

A Lively Hope In Troubled Times
The Wonderful Cross
1 Peter 4.1-6

Peter is writing to Christians who are suffering under the worst kind of persecution. They had been driven from their homes, jobs, cities, and had been caused to live continuously running for their lives. We have heard of the catacombs, which were burial tombs, and the multitudes of Christians who lived in those caves among those dead bodies.

These Christians were living in desperate times. These Christians were destitute in every respect of the word. Yet, Peter writes, "*forasmuch as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, . . .*" indicating that Christ's suffering was greater still than all that these saints were forced to endure.

Many are suffering around us today. Yet, our suffering today pales in comparison to the suffering of these first century saints. We must also realize that Peter indicates that like as our suffering pales in comparison to theirs, so theirs pales in comparison to Christ's suffering on Calvary's Cross. What an incredible picture develops as a result of these scriptural truth's

Read Passage

*When I survey the wondrous cross,
On which the prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.*

*See from his head, his hands, his feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down;
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown.*

*Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;*

Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.

[Words written by Isaac Watts in 1707. Tune written by Lowell Mason, 1824.]

The Cross of Christ should bring us to,

A. A New Way of Thinking (vs 1) - "Forasmuch then as Chirst 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." - Christians need to change their way of thinking.

1. Our thinking about Sin (Rom 6.23) - For the wages of sin is death; . . .

Sin, all sin requires a deadly toll.

To live the way of the world or in the "will of the Gentiles" (vs 3) is to live in sinful ways.

1 Peter 4:3 - 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:**

Gal 5.19

- Murder, adultery, and fornication are often high on our deadly sin list.
- But god places lying, stealing, and even being disobedient to parents on His deadly sin list as well.

Look at the list given in Galatians,

Galatians 5:19–21 - Now **the works of the flesh are manifest**, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, ²⁰Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, ²¹Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

2 Tim 3.1

Another list is given in 2 Timothy,

2 Timothy 3:1–5 - This know also, that **in the last days perilous times shall come**. ²For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, **disobedient to parents**, unthankful, unholy, ³Without natural affection, **trucebreakers**, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, ⁴Traitors, heady, highminded, **lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God**; ⁵Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

God's lists of heinous sin is far more encompassing than ours.

Sin, all sin is costly!

**Sin will take you Farther than you want to go,
Sin will cost you more than you want to pay,
Sin will keep you longer than you want to stay.**

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**The Suffering of Christ Should
bring us to,**

A. A New Way of Thinking
1. Our thinking about Sin

How do you think about Sin, Christian? Do you live in the same mind as our Lord Jesus Christ?

Jesus died for our past, present and future sins (Isa 53.5; Heb 12.7-8)

Isaiah 53:5 **But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace** was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

God only chastens his children - Sinning Christians place a deadly toll upon Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 12:7-8 *If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? ⁸But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.*

Every Christian should hate sin with a passion. A Christian that does not hate sin is a Christian who has failed to reckon with the suffering of Christ.

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

A Christian, in knowing how Jesus Christ suffered for our sins, should have a new, born again, holy spirit filled way of thinking about sin.

2. **Our thinking about Suffering (Heb 12.1-6) - "Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin."**

1 Peter 4:1 - 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;

If you fully understand the suffering of Christ for your sin, you will strive diligently to cease from sin.

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The Suffering of Christ Should bring us to,

A. A New Way of Thinking
1. Our thinking about Sin

When your thinking says, "If I sin then I can be forgiven. (1 John 1.19)" Your making accommodation for your sin and your sinful desire. You need to remember that your sin, every sin, cause the Lord Jesus Christ to suffer miserably.

When you fully understand the suffering of Christ and the suffering He endured because of your sin, you will stop making excuses for your sin and sinfulness. You will indeed strive against and even hate sin.

Why? **Because you will not allow yourself to cause a Lord and Savior that loves you as much as the Lord Jesus Christ to suffer for anymore of your sins.**

As a human being you may still occasionally succumb to a few temptations to sin but you will utterly abhor your sinful weakness and the suffering it causes your Lord. Because of this you will strive with determination and conviction to cease from sin.

If you are willing to accept and allow sin in your life you should prayerfully consider the depth of your relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 4:1 - 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;

3. **Our thinking about Service (vs 2, Rom 12.1-2) - 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.****

Rom 12.1

A born again Christian that understands the suffering of Christ on Calvary's Cross should want to **live according to the will of God.** We should have a new way of thinking about service, or who we seek to serve in the way we live our lives.

The Word of God says it this way,

Romans 12:1-2 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye **present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.** ²And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

A Christian who comes to understand the incredible, unspeakable suffering of Christ will find it impossible to fail to yield himself to Christ.

"Sin is costly, Christ paid the price for your sin, Yield to Him today."

B. A New Way of Living (vs 2,6) - "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 . . . **but live according to God in the Spirit."**

Consider,

1. Your Priorities - "That he no longer should live the rest of his time **in the flesh to the lusts of men, . . ."**

The way we think is indelibly linked to the way we live. If you want to know what is inside of a person's heart, just watch their lives.

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The Suffering of Christ Should bring us to,

A. A New Way of Thinking

1. Our thinking about Sin
2. Our thinking about Suffering

People make time for what's important to them. When it comes to choices they will always reveal their priorities.

If Christ is important to them then they will make decisions that will reflect that priority.

If worldly things are important to them then they will make decisions that reflect that priority. They will place many worldly things before their service to God or Christ.

If your actions point toward the things of the world, rather than the things of God, then where is your heart.

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The Suffering of Christ Should bring us to,

A. A New Way of Thinking

1. Our thinking about Sin
2. Our thinking about Suffering
3. Our thinking about Service

B. A New Way of Living

1. Your Priorities

“Recognition of the suffering of Christ will not manifest itself in a worldly life It will always reveal itself in a transformed life.”

2. **Your Passion (vs 2, Mark 12.29-30,31; Luke 19.10; Eph 5.25) - 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.****

Mark 12.29

A Christian that has come to understand the suffering of Christ will be a Christian that will **seek God's will over his own will.** The things of God will become a priority in his life.

He will,

- **Love God (Mark 12.29-30) – The First and Greatest Commandment**

Mark 12:29-30 *And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: ³⁰And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.*

Surrender to God - A Living Sacrifice

- **Love the things God loves**

- His neighbor (Mark 12.31)

Mark 12:31 And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.

- Lost Souls (Luke 19.10)

Luke 19:10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

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A. A New Way of Thinking

1. Our thinking about Sin
2. Our thinking about Suffering
3. Our thinking about Service

B. A New Way of Living

1. Your Priorities
2. Your Passion

3. **Your Persuasion (vs 6)** - . . .but live according to God in the Spirit.

The indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit of God will become your persuasion.

The Holy Spirit will convict, compel, and counsel you.

C. A New Way of Witnessing (vs 3-4) - "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:"

1. **You will witness through your conversion** - There will be a noticeable change in the way you live your life.

Your old friends will notice it and think it rather strange.

2. **You will witness through your convictions** - There will be a noticeable change in the way your think about life.

You will develop a biblical mindset as you mature in Christ.

The world, the flesh, and your adversary will always resist a change based on a relationship with Jesus Christ.

CrossRoads Baptist Church, Feb 21, 2021

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A. A New Way of Thinking

1. Our thinking about Sin
2. Our thinking about Suffering
3. Our thinking about Service

B. A New Way of Living

1. Your Priorities
2. Your Passion
3. Your Persuasion

C. A New Way of Witnessing