



1 Peter 4:1-6

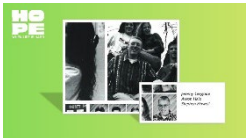
1 Peter #7 • July 12, 2026

Opening



I brought a copy of my high school yearbook today. Specifically, it is a copy of the 1995 “The Bluejay” from my junior year at Norton Community High School. Can I share a few highlights?

- **What happened that year** (p. 6) – Genocide in Rwanda, OJ Simpson, no World Series due to strike...
- **What I was in** (p. 7) – Flannels, “Suspenders: In or Out?”
- The normal **activities** – Football, plays, homecoming, prom...
- **Pix** of Steve (on big screen?)



Sometimes it is fun to look back at that kind of stuff. There are some fun memories and people to recall. And there are a few things about that time that I wish had continued...like my physique.

But the truth of the matter is that I do not (and should not) want to be the same person I was back then! Amen? Amen!

Somehow, in ways small and large, the Steve who existed in that picture changed. My understanding of the world, the people that I grew close to, my tastes, and my wisdom have all changed.

The guy in these pictures might not recognize the guy who stands in front of you today. And that’s a good thing!

What about you? Specifically, what about you as a Christian? Are you the same person you used to be?

I’m not talking about fashion, music preferences, or hairdos. I’m talking about your faith and how Jesus has changed you. Would the “you” from high school – or from five years ago, or even five months ago – be satisfied with the progress you’ve made? Would the “you” from your baptism smile or groan if he/she saw how your faith has developed?

You (now) need to be different from you (then).



For several weeks, our sermons have been exploring the letter of 1 Peter. In this letter, Peter has been writing to Christians who are facing difficulties. He has been challenging them to have hope, despite life being difficult. We've been encouraged along with the original audience to look to Jesus as our example, to live out our faith despite pushback, and to hold firmly to the hope of eternity.

Peter makes it clear that this audience **needs to be different** from what they once were.

Let's listen to what he says next. If you have your Bible, please turn to 1 Peter 4.

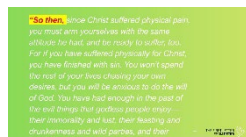


1 Peter 4:1-6

“So then, since Christ suffered physical pain, you must arm yourselves with the same attitude he had, and be ready to suffer, too. For if you have suffered physically for Christ, you have finished with sin. You won’t spend the rest of your lives chasing your own desires, but you will be anxious to do the will of God. You have had enough in the past of the evil things that godless people enjoy—their immorality and lust, their feasting and drunkenness and wild parties, and their terrible worship of idols. Of course, your former friends are surprised when you no longer plunge into the flood of wild and destructive things they do. So they slander you. But remember that they will have to face God, who stands ready to judge everyone, both the living and the dead. That is why the Good News was preached to those who are now dead—so although they were destined to die like all people, they now live forever with God in the Spirit.”
(1 Peter 4:1–6, NLT)

Exploring the Text

I’d like to take things a little slower with you on this passage. Today, let’s just go through what it says.



“So then...” (4:1). Peter starts off with “so then.” This is a “therefore” transition point in the letter. Knowing the things said so far... “what

now?” Such moments of transition in a letter always deserve our attention. Previous truth-statements and belief-claims now lead us to a moment of clarity, a focus on application (*remember last week – application should be **personal, practical, possible, and provable***).

Therefore...

“Since Christ suffered in the flesh” (4:1). Peter brings us back to the cross here. What he states is not just a theoretical point; no, this is a *memory*. Peter *remembers* the night Jesus was arrested. He was there in the Garden of Gethsemane (swinging a sword – John 18). He was in the courtyard outside the place where Jesus was being interrogated and accused. He could have seen Jesus walk to Golgotha and be nailed to the cross.

Peter *knows* that Jesus suffered.

He also knew that Jesus *could have avoided* that suffering! Peter knew Jesus’ identity, who He really was. He was the Christ! Perfect in spirit, God in nature. Jesus was not powerless to avoid the cross if He chose to! At any moment, He could have rescued Himself.

“Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels?” (Matthew 26:53, ESV)

Peter knows that Jesus surrendered Himself to this suffering... *intentionally*. It wasn’t by accident; Jesus thought about it and made a choice.

Because of His choice...

“you must arm yourselves with the same way of thinking” (4:1)

What does Peter mean? You and I aren’t about to suffer like Jesus, as though our suffering would pay the price for the sins of others. No, that kind of substitutionary atonement is on Jesus alone!

We are not being told to imitate Jesus’ sacrifice...but we are being told to imitate His **way of thinking**. We are told to **“arm ourselves”** with such brainwaves. Protection (mentally and spiritually) is valued strongly throughout the New Testament. Putting on Christian “armor” is expected, for our safety.

“So then, since Christ suffered physical pain, you must arm yourselves with the same attitude he had, and be ready to suffer too. For if you have suffered physically for Christ, you have finished with sin. You won’t spend the rest of your lives chasing your own desires, but you will be anxious to do the will of God. You have had enough in the past of the evil things that godless people enjoy—their immorality and lust, their feasting and drunkenness and wild parties, and their hostility toward you. Refrain from all that.”

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In Ephesians, the armor includes faith and truth and the Spirit. In 1 Thessalonians a similar list adds things like love.

But the "armor" of suffering? Being prepared mentally and spiritually with a mindset of suffering? That's a new one. It sounds strange at first, but it makes sense when you really consider it.

NO
PE



*Deb and I have been watching a show recently called "**Alone.**" It's a survival show where contestants are dropped off in remote locations, miles from anyone, and then challenged to survive (by themselves!) for as long as possible. You can "tap out" anytime – they give you a radio to call in and exit the game – but otherwise you are on your own. Alone.*

*We've been fascinated by the mental **resilience** shown by some competitors during the season. We've seen men and women last weeks – even months. The winners have fortitude to overcome and to endure!*

*Others, though, have a **lack of resilience**. On season one, the first guy tapped out after 12...hours. (Because he was scared of bears!) He just wasn't ready! And other participants regularly encounter what the show now terms "drop shock" – that tough adjustment period while you acclimate to your surroundings and suddenly face the reality of being isolated.*

*Many fail. But those who have **prepared themselves to suffer** (comfort, hunger, cold, away from family and friends) can handle the stress of survival better.*

"So then, since Christ suffered physical pain, you must arm yourselves with the same attitude he had, and be ready to suffer. You can't just turn off your physical pain for Christ; you have finished with sin. You won't spend the rest of your lives chasing your own desires, but you will be devoted to do the will of God. You have had enough in the past of the real things that people enjoy: their sexuality and food, their drinking and pleasures and idle parties, and their

"Arm yourself with the willingness to suffer," Peter says. So, let's get real: are you in "drop shock" with suffering as it relates to your faith, or are you prepared for it? Have you been hit with all the feelings of sorrow as you realize how painful it can be to suffer in this sinful world...or are you aware of the brokenness? Are you shocked and stunned by the evil choices you find all around you...including people you have loved and maybe even trusted...or are you equipped for the battle?

How do we do arm ourselves with a mindset of suffering? What is the practical application here?

In counseling, they talk about different types of thinking that we can have in a situation. We find ourselves thinking certain types of thoughts. You can have...

Types of Minds:
- Emotional Mind
- Logical Mind
- Wise Mind

HOPE

- **Emotional Mind.** The feelings take over! Reactive and passionate and full of emotions. Scared? Angry? Annoyed? Your words spill out immediately as you use an Emotional Mind.
- **Logical Mind.** The facts are primary. Reason and comprehension take priority over passion. An assessment of truth is more important than how that truth makes you feel, at least to the Logical Mind. You try to argue your way through.
- **Wise Mind.** The better choice is the Wise Mind, which takes into account the feelings and facts and weighs them both against God's Truth. Feelings matter and facts matter...but both must be humbly compared to what God commands and values.

In a situation where you are suffering because of your faith – maybe facing workplace backlash against your beliefs, or paying a social price because you took a stand¹ – we must “arm ourselves” to think like Jesus.

We cannot use an emotional mind that protests, *“I’m angry! That was wrong and unfair!”*

We cannot use a logical mind that dispassionately makes assessments like, *“I don’t care if I hurt your feelings, my position was right. Let me draw a diagram to prove it.”*

But we must adopt a wise mind that says, *“Jesus already told me about this...”* We must choose, when there is suffering, to endure the pain of the present while trusting the hope of heaven! It looks like what Jesus says in Mark 8.

¹ Example. See yearbook comment from Kirsten D: *“I know we’ve gone our separate ways in the past year or two, but I wish you well. I admire the courage you have in your convictions, but please remember the validity of other points of view. Good luck...”*

"For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it." (Mark 8:35, ESV)

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If we are so armed with such thoughts, now we can adjust our actions.

"So then, since Christ suffered physical pain, you must arm yourselves with the same, because he had, and he ready to suffer, has. **For if you have suffered physically for Christ, you have finished with sin.** You won't be ruled by your old desires, your own desires, but you will be anxious to do the will of God. You have had enough in the past of the evil things that produce sin—enjoy—their immorality and lust, their feasting and drunkenness and wild parties, and their hostility toward kind and gentle people."

"For if you have suffered physically for Christ, you have finished with sin." (4:1)

Sound good? Ummm, yes please!!! Can you and I just be done with sin? Are you tired of it? Me, too! I want to be done with temptations and failures and rebellion and backsliding.

Peter says this statement here like sin is over! And, if true, Peter's claim *does* match up with other passages that talk about the defeat of sin in our lives.

"We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin." (Romans 6:6, ESV)

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This *is* right! There is a sense in which our new life is in Christ, and our old self (and sin's power over it) is in the grave. Sin *is* defeated! Its power *is* broken! God sees us *just as if* we had never sinned (aka "Justified"). Sin lost. It's over, just as quickly as the US Men's National Soccer Team was done in the World Cup after Belgium went up 3-1.

It's over...yet our old sinful habits die hard. Sin may be defeated, but the loser still fights.² We still choose to pursue our temptations, despite knowing that Jesus has provided a way out.

"The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure." (1 Corinthians 10:13, NLT)

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- We forget that the bridge has been repaired... and so we take the muddy road instead.
- We forget the broken leg is fully healed ...so we continue to struggle with the crutches.

² Paraphrase from Caedmon's Call "Love Alone"

- We forget that we lost weight... so we keep buying the bigger sizes

Despite those passages that speak of sin being done, we still cave to the temptation on a Monday morning!

I don't think Scripture (or Peter) claims Christians will never sin again. There are too many passages that point out the ongoing struggle and the need for forgiveness from God and from one another. Sin is still a reality. You and I sometimes venture into old ways and paths and habits that take us away from God.

...but...

If we have a mindset of suffering – a mindset that says we will make it through the temptation; that we have the choice not to follow the old addiction; that, like Jesus, we can endure the pain and agony for a better outcome – then we will be **finished** with sin.

We can forget the flesh! We can forget the flesh, and all that comes with it. We can live, no longer for “human passions” but instead for the “will of God!”

Are you ready to forget the flesh? Even if holiness makes you hurt?
Even if righteousness is resisted? Even if godliness comes with no
gain? Even if purity is painful?

I pray that you'll make that choice. If you are ready to forget the flesh...

...then it is time to move on!

Peter says, **“the time past is sufficient” (4:3)** for all those sins. You did enough. You had more than you could handle. Now be done with it! **This is where Scripture ties into the 1995 “Bluejay” yearbook.**

Are you the same person you used to be? Am I?

I hope not. I hope that you recognize that the old ways of sin deserve to go the way of flannels and grunge and CD players and Doc Martens.

Peter gives a quick list of “old ways.” These are most definitely behaviors that flew in the face of God’s character! Look at the list and consider *who you were* versus the *new person you are now in Christ*.

The old you dealt with...

- **Sensuality** – the license to do anything that makes your body feel pleasure, specifically with other bodies. Society pushed us to experiment and explore our cravings, yet as followers of Christ we have been called to treat others as honorable and not as objects.
 - *“Treat older women as you would your mother, and treat younger women with all purity as you would your own sisters.” (1 Timothy 5:2, NLT)*
- **Passions** – the cravings and lusts that bubble up and demand to be satiated. Society said go after anything you want! If you crave it, the craving must be satisfied. Yet as Christians we know we must not pursue every urge...because every urge has a consequence.
 - *“They are headed for destruction. Their god is their appetite, they brag about shameful things, and they think only about this life here on earth.” (Philippians 3:19, NLT)*
- **Drunkenness** – the overindulgence in substances that affect your control and decision-making. Alter your mental state and your mood by letting chemicals control your emotions, said the world. But now, you and I must be able to think clearly. Be honest - has *any* decision really been made better by the phrase, *“Let’s have a few beers first”*?

(Did you chuckle when I said that?)

As Peter’s list continues, I know some of these so-called sins don’t sound as bad as they should. We sometimes downplay the list of actions. Sins like drunkenness can be *funny*; drunkenness can be *fun*. Country artist Brad Paisley sums up the attitude in one of his songs: *“You had some of the best times you’ll never remember with me: Alcohol!”*

But that’s a child’s way of thinking! Grow up and be a man of God! Be a woman of righteousness! Those sins

aren't harmless or cheap, even if they can be pleasurable for a moment.



You need to remember that even though your sins (from this list and beyond) can be forgiven by Jesus, they still carry the lingering aroma of hell. Those sins still bear the stench of Satan. They are the same kind of lies that left you one fingernail away from slipping off the edge into eternal torment! You had to be rescued from them so you didn't plunge into spiritual death!

Your sin cost the blood of Jesus. Every extra shot of tequila, each one-night stand, every curse, each leering look pounded the nails into the cross. Deeper. And deeper.

The sins of our “flesh” *were* our identity. And they took us far from the path of God.

Church, (and Steve – I’m preaching to myself, too), the time for doing that stuff is over. Whatever illicit fun we had, it was sufficient. You don’t need it anymore.



“The night is almost gone; the day of salvation will soon be here. So remove your dark deeds like dirty clothes, and put on the shining armor of right living. Because we belong to the day, we must live decent lives for all to see. Don’t participate in the darkness of wild parties and drunkenness, or in sexual promiscuity and immoral living, or in quarreling and jealousy. Instead, clothe yourself with the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. And don’t let yourself think about ways to indulge your evil desires.” (Romans 13:12–14, NLT)

That’s who we were; that’s not who we *are*. That old sin is dead. The new me is alive in Christ...with all the hope and joy that He brings.

Now, Peter says, the *new me* is guaranteed to earn weird looks. People will question when you look away instead of gawking. People will groan that you skip the bachelor’s party. Your coworkers will be mad you didn’t go to their house for fireworks and Fireball shots.

immorality and lust, their feasting and drunkenness and wild parties, and their sinful worship of idols. Of course, your former friends are surprised when you no longer plunge into the flood of wild and destructive things they do. So they slander you. But remember that they will have to face God, who stands ready to judge everyone, both the living and the dead. That is why the Good News was preached to those who are now dead—so although they were despised or

“Of course, your former friends are surprised when you no longer plunge into the flood of wild and destructive things they do. So they slander you.” (4:4)

But let them! Forget the flesh! There is a spiritual consequence to each of these defeated sins. You and I must give account for our behavior. And your friends will too.

“God is ready to judge everyone, both the living and the dead” (4:5)

The only thing that will keep you standing when that judgment is passed...is the good news of Jesus Christ!

On the day of judgment God will look at your life – watch the replay – and point out every wrong. Every sin will be on full display.

“And I tell you this, you must give an account on judgment day for every idle word you speak.” (Matthew 12:36, NLT)

You could watch it with God, and you’d have to agree with Him: Yes, to your shame, that WAS wrong. Yes, that DID blaspheme your Father. Yes, that DID trample on His grace.

Your only hope on that day will not be yourself. Your only hope will be that you claimed the blood of Jesus Christ. You can say (in the words of the song we’ll sing in just a minute):

Behold the man upon a cross,
My sin upon His shoulders;
Ashamed, I hear my mocking voice
Call out among the scoffers.
It was my sin that held Him there
Until it was accomplished;
His dying breath has brought me life –
I know that it is finished.

Our sinful flesh might be judged, but our spirit may live through Him (4:6)

It’s not who we were; it’s who we are...in Christ!

Who we were has been forgiven; who we are...is His!

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You (now) needs to be
different from You (then).

HOPE

So, Church, **forget the flesh**. Arm yourself with a mind that is willing to suffer for Jesus' sake.

Because You (now) needs to be different from You (then).

1 Peter 4:1-6

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(1 Peter 4:1–6, NLT)

THE GOSPEL OF CHRISTIANITY

HOPE
WHEN LIFE IS HARD

HOPE WHEN LIFE IS HARD

Prayer

Song

Sermon Notes

(1 Peter 4:1–6; Matthew 26:53; Ephesians 6:11, Mark 8:35; Romans 6:6; 1 Corinthians 10:13; 1 Timothy 5:2; Philippians 3:19; Romans 13:12–14; Matthew 12:36)

[illegible]

Sermon Discussion Questions

- Read 1 Peter 4:1-6 multiple times. Read it fast, read it slow, read it in different translations.
- **Caption.** Give this section a short, descriptive title.
- **Contents.** Describe, summarize, or outline the passage.
- **Chief People.** List the most important people mentioned. Who is mentioned? Why are they significant?
- **Choice Verse.** Write one verse that summarizes the passage well, or that speaks to you personally.
- **Crucial Word(s).** Write down key word(s) in the passage – words that are used frequently or that are important to Peter's point.
- **Challenges.** List any difficulties you have. Are there statements you don't understand? Is there an issue you want to study further?
- **Cross-References.** Use the notes in your Bible to see what else in the Bible helps you understand this passage. Look those verses up.
- **Christ Seen.** The Bible's focus is on Jesus. What does this passage teach you about the nature of Jesus? What attributes are illustrated here?
- **Central Lesson(s).** Write down the major principle, insights, and lessons you learn from this passage. Why does God want us to know this?
- **Conclusion.** How do these truths apply to you personally? What specifically will you do about it?