

WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU?

1 Peter 4:1-6

"The Ugly American" Syndrome—the only understanding people from other nations have of our country is based on the lifestyle they see us live out before them.

Since our citizenship is in heaven, this isn't our home. We are on foreign soil. We need to be on our best behavior or those who watch us will get a poor idea of what our homeland is like.

The Christian hope should make a difference in our lives, even when suffering. Peter now emphasizes this principle by calling on the reader to maintain a good testimony, even if it causes him to suffer.

Importance of good deeds 2:11-12

Importance of submission 2:13-3:7

Suffering for good deeds 3:8-22

Specific application 4:1-11

Peter now makes a direct application to our lives, based on Christ's example:

**DECIDE THAT YOU'RE WILLING TO SUFFER UNJUSTLY
IN ORDER TO DO GOD'S WILL—rather than man's
OUR SUPREME EXAMPLE 4:1a**

Therefore, since Christ suffered and died, the just for the unjust, we ought to assume the same attitude He had.

<= 3:18

OUR TRANSFORMED ATTITUDE 4:1b-2

We're to be equipped (prepared, armed) with the same thought (intent).

Christ's attitude toward suffering: an unswerving commitment to do God's will.

That was His mindset that we are to arm ourselves with also:

He who suffered physically (Christ, then, by implication, us too) has been kept from sin in order to live (conduct himself) by the will of God rather than human desires.

Kistemaker – "The verb *arm yourselves*, which Peter used to stir believers to action, is a military term which refers to a soldier putting on his weapons to fight the enemy (Rom. 13:12; 2 Cor. 6:7; 10:4; Eph. 6:11)." In this we are to identify ourselves with Christ – "also". Suffering was the Lord's weapon to defeat the enemy. It should be ours also.

"May the Mind of Christ My Savior"

"Should Jesus Bear the Cross Alone"

Arm yourself with this attitude: the one who has suffered in the flesh, unjustly as He did, has stopped sinning in order to live for God's will in the time remaining.

He's stopped fighting back and sinning by trying to get out of this mess. The sin is trying to have man's "druthers" and escape from the suffering. Christ was willing to suffer unjustly in order to avoid sinning and do God's will.

Grudem: "Whoever has suffered for doing right, and has still gone on obeying God in spite of the suffering it involved, has made a clear break with sin."

=> in order that he might no longer live
by man's desires
but by God's will

In contrast to pagan attitudes, he shows that obeying God, not avoiding hardship, is the most important motivation for his or her action. Obedience to God is more important than our normal desire to avoid pain. Just as it was for Him (remember in the garden?)

He left man's way of thinking about suffering and, therefore, kept away from sin in this matter. He wanted God's will more than His own. He stopped sinning in His attitude in order to do God's will. So should we.

Man's way: when you suffer unjustly, fight back.

God's way: imitate Christ's example

He didn't fight back

He didn't talk back

He suffered unjustly and brought us to God!

Will we follow God's will, like Christ did?

Or, man's will, as pagans do?

OUR FORMER PAGAN LIFESTYLE 4:3

After stating the general principle, **Peter goes on to explain specifically what a life that conforms to God's will looks like.**

Neg.– We won't go on living the same old lifestyle.

We look different.

From a negative viewpoint he demonstrates that we won't continue the same way as other men (4:3-6).

We used to live that way.

We've already wasted enough of our lives, lived long enough (too long!), doing things man's way.
– acting like pagans!

Man's way produces ugly fruit (cf. Gal. 5:19-21)!

No article–all plural–These are the kinds of actions we continually pursued:

– sensuality–multiple acts of *unbridled* lust and lawlessness–licentious conduct.

- lusts–natural desires and passions
- drunkenness–
- carousals–village festivals, fiestas = religious orgies
- drinking parties–
- abominable idolatries–lit., "lawless idolatries" = lawless forms of idol worship

Demonic idol worship drove them to do things that even the civil law of pagan countries prohibited (cf. such demonic worship today)
That's the fruit of doing things the pagan way.

DABBLING AND WALLOWING

A newspaper article bore the headline: "Man Wallows in Putrid River." The Associated Press news release described this person's jump into a filthy stream. Commenting on his experience, the man said it was "almost like going through pudding." Unbelievably, some people paid \$10 apiece to witness the spectacle. Called "The Celebration of Slime," the event featured a punk-rock band. The beer-swilling crowd, many of them wearing green nail polish, chanted, "Slime, slime, slime!"

We lived that lifestyle long enough.–now we live for the will of God.

THEIR PRESENT PAGAN REACTION 4:4

When we turn from that way to God's way our old gang will never understand what it's all about.

lit, "It will seem foreign to them"

Our attitude toward suffering unjustly is just one part of that transformation.

People can't understand why we take the attitude we take toward suffering, but they can't understand why we don't run alongside of them anymore either.

- Why we don't go on in the same rapid pouring out of unrestrained indulgence.
- a flood, rapid overflow

– of wastefulness, of an abandoned life, unsavable incorrigibility

So they start to attack you. There's something wrong with you—you're out of your gourd!

They heap (verbal, mainly) abuse on you:

"What's happened to you?"

"Did you get religion?"

"Have you become square?" etc.

At least it's clear why we're suffering—it's not for doing wrong!

LB— *"Of course, your former friends will be very surprised when you don't eagerly join them any more in the wicked things they do, and they will laugh at you in contempt and scorn."*

In the **Reader's Digest**, December 1982, a marvelous little piece of philosophy appeared that may be helpful to you this year. It is entitled "Anyway."

People are unreasonable, illogical and self-centered. Love them anyway.

If you do good, people will accuse you of selfish ulterior motives. Do good anyway.

If you are successful, you will win false friends and true enemies. Succeed anyway.

Honesty and frankness make you vulnerable. Be honest and frank anyway.

The good you do today will be forgotten tomorrow. Do good anyway.

The biggest people with the biggest ideas can be shot down by the smallest people with the smallest minds. Think big anyway.

People favor underdogs but follow only top dogs. Fight for some underdogs anyway.

What you spent years building may be destroyed overnight. Build anyway.

Give the world the best you have and you'll get kicked in the teeth. Give the world the best you've got anyway.

They will mistreat us—because we're different.

THEIR FUTURE ACCOUNTABILITY 4:5

In the end, they will have to give account to God for their actions.

The pagan is to be pitied—he is swept along by the destructive forces of evil.

In the end he must stand before his maker as his Judge, not as his Redeemer. 1:17; 2:23

They will have to stand on their own before the Judge.

MISSING A LOT

A young worker ridiculed a devout believer, saying, "I don't see what you Christians get out of life. You say you're happy, but you're missing so much!" The unsaved man had ability, an excellent position, and much of this world's goods, but he loved to indulge in the pleasures of sin. One day this worldly fellow failed to report for work. Eventually, when the police forced open the door of his locked apartment, they found his body sprawled grotesquely on the floor alongside of several empty liquor bottles! When the tragic news of his death reached the Christian, he said with discernment, "Yes, thank God, I AM missing a lot!"

OUR FUTURE REWARD 4:6

Some of them have died because of the persecution.

The gospel was preached to those who now are dead.

This is the reason the gospel was preached to those who have already died,

Some of them have actually *died because of the persecution* that has been turned on them. These had heard the gospel preached to them, so that now, though men have turned on them and judged them in the flesh, they live on spiritually, because God is the One who has ultimately judged them and given them life.

Condemned to death

but alive

-physically

-spiritually

-acc. to human judgment

-acc. to God's judgment

-aor. - one time

-

-pres. - continuing

Wisdom of Solomon 3:1-5

"But the souls of the just are in God's hand, and torment shall not touch them. In the eyes of foolish men they seemed to be dead; their departure was reckoned as defeat, and their going from us as disaster. But they are at peace, for though in the sight of men they may be punished, they have a sure hope of immortality; and after a little chastisement they will receive great blessings, because God has tested them and found them worthy to be his. Like gold in a crucible he put them to the proof, and found them acceptable like an offering burnt whole upon the altar."

The gospel was preached to them so that,
even though they would be condemned by men,
and even died physically
because they are different and not understood
they now live spiritually
because God has judged righteously and
declared them righteous in Christ.

When the bishop of Madras was touring India, he was introduced to a young slave girl who was an outstanding witness for the Lord. By her quiet persistence in telling others of Jesus and His love, she had won many to Christ. As the bishop looked at her, he saw that her face, neck, and arms were badly scarred. She had received many beatings for her faithful testimony. With tears in his eyes he asked, "Child, how could you bear this brutality?" Somewhat surprised, she replied, "Aren't you glad if you can suffer for Christ, sir?" Her humble response spoke to his heart. It reminded him that if one is true to the Savior, he can expect ridicule and even harsh treatment from the world.

*Where are we in this picture?
What does God want us to do about it?*

Am I a soldier of the cross,
a follower of the Lamb,
and shall I fear to own His cause,
or blush to speak His Name?

Must I be carried to the skies
on flowery beds of ease,
while others fought to win the prize,
and sailed through bloody seas?

Are there no foes for me to face?
Must I not stem the flood?
Is this vile world a friend to grace,
to *help me* on to God?

Sure, I must fight if I would reign;
increase my courage, Lord;
I'll bear the toil, endure the pain,
supported by Thy Word.