

1 Peter 4:4-11

“Having the same mind as Jesus: Towards the lost, heaven and the church”

- I. Intro
- II. Vs. 4-6 Loving the lost (Salvation)
- III. Vs. 7 Excited about our exit (Glorification)
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I. Intro.

In 1st Peter, Peter wrote an encouraging word to the church about their “**great salvation**” that should be producing a “**living hope**” even though they were experiencing severe persecution. The primary example he uses was of Jesus who suffered for doing good in the will of God. Peter writes “*Since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, **ARM YOURSELVES ALSO WITH THE SAME MIND**”.* The emphasis is upon **the use of time** as Peter tells the reader “*that he should no longer live the **REST OF HIS TIME**” in the flesh for the lusts of men. In looking at these 11 verses I see that Peter’s words are telling his readers that **Jesus’ example of the use of time ought to produce four things that are of the same mind of Jesus that ought to be occupying our lives with until Jesus calls us home:***

- A. Vs. 1-3 Dying to the lust of the former life (Sanctification)
- B. Vs. 4-6 Loving the lost (Salvation)
- C. Vs. 7 Excited about our exit (Glorification)
- D. Vs. 8-11 Serving the saints

Last week in verses 1-3 Peter understood the nature of the flesh and the spiritual warfare that we Christians go through during difficult seasons as he offers his readers reasons why we should take a “**militant attitude towards our own sin**”. Oh, that we would take aggressive actions towards our own sins the way we react to others! Peter in these three verses gives three strong deterrents from going back “**to living the rest of our time in the flesh for the lust on men instead**

of for the will of God". The first area that we ought to be spending the rest of our time deals with our "Sanctification"!

1. Vs. 1b-2a "Since Christ suffered for us": *The Point Peter is making to these believers is when you are being tempted to go back to the life of the flesh STOP and realize what Jesus had to suffer in order to save us from what we are about to go back and do! The devils lies maximizes the temporary pleasure of sin while minimizing three things about sin:*
 - How much time it wastes: Both while engaged in the sin and the guilt and failure we experience after we sin.
 - How much destruction it causes: Our sin is like the aftermath of a tornado that leaves in its path broken homes and ruined lives.
 - How much Jesus sacrifice has changed sin: Jesus finished work on our behalf against sin has not only paid the penalty for our sin past, present and future but also broken the power over us that sin had as we don't have to sin now.

How can we enjoy that which made Jesus suffer and die on the cross?

2. Vs. 2b "Live...for the will of God": Peter's point is that we cannot just avoid the "lusts of the flesh" they must seek to live for the will of God! We must not leave the waste of the world without the "Joy of the presence of God"!
3. Vs. 3 "For we have spent enough of our past life-time in doing the will of the gentiles": Peter isn't looking at the temporary pleasures of sin for a season but rather the bondage and destruction that the pursuit of the flesh reeked upon our lives. We need to ask ourselves two question when tempted to sin:
 - *If sin was so pleasurable, so rewarding, so wonderful....why did you leave it?*
 - *If sin is so good and desirable a condition then why did Jesus have to die to save us from it?*

II. Vs. 4-6 Loving the lost (Salvation)

Vs. 4-6 The second area that we should be spending the rest of our time with is other's "Salvation"! Peter qualifies this pursuit by saying that those that we are desiring to reach think it strange that we are no longer in "the flesh pursue the lusts of men"! The Greek words for "do not run" is a phrase that means "to run in a troop or a pack lack a band of renegades." Peter offers a threefold exhortation to believers that has to do with them and not whom they are witnessing too:

- A. **Vs. 4 Be different**: Peter's first point to these believers is one that perhaps that were not fully aware of as their trust in Jesus had made them "**different**" from the way they use to be. In their former sinful nature, they thought nothing of wrecking their lives and bodies in the pursuit of the "**lust of the flesh**" but now where at one time they were drunkards they were sober, where they once were engaged continually in immoral behavior they were pure. The things they once loved they now hated and the things the once hated they now loved. Such transformation caused their former family and friends to think it "**strange**" and the Greek word here **doesn't mean something odd or unusual** but "**something foreign in nature to something else**". **If we are going to reach the lost we will need to be recognizably different then the way we were**. So much of modern evangelism and the "**seeker**" movement attempts to be "**unrecognizably different to the unregenerate**" in an attempt to appeal to their flesh and make "**going to church**" **fun!!!** Church has become more about "**entertaining the sinners**" instead of "**equipping the saints**". There is nothing fun about being in a condition that leaves your life in ruins and the church should not be engaged in imitating the tools that have led to the destruction of so many!
- B. **Vs. 5 Be patient**: Seeing that these former friends and family are now engaged in their persecution Peter's second exhortation is for these persecuted believers to exercise patience towards the unsaved. Our patience is needed as often we have forgotten that we also were blind to our condition as they now are. They will, if they remain unrepentant, give an account to God who WILL judge them and as long as they still have breathed there remains the possibility of "hope" that they will become followers of Jesus. Our patience ought to be based upon looking into the past and realizing how far we were at one time from the grace and knowledge of Jesus and now we have trusted in only Him. The sinner's judgment must never be from our hearts towards them no matter how they have mistreated us, our prayer is that they, like us will turn away from sin and towards the Living God!
- C. **Vs. 6 Be bold**: This is a difficult passage for some, but the context is the believer's suffering persecution for doing good in the will of God. The "those who are dead" cannot mean those who have died physically as the gospel is only preached to the physically alive as there is no possibility of salvation after a person has died apart from Jesus according to Hebrews 9:27. In this case the Greek makes it clear that the gospel had been preached to non-Christians who had become believers and then died being judged by non-Christians on earth and persecuted but in heaven they had been made alive in the spirit. We can be bold for two reasons:
1. Because there is nothing the world can do to us even in their persecution as God will reward us for being bold in God's love and truth towards others.
 2. Because just like us you can never know the potential of the message of our boldness may have upon a sole who was lost, and we have no other better example than our own sole!

III. Vs. 7 Excited about our exit (Glorification)

Vs. 7 The third area that we should be spending the rest of our time with is our “**Glorification**”.

The first century believers were to live expectant lives and anticipating the return of Jesus in their lifetimes but the fact that Jesus hadn’t come back yet and they were being severely persecuted for their faith didn’t invalidate God’s promises. The question that Peter now addresses is what does live “**expectant lives**” of the soon return of Jesus look like? Peter gives his readers two primary things it should produce in their hearts:

1. **Be serious**: The end of “**all things**” ought to produce in the heart of a believer a sobriety that leads to living as if this is your last day and hour. The Christian who has no expectancy of the soon return of Jesus, lives frivolously and wastes time as if there is always a guarantee of tomorrow. **Instead of living in fear of tomorrow we need to live in faith as if there is no tomorrow!** There are those that look at the bible and end times “as a hobby” and speculation leads to daydreams and wishful thinking that they can live as they want in the pursuit of the “lusts of men” as we are going to be “raptured” anyway. Peter didn’t share that viewpoint of the soon return of Jesus instead he exhorted them to get serious about their faith.
2. **Be watchful in your prayers**: The Greek word “watchful” is a word that means to be calm and collected in spirit and the context is in prayer. The “expectant life” is one that ought to cause the believer to be calm and collected in their prayer life. Our minds and hearts will become more focused and specific as we see that our time is short. There will be not time wasted on lazy, listless, routine prayers of the same things over and over or trying to tell God about something that He already knows. It will be replaced with humble crying out for our transformation and those around us as well as an attitude of gratitude as we praise Him not for favorable outcomes but for His will being done.

IV. Vs. 8-11 Serving the saints

Vs. 8-11 The fourth and final area that we should be spending the rest of our time with is “***loving each other***”! Peter says that, “above all things” and in the Greek words tell us that this is to be a prerequisite to every believer to exercise love towards each other. Elsewhere the word is used to describe an athlete who is working out their sport to get better. **What this suggests to us that Christian love for each other isn’t automatic and will require intense effort and is not about**

emotional feelings instead it's about an obedient heart. Peter tells his readers that loving each other must include three traits:

1. **Vs. 8 Fervency:** The word “**fervent**” in the Greek is “**stretched out**” and the idea is that love is extended to reach the person loved and isn’t self-centered but **others-centered in nature.** “**Courtesy**” **without love is pleasant but cold,** “**Generosity**” **without love is nice but odd without love...** **love is what makes all these other virtues what they should be!** Peter says that when a Christian truly loves their fellow believer they would never think of publishing their failings to others instead they would only think of covering them from the sight of others. **Gossip in the church is eliminated when love for each other is present and you can always tell how mature the body of Christ is by how much gossip exists!**
2. **Vs. 9 Friendly:** The Greek word for “**hospitality**” means “**friendly to strangers**” thus the idea is not friendship shown to those whom you have a relationship with but to believers you don’t have a relationship with. I think that Christians’ ought to work towards being people who makes friends with every person they meet, and you can’t find a person who doesn’t like them. The fact that Peter says without “grumbling” tells us that Peter was telling his readers that it wasn’t enough to do the action that they had to have the right heart in doing it!
3. **Vs. 10-11 Faithfully:** Finally, Peter speaks of discharging the Spiritual Gifts faithfully as stewards not as owners of the gifts. We need to be faithful and generous if our distribution of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit towards the body of Christ is a way that builds others up while not calling attention to ourselves. Far too much of the work of the Holy Spirit in the body of Christ is has been overshadowed by the instrument instead of all the glory going to the Giver of the gift it has unfortunately been upon the recipient of the gift. **There is no greater deterrent to the continual work of the Holy Spirit in the church than the miss use of the gifts of the Holy Spirit seen in the self-glorifying arrogance of the person who claims to be anointed by God! The clearest way to see if a person is truly anointed by God and has been baptized in the Holy Spirit will be their invisibility and God’s visibility!**