

Courage in the Midst of Hardship

Scripture Reading — 1 Peter 4:1-11

Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. — 1 Peter 4:8-9

The apostle Peter encourages the church not only to anticipate hardship but to prepare for trials that will inevitably come. One way to do that is to prepare our minds. Through suffering, our confidence can be renewed, knowing that Christ is at work in us. For many of us, the difficult times in life lead to the most powerful testimony of God's presence and work in our lives.

Not only are we to prepare our minds, but we must also prepare our hearts to endure hardship. When Peter writes, "Love covers over a multitude of sins," he is referring to the way our sins affect our relationships with other believers. The Christian life is not about finding faults in one another. It's about mercy and forgiveness. It pleases God when we get along together. How can we do that? We show hospitality, making guests feel welcome and sharing our resources. We serve one another, being good stewards of the gifts God has given to us. We serve and encourage one another as people who speak "the very words of God."

If we expect to thrive in hard times, it will require unity and a commitment to live peacefully together. Loving generously also demonstrates our own understanding of the love and mercy of God that we have received.

Prayer

God, give us grace to understand how loving we can be as your disciples. For you have forgiven and loved us, no matter the circumstances. Amen.

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