed, but to those who have faith and are saved." (NIV)