

1 Peter 4:1-11

Week 6 - Living for Christ

? Have you ever done anything unusual to fit in with a group? What happened?

1 Peter 4:1-11 (NIV)

¹ 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. ⁴ They are surprised that you do not join them in their reckless, wild living, and they heap abuse on you. ⁵ But they will have to give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. ⁶ For this is the reason the gospel was preached even to those who are now dead, so that they might be judged according to human standards in regard to the body, but live according to God in regard to the spirit.

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.

? Chapter 4 starts with “therefore” we should arm ourselves with the attitude of Christ in his suffering. How do the previous passages lead us to that conclusion (look at 1 Peter 3:13-22)?

? Knowing that we will always struggle with sin, what does Peter mean when he says whoever suffers in the body is done with sin?

? Look at verses 2-5. As a result of following Christ, how does Peter say our lives will change?

? How might the world respond to this change in our lives?

? Have you experienced a response, positive or negative, from living differently as a Christian?

Possible Answers: Answers will vary. For example, think about how people responded when you first became a Christian.

? As Christians we experience the tension of not being immune to the judgment of the world, even though we know that the state of our spiritual lives should be our primary concern. How has this impacted you, and what encouragement can you take from this passage as you live with this tension?

? Look at verses 7-11. Because “the end of all things is near,” what are the things we should be focused on as we await Christ’s return?

? Looking at verse 7, why does prayer require “an alert and sober mind?”

? Optional question: Knowing we are called to suffer for Christ, what types of things should we pray for in our lives?

? How does verse 10 help shift our perspective of grace being something we receive to something we steward and share with others through service?

For Discussion and Accountability

? Is there an area in our life you should be more willing to “suffer” for God (i.e. are there worldly behaviors you need to address in your life in response to what God has done for you)?

? Peter calls us to serve with the strength that God provides. Are you serving in ways in which you can succeed under your own power or are you serving in ways in which you must wholly depend on God for success? The first option gives you the glory and the second option gives it rightfully to God. What specific gifts can you use this week to serve others selflessly?