

A Study of  
1 Peter 4

*Serving God  
In the  
Last Days*  
– Part 4

## The Epistle of 1 Peter 4 Covers:

### Attitudes for End-Times Believers (1 Peter 4:1-2)

1. Attitude of Commitment (1 Peter 4:1-2)
2. Attitude of Wisdom (1 Peter 4:3-6)
3. Attitude of Prayer (1 Peter 4:7)
4. Attitude of Love (1 Peter 4:8-11)

For more information, see Blue Letter Study Guide

"[https://www.blueletterbible.org/comm/guzik\\_david/studyguide\\_lpe/lpe\\_4.cfm](https://www.blueletterbible.org/comm/guzik_david/studyguide_lpe/lpe_4.cfm)"

## *The Epistle of 1 Peter 4 Covers:*

### Trials of End-Time Believers (1 Peter 4:12-13)

1. Enduring Trials with the Right Attitude  
(1 Peter 4:12-13)
2. Difference between suffering as a Christian  
and suffering as an Evildoer (1 Peter 4:14-16)
3. Committing your soul to God in the midst  
of suffering (1 Peter 4:17-19)

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## 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 reed 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.

## Attitude of Commitment

In the last days, we need to have a commitment to God that will endure through many hardships:

Jesus communicated the same idea when He told us that anyone who would come after Him must pick up his cross and follow him (Matthew 16:24). Taking up the cross means that you are committed and not looking back!

*He who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin:* When someone suffers persecution for the sake of Jesus, it profoundly changes their outlook regarding sin and the pursuit of the lusts of the flesh. He is more likely to live the rest of his time in the flesh *not* for the lusts of men, but for the will of God.

"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." ("The First Epistle of Peter, An Introduction" by Wayne A. Grudem)

The phrase *has ceased from sin* "Depicts the spiritual state of the victorious sufferer. It carries a note of triumph; he has effectively broken with a life dominated by sin. It need not mean that he no longer commits any act of sin, but that his old life, dominated by the power of sin, has been terminated." – ("Enduring Word Bible Commentary" – Heibert)

## 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:

4 Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you:

## Attitude of Wisdom

In the last days, Christians should live with an attitude of wisdom:

For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles: Peter understands that we all have spent time living like the world but are now called to live like Christians. It is a profound, and foolish, waste of time for Christians to live like the world, and we must simply stop being double-minded and start living as Christians.

Lasciviousness: This word is descriptive of the list of sins that Peter understood should only mark the past life of Christians, and not the present. This word means "to live without any sense of moral restraint, especially in regard to sexual immorality and violence."

## Attitude of Wisdom

In the last days, Christians should live with an attitude of wisdom:

Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot: When the world looks at our godly living, they think it strange that we do not follow them in their 'excess of riot':

"A strong and expressive metaphor, especially in countries where, after violent rain, the gutters are suddenly swollen and pour their contents together with violence into a common sewer. Such is the apostolic figure of vicious companies rushing together in filthy confusion for reckless indulgence and effusion in sin." – C. Wordsworth

Speaking evil of you: When we don't participate in the sin around us, we convict those who practice their sin, and they don't like that - so they speak evil of us.

# 1 Peter 4



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

6 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.

## Attitude of Wisdom

In the last days, Christians should live with an attitude of wisdom:

They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge: When this account is required, the magnitude of their foolishness will be easily seen.

For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead...: Peter has already told us that Jesus preached to the spirits in prison, preaching a message of judgment (1 Peter 3:19). Apparently during this same time, Jesus also preached a message of salvation to the faithful dead in Abraham's Bosom (Luke 16:22) who anticipated the work of the Messiah for them. This preaching to those who are dead was not the offer of a second chance, but the completion of the salvation of those who had been faithful to God under their first chance.

In doing this, Jesus fulfilled the promise that He would "lead captivity captive" (Ephesians 4:8) and "would proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to those who are bound" (Isaiah 61:1, Luke 4:18).

## 1 Peter 4

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

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.

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.

## Attitude of Prayer

In the last days, Christians should live with an attitude of serious prayer:

*The end of all things is at hand:* If we really believe that we live in the last days, it is all the more appropriate that we give ourselves to prayer.

*Therefore be serious ... in your prayers:* We must give ourselves to serious prayer. As we see the weight of eternity rushing towards us, we dare not take the need for prayer lightly.

*Therefore be ... watchful in your prayers:* We must give ourselves to watchful prayer, having our hearts and minds watching and ready for the return of Jesus Christ. But this also means watching ourselves and watching this world, measuring our readiness for Jesus' coming.

## Attitude of Love

In the last days, Christians should live with an attitude of love:

*Above all things have fervent love for one another:* If these are the last days, how much more important is it to love those you are going to spend eternity with? In light of eternity, we must have fervent love for one another.

*For love will cover a multitude of sins:* Love does cover a multitude of sins, both the sins of the one loving and the sins of the one who is being loved.

*"Where love abounds in a fellowship of Christians, many small offences, and even some large ones, are readily overlooked and forgotten. But where love is lacking, every word is viewed with suspicion, every action is liable to misunderstanding, and conflicts about - to Satan's perverse delight." (Grudem)*

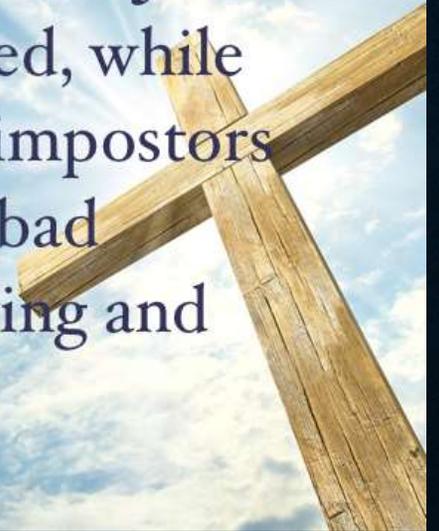
## Last Days Indicator: Lack of Love

**And because  
iniquity shall  
abound, the  
love of many  
will wax cold.  
Matthew 24:12**



Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.

2 Timothy 3:12-13(esv)



## Attitude of Love

In the last days, Christians should live with an attitude of love:

*As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another:* Love will show itself as we give to the church family what God has given us as gifts. As we do so, we are good stewards of the many-faceted (manifold) grace of God given to us.

*In 1 Corinthians 15:10, Paul makes it clear that he was what he was only by God's grace. God's grace toward Paul was not in vain because Paul put his own God-inspired efforts to work with God's grace. The idea is that if we are bad stewards of the manifold grace of God, its as if that grace was given to us in vain. That grace is wasted, because it only comes to us, but doesn't move through us towards others.*

As we serve one another, we do it with the strength God provides, the ability which God supplies - so that to Him belongs the glory and the dominion forever and ever.

## 1 Peter 4

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

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.

14 If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.

15 But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters.

16 Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.

## Enduring trials with the right attitude

In the last days, Christians should understand their time of trial:

Concerning the fiery trial which is to try you: Instead of thinking of trials (even fiery trials) as strange occurrences, we see them as ways to partake of Christ's sufferings. And if we partake of His sufferings, we will also partake of His glory and joy.

*Peter once told Jesus to avoid the suffering of the cross (Mark 8:32-33). "Once it seemed strange to the Apostle Peter that his Master should think of suffering. Now he thinks it strange that He could have imagined anything else." (Meyer)*

Rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy: Our tendency is to embrace the glory and the joy, and to avoid any sharing of Jesus' suffering. Or, we morbidly fixate on the suffering and forget that it is but a necessary prelude to the glory and joy.

## Enduring trials with the right attitude

The difference between suffering as a Christian and suffering as an evildoer:

*If you are reproached for the name of Christ:* Suffering for the name of Christ is a blessing, because it shows that we really are following Jesus, and that we suffer because we are identified with Him.

*Let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody:* Suffering as an evildoer is deserved and brings shame to the name of Jesus. Peter recognizes that not all suffering that Christians experience is suffering in the name of Jesus.

*We understand when Peter writes about the suffering that might come to the murderer, the thief, or the evildoer. Yet we shouldn't be surprised that he also includes the busybody in other people's matters. Such people do suffer a lot of grief and pain, but not for the sake of Jesus!*

## Enduring trials with the right attitude

The difference between suffering as a Christian and suffering as an evildoer:

*If anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed:*

Suffering as a Christian is nothing to be ashamed about, even though the world may despise the suffering Christian. Instead, we should glorify God in these matters.

We don't glorify God *for* suffering. But we do glorify Him *in* suffering, and we glorify Him for what He will accomplish in us and through us with the suffering.

## What is a Christian:

"The name 'Christian' (Christianos), built on the name Christ with the suffix "ianos", a Latin formation (-ianus), denotes a partisan follower.... Christ-*ian* categorized the followers of Christ as 'members of the Christ-party.'  
(Hiebert)

Christians were first known as "disciples," "believers," "the Lord's disciples," or "those who belonged to the Way" before they were known as Christians, first at Acts 11:26. This is the first of three places in the New Testament where the followers of Jesus are named Christians.

- In Acts 11:26 it tells us the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.

## 1 Peter 4

17 For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?

18 And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?

19 Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.

# Enduring trials with the right attitude

Committing your soul to God in the midst of suffering:

*For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God:*

"It is right for judgment to begin at the house of God. There is equity in it; for Christians profess to be better than others, and so they ought to be. They say they are regenerate, so they ought to be regenerate. They say that they are a holy people, separated unto Christ; so they ought to be holy, and separate from sinners, as he was."

(Spurgeon)

*Now is our time of fiery trial:* the ungodly will have their fire later. The fire we endure now purifies us; the fire the ungodly will endure will punish them. Yet we always remember that there is never any punishment from God for us in our sufferings, only purification. For the Christian, the issue of punishment was settled once and for all at the cross, where Jesus endured all the punishment the Christian could ever face from God.

# Enduring trials with the right attitude

## Committing your soul to God in the midst of suffering:

The same fire that consumes straw will purify gold. The fire is the same, but its purpose in application is different, and its effect is different upon the straw and the gold. Even so, Christians do suffer some of the same things the ungodly do, yet the purpose of God is different, and the effect is different.

*If it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?* Peter's sobering application is clear: if this is what God's children experience, what will become of those who have made themselves His enemies? How can they ever hope to stand before the judgment and wrath of God?

Christians can rejoice that the sufferings they face in this life are the worst they will ever face, throughout all eternity. We have seen the worst; those who reject Jesus Christ have seen the *best* of life their eternal existence will ever see.

# Enduring trials with the right attitude

## Committing your soul to God in the midst of suffering:

If the righteous one is scarcely saved: Peter here is alluding to Proverbs 11:31 – "If the righteous will be recompensed on the earth, How much more the ungodly and the sinner." Since this is true – that the salvation of the righteous does not come without difficulty – then it should make us pause if we ourselves or others seem to have an "easy" salvation.

This doesn't mean that *our salvation* is difficult in the sense of earning it or finding a way to deserve it; it is all the free gift of Jesus Christ. Yet our salvation is hard in the sense that the claims of discipleship challenge us and demand that we cast away our idols and our sins. Real discipleship; genuine following after Jesus Christ – is sometimes a hard thing, so we understand why Peter quoted the passage from Proverbs, the righteous one is scarcely saved.

# Enduring trials with the right attitude

## Committing your soul to God in the midst of suffering:

*Commit their souls to Him:* The word "commit" is a technical one, used for leaving money as a deposit with a trusted friend. Such a trust was regarded as one of the most sacred things in life, and the friend was bound by all honor to return the money intact. It is the very word Jesus used when He said, Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit. (Luke 23:46)

When Christians commit their souls to Him, they leave their souls in a safe place. God is a faithful Creator, and we can give ourselves to Him as pliable clay in His hands.

*Faithful Creator:* So much of the agony we put ourselves through in times of trial and suffering has to do with our disregard of God's faithfulness, or of His place as Creator. He is our sovereign Creator, with the right to do with us as He pleases. Yet He is faithful, and will only do what is ultimately best for us.

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