

## **"The Believer's Suffering"**

### **Part 5**

#### **1 Peter 3:13-5:14**

**Introduction:** Tonight as we return to our study in 1 Peter, we have come to chapter 4 which is a continuation of the previous chapter and thoughts. We are in a section where Peter is teaching his readers concerning suffering. The suffering he is teaching about is suffering for doing what is right. Keep in mind Peter is writing to believers who are or will be suffering for being followers of Jesus Christ. In 1 Peter 3 Peter pointed to Jesus as our Example.

#### **Notice 1 Peter 3:13-18**

Now as we get to 1 Peter 4, we shall see the application of these verses.

### **Serving God in Difficult Times**

#### **A. Attitudes that Glorify God**

##### **1. An attitude of commitment.**

#### **Notice 1 Peter 4:1a**

When we are faced with suffering, we are to arm ourselves with the same mind which Jesus had. This is a call to you and me to be as committed to glorifying God as our Lord was committed to suffering so that He could provide salvation for every sinner in the world. It is this same commitment that God is calling for in us.

This is what Jesus was calling for in Matthew 16.

#### **Matthew 16:24**

*<sup>24</sup> Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.*

To take up our cross is to be fully committed and determined to stay the course no matter the cost. This is what Peter is saying to his readers. He was calling on them to be as committed to serving the Lord as Jesus was committed to serving the Father.

Too many times believers start out saying they are committed but then they encounter opposition, and they abandon the course. Others get pulled away by the flesh's desire for the world and the "things" that are in the world. This all then raises a question, "How can a believer stay committed in this world and in the face of opposition?"

Notice 1 Peter 4:1a again.

We are to "ARM" ourselves with the same mind that Jesus had. This is the same idea that Paul had when he wrote to the Philippians.

**Philippians 2:5-8**

<sup>5</sup> Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

<sup>6</sup> *Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:*

<sup>7</sup> *But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:*

<sup>8</sup> *And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*

Jesus was determined that He would endure whatever the Father allowed because there was a cause. The cause was there were sinners who needed a Savior.

**Hebrews 12:1-2**

*Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,*

<sup>2</sup> *Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

Isaiah speaks of the suffering of our Lord.

**Isaiah 53:7-11**

<sup>7</sup> *He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.*

<sup>8</sup> *He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.*

<sup>9</sup> *And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.*

*<sup>10</sup> Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.*

*<sup>11</sup> He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.*

Getting back to 1 Peter 4:1 again, Peter tells his readers that there is a need to ARM themselves with the same mind. The word ARM here is not the word for light armor but it is the word for heavy armor. We are in a battle, and we all need to be prepared for spiritual attacks. God has not promised to carry us to heaven on flowery beds of ease. He has not promised great prosperity and good health and long life. He has not promised that there will not be pain and hardships for us who know Jesus Christ. Those who look for the path of ease and expect that life as a Christian will be one of great prosperity and popularity are in for a major shock. It is often the opposite.

Peter was a man who had learned to arm himself for battle. He had learned what was needed to stand against the fiery darts of the Devil. Let me show you what it looks like to be armed with the same mind that Jesus had.

#### **Acts 12:1-6**

*Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church.*

*<sup>2</sup> And he killed James the brother of John with the sword.*

*<sup>3</sup> And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. (Then were the days of unleavened bread.)*

*<sup>4</sup> And when he had apprehended him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people.*

*<sup>5</sup> Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him.*

*<sup>6</sup> And when Herod would have brought him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains: and the keepers before the door kept the prison.*

In the face of death Peter was able to sleep between two soldiers. That takes a rock-solid mind that is stayed on Jesus Christ.

The mind is the battle field. It is so important that we arm ourselves to protect our minds because when the enemy starts to shoot his darts and one or more get in the mind, we will most likely abandon our commitment. Notice Paul's instructions concern the armor of God and especially the shield of faith.

**Ephesians 6:11-16**

*<sup>11</sup> Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.*

*<sup>12</sup> For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*

*<sup>13</sup> Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.*

*<sup>14</sup> Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;*

*<sup>15</sup> And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;*

*<sup>16</sup> Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.*

Paul gives us one of the keys to arming ourselves so as to protect the mind.

**Philippians 4:4-9**

*<sup>4</sup> Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.*

*<sup>5</sup> Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.*

*<sup>6</sup> Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.*

*<sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

*<sup>8</sup> Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever*

things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

<sup>9</sup> Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

If we are going to arm ourselves with the mind of Jesus Christ it is going to require sacrifice. It takes time in the Word of God to know the Lord better. This means that we are going to need to eliminate that which would keep us from time with God. Many believers live defeated lives because they are not willing to sacrifice. They desire victory but only if it is easily attained. But easy victory was never promised but instead sacrifice is expected.

**Matthew 5:29-30**

<sup>29</sup> And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

<sup>30</sup> And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

Let us now get back to Peter.

**Notice 1 Peter 4:1**

We need to look closely at the second half of this verse.

***"for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin:"***

The question we raise here is, "What is Peter talking about?" We know that many have suffered for their faith, but sin has not been terminated in their lives. Peter is referencing the Truth which Paul revealed in Romans 6.

**Romans 6:6-8, 11-14**

<sup>6</sup> Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

<sup>7</sup> For he that is dead is freed from sin.

<sup>8</sup> Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:

<sup>11</sup> Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

<sup>12</sup> Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

<sup>13</sup> Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

<sup>14</sup> For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

When we were saved, we were crucified with Christ and so because of the cross the power of sin has been broken. We suffered with Christ when we were crucified with Him so now sin's grip has been broken. This is the idea which Peter has here. To "cease from sin" is to cease from practicing sin.

Notice the words of Chuck Swindoll;

*"Peter's point is clear. Christ didn't send us into the world as vacationers on a self-guided tour of a playground but as soldiers on a tour of duty in a battlefield. We're not called to kick back, relax, take in the scenery, and wait for our Guide to take us home. We're engaged in a fierce conflict on foreign soil. We need to arm ourselves with spiritual armor to withstand the temptations of this world. Peter says if you have been conformed to Christ's death and resurrection, the power of sin has been broken (4:1). Because the old person you used to be has died with Christ, you are now free to live with Christ."*

#### **Notice 1 Peter 4:2**

Because sin's power is broken, we are now free to live the rest of our time on earth in the will of God.

#### **Conclusion:**

We have everything we need to live lives of holiness.

#### **2 Peter 1:3-4**

<sup>3</sup> According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:

<sup>4</sup> Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.