



Arm yourself with the Mind of Christ

Sunday March 7, 2021

¹ Peter 4:1-11 (ESV) Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same way of thinking, for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, ²so as to live for the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for human passions but for the will of God. ³For the time that is past suffices for doing what the Gentiles want to do, living in sensuality, passions, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and lawless idolatry. ⁴With respect to this they are surprised when you do not join them in the same flood of debauchery, and they malign you; ⁵but they will give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. ⁶For this is why the gospel was preached even to those who are dead, that though judged in the flesh the way people are, they might live in the spirit the way God does.

⁷The end of all things is at hand; therefore, be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers. ⁸Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. ⁹Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. ¹⁰As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: ¹¹whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Introduction: The believers Peter was writing to were facing persecution and hardship for the sake of Christ. It's in times like these that believers are most tempted to give in and compromise their faith and behave with self-interest and self-preservation.

Peter reminds them that living a life of holiness and doing the will of God requires intentionality and self-sacrifice. It requires being armed. It requires preparation.

Arm yourself by looking to Jesus as the ultimate model

1 Peter 4:1a (ESV) Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh...

Jesus modeled intentional obedience and Holiness when he faced the plots and persecution of the religious leaders and ultimately the death sentence at the hands of the Romans. He was intentional in his resistance to the pressures of the world around him that attempted to sidetrack and keep Him from realizing His ultimate mission of redemption.

His final prayer in the garden of Gethsemane sums up His way of thinking when facing the ultimate price of suffering.

Matthew 26:39 (ESV) And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will."

John 6:38 (NLT) For I have come down from heaven to do the will of God who sent me, not to do my own will.

Arm yourself by being intentional as Jesus was

1 Peter 4:1 (ESV) Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same way of thinking, for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin

To arm yourself requires intentionality. As a soldier going to battle we must be prepared to face hardship and persecution.

If we are to live a life that honors God then we need to be armed (be prepared) with the same kind of thinking and determination that Jesus had. He didn't live to do His will but to do the will of His Father.

Philippians 2:5-8 (NCV) In your lives you must think and act like Christ Jesus. ⁶ Christ himself was like God in everything. But he did not think that being equal with God was something to be used for his own benefit. ⁷ But he gave up his place with God and made himself nothing. He was born as a man and became like a servant. ⁸ And when he was living as a man, he humbled himself and was fully obedient to God, even when that caused his death—death on a cross.

Arm yourself by responding to the call of dying to self and living for God

1 Peter 4:2-3 (ESV) so as to live for the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for human passions but for the will of God. ³ For the time that is past suffices for doing what the Gentiles

want to do, living in sensuality, passions, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and lawless idolatry.

Peter tells the believers that their duty in following the world was over. They were called to be different from the world. They were called to die to self not to serve self. They were no longer called to follow the currents of self-pleasure and lawless idolatry.

Their passion, because of what Christ had done, was to serve and live for God.

Paul gave the same kind of exhortation in his letter to the believers in Rome.

Romans 13:12-14 (NLT) The night is almost gone; the day of salvation will soon be here. So remove your dark deeds like dirty clothes, and put on the shining armor of right living.
¹³ Because we belong to the day, we must live decent lives for all to see. Don't participate in the darkness of wild parties and drunkenness, or in sexual promiscuity and immoral living, or in quarreling and jealousy. ¹⁴ Instead, clothe yourself with the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. And don't let yourself think about ways to indulge your evil desires.

As Christians we must not allow ourselves to be pressed into the mold of the world. The mold of their dress, their talk, their actions, their entertainment, their philosophies, their goals or ambitions.

We are called to be Christlike in our thinking and living.

Armed yourself to be criticized and looked down upon by the world

1 Peter 4:4 (ESV) With respect to this they are surprised when you do not join them in the same flood of debauchery, and they malign you

Living a life of holiness will not always be rewarded by everyone. Especially those who you used to party with on a regular basis.

As Christ followers we can at times expect people to see us as strange or even attack us for being different.

1 Peter 4:4 (AMP) In [connection with] all this, they [the unbelievers] are resentful *and* surprised that you do not [think like them, value their values and] run [hand in hand] with *them* into the same excesses of dissipation *and* immoral freedom, and they criticize *and* abuse *and* ridicule you *and* make fun of your values.

Arm yourself to face criticism because of your faith in Christ. Many people will think of us as *strange* because of our beliefs and lifestyle. When Christ came, he was not surprised by his sufferings; he predicted it would come from the beginning. We should not be surprised as well.

Arm yourself by staying focused on the mission

1 Peter 4:7-11 (ESV) The end of all things is at hand; therefore, be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers. ⁸ Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. ⁹ Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. ¹⁰ As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: ¹¹ whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Conclusion: Living a life of holiness and doing the will of God requires intentionality and self-sacrifice. It requires being armed. It requires preparation.

- Arm yourself by looking to Jesus as the ultimate model
- Arm yourself by being intentional as Jesus was
- Arm yourself by responding to the call of dying to self and living for God
- Arm yourself to be criticized and looked down upon by the world
- Arm yourself by staying focused on the mission