Experiencing Victory in a Hostile World

Our Present: Remember Our Testimony

How We Navigate Life Really Matters (2:11 – 4:6)

Questions for Discussion and Reflection

1. According to 1 Pet. 4:2 what is the twofold result of the Christian arming himself with Christ's attitude?

2. Evidently many of Peter's reader were converts from a pagan lifestyle. Was the 1st century much different than the 21st century? Describe how you have seen evidence of this type of living.

3. How does the reality of Christ's suffering shape the concrete living of the Christian life?

4. What changes will you attempt to implement in your life as a result of studying this passage?

Navigating Unjust Suffering

Our Objective: What does God want us to learn and do?

Maintaining proper conduct in suffering requires that Christians maintain a Christ-like attitude, living for the present in God's will, and knowing that they will live for eternity in His presence.

Navigating Unjust Suffering

1 Peter 4:1-6

1 Peter 3:18

1 Therefore,
since Christ has suffered in the flesh,
arm yourselves also with the same purpose, **(The Attitude of Christ)**
because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,
2 so as to live the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for the lusts of men,
but for the will of God. **(The Will of God)**
3 For the time already past
is sufficient for you to have carried out the desire of the Gentiles,
having pursued a course of sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, carousing,
drinking parties and abominable idolatries.
4 In all this, **(Transformation from the Past)**
they are surprised that you do not run with them into the same excesses of
dissipation, and they malign you;
5 but they will give account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.
6 For the gospel has for this purpose been preached
even to those who are dead, **(Hope of Eternal Life)**
that though they are judged in the flesh as men,
they may live in the spirit according to the will of God.

Armed for Suffering

A. Context

Everything from the previous verses (3:18-22) is focused on preparing Peter's readers, believers, us, to suffer well.

Suffering unjustly for being righteous is also on Peter's mind. (See 1 Pet. 1:6-9; 2:19-23; 4:14-19; 5:6-10)

A key verb is found in verse 1: (Gr. Hoplizo) To Arm

The picture is of preparation for battle

Armed for Suffering

A. Context

Peter provides believers with 4 perspectives motivating them to be strong when righteousness brings suffering and, even martyrdom.

Believers strengthen their resolve in suffering when they are armed with:

- An understanding of the Attitude of Christ (4:1)
- The Will of God (4:2)
- The Transformation from the past (4:3-5)
- The Hope of Eternal Life (4:6)

Armed for Suffering

A. The Attitude of Christ (v. 1)

" Therefore, since Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same purpose, because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,

The cross of Christ is the ultimate proof that Christ endured His greatest suffering, dying under divine judgment as:

- The Just for the unjust (3:18)
- Yet there, He also accomplished for believers His greatest triumph over sin (3:18)
- And victory over the forces of evil (3:22)

Armed for Suffering

A. The Attitude of Christ (v. 1)

" Therefore, since Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same purpose, because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,

In 4:1, Peter connects us to the previous section with a key summation:

- Christ suffered in the flesh – He died (3:18; Isa. 53:10; Matt. 27:50; Acts 2:23) in fulfilling God's redemption plan.
- He (Christ) came "in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin" (Rom. 8:3; 2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Pet. 2:24; Gal. 3:13)
- "Therefore", Peter commands his readers to "arm yourselves" with weapons/or armor. Noun form *hoplon* used in several passages: John 18:3; 2 Cor. 6:7

Armed for Suffering

A. The Attitude of Christ (v. 1)

" Therefore, since Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same purpose, because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,

What are believers called to arm themselves with?
"the same purpose"

- Be willing to die knowing it produces the greatest victory. (Phil. 2:5; 1 Cor. 15:54-55; 2 Tim. 1:10; John 21:18-19)
- It is better to suffer for Christ than to suffer with the World.
- Put on your armor (Eph. 6:11; 2 Cor. 10:3-4)

Armed for Suffering

A. The Attitude of Christ (v. 1)

" Therefore, since Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also <u>with the same purpose</u>, because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,

- Peter was not expressing a new concept to his readers. (See Matt. 10:38-39). Paul was "armed". (2 Cor. 4:8-12; 1 Cor. 15:31; 2 Tim. 4:6)

How is Jesus' teaching in Matt. 10 similar to Peter's statement in 4:1?

- Thousands of martyrs throughout church history "armed themselves". (Heb. 11:13-16, 35-38)

- *To be armed for the purpose of suffering means we have clothed ourselves with the* ___*attitude of Christ*___.

Armed for Suffering

A. The Attitude of Christ (v. 1)

" Therefore, since Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same purpose, <u>because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,</u>

Believers can face suffering/death with the same attitude, because when it comes, they will experience <u>victory over sin</u>.

Who is the one ("he") who has suffered?

- Option 1 – The one who has suffered could be <u>Christ Himself</u>. (Rom. 6:6-10)
- Option 2 – The one who suffered is the <u>believer</u>. (Rom.6:7)
- Option 3 – The one who suffered are <u>dead believers</u>.

Armed for Suffering

A. The Attitude of Christ (v. 1)

" Therefore, since Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same purpose, because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,

"ceased from sin" or "is done with sin" - power of sin is broken!

- *Affirming Truth 1* – The power of sin was broken by Christ in his death and resurrection. His cross-work is finished.
- *Affirming Truth 2* – Through our union with Christ "he who has died has been freed from sin" Resolving that we are willing to suffer indicates that we have ceased to let sin dominate our lives.
- *Affirming Truth 3* – Believers can face suffering/death knowing that they will enter into eternity, free from sin's influences and effects (1 Cor. 15:42-43; 2 Cor. 5:1)

Armed for Suffering

A. The Attitude of Christ (v. 1)

" Therefore, since Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same purpose, because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,

- Jesus willingly faced death --"for the joy set before Him endured the Cross" (Heb. 12:2)

- *To be armed for the purpose of suffering means we have parted ways with our past life of sin.*

Armed for Suffering

B. The Will of God (v. 2)

"so as to live the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for the lusts of men, but for the will of God."

To be armed for the purpose of suffering means we are engaged in the ***pursuit of God's will, not our own.***

Note the connection: Christ suffered…Arm yourselves with the same mind-set…The one who suffers in the flesh is broken from sin…So that he might live the rest of his life for the **will of God**, not **for the sinful desires of men.**

What does "rest of the time" mean? **Rest of your life** (1:17)

Armed for Suffering

B. The Will of God (v. 2)

"so as to live the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for the lusts of men, but for the will of God."

As believers, we are about God's Will. What is His will? (Rom. 12:2; Eph. 6:5-6)

- To surrender yourself to God
- To engage in spiritual worship
- To be transformed – renewed mind

Peter "draws the line" in verse 2: Whose army are you in? Who is your master?

(Eph. 2:3; 4:17, 22-24; 5:7-8; 5:17; Tit 3:3; 1 Pet. 2:15)

/ One group lives for themselves Does their own thing

/ One group lives for Christ Does God's will

Peter is telling believers to arm themselves with a commitment to do the will of God and abandon their former sins. (Rom. 6:8-12)

Armed for Suffering

C. The Transformation from the Past (v. 3-5)

"For the time already past is sufficient for you to have carried out the desire of the Gentiles, having pursued a course of sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, carousing, drinking parties and abominable idolatries. In all this, they are surprised that you do not run with them into the same excesses of dissipation, and they malign you; 5 but they will give account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead."

To be armed for the purpose of suffering means we know the *season of sinning is past*

Peter reminds believers of the vivid description of humanity's lost spiritual condition and the ultimate consequence of sin - judgment (1 Cor. 6:9-10; Gal. 5:19-21)

Armed for Suffering

C. The Transformation from the Past (v. 3-5)

" For the time already past is sufficient for you to have carried out the desire of the Gentiles, having pursued a course of sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, carousing, drinking parties and abominable idolatries. "

The time for serving sin is already past. (Rom. 7:1; 1 Cor. 6:9-11; 1 Pet. 1:18)

Six words (sins) describe the pursuit of the unregenerate:

- "sensuality" unrestrained, excessive indulgences
- "lusts" sinful passion - sexual/greed
- "drunkenness" overflow with abundance (habitual intoxication)
- "carousing" revelry, partying
- "drinking parties" drinking binges
- "abominable idolatries" lawless idolatry

Armed for Suffering

C. The Transformation from the Past (v. 3-5)

" In all this, they are surprised that you do not run with them into the same excesses of dissipation, and they malign you; but they will give account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead."

To be armed for the purpose of suffering means we "walk"
out of step with the world

Scripture says much about our "walk".
(1 John 1:6-7; 2:6; Eph. 4:17)

When we are faithful in living lives in pursuit of the will of God, the response from the world is going to be two-fold:

- surprise v. 4 (1 Thess. 1:9)
- slander v. 4 (1 Pet. 2:12; 3:16; Luke 6:22-23; Acts 9:4)

Armed for Suffering

C. The Transformation from the Past (v. 3-5)

"In all this, they are surprised that you do not run with them into the same excesses of dissipation, and they malign you; but they will give account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead."

Peter next reminds his readers, that those who slander and persecute believers will give an account to Him

(Matt. 18:23-34; 25:31-33, 41-46; 2 Thess. 1:6-9)

"Living and the Dead" means everyone

Armed for Suffering

D. The Hope of Eternal Life (v. 6)

"For the gospel has for this purpose been preached even to those who are dead, that though they are judged in the flesh as men, they may live in the spirit according to the will of God.

To be armed for the purpose of suffering means we live in the hope of vindication beyond death

"for this purpose" - that all will give an account

The coming judgment not only will bring sinners into account (v.5), but will also reverse the judgments of men (v.6)

The Gospel was proclaimed to those Christians who are now dead.

Armed for Suffering

D. The Hope of Eternal Life (v. 6)

"For the gospel has for this purpose been preached even to those who are dead, that though they are judged in the flesh as men, they may live in the spirit according to the will of God.

Peter reminds them that God has promised them that through suffering and death….

- They will overcome sin
- Escape final judgment
- Enter eternal heaven
- In Holy perfection

Just as Christ was crucified but was alive in spirit and raised from the dead, believers will suffer and die but their spirits remain alive and enter into the promise of eternal life (1 Thess. 4:13-18;Heb. 12:23)

What does it mean to be Armed for the purpose of Suffering?

(1 Pet. 4:1-6)

1. We have clothed ourselves with the attitude of Christ. (v. 1a)
2. We have parted ways with our past life of sin. (v.1b)
3. We have engaged in the pursuit of God's will, not our own. (v.2)
4. We know the season of sinning is past. (v.3)
5. We walk out of step with the world. (v.4-5)
6. We live in the hope of vindication beyond death. (v. 6)

How has this discussion affected your perspective on suffering?