

THE BATTLE IS NOT OVER Part 3

1 Peter 3:18

18 For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

According to this verse, Christ has suffered FOR our sins. This means that Christ has taken the punishment for our sins so we don't have to go through life paying for our mistakes. (The curse will catch up to you, IF you don't escape it.)

While we are able to escape the suffering that's associated with our mistakes (or sins), we can't escape ALL suffering!

1 Peter 4:1

1 Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;

Notice, Peter is not talking about suffering *for* sin. He's talking about suffering to CEASE from sin. When a person chooses not to sin (or chooses not to give their flesh what it wants) they will suffer. This suffering can take place *internally* (emotionally) OR it can take place *externally* (relationally, from people).

1 Peter 4:2–4

2 That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God. 3 For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries: 4 Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you:

Notice what happens when you choose not to live according to the lusts of your flesh—men will speak evil of you and persecute you.

Now, we should point out that NOT ALL persecution/conflict is because we are denying your flesh. Sometimes the reason we keep experiencing conflict with others is because we keep giving in to our flesh! We haven't yet learned how to interact with people without insisting on our way. (For example, James says, "You fight and war BECAUSE OF THE LUSTS that are in your members.")

Having said that, sometimes we can do everything right and we still experience conflict. This is because anyone choosing to crucify their flesh to follow God will (sooner or later) have to suffer! And, sometimes this suffering/conflict will come at the hands of people.

Matthew 16:21

²¹ From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.

Notice where Jesus said His suffering would take place—in JERUSALEM.

This is a reminder that sometimes our greatest battles will occur in familiar places!

Matthew 10:34–36

³⁴ Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. ³⁵ For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. ³⁶ And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.

We must come to grips and prepare our mind to accept the fact that sometimes our suffering will come FROM THE HOUSE. This means our house AND/OR God's house (the Church). Therefore, anyone fleeing from family or the Church is technically *running from the battle* (or running from their cross)!

Matthew 16:22–23

²² Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. ²³ But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me...

Although Peter was the one bringing the offence, Jesus addressed Satan not Peter. This is because Jesus understood that Satan was the one behind the attack. Therefore, our battle is not with men. It's against sin/the devil!

Matthew 16:21

²¹ From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.

What TIME is the Bible referring to?

Matthew 16:15–17

¹⁵ He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? ¹⁶ And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. ¹⁷ And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

THIS is the time Jesus was referring to—the time when God revealed to the disciples that Jesus was the Christ. Moreover, AFTER THIS Jesus began to reveal to His disciples that He must suffer many things.

Sometimes our greatest fight comes after we receive our greatest revelation!

Hebrews 10:32

³² But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions;

Hebrews 10:32 New American Standard Bible

³² But remember the former days, when, after being enlightened, you endured a great conflict of sufferings,

The reason there's often a great fight (or suffering) *after* we're enlightened is because what's been revealed contradicts what we see (or our circumstances), OR what's been revealed contradicts what we know (or what's in our mind)!

Matthew 16:22

²² Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee.

The reason Peter rebuked Jesus is because what Jesus said contradicted what he understood in his mind. In Peter's mind, the Messiah was coming to usher in a new era of glory. Therefore, when Jesus said that as the Messiah he would suffer many things and be KILLED, this created a conflict (battle) in Peter's mind!

Sometimes God will reveal something that contradicts with what we think or even what we want. This creates a battle. "Will I go with what God has said, OR will I stick with what I know or want?" In fact, sometimes this is even the PURPOSE of revelation—to expose what's really in our heart!

Matthew 16:23

²³ But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.

Notice, the reason Peter objected to what Jesus said is because it conflicted with what HE wanted. Peter was busy thinking about what HE wanted rather than what GOD wanted!

When God reveals some error (sin) in your heart, don't take offence. Instead, acknowledge it and repent.

1 John 1:7–8

⁷ But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. ⁸ If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

Verse 8 is a reminder that God does not cleanse us from sin all at once. He does it gradually. Once you know this, you won't be surprised when He reveals sin in your heart!

Finally, understand that there's a difference between "having" sin *in your flesh* and "committing" sin *with your body* or *with your heart*.