

Chapter 4 Verses 1-2

Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same way of thinking, for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, so as to live for the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for human passions but for the will of God.

Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh- Peter is taking us back to what he said in 3:18. He wants **believers** to have a good Christian witness when they go through **suffering**, but also to be willing to suffer instead of sinning.

Arm yourself with the same thought- Peter is saying we need to be **convinced** that doing right even if we suffer is better than doing wrong.

Ceased from sin- This does not mean we will **never sin again**- Scripture makes it very clear we never reach a point where we no longer sin (Proverbs 20:9; James 3:2; 1 John 1:8). What Peter is teaching is we need to be governed not by feelings but by God's will and when we do that we **break** from sin in our life.

When we decide to do God's will even if we will suffer commits us to do God's will even though it is not the easy way and makes us stronger to live for the Lord.

Verse 3

For the time that is past suffices for doing what the Gentiles want to do, living in sensuality, passions, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and lawless idolatry.

Peter builds off what he said in verse 2. His readers had lived in a shipwrecked **state of life** and that is enough- they should not live that way again. Peter then gives examples of what they used to be **involved** in and where they should never go again (our baptism is a picture of this).

- Sensuality (actual word is licentiousness)- no regard for any **moral restraint**. It refers to giving oneself over to sexual immorality or acts of physical violence (Romans 13:13; Galatians 5:19; 2 Peter 2:7).
- Passions- refers to powerful **desires** that can control you which include greed and sexual desires.
- Drunkenness- refers to feasts that involve **gluttony** and getting drunk and sexual immorality.
- Drinking parties- parties focused on getting **drunk**.
- Lawless idolatry- lawless does not mean breaking God's law because all idolatry does that. Lawless means **idol worship**, which violated civil laws. This is idol worship that even violates the civil laws of the time.

Verse 4

With respect to this they are surprised when you do not join them in the same flood of debauchery, and they malign you;

Before their conversion, these believers were involved with the other unbelievers in their out-of-control **pursuit of pleasure**. And now these believers did not take part in these activities anymore. The response of the unbelievers was not only surprise but they abused believers. The word Peter uses is *malign* which means “**speak evil** of, defame, injure the reputation of someone”.

Why- oftentimes non-participation in sin implies condemnation of that sin and pains their **conscience**. And instead of not doing that sin they will attack those non-participants verbally.

Verse 5

but they will give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.

Peter makes sure to remind unbelievers they will be judged by God for what they are **doing** and have **done**. He also makes it clear that they would not escape this judgment if they died. If someone dies the law of man cannot touch them, but God's judgment can and will if they are alive or dead.

Verse 6

For this is why the gospel was preached even to those who are dead, that though judged in the flesh the way people are, they might live in the spirit the way God does.

The early church had questions about those believers who died before Christ came back. Especially those who had been martyrs for their faith. Peter tells his readers that the Gospel had been preached to those who died and they had not **lost out** but are in the spirit and they are with God. Paul wrote about this also in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.

The final judgment is near, so act this way in the church: Verses 7-9

Verse 7

The end of all things is at hand; therefore be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers.

The end of all things is at hand- Peter is telling us that all major events in God's plan of redemption have occurred and the only thing left is the **return of Christ**.

Sane and sober- Christians should be able to make a **mature evaluation** of what is going on and then be able to pray effectively.

Verse 8

Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins.

Above all- shows how important this **command is**. It is even more important than the previous one.

Our love- is to be constant and intense. The word Peter uses for love is a love **expressed** by attitudes and actions (1 Corinthians 13:4-8).

Peter then quotes Proverbs 10:12 to explain why it is so important to love each other, we will choose not to pursue a pound of flesh when we have been wronged if we really love that person, instead, we will forgive them (Matthew 6:12).

Verse 9

Show hospitality to one another without grumbling.

A practical way Peter tells us to show our love for each other is **hospitality**. Without resenting the time and expense it might take to show hospitality we are to show hospitality to all **people** but especially to Christians (Galatians 6:10).

Being Steadfast: Verses 12-19

In this next section, Peter writes about suffering. We need to understand that there are three types of suffering that we will have.

- 1) Common suffering- because we are **humans** and we live in a fallen world.
- 2) Carnal suffering- we live with the **consequences** of the wrong decisions we make.
- 3) Christian suffering- going through **suffering** even when we are living for the Lord.

Peter will tell us five things we need to know

Verse 12

Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you.

- 1) Suffering is going to **happen**.

Beloved- means to have a very special **relationship** with someone. Peter reminds them that they are knit together and we go through suffering together.

The problem is when we go through **suffering** we oftentimes hide and get by ourselves and that is the worst place to be, we should go through suffering together.

God is going to allow trials to come into our lives to strengthen us. These trials are meant for a positive outcome (1 Peter 1:7). Again, suffering will come into our **lives** to make us stronger in our faith.

Verse 13

But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed.

2) Suffering: when it comes- **rejoice**

Why? Suffering **draws** us closer to God. When we suffer for Him, that draws us closer to Him and increases our joy in the Lord (Acts 5:41; Romans 5:3; Colossians 1:24; Hebrews 10:34).

Verse 14

If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.

God, you can trust me. When we go **through** suffering or a tough trial it shows that God can trust me to stand for Him- think of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in Daniel 3.

Verses 15-16

But let none of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or as a meddler. 16 Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in that name.

3) Suffer- but not for the **wrong reason**

Peter tells us that God does not **bless** the wrong type of suffering; he gives a list.

4) Suffering Christians should not be **ashamed**.

The word *Christian* is only used three times in the New Testament; here, Acts 11:26, and Acts 26:28. Back two thousand years ago the name Christian was a slur, the name Christian means follower of Christ and Peter says don't be ashamed of that, rather, live for the Lord and God is **honored** by our lifestyle.

Verse 17

For it is time for judgment to begin at the household of God; and if it begins with us, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God?

The key to understanding this verse is the word **judgment**. The Greek word that Peter uses does not mean determining guilt or innocence but rather the sentence or punishment handed out.

Peter's point is if Christians go through a refining fire by God to purify them, this should be a warning to unbelievers that judgment is coming.

Verse 18

And

*"If the righteous is scarcely saved,
what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?"*

Peter quotes Proverbs 11:31 showing that unbelievers will be **judged**.

Verse 19

Therefore let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good.

5) Suffering will come, **trust God**.

In this verse, Peter uses a very special word that his readers would understand and appreciate. The word is **entrust** which is the term for depositing money with a trusted friend. In the ancient world, there were no banks or safe places to deposit your money. So when a man went on a journey he would leave his money with a trusted friend. This trust was considered one of the most **sacred things** in life. That friend was bound by all honor to return that money intact. This word Christ used on the cross (Luke 23:46).

In other words, we can trust our Lord even though we go through **suffering** (Romans 8:28).

Making a Difference: Chapter 5 Verses 1-8

In this passage, Peter encourages elders but I want to apply what he says to them and what he says to the church (to us).

We are called as believers to make an impact for our Lord. And the way we do that is to be **servants**. All through Scripture we are called to be servants (1 Peter 4:10; Galatians 5:13; Matthew 23:11). Peter tells us how to be good servants.

Verse 2

shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly;

Willingly- it is a desire to serve, a **willingness** to make a difference. If you want to make a difference in your home, **serve** your family. If you want to be a good supervisor and make an impact on your employees, **serve them**. If you want to make an impact in the church, **serve others**.

Verse 3

not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.

Being examples- you don't make a difference by telling people what to do, you make a difference by showing people what to do. (ex: mission trip to Mexico- 1st time showed them how to work together).

Verse 5

Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."

Being humble- when we think of being humble we think it means being weak, a coward, a cringing person. Being humble means depending on God, not ourselves.

The opposite of being humble is pride. A proud person has a haughty attitude, superiority toward others, and believes they are the standard, and anyone who does not measure up to them they look down on. Peter makes it clear God opposes the proud person and if you are going to make a difference- get rid of pride.

Verse 6

Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you,

The keyword in this verse is *exalt* which means "to lift up". Peter is not talking about Christ's second coming, he is talking about our Lord- that we trust he is sovereign and he will lift believers who are humble out of their difficulty. In other words, whatever we are going through, trust him, he knows what he is doing.

Verse 7

casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.

Being worry-free- Worriers don't make a difference for the Lord for two reasons.

- 1) They are too busy worrying about stuff instead of being busy for the Lord.
- 2) Worry is the exact opposite of being humble. Worry is all about depending on self and not trusting God and when we don't trust God we will not make much of an impact for our Lord.

Peter tells us instead of worrying to be about casting our cares on Him. In other words, to cast means to completely let go. Cares are not handed over but thrown into the arms of God.

Verse 8

Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

Be warned- We need to remember that even if we humble ourselves before the Lord we are not immune from Satan's attacks.

Peter is painting a picture of a fierce beast (Africa-scared of the female lion) who wants to devour us. The word *devour* in the original language means "to swallow up".

- Satan cannot take our salvation.
- Satan cannot separate us from Christ.
- Satan will try to swallow up your testimony for the Lord.
- Satan does this by enticement to sin, through the temptation to lust, or through our response when attacked by people whom he controls.

Verse 9

Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world.

Our response to Satan is to resist him by being steadfast in the faith by remaining true to our convictions and our trust in the Lord.