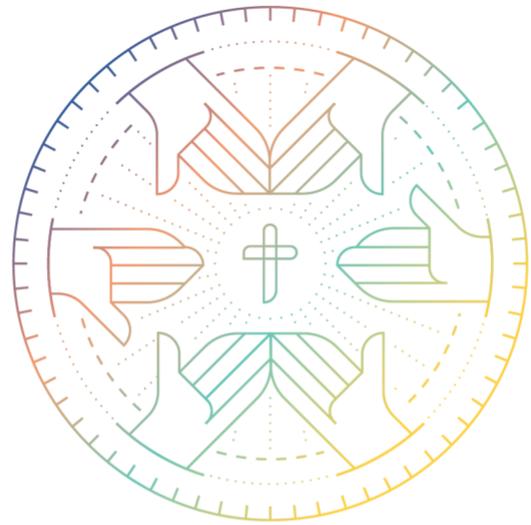


Group Life.

WE ARE BETTER TOGETHER



ICEBREAKER (10 MINUTES)

What's one area of your life where you have demonstrated being steadfast (standing firm, not giving up)?

OR

Is there an area of your life where you would like to be more steadfast? Share that with your group.

INTRODUCTION (5-10 MINUTES)

What most stood out to you from Pastor David's message?

Read 1 Peter 1:1-12. Peter addresses those who are suffering. David talked about the suffering the Church endured because of the Emperor Nero. Church historians would say the current Church in China has suffered greatly at the hands of the atheist government. Why is it that the Church seems to grow exponentially during times of suffering?

INTO THE WORD (20 MINUTES)

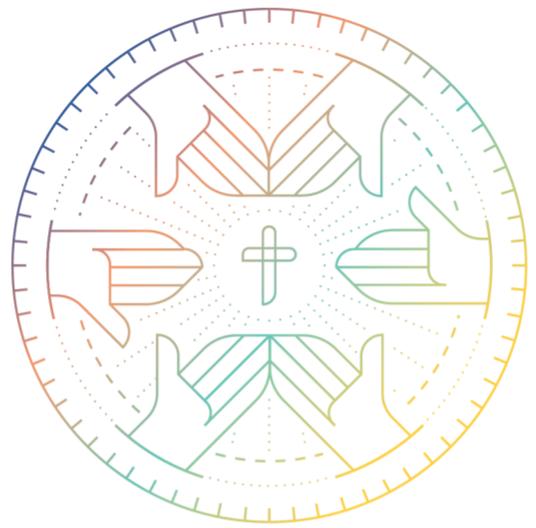
Read 1 Peter 1:2. Paul clearly wants to encourage his readers who are in trials of various kinds. How does the truth of God's "foreknowledge" help encourage them in their trials?

Read 2 Kings 6:15-17. How does this passage and story reinforce what Peter is teaching in his epistle? How might it relate to current trials we may be facing?

Read 2 Cor. 4:7-8, 16-18. How does this passage dovetail with Peter's epistle and his message about suffering? What more does it teach us about the suffering we may experience?

Group Life.

WE ARE BETTER TOGETHER



Read 1 Peter 1:3-4. How does it encourage you that you have an inheritance in heaven that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading?

Read 1 Peter 1:5. What does Peter mean when he says we are being "guarded through faith"? How is v.5 meant to be an encouragement to you?

APPLICATION (15 MINUTES)

Was there a specific, personal application you took away from the sermon? Can you share that with your group, since it might be helpful for them as well?

What are some of the ultimate purposes God has for suffering? What are the good things that trials bring about in our lives?

What truth from the message can help sustain you as you go through a time of suffering?

DAILY THIS WEEK

Use Sunday's message as the basis for praying each day about some trial you or someone close to you is going through in this season of your life. Complete sentences such as these in prayer:

- Father, I thank you that my trial did not catch you by surprise, which means I can _____.
- Father, make me more like Jesus because of _____.
- Father, show me your overwhelming goodness through _____.
- Father, move me to pray for _____ because of what I am/have experienced.

PRAYER (10 MINUTES)

Our Savior and Lord Jesus, I am grateful that you know our needs before we do. That no trial or suffering happens outside of your foreknowledge and love. Give me the faith to trust you and to endure because of your goodness. Give me a vision for what you want to accomplish in me, how you want to shape me through this hardship, and how I can be an encouragement to others who suffer. In Jesus' name, Amen.