

Approximately 45 minutes Expository



Living for the Will of God in the Last Days:

An Expository Sermon on 1 Peter 4

Opening Prayer:

Father God, we come before You in the mighty name of Jesus. Thank You for Your Holy Word. Thank You for giving us truth in a world filled with confusion. As we open 1 Peter chapter 4, teach us by Your Spirit. Strengthen us to live with courage, holiness, love, and eternal purpose. Help us not just to hear Your Word, but to obey it. And Lord, if anyone hearing this message has never truly been born again, please draw them to Yourself today. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Historical Setting:

Peter is writing to believers who are scattered and suffering. These Christians are living under the shadow of the Roman Empire. The culture around them is increasingly hostile to their faith. Christianity is not popular. It is not protected. It is costly. Peter himself knows what it is to fail, to be restored, and to stand for Christ. And by the time this letter was circulating, the pressure on believers was growing stronger.

So when Peter speaks about suffering, he is not speaking in theory.

- He is not giving comfortable words from an easy life.
- He is speaking as a shepherd preparing God's people to stand firm in hard times.

The Christian life is lived in a battlefield, not a playground.

Peter says much the same thing here. This chapter calls believers to live with spiritual seriousness in the light of Christ's sufferings, Christ's return, and coming eternity.

1 Peter 4:1-3 ... A New Mindset, A New Direction:

1Peter 4:1-3(NIV) *Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because whoever suffers in the body is done with sin.* ² *As a result, they do not live the rest of their earthly lives for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God.* ³ *For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do—living in debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry.*

Peter begins:

“Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude...” (1 Peter 4:1, NIV)

Notice that phrase: **arm yourselves**. That is battle language. Peter is telling us that Christian living is not passive.

- It is intentional.
- It is deliberate.
- It requires readiness.
- We are to put on the mindset of Christ.

👉 What mindset is that?

👉 A willingness to obey God even when obedience brings suffering.

- Jesus did not live for comfort. He lived for the Father’s will. He did not avoid the cross. He endured it. He would rather suffer in righteousness than escape through compromise.

Peter continues:

“...because whoever suffers in the body is done with sin.” (v.1)

Peter is not saying the Christian becomes sinless. Not at all...

He is saying that when a believer chooses obedience over ease, there is a decisive break with the old life.

Something shifts. There is a new seriousness about holiness. There is a new refusal to let sin dominate.

Then verse 2 explains it:

“As a result, they do not live the rest of their earthly lives for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God.” (v.2)

Before Christ, we lived for ourselves. We followed our own desires and were driven by things like pleasure, pride, lust, anger,

greed, and self-will. But when Christ saves us, everything begins to change.

- We now have a new Master,
- a new direction,
- and a new purpose.

The Christian life becomes a life centered on pleasing God and doing His will.

Verse 3 is very direct:

“For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do...”^(v.3)

Peter lists debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing, and detestable idolatry.

He says, in effect, **that old life had enough of your time.**

The world may celebrate sin, but the Christian no longer belongs to that world system.

When Jesus saves a person, the old chapter closes and a new chapter begins.

1 Peter 4:4-6 ... When the World Does Not Understand:

1Peter 4:4-6(NIV)

Peter says:

“They are surprised that you do not join them in their reckless, wild living, and they heap abuse on you.” (v.4)

That is still true today.

👉 When you begin walking closely with Christ, your life starts to look different. The things you once joined in may no longer fit who you are becoming in Him. And when that happens, others often notice. Not everyone will understand that change. Some may respond with confusion, criticism, or discomfort, because a transformed life can be a quiet witness to the power of God.

But Peter says:

“They will have to give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.” (v.5)

As believers, we are not called to live with a spirit of revenge or to feel that we must answer every wrong ourselves.

- God sees fully,
- knows completely,
- and judges perfectly.

👉 Our part is to stay faithful, keep a gracious spirit, and rest in the confidence that the Lord will take care of every matter in His time and in His way.

Verse 6 **....but live according to God in regard to the spirit.** (v.6) reminds us that death is not the end for the believer. Those who die in Christ live before God. The world may judge outwardly, but heaven sees the

true end of the matter. This chapter keeps pushing us to think eternally.

1 Peter 4:7-11 Living Urgently in the Last Days

1Peter 4:7-11(NIV) ⁷ The end of all things is near. Therefore be alert and of sober mind so that you may pray. ⁸ Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. ⁹ Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. ¹⁰ Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. ¹¹ If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

“The end of all things is near. Therefore be alert and of sober mind so that you may pray.” (v.7)

Peter lived with expectancy.

He believed that history was moving toward God’s appointed end, and believers should live with that same outlook.

- Not in panic,
- Not in dramatic guessing about every event,
- and not in fear,

👉 but in readiness and steady confidence in the Lord.

So Peter says, **“....Be alert and of sober mind so that you may pray.”** (v.7) He is calling us to spiritual clarity. He is telling us to stay awake in our hearts, disciplined in our thinking, and serious about the times in which we live.

Why?

Because clear thinking strengthens clear praying.

Prayer is weakened when the heart is distracted and the mind is consumed with lesser things.

But when we remember that Christ is coming and eternity is real, prayer takes on new importance.

- It becomes more urgent,
- more focused,
- and more full of faith.

A distracted believer becomes weak, but a prayerful believer becomes spiritually strong.

If we really believe Jesus is coming, **and He is coming very soon**, then we should live with watchful hearts, clear minds, and lives marked by earnest prayer.

Then Peter says:

“Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.” (v.8)

Peter says, “Above all,” because this matter of love is central to the life of the church. In the last days, when pressures increase and trials come, **believers must not turn against one another.** We must love one another deeply.

This is not a shallow or sentimental love.

👉 It is the kind of love that keeps going.

- It is patient, forgiving, and willing to bear with the weaknesses and failures of others.
- It does not mean we excuse sin or compromise truth.
- But it does mean that love is not eager to shame, expose, or magnify

every fault. Love seeks forgiveness, healing, and restoration.

👉 That is important in every church family, because wherever there are people, there will be weaknesses, misunderstandings, and opportunities for offense.

👉 But deep Christian love helps preserve unity.

It reminds us that we are all people in need of grace. And when we love each other this way, we reflect the heart of Christ, who has loved us with patience, mercy, and unfailing compassion.

Verse 9 says:

“Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling.” (v.9)

That is very practical.

- Open your home.

- Open your life.
- Open your schedule. **And do it without complaining.**

👉 Some of the most powerful ministry does not happen on a stage.

- It happens around a table,
- in a living room,
- in an act of simple kindness done in Jesus' name.

Then verse 10:

“Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others...” (v.10)

Every believer has a gift.

- Not just pastors.
- Not just teachers.
- Not just missionaries.

👉 Every believer.

Spiritual gifts are not for self-promotion.
They are for service.

Peter says if you speak, speak as one speaking the very words of God. If you serve, do it with the strength God provides.

Why?

“So that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ.” (v.11)

That is the goal of ministry: not applause for us, but **glory for Christ.**

1 Peter 4:12-16 Do Not Be Surprised by Fiery Trials:

1Peter 4:12-16(NIV) ¹² Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. ¹³ But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. ¹⁴ If you are insulted

because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. ¹⁵ If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler. ¹⁶ However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name.

Let us look into this.....

“Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you.” (v.12)

Peter says suffering for Christ is not strange. It is normal Christianity in a fallen world.

Sometimes we act shocked when obedience gets costly. But Peter says do not be surprised.

Then he says something even more challenging:

“But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ...” (v.13)

Rejoice?

Yes....

Not because pain itself is good, but because suffering for Christ identifies us with Christ.

It reminds us we belong to Him.

It also prepares us for the joy of His coming glory.

Verse 14 says:

“If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed...” (v.14)

- Not because you are difficult.
- Not because you are rude.

- Not because you are suffering for your own bad decisions.

Verse 15 makes that clear. 🖐️ But if you are insulted because you belong to Jesus, Peter says you are blessed.

Verse 16 says:

“However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name.” (v.16)

- Do not be ashamed of the name Christian.
- Do not hide your loyalty to Christ.
- Do not apologize for biblical truth.

Stand with humility, love, and courage.

1 Peter 4:17-19 ... Judgment Begins with God's House:

1Peter 4:17-19(NIV)¹⁷ For it is time for judgment to begin with God's household; and if it begins with us, what

will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God? ¹⁸ And,

“If it is hard for the righteous to be saved,

what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?”

¹⁹ So then, those who suffer according to God’s will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good.

Peter says....

“For it is time for judgment to begin with God’s household...” (v.17)

Peter is speaking here about God’s refining work in the lives of His people.

The Lord loves His church too much to leave us unchanged.

- So He disciplines,
- corrects,
- and purifies His people.

- He exposes what is false,
- deals with what is fleshly,
- and uses trials to make us more like Christ.

Peter's point is this: if God is doing that kind of purifying work among His own people now, how much more serious will the final judgment be for those who refuse the gospel?

That is why verse 18 carries such weight. Peter is not saying that a true believer's salvation is uncertain. He is reminding us that salvation is not a small or casual matter.

It came at the highest cost....**the suffering and death of Jesus Christ.**

And if the righteous are saved only by the grace of God through Christ, then how terrible it will be for those who reject that grace and stand before God on their own.

Then Peter closes the chapter with this counsel:

“So then, those who suffer according to God’s will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good.” (v.19)

That is a beautiful closing command.
Commit yourself to your faithful Creator.

- He made you.
- He knows you.
- He sees you.
- He will not fail you.

And while you trust Him, continue to do good.

- Keep obeying.
- Keep serving.
- Keep loving.
- Keep standing.

Bringing It All Together:

1 Peter 4 teaches us how to live in hard times.

- Arm yourself with Christ's mindset.
- Leave the old life behind.
- Expect misunderstanding from the world.
- Stay alert in prayer.
- Love deeply.
- Use your spiritual gifts faithfully.
- Do not be surprised by suffering.
- Trust your faithful Creator.

This chapter is not calling us to survival mode.

👉 It is calling us to holy, bold, purposeful living.

- The Christian life is not drifting. It is devotion.
- It is not compromise. It is consecration.
- It is not living for self. It is living for the will of God.

Invitation to Be Born Again:

Now let me speak to anyone hearing this who does not know Jesus Christ personally.

Peter said you have spent enough time living for sin.

Maybe that describes your life.

Maybe you have lived for pleasure, success, money, anger, addiction, or self-rule.

But Jesus Christ suffered for sinners.

- He went to the cross for you.
- He shed His blood for your forgiveness.
- He died in your place.
- And He rose again in victory.

You do not become a Christian by trying harder.

You do not save yourself by turning over a new leaf.

👉 You must be born again.

- You must come to Christ by faith, repent of your sin, and receive Him as Savior and Lord.

If God is speaking to your heart today, you can pray something like this:

Let us Pray.....

“Lord Jesus, I know that I am a sinner.... I believe You died on the cross for my sins and rose again from the dead.... I turn from my old life and ask You to forgive me.... Come into my life.... Save me.... Change me.... I put my trust in You alone as my Savior and Lord. Amen.”

John 3:16-17(NIV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the

world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

Listen....“IF” you prayed this sincerely by faith, on the authority of God’s Word, you are forgiven.

- You are born again.
- Now walk with Jesus.
- Go tell a believer what happen to you.
- Read His Word Daily.
- Pray Constantly.
- Fellowship with other believers.
- Grow in grace.

Closing Prayer:

Let us Pray.....

Father God, thank You for the truth of 1Peter chapter 4. Help us arm ourselves with the attitude of Christ. Strengthen us to live for Your will and not for our old desires. Teach us to pray, to love deeply, to serve faithfully, and to stand boldly when trials come. Refine Your church. Encourage believers. And for those who have trusted Christ today, establish them firmly in the faith. We commit ourselves to You, our faithful Creator. In Jesus' powerful name, Amen.



Matthew 28:19-20