

“How to Face Suffering”

1 Peter 4:1-6

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I. Introduction

- A. Peter calls on the persecuted and suffering saints to “arm yourselves” (v. 1).
 - 1. It’s a military term that refers to a soldier taking up weapons in preparation for battle.
 - 2. The Christian life is not a playground; it is a battleground.
 - 3. As Christians, we face three enemies.
 - a) The world
 - b) The flesh
 - c) The Devil
 - 4. If we are going to “stand,” we need to take up the armor and weapons God has provided
 - a) (Ephesians 6)
 - 5. Peter tells us that there is armor we need to take up if we are to stand triumphantly like Jesus in the face of suffering and persecution from the world.
 - a) All who desire to live godly will suffer.
 - 6. What do we arm ourselves with to stand in suffering?

II. The Right Attitude (1 Peter 4:1)

- A. “Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh” (v. 1)
 - 1. It takes us back to 1 Peter 3:18-22
 - a) Jesus suffered triumphantly in His
 - 1) Crucifixion
 - 2) Proclamation
 - 3) Resurrection
 - 4) Ascension
 - 5) Exaltation
 - b) Jesus knew His suffering would lead to glory.
- B. “Arm yourselves with the same mind or attitude” (v. 1)
 - 1. Have the “mind” or “attitude” of Christ about suffering.
 - a) To do the will of the Father
 - b) To finish the work of the Father
 - c) To be willing to die
 - 2. The reason this attitude is important - “For he that ceased from sin” (v. 1)
 - 3. We, as Christians, are often faced with two possibilities: sin or suffering.

- a) We can live like the unsaved people around us, in sinful pleasures and avoid persecution, or we can live in purity and godliness, bearing the reproach of Christ and suffering for righteousness.
 - b) Jesus said, “Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master” (John 13:16).
- 4. We must be armed with the attitude that we will take up our cross and follow Jesus.
 - a) Our attitudes are weapons, and wrong attitudes will lead to defeat. Right attitudes will lead to victory.

III. Arm Yourself with the Right Ambitions (1 Peter 4:2)

* We should no longer live the rest of our time in the flesh (v. 2)

- A. We don’t live for the lust of men
 - 1. It’s saying “no” to your fleshly ambitions
- B. We live to do the will of God
 - 1. You have two options
 - a) Lust of men (v. 2)
 - b) The will of God (v. 2)
 - 2. What is your ambition?
 - a) Arm yourself with an ambition to do God’s will
 - b) (Romans 12)

IV. Arm Yourself with the Right Activities (1 Peter 4:3)

* Don’t do what you once did. Six sins of their past lives:

- A. Lasciviousness
 - 1. “Lewdness”
 - 2. Unrestrained indulgence in primarily sexual immorality
- B. Lust
 - 1. The gratification of unlawful appetites of any kind. Most likely referring to sexual sins
- C. Excess of wine
 - 1. “Drunkenness”
 - 2. It often leads to a weakening of willpower and yielding to immorality

D. Reveling

1. “Orgies”

E. Banqueting

1. “Carousals”
2. Wild drinking parties that lead to sinful, wild behavior

F. Abominable idolatries

1. The worship of idols, with all their associated sexual and drunken behavior
2. Sinful man has not changed. People still worship false gods
 - a) Bacchus (wine)
 - b) Aphrodite (god of sexual love)
 - c) Mammon (money and possessions)
3. Arm yourself with the worship of the true and living God, who is holy. Live a holy life in a lustful, wicked world
 - a) A holy life is a powerful weapon in the hands of God

V. Arm Yourself with the Right Associations (1 Peter 4:4)

A. “They think it strange.”

1. Literally- “astonishment” or “perplexity”
2. The unsaved person doesn’t understand

B. “You run not with them to the same excess of riot.”

1. “Overflowing dissipation”
 - a) Used for the Prodigal Son

C. “Speaking evil of you”

1. “They heap abuse on you”

D. You are a child of God (a new family)

1. You are dead to the world
2. (Psalm 1)
3. “Don’t be conformed (Romans 12)
4. Illustration- Peter sitting at the fire

VI. Arm Yourself with the Right Assurance (1 Peter 4:5-6)

A. You can have absolute assurance that a day of judgment is coming (v. 5)

1. “Sheep and goats” (Matthew 25)
2. “Great white throne” (v. 5)

B. “For this cause” or “for this reason”

1. Because judgment day is coming
2. The gospel is preached
 - a) (1 Corinthians 15)
3. To them that are dead?
4. They might be judged according to men in the flesh
5. But living according to God in the Spirit
 - a) They are in heaven with God
 - b) The ultimate victory is ours
 - c) Assurance of eternal life
 - d) There is no need to fear
 - e) Death for the Christian is coronation

VII. Conclusion

A. “It is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment” (Hebrews 9:27).

1. Where will you go when you die?
2. Do you have an assurance of salvation?
3. Jesus took your judgment so you can be forgiven and be with God in heaven
 - a) Realize
 - b) Repent
 - c) Receive by faith in God