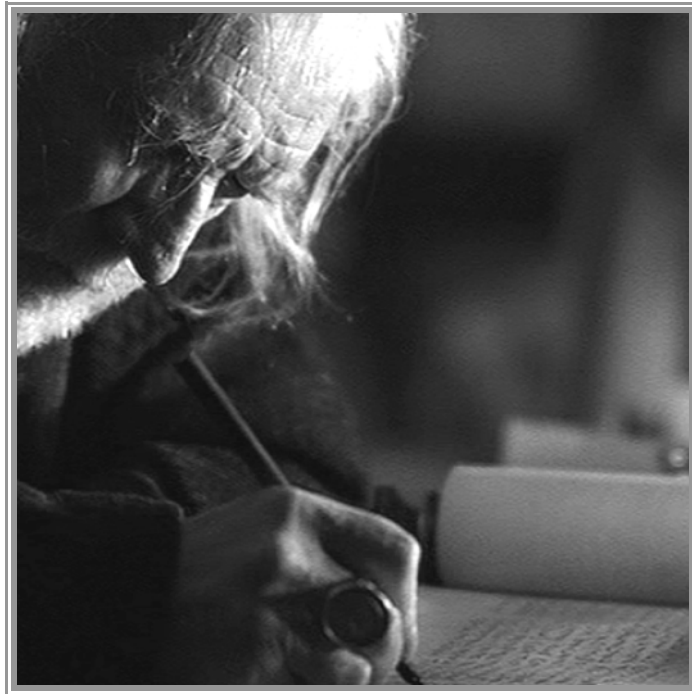


THE WRITINGS OF PETER



STUDY 4

1 PETER 4

Sunday Morning Bible Study

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STUDY 4 ~ 1 PETER 4

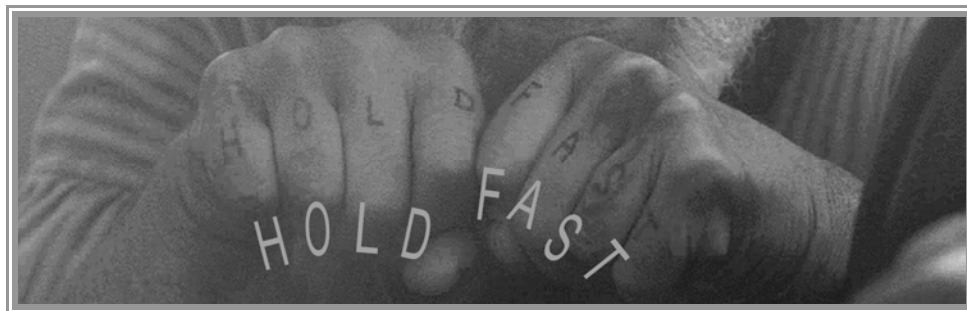
Introduction – We have been studying the first letter that the Apostle Peter had written to believers. The Christians that Peter wrote to were Christians who had been displaced from their homes by intense persecution that had begun in the mid 60's AD. They had fled to cities throughout the area that modern day Turkey occupies. These Christians were strangers geographically, socially, and spiritually because of their trust in Jesus Christ. The advice to these Christians and all Christians is to:

HOLD FAST

HOLD FAST to Who We Are in Christ

HOLD FAST to Our Holy Lifestyle in Christ

HOLD FAST to What We Have in Common with Christ



The bulk of chapter 1 focused on the Christian's salvation and identity in Christ; most of **chapter 2** instructs Christians on their behavior and lifestyle in Christ. **Chapter 3** completes Peter's instruction on our behavior shifts the reader's focus to what Christians have in common with Jesus Christ.

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TURN TO 1 PETER 4 - Chapter 4 offers instructions for living our lives for Christ amid unjust suffering because of Christ.

1 Peter 4:1-6

Forasmuch [*Therefore*] 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; 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 [*unbridled lust*], lusts [*forbidden desires*], excess of wine, revellings [*drunken rioting*], banquetings [*carousing, partying, orgies*], 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: 5 Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick [*living*] and the dead. 6 For for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.

Group Questions

- **Verse 1** – What does it mean to “arm yourselves with the same mind”? Be ready to mentally fight when the challenge to your faith comes.
- **Verse 1** – What does suffering in the flesh have to do with the ceasing of sin? In a similar way, baptism visibly shows our belief and identification with Christ. For these Christians, their holy lifestyle was an outward display of their alignment with Christ and magnet for being abused. If you are living in a place that persecutes Christians, and you are being persecuted, there is something evidently holy about your life that is drawing the hatred of the world.
- **Verse 2** – What is the result of a Christian who sees themselves as dead to sin? They choose to think, speak, and act in a way that pleases God and is quite different compared to how the world “does life.”

- **Verse 3** – Have you made the choice to “break” with your past worldly or fleshly lifestyles or are you still hanging onto something that God disapproves of?
- **Verse 4** – Are there any unbelievers in your life that think it is strange that you do not participate with them or live life in the same ways they do? If not, why not?
- **Verse 4** – Has anyone noticed how old acquaintances become persecutors after you commit to Christ? How are Christians to respond to old friends who now deride their new found loyalty?
- **Verse 5** – What is a good motivation to hold to our faith and not get pulled into worldly living? Knowing that one day there will definitely be an accounting of our choices – starting first with whether we chose to accept Christ as Messiah or not.



A Commentary Note on 1 Peter 4:6

“For this indeed was the effect of the preaching of the Gospel to the dead, (the unconverted Gentiles), that some will be punished as carnal men; but others, (those converted to Christianity), lead a spiritual life unto God.”—WAKEFIELD.

“For this purpose hath the Gospel been preached even to the dead, (i.e. the Gentiles), that although they might be condemned, indeed, by men in the flesh, (their persecutors), yet they might live eternally by God in the Spirit.”—MACKNIGHT.

“For this cause was the Gospel preached to them that were dead; that they who live according to men in the flesh, may be condemned; but that they who live according to God in the Spirit, may live.”—KNATCHBULL.

There are as many different translations of this verse, and comments upon it, as there are translators and commentators. That of Sir Norton Knatchbull, could the Greek text bear it, appears the most simple; but that of Dr. Macknight, which is nearly the sense given by Mr. Wesley in his Paraphrase, is more likely to be the true one among those already proposed.

But if the apostle had the same fact in view which he mentions, 1 Peter 3:19, 20, then the antediluvians are the persons intended: For this cause—that Christ is prepared to judge the quick and the dead, and to dispense righteous judgment in consequence of having afforded them every necessary advantage, was the Gospel preached by Noah to them also who are dead—the antediluvian world, then dead in trespasses and sins, and condemned to death by the righteous judgment of God; but in his great compassion he afforded them a respite, that though they were condemned as men in the flesh, (for this was their character; my Spirit will not always strive with man, forasmuch as he is FLESH, Genesis 6:3), yet, hearing this Gospel by

Noah, they may believe, and live according to God in the Spirit—live a blessed life in eternity according to the mercy of God, who sent his Spirit to strive with them. This appears to me to be the most consistent sense; especially as the apostle seems to refer to what he had said of the Spirit of Christ in Noah preaching to the spirits in prison—the rebellions that lived before the flood. Adam Clarke's Commentary on the New Testament; First Electronic STEP Files Copyright © 1999, Parsons Technology, Inc. Clarke, Adam; Parsons Technology, Inc.

The basis for all godly attitudes while suffering for our faith rests on the truth that Jesus Christ, the Creator Himself, suffered unjustly because of His “separateness” from the world. Christ’s holy way of living drew fire from those who reject God. If we live like Him, our lifestyle will draw fire from those who reject God.

1 Peter 4:7-11

But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober [*serious minded*], and watch unto prayer. 8 And above all things have fervent [*stretched out*] charity [*unconditional love*] among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. 9 Use hospitality one to another without grudging. 10 As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. 11 If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

Group Question

- **Verse 8** – How does our unconditional love for each other “cover a multitude of sins”? Strenuously maintained love is not blind but sees the faults in others and accepts them in spite of the faults.
- **Verses 10-11** – How should speakers speak and servants serve? In a way that gives all credit to God who gave us the gift of our ability which we are now responsible to use according to His plan and purposes in this life.

1 Peter 4:12-19

Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try [*test*] you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: 13 But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. 14 If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. 15 But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. 16 Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf. 17 For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? 18 And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? 19 Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.

Group Questions

- When a Christian is suffering unjustly, how can they follow this instruction to “rejoice”? Although they feel like the world is against them, fix their thoughts on the truth that Christ suffered unjustly and He is with us at this very moment to bring comfort to us through the presence of the Holy Spirit who indwells us.
- When we are “picked on” or ostracized for something we’ve done that is wrong how do we feel? Guilty.
- How should we feel when we are “picked on” or ostracized for something we’ve done that is Christ-like? Happy.
- Have you felt guilty or happy lately?

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1. Christians are to keep their **MENTAL** guard up to protect their **FAITH** because Satan will attack our belief through any means he can.
2. Christians are motivated to make a break from worldly **BEHAVIOR** and **RELATIONSHIPS** to glorify God and gain His blessing and protection in this life and avoid His discipline.
3. One way to evaluate how **GODLY** my lifestyle is, is to try to identify what unbelievers who know me think about me: do they see me as **GENUINE** in my faith or as a hypocrite.
4. Maturity in my relationship with Christ is characterized by my non-judgmental **ACCEPTANCE** of fellow Christians despite what their **MATURITY** level in Christ may be.
5. **CONCENTRATING** on the truth of Christ's unjust suffering will help Christians to be **JOYFUL** when they are mistreated unfairly.

So for this week, let's expect to be attacked and be mentally ready to defend our faith and protect each other; **and remember to:**

HOLD FAST