

THE BATTLE: WORLD v/s GOD

4:1-6

“Therefore” show that Peter is moving into practical application. Now the emphasis shifts to the related theme of one’s willingness to suffer in order to avoid sinning.

V. 1 (This is the fourth direct reference to Christ suffering in the epistle- 1:11; 2:21; 3:18) Peter will reflect on 3:18 and make it apply to everyday life. Since Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves in the way you think.

1. **Arm yourselves**... referred to a soldier putting on armor, **preparation** for battle
 - a. The battle is describe in more details in verses 3-4
2. **“With the same thought, attitude, purpose.”** It calls for an acceptance of Christ attitude, and a willingness on our part to suffer for righteousness in doing the will of God. (Phil. 2:5-9)
3. **“Because he who suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin”**
 - a. Depicts the spiritual state of victory for those who suffer
 - b. When you identified with Christ, you arm yourself and make a break from sins dominion. The dominate power of sin is terminated (Romans 6:6-7)
 - i. “Done” is a perfect tense, emphasis on a definite break from sin. (2 Cor. 5:17)

V. 2-5 The battle is further explained: Break from past; Battle in the present; Hope for the future

V. 2 **Summarizes before & after:**

1. Life **once was** dominate by the desires of the flesh.
2. But **now** life is a pursuit of knowing God and living in His will.

Question: What does it mean to live for the will of God? **Answer:** Here is must have been connected to suffering, hardship, which we often don’t see as God’s will.

V. 3 **Recalls the change**, our cleansing from sin should not be forgotten (2 Peter 1:9)

1. You **spent enough time** being **carried about** by desires of the flesh...
2. The **desires of the Gentiles**, typifies the choses society make and lives by.
3. You once pursed **their** course, but no longer should be identified with it.
 - a. Pictures our being separate from the world, while still being a human in it.
4. The **6 sins mention** (all 6 are in the plural which intensifies the meaning)
 - a. Sensuality- lack of personal self-restraint
 - b. Lust- inner uncontrolled cravings, that’s vicious and degrading
 - c. Drunkenness- loss of control by excessive substance like wine
 - d. Carousing- festive party, orgies, without restraint
 - e. Drinking Parties- partying in excess
 - f. Detestable idolatries- worship and devotion to ideas used to define life without God. Abominable carries the idea of being unlawful for us, though it was not to society.

Question: What sins characterize our culture today?

V. 4 **Tension it brings to us**

1. Our change in behavior brings suspicion from those who once knew in the world and now observe the change. Human nature resents and become suspicious of anything that disturbs the status quo.
2. Our **persistence refusal** to participate in the worlds social and religious activities, mark us, and we become a source of irritation, misunderstanding and opposition to them.
3. **Flood of dissipation** refers to society lacking any saving power- restraint (Greek word “**save**” with negative in front). Becoming reckless and promoting life without any self-discipline.

4. They **malign you**, they heap up abuses at you. Their strange way of thinking about you turn into reproaches, reviling, defaming, and ultimately they vilify you. (You're the problem of society.)
5. Peter **portrays** this **attack** is being **made on the character of Christians**. This battle is real and comes because of our identifying with Christ, and living the will of God out among the world.

V. 5 Future accountability

1. **They will give an account** to Him. Pictures those who oppose us now will one day have to stand trial like a court scene.
 - a. It is the reversal of the scene portrayed in 3:15, where our hope is explained
 - b. In 1:5 the believer's hope of salvation will be revealed (1:5)
2. **Him** who is **ready to judge...** is the Christ himself. (Acts 10:40-42; 2 Tim 4:1)
3. The **living and the dead**, speak of no one who will escape this judgement.

V. 6 The Great Reversal:

1. The **gospel was preached, even to those who are dead** shows a definite historical activity in the past. It was preached to them while they were alive and have since died.
 - a. Some hold that the dead were Christians in that time who have since died.
2. This **implies** that the **preaching** of the **gospel** brings **two results**
 - a. Blame from humanity,
 - b. Approval from God.
3. Two aspect are made according to two different standards
 - a. **According to men...** Christians are judged in the flesh as men- the judgement that happens in according to the standard of human beings.
 - i. The fact they died at the hands of evil men, might of raised questions.
 - ii. It certainly brought up question about the way Christ died, but for only for 3 days.
 - b. **According to God.** The life they have receive in harmony with the nature of God (2Peter 1:3-4), is in harmony with the will of God. (Romans 8:27-29).
 - c. Though they died in the flesh, they live on in the Spirit as said of Christ in 3:18. Death does not terminate their life...they live on for the same purpose.

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