

**Text: I Peter 5:10-11**

**Title: “After You Have Suffered”**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Open your Bibles to I Peter 5. And as you're turning I'll remind you that we are coming into an incredibly special time of the year with our focus on missions, here in our community and around the world. This weekend we have our community ministries' Christmas store and next Sunday we'll have our church-wide focus on global missions. But next Sunday we will also launch our celebration of the birth of our Savior Jesus.

Now we come to the last message in our study of I Peter. The theme of the letter is “Stand Firm,” and Peter closes with some important information about how that happens. It tells us where this blessed assurance is found. Read vv.10-11.

Well these verses are a great source of encouragement and assurance for us.

**ILLUSTRATION** – Sometimes our life can resemble an episode of the TV series “Amazing Race.” In this series contestants are trying to get to a particular destination somewhere around the world. And their journey is filled with all kinds of challenges and obstacles. And if they fail to meet these challenges and obstacles successfully they're disqualified, and they don't make it to the final destination ... and the cash reward that goes with it.

And that is far too close to reality for us. We desperately want to know that we are headed toward the right eternal destiny ... heaven. And yet life has so many challenges and obstacles, and we fail so often. And we wonder if in the midst of this big mess God is somewhere in the picture and, if He is, will He get me where I'm supposed to go.

So these verses come to us today as a signal from heaven that while everything around you may be in a mess, God is working according out a marvelous plan and He has a glorious destination in store for His people.

Now today I'm going to help you memorize these two verses. And hopefully they will lodge in your mind and in your heart, and provide assurance for you in the days to come.

**1 Peter 5:10 (NIV) - And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.**

Now just look at that first phrase:

**1 Peter 5:10 (NIV) - And the God of all grace...**

God is the God of all grace. He is rich in grace.

**ILLUSTRATION** – Last week we talked about God’s amazing grace. And we recited together the words of the great hymn “Amazing Grace,” written by John Newton, that vile slave trader who was transformed into a powerful preacher of the Gospel. Later in his life John Newton wrote these words: “Every age seems to have people who’ve made a habit of evil, who’ve had to look up to see the bottom. And in the day of God’s power they are saved and transformed. They become an example to other believers, giving them an opportunity to praise God for His remarkable grace.”

Why is it important for me to know that God is the God of all grace? It is because *all* of my sin is covered by *all* of God’s grace. And *all* of my deficiencies are covered by *all* God’s grace. Do you realize that you can never sin your way beyond the grace of God? Do you realize that you can never out-sin God’s grace? Do you realize that no trial or adversity can take you down so deep that God’s grace isn’t deeper still?

**1 Peter 5:5b (NIV) - “God ... gives grace to the humble.”**

So access into this grace is gained by doing the only thing we can do ... admit our total lack of sufficiency in every way. And when we humble ourselves in this way we are given grace.

**REVIEW – “And the God of all grace...”**

Now let’s go to the next phrase in the verse:

**1 Peter 5:10 (NIV) - And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ ...**

Now Peter has had glory on his mind throughout this entire letter:

**1 Peter 4:13 - But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.**

**1 Peter 5:4 - And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.**

**1 Peter 5:10 - And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ...**

Look carefully at that phrase “called you to his eternal glory.” When you were saved God forgave you of your sin. But there’s more he had in mind. When you were saved, God deposited in you His Holy Spirit. But there’s more He had in mind. When you were saved God made you a new creation, and filled your life with great purpose and peace. But He had more in mind. When He saved you He called you to something far beyond just getting through today or this week. He called you to his eternal glory! He has in mind you standing before Him completely changed and gloriously transformed in the presence of His glory. God’s glory is the outshining of all His marvelous excellencies. And God’s desire is for us to one day stand before Him glorified with Him. This is the essence of heaven ... the hope of glory.

And God called us to this eternal glory “in Christ.” You don’t get this apart from Christ. You can’t earn your way to it by your good works. So we must admit our need, confess our sin,

and humble receive the gift of eternal life. So when we are saved we are “in Christ,” and Christ is in us.

And there isn't any doubt that this is going to happen for you, dear child of God. It is your destiny. Paul put it this way...

**Romans 8:30 (NIV) - And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.**

Note: Though it is future, Paul speaks of it as though it has already happened. “He also glorified...” (aorist indicative = past tense verb).

What that tells me is that the God who called you to His eternal glory will make sure you get to the His eternal glory. So, you see, this is your destiny.

**REVIEW – “And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ...”**

Now why is it important for us to know this? It is because we need to know that everything God does in our lives is focused on that singular vision ... getting us to His eternal glory. And that includes suffering. Look at the next phrase:

**1 Peter 5:10 (NIV) - And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while...**

Now notice that the glory to which we are called is eternal; the suffering to which we are called are “for a little while.”

**1 Peter 1:6 - In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials.**

Note: I know that we you're suffering, a minute can seem like an eternity. And I know some of you are in the midst of unrelenting pain of different kinds. There's physical pain that won't go away ... there's financial pain that won't go away ... there's emotional pain that won't go away. And I know that as you go through it now, you just think that you can't go on another day.

But let me remind you that one day, when you are in God's glorious eternal presence, you will look back on this suffering and you will see them for what they really are ... what Paul calls light and momentary afflictions compared to the eternal glory to which we are called.

So in God's ways, suffering always precedes glory. This was true for our Savior. Early Peter told us that the prophets in OT times searched...

**1 Peter 1:11b – (The prophets of old) predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.**

So Peter concludes later...

**1 Peter 4:12 - Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you.**

**1 Peter 4:13 - But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.**

This is what Peter is talking about when he says back in...

**1 Peter 5:10 - And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while...**

So here's the point: God has called you to His eternal glory, and He has obligated Himself to get you to His eternal glory ... and a little suffering along the way is not going to stop Him.

**REVIEW – “And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while...”**

Now let's go to the next phrase:

**1 Peter 5:10 (NIV) - And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you ...**

So don't despair in your sufferings. God has obligated Himself to get you to His eternal glory, but God has also obligated Himself to get you through these “little while” sufferings on your way to His eternal glory.

Note: The Bible doesn't hold out the promise that we will not suffer. It does hold out the assurance that as we suffer and after we suffer God's promises will sustain us.

I remind you of what I said earlier. God is the God of all grace. There is no suffering that is so deep but that God's grace is deeper still.

And Peter uses four phrases to describe this activity of God in our behalf.

**“God ... will himself restore you.”** The word “restore” = to make complete, to put in order.

The word is used of a fisherman mending a net, or a surgeon setting a broken bone, or a ship that is brought back into a harbor for repairs.

When our sin and our suffering have shredded our lives like a broken net, or fractured our lives like a broken bone, or disabled our lives like a broken ship ... God can restore.

Note: Peter must have thought about his own experience with failure at the most crucial hour of Jesus' trial, when Peter denied Jesus three times. But later, the Risen Lord restored Peter and gave him an important assignment.

**ILLUSTRATION** – Remember the nursery rhyme “Humpty Dumpty”? Let’s say it together:

Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall,  
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.  
All the King's horses, And all the King's men  
Couldn't put Humpty together again!

We’ve all fallen. And this world cannot put us back together again. And we cannot put our lives back together again. But God can.

**REVIEW** – “**And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you...**”

Now look at the next phrase:

**1 Peter 5:10 (NIV) - And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong...**

“make you strong” = enable to stand fast

Remember that the theme of the letter is this:

**1 Peter 5:12b (NIV) - I have written to you briefly, encouraging you and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand fast (same word as in v.10) in it.**

We are called to stand fast in the grace of God, but we don’t even do that alone. God will make us strong; He will enable us to stand fast. It’s all Him!

**REVIEW** – “**And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong...**”

He will not only make you strong, but also ... firm.

**1 Peter 5:10 (NIV) - And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm...**

“make you ... firm” = another way to say strengthened

So what this tells me is that as I go through suffering and trials, God promises to fix me up when I am broken, and then he will make me stronger and firmer than I was before I went through the suffering.

**REVIEW – “And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm...**

Look at the last word in the verse:

**1 Peter 5:10 (NIV) - And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.**

“make you ... steadfast” = to place on a firm, secure foundation

**ILLUSTRATION** - Now there’s a parable that Jesus told that helps us see how this all works. Jesus told the story of two men who built houses. One man built his house on the sand, and the storms came and destroyed the house because it had no foundation. The other man built his house on a solid rock. And when the storms came his house stood steadfast. And Jesus said...

**Matthew 7:24 (NIV) - “Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.**

So this foundation that God builds under our lives is the very Word of God. And as we believe what it says and practice what it says we are putting a foundation in our lives that will fortify us for the storms that will come.

**REVIEW – “And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.”**

**1 Peter 5:11 (NIV) - To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.**

This is another way of saying, “To God belongs this power, for ever and ever.” God possesses this power for ever and ever. The power that we don’t have, God has it for ever and for ever.

God has the power to pull all of this off. God called you to his eternal glory and He has the power to get you to His eternal glory. No suffering or adversity along the way will keep Him from doing it. And along the way as we go through trials and failures, God has the power to restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.

And that power is His for ever and ever. It will never diminish.

Amen = may it be so ... so be it.

**REVIEW – “And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.”**

**1 Peter 5:11 (NIV) - To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.**