

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

JULY 17TH, 2022 // BOOK OF 1 PETER

TOO MUCH TIME WASTED (1 PETER 4:1-6)

THEREFORE...

Peter connects these verses to the previous section by saying, "since Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same understanding."

- We must understand that, like Christ, we will suffer in the flesh just as He was "put to death in the flesh" for others, however, we too are "made alive in the spirit" (3:18b).

THE SAME UNDERSTANDING

We understand that if we have chosen a life of righteousness, we have also chosen to suffer. Jesus told His followers to take up their cross and follow Him (Matthew 16:24).

- Having the same understanding as Christ toward our suffering means that **we are committed to sacrifice in the battle against sin.**

IT IS A CHOICE

Peter is not implying sinless perfectionism when he says, "the one who suffers in the flesh is **finished with sin.**"

- The person who has willingly chosen to suffer for righteousness' sake has also chosen to please God and is **no longer choosing to give in to the pleasures of the flesh and the world.**

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH

Peter bluntly states that we have spent enough time in sin and that our past experience with sin is sufficient.

- **We have spent enough time looking like the world and participating in the list of sins in verse 3, but the time has come for us to stop being double-minded and start looking like the Church.**

MARKERS OF THE PAST LIFE

Peter lists sins that Christians are no longer to give into because they mark the past life and portray a lack of personal restraint especially when it comes to sexual immorality, violence, alcohol.

- Unlike the world, we, as Christian are not to live life unrestrained, with no boundaries, and no rules for how we are to live.

"THEY ARE SURPRISED..."

When we do not participate in the sins that are being normalized and accepted by the masses around us, the masses start to take notice.

- The language used in these verses suggests that they will become offended by our unwillingness to conform and start to "slander" or "heap abuses" on us.

EVERYONE WILL GIVE AN ACCOUNT

Peter tells us that we are to preach the gospel "to those who are now dead," because a day is coming when "the living and the dead" will all be judged.

- Being "judged in the flesh" means that conviction brings an end to a spiritual death, living (by human standards), and gives way to living in the spirit (by God's standards).

THE END IS NEAR (1 PETER 4:7-11)

"THE END OF ALL THINGS IS NEAR"

"End-times" refers to a time where all major events for God's plan of redemption have taken place and the people of God await the eventual return and reign of Christ.

- We began living in the "end-times" since the moment Jesus ascended into Heaven and took His place at the right hand of the Father.

WHAT IS OUR RESPONSE?

If we truly believe, as we should, that we are living in the last days, then we should give ourselves over to prayer.

- Peter urges the Church to **"be alert and sober-minded for prayer." We often apply the reality of the end times in the wrong way and give ourselves over to fear and panic instead of prayer.**

A PERSONAL CHOICE

We must choose to display a forgiving and sacrificial love towards one another. Peter says this love "covers a multitude of sins."

- "Covers" means "willing to forgive," and this kind of love, like forgiveness, is a choice. **True (agape) love, however, does not ignore, justify, or condone sin. To do so, would be the antithesis of love.**

LOVE DISPLAYED

One way the Believer is to carry out agape love is through hospitality. We are to be hospitable without complaining about the time and expense involved.

- We demonstrate love to others by using whatever gift we have received to serve others. We have been given "a gift of grace" for the benefit of the body as a whole.

"SO THAT GOD MAY BE GLORIFIED"

As we serve one another with the gifts of grace that God has given us, we do so with complete dependence on Him. We speak His words and rely on His strength.

- If we do this, **the praise and attention will shift from the individual and will placed on God where it belongs since He is the one who supplied the gift.**

REJOICE IN SUFFERINGS (1 PETER 4:12-19)

"DO NOT BE SURPRISED"

Peter tells us not to view our "fiery ordeal" as though "something unusual were happening to [us]."

- It's interesting that Peter is describing experiences of pain comparable to being burned by fire in a time when Christians were being used as living torches in Nero's garden.

"SOMETHING UNUSUAL HAPPENING"

The idea of not viewing our sufferings as "something unusual" or strange means that we are not facing these things by accident, nor are they thwarting God's purpose in our lives.

- Instead, we view our fiery trials as a way to partake of Christ's sufferings so that we may also partake of His glory and joy.

WE SUFFER AS HE SUFFERED

In a way, our suffering is what identifies us as Christ followers.

- There is a balance we must find. We must avoid thinking that we can share in the joy and glory of Christ without experiencing suffering, and we must also avoid fixating on the suffering and forget that it gives way to joy and glory.

SUFFERING FOR DOING GOOD NOT EVIL

Joy in our suffering can only be found when we "do good" and not when we break "the law" or stick our nose where it does not belong (meddler).

- We come to know Christ deeper and trust Him more through our suffering. We rejoice as we grow our relationship with our Savior through suffering, knowing that we will have "great joy" at the return of Christ.

WE PRAISE IN OUR SUFFERING

When we suffer as a Christian, we are not to be ashamed. Instead, we are to glorify God "in having that name."

- We praise God that we can be called a "little Christ," which was an insult at one time. We are not expected to glorify God for our suffering. Instead, **we are to glorify Him in our suffering.**

PURIFYING AND PUNISHING FIRES

Verses 17-18 communicate that the fiery trials we endure have a purpose, since "the righteous person is saved with difficulty."

- **As Believers (God's household), we face purifying fires of judgment, but unbelievers (those who disobey the gospel) will face a punishing fire of judgment.**

HEART OF THE LETTER

- Peter summarizes the heart of his letter in verse 19: **"So then let those who suffer according to God's will entrust themselves to a faithful Creator while doing what is good."**

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH

- Peter states, "there has already been enough time in doing what the Gentiles choose to do" (v3).
- **Do we really believe that we have spent enough time living like the world?**
- **Do we believe there is something we have not experienced that is keeping us from committing to godliness?**

END TIMES

- We have been moving closer and closer to Jesus' return since the day He ascended into Heaven. Though we do not know the date of His return, we are to be ready and expectant of that day.
- **What type of feelings does the topic of "end times" make us fill? Are we "prepared" and awaiting Christ's return?**

IF WE ARE FEARFUL...

- **Is there something we have not repented of?**
- **Have we fallen in love with the things of this world?**
- **What is there that we have we not reconciled to God that is making us fearful?**