

Bible Study 02-26-2025

Rev. Debbie Sexton

"Be Encouraged"

1 Peter 4:1-2, 7-13 KJV

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;

How did Christ Suffer? How was Christ armed? What is expected of us?

1 Peter 2:21 NIV *To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in His steps.*

Peter offers encouragement to the Jewish Christians and all believers everywhere how their life with Christ began. Christ took the penalty for the sins of the world, and died on the cross. Because of this selfless act, Christians are united with Christ in His resurrection and its victory over sin. We who are united with Christ are armed with the strength that only Jesus can provide to help us fight temptations.

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.*

Our transformation in Christ should reveal our new life in Him. In the old life, we were driven by our own desires. But in Christ our motives have changed. No longer will you spend the rest of your lives chasing your own desires, but you will be anxious to do the will of God.

Spend and invest "the rest of your time" in that which is lasting and satisfying. Avoid giving in to the world and fleshy desires thereby "wasting the rest of your time". The will of God is not hard nor is it a burden. It is a divine promise and enablement that makes all burdens light. The will of God comes from the heart of God and is an expression of His love.

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

We have more time behind us than we do ahead. Let us be intentional in our efforts for Christ. Stay focused, alert, prayerful and love others on purpose. Make an impact. Only what you do for Christ will last.

8 *And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.*

John 13:34 *A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.*

35 *By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*

9 *Use (offer) hospitality one to another without grudging.*

To provide and meet the needs of others. Real love is generous, and real generosity is free of resentment. We are to remember that our hospitality is an expression of love in response to God's love for us.

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.*

All kinds of people make up the community of faith. This diversity is part of God's plan, so that His people can be equipped to do all kinds of service. We are different by design and are differently empowered by God's Spirit (**1 Corinthians 12**). From this perspective, our differences are gifts, the result of God's grace for each of His people. To minister one to another is to serve others to the full extent that God enables, just as He has generously served and blessed us. Withholding from service or doing good to others is to hold back on God. God's grace compels us to live as if we belong to Christ because we do. Every Christian has at least one spiritual gift that he/she must use to build up the church and glorify God.

12 *Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:*

No suffering comes our way but that which God has purposed for our good and for His glory. Christians should not view suffering as a negative experience; it is part of God's divine plan.

Romans 8:28 KJV

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.

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.*

Song: "Be Encouraged" by Fred Hammond