

Because Christ gave Himself for us on the cross, we should make up our minds that we will live the remainder of our lives in obedience to Him, loving and ministering to one another.

¹ Forasmuch 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.

“Forasmuch [therefore; because] then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh” - In the previous chapter Peter has been telling us that in order to face our own suffering we are to look at the example of Jesus, the One Who suffered for us on the cross. We should look to and follow His example of total sacrifice.

“arm [furnish; equip] yourselves likewise with the same mind” - Peter is writing to Christians facing persecution and he is urging them to prepare themselves with the same mind (attitude or thought pattern) that Jesus Christ had. Like a soldier arming himself for battle, we should arm ourselves with the same mind that Christ had. What mind did Christ have that made Him willing to die?

- 1) **He loved us** enough to give His life for us so we ought to love Him enough to give ours for Him.
- 2) **He did it in anticipation of joy** - (**Heb. 12:2** “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.”). To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord, so we can anticipate joy after our death.
- 3) **He did it in anticipation of glory** (Jesus on the night he was to be betrayed to be crucified – **John 13:31b** “...Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him.”). We will get a taste of Christ’s glory – **Rom. 8:18** “For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the *glory which shall be revealed in us.*”
- 4) **His death was not a defeat but a triumph**: **Col. 2:14-15** “¹⁴ Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; ¹⁵ And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.” We share in Christ’s victory: **1 Cor. 15:55-57** “⁵⁵ O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? ⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. ⁵⁷ But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

“for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin” - Peter seems to be using the phrase “suffered in the flesh” as a synonym for death, as that is what Christ did when He “suffered for us in the flesh.” The context of these first three verses of this chapter seem to indicate that Peter is not necessarily speaking of physical death when he says that “he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin.” The “he” is referring generically to anyone who has experienced the new birth and has died to sin. In fact, vs. 1b-2 seem to parallel the idea that Paul was conveying in **Rom. 6:6-12**. After explaining that our “old man” (our old life before salvation) was crucified on the cross in Christ, Paul points out that we are now dead to sin:

Rom. 6:11-12 “¹¹ Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. ¹² Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.”

The idea that we have died to our old life of sin is repeated in other places; here are a few:

Gal. 2:20 “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”

Col. 3:3-4 “³ For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.”

“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” - This verse mirrors the idea in Rom. 6:12. Since Christ died on the cross to redeem us from sin and we have “suffered in the flesh” (died) then we should not spend the rest of our lives in the pursuit of the desires of our flesh but seeking 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, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, 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:

“For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles” - We have spent enough of our prior life (before salvation) in doing the “will of the Gentiles” (doing the things that the Gentiles [unbelievers] desire to do).

“when we walked in lasciviousness [unrestrained by law or morality], lusts [following the desires of the flesh], excess of wine, revellings [drunken behavior], banquetings [drunken parties], and abominable idolatries” - Peter gives us a sample of the types of sins that we may have taken part in when we were doing “the will of the Gentiles” before Christ redeemed us.

“Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess [overflowing] of riot [moral abandon], speaking evil of you” - They don’t understand why you no longer want to take part in the same things that they enjoy doing or that you used to enjoy, and either make fun or criticize you for it. They may accuse you of being “holier than thou” or not being “an adult.”

⁵ Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick 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.

“Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick [living] and the dead” - When Christ returns He will judge those who are currently alive as well as those who have already died. All are accountable to God.

“For for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead” - Referring to those who had heard and responded to the gospel and later died (perhaps martyred). The gospel was preached to them to give them an opportunity to escape the judgment that they could not escape through death.

“that they might be judged according to men in the flesh” - They were judged according to men’s ideas and opinions who would condemn and possibly kill them for following Christ.

“but live according to God in the spirit” - But even in death (of their flesh), they will still be spiritually alive. **John 11:25** (at the tomb of Lazarus) *“Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:”*

⁷ But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.

“But the end [culmination] of all things is at hand” - Peter is speaking of the day when Christ returns and establishes His kingdom on earth, fulfilling all the prophecies concerning Him. If Peter felt this event was “at hand” in his day, how much closer is it today?

“be ye therefore sober [in one’s right mind; to exercise self-control], and watch [to be calm; not caught up with emotion] unto prayer” - Knowing that Christ’s return is near, we are not to panic or get beside ourselves when we are persecuted or worry about the prospect of giving our lives for Christ. We are to calm ourselves through prayer and allow our trust in God to govern our behavior.

⁸ And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. ⁹ Use hospitality one to another without grudging.

“And above all things have fervent [stretched out] charity [agape; selfless love] among yourselves” - We should love one another with the selfless love that comes from God. The word for “fervent” means “stretched out” as in loving to the fullest extent possible.

“for charity shall cover the multitude of sins” - This comes from **Prov. 10:12** *“Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all sins.”* Love is willing to forgive those who have sinned against us. God’s love covered our sins and our love can cover other’s sins.

“Use hospitality one to another without grudging [murmuring; muttering]” - Hospitality is love in action. Sometimes we go through the actions of love without actually meaning it. Peter says that we should show love to one another without grumbling under our breath or complaining about the trouble or expense or that the person doesn’t really deserve it.

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.

The Greek word for “minister” means to “to serve; to supply the needs of someone.” God has demonstrated His grace in manifold (various) ways by giving to each of us the honor of being a steward of the grace He’s shown to us as an individual. One of the ways God demonstrates His grace is by giving us one or more spiritual gifts, not to use selfishly on ourselves, but to use for the benefit of other believers as well. Whatever gift God has given us, we should use it to serve one another in love.

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.

“If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God” - If a man’s gift is to speak (preaching, teaching, or witnessing), then he should speak what God has given him. He should not speak his own ideas or opinions but only what God has given him to say from His word.

“if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth” - Anyone who ministers should only minister with the abilities that God has given him. Too many attempt to minister in the way that they want to be able to minister rather than in the way that God has actually gifted them. They should not neglect the gift that God has given them because they would rather have had another gift. They should also not attempt to minister outside their gifting just because someone else thinks they should.

“that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ” - God did not give us our gift in order to bring glory to ourselves, but so that He would be glorified. God is glorified when everyone is using the gifts that God gave them in the way He intended. The name of Jesus Christ is exalted as each person exercises their spiritual gifts to their fullest extent.

“to whom be praise and dominion [strength; power] for ever and ever. Amen” - Peter demonstrates the importance of glorifying God by praising God himself. God is worthy of all the praise and honor we can give Him.