

## **Recap of 12/11/22 message by Pastor Steve (“Suffering Well in Marriage”)**

- *For those who are married, you know that marriage is sometimes a struggle. Being a sinner living with another sinner is hard and at times it may seem easier to just quit.*
- *For those who know married people, you may have a friend or family member come to you describing how difficult is their marriage and seeking advice.*
- *As Christ followers, we realize that marriage is a lifelong union of a man and a woman joined by God (Mal 2:14-16, Mt 5:32, Mk 10:4-12, 1 Cor 10-16) When things are going well, this is no problem. When marriage becomes difficult, our society and even many in pulpits tells us to move on. This is not God’s Word. For us, unhappiness is not Biblical grounds for divorce. Instead, we are called to suffer well through difficult times until our marriage starts thriving again.*
- *In 1 Pt 3:1-7, as Peter describes the functional roles of the husband and wife in marriage, he uses the phrase “In the same way.” Some translations render it as “Likewise.” Those words point back to 1 Pt 3:18-25 where we find Peter gives us four principles about suffering in marriage.*
  - *What we are commanded to do as a husband, or a wife, is not contingent on what our spouse does. We are not commanded to follow God IF or WHEN our spouse does. No, we are commanded to follow God even if our spouse isn’t (1 Pt 3:1, 2:18)*
  - *Suffering in an unjust situation finds favor with God (1 Pt 2:19-20, 3:17, 4:12-16, Lk 6:31-35)*
  - *Suffering is one of the purposes for which God called us (1 Pt 2:21, 3:9, 4:1-2, Ac 14:22, Php 1:29)*
  - *Jesus is our example in suffering. His example shows that as we suffer, we should (1 Pt 2:21-23):*
    - *Not revile in return*
    - *Utter no threats*
    - *Trust God who is the perfect, righteous judge (also 1 Pt 4:19)*
- *As we suffer well in marriage, we are often tempted to try to change our spouse. We self-righteously get the mistaken idea that if we could just change our spouse, all the problems would disappear. This attitude prevents us from seeing and fixing our own sin (Mt 7:1-5, Ro 2:1, 12:3, Jas 4:7-12) and results in things getting worse, not better.*
- *Instead, we should concentrate on completely following God in all He commands for us while we patiently wait on the Lord to change our spouse until he or she also decides to follow God in all He commands.*
- *We must 1) Love the LORD our God with all that is in us, 2) Love our spouse as our self, 3) respond to difficulty in the Spirit, not in the flesh, 4) be quick to ask for and grant forgiveness, and 5) realize that we can’t change our spouse so stop trying.*
- *When both husband and wife are doing their very best to follow God in all He commands, marriage is amazingly fantastic!*