

Living for Christ 1 Peter 4v1-11

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[0 : 00] Here, verse 4, 1-11, that's on page 1220. Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourself also with the same attitude.

Because he who has suffered in his body is done with sin. As a result, he does not live the rest of his earthly life for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God.

For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do, living in debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgy, carousing, and detestable adultery.

They think it's strange that you do not plunge with them into the same flood of dissipation, and they keep abuse on you.

But they will have to give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. For this is the reason the gospel was preached, even to those who are now dead, so that they might be judged according to men in regard to the body, but live according to God in regard to the spirit.

[1 : 28] The end of all things is near. Therefore, be clear-minded and self-controlled so that you can pray. Above all, love each other deeply, because love can convert all multitude of sin.

Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various form.

If anyone speaks, he shall do it as one speaking the every word of God. If anyone serves, he shall do it 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 forever and ever. Amen. Thank you, Arvita.

Please keep your Bibles open to 1 Peter chapter 4. And we'll pray. Father, we ask that these words that I speak would be as the very words of God, words of truth about you, about how we should live in this world.

[3 : 16] Lord, we pray that these words would change us, that they would transform us, and show us how to live as we should.

Father, we pray this so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ, for as to him be the glory and the power forever and ever.

Amen. A very close friend recently told me a true story about himself.

He was about 16 at the time, and they were away on a school geography trip. When it came to their bedtime, he got into his sleeping bag, and with his torch, and with his torch, began to read his Bible.

For fear of being seen by his mates, he pulled the bag up over the top of him and snuggled away, way down. Someone heard some rustling of pages and shouted over, what are you doing?

[4 : 32] To which there was a muffled replied, I'm eating sweets. The conversation continued, give us one. I can't, it's my last one.

Sometimes it's easier to tell lies than to tell the truth. Now, if you're a Christian, you will identify with that.

It's easier to conform to the world than to live for Christ. You see, if we do speak out for Christian truth, if we stand up for Christian values, you will struggle.

You will get hit. So to avoid any kind of grief or hardship, well, we behave like everyone else. So rather than say no to another drink, we have another one, and then another one, and then soon the whole evening is out of control.

Instead of explaining our views on marriage or abortion, we politely excuse ourselves from the conversation before we're even asked. Rather than speak against racist talk, we keep quiet.

[5 : 50] After all, we don't want people making jokes of me. Instead of making it clear that I am a Christian, we change the subject and talk about the match last night.

We live like the world. We conform. We begin to blend in so that we escape any kind of suffering or struggle.

Now, if you've ever experienced that, it's a normal temptation for every Christian.

We all feel that pressure to just blend in and fit in. So how can we keep living for Christ rather than conforming to the world?

How can we make sure we still follow Jesus rather than drift away? Well, we must remember two realities.

[6 : 50] One past and one future. We're to live in the light of Christ's death on the cross, which is a past event, and we are to live in the light of Christ's return at the end, which is a future event.

So first, here's the encouragement to live for Christ instead of conforming to the world. First, we live in the light of Christ's death on the cross.

Looking back to the cross, shapes and affects how I live my life today. First, we are done with sin. Look at verse 1, chapter 4.

Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because he who has suffered in the body is done with sin.

The suffering of Christ takes us back to the cross of Christ. And what happened when Christ died? Well, have a look back to chapter 3, verse 18.

[7 : 57] We're told very clearly, chapter 3, verse 18, that when Christ suffered, when Christ died, he died for sins, once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous to bring you to God.

When Christ died, it was a death for us. In other words, he exchanged places with us. He took on himself all our unrighteousness.

That's all the things I've ever said, thought and done that are wrong. Christ took it all on himself and suffered the punishment that we deserve.

He suffered hell for you and for me. So when Christ suffered on the cross, he dealt with our sin. Look at verse 18. Once for all.

It's dealt with. It's finished. It's done. Chapter 4, verse 1. Therefore, in the light of what Christ has done, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude.

[9 : 14] In other words, we now are to think about our sin in the same way that Christ has treated our sin. That's important that we make that connection.

We are to think about our sin in the same way that Christ has treated our sin. So if Christ has dealt with my sin, I am to consider that my sin has been dealt with.

If Christ is judged for my sin, I am to consider that my sin is no longer held against me. If Christ has forgiven my sin, I am to consider myself and live as a forgiven child of God.

Why? Look at the rest of verse 1. because he who has suffered in his body is done with sin.

Through faith, through my trust, I am united to Christ. So the work that Jesus did on the cross is now applied to me in my life.

[10 : 22] So if Christ has suffered and dealt with my sin, then I too am done with sin. I am no longer living the rest of my life trying to deal with it because it has been dealt with in the past once and for all.

And that means our life now has been changed. It changes everything, verse 2. As a result, as a result of Christ's death on the cross, we do not live the rest of this earthly life for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God.

which takes us to the fact that not only is our sin done with, but our past has been put behind. We no longer have to go back.

We've a new way to live. Look at verse 3. For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do, living the way people who are not yet Christians do.

Living in debauchery. That is, living without any moral boundary in place. Doing what you like, when you like, with who you like.

[11 : 44] So just think about the culture of sleeping with multiple partners. It's living without any moral boundaries. or, as he goes on, lust, which is being driven by your own desires.

So you want something, you buy it. You get fed up with what you have, you change it. drunkenness. Drinking without restraint.

One is never enough. Orgies, which is wild living, indulging in a cocktail of sex and drugs, whatever it takes, and doing whatever you like to experience that ultimate high.

Carousing, which is another word for drinking parties. Drinking copious amounts at the Christmas party or the nightclub or wherever you might hang out.

Detestable idolatry. Replacing God with other things and with other people. So making sport or your work or your family or your girlfriend or boyfriend more important to you than God.

[13 : 02] Now I think that verse 3 is a fairly accurate picture of how people live. And without pointing fingers I think we can all see ourselves in there.

Because each one of us have pushed the moral boundaries. We've all replaced God with other things. We've all searched for fulfilment and satisfaction, whether it's through sex or shopping.

But, look at verse 3, you have spent enough time in the past living like this. In other words, it's now time to move on.

We no longer have to live this way. Because of Christ's death on the cross, we are done with sin. A decisive break has been made in our life.

The past is put behind us and now we are living for Christ. So when you get invited out to your work Christmas party or round to your neighbours, when you're walking down Patrick Street and you see all the things that you want for Christmas, you don't have to indulge.

[14 : 20] You don't have to conform to the way of the world. Your past has been dealt with. You've now got a new way to live for Christ.

And of course, when we put the past behind and now live for Christ, it comes at a great cost. Look at verse 4. Verse 4.

They think it's strange that you do not plunge with them into the same flood of dissipation and they heap abuse on you. Again, it's a very graphic picture.

Society has plunged into a flood of dissipation. Strange word, but it basically means that we have indulged, we've jumped into a flood of a life of excess.

We just are never ever satisfied. We're always wanting more. We crave more sex, more drink, more shopping, bigger homes, bigger salaries, new cars, new gadgets.

[15 : 29] It's the way in which the world thinks. But as Christians, of those who've left the past, we no longer need to indulge in excesses.

So if we find ourselves in conversation, talking with people, or simply by the way that we live, when we say that, well no, sex is confined to the marriage of one man and one woman, if we stop at one drink or at no drink, if we make obedience to Christ more important than favour with friends, you're going to get hurt, you're going to get abuse, you're going to be mocked, you're going to be laughed at.

There is going to be a cost if we leave the past behind and live for Christ. So because of Christ's death on the cross, we no longer have to conform to the world, the past is behind, we now have a new way to live.

So we're done with sin, the past is put behind, and we're prepared for the future, all because of what Jesus has done on the cross. Look at verse 5.

They will have to give an account to him, so all those who live a life of excess and indulging a life without Christ will have to give an account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.

[17 : 14] God. Now I don't think it's saying that we're to exclude ourselves. You see, judgment is coming and every one of us will have to give an account before God and everything is going to be laid out before God.

No one is going to escape, nothing is going to be excused, our whole life before God will be exposed, shown up for who we are and what we've done. So when I am tempted to conform to the world, when I start considering and thinking of living like everyone else so that I fit in and escape being laughed at, remember judgment is coming.

I am going to have to give an account before God. But if we trust in Christ, if our hope is in him, we are not just looking forward to judgment, we are looking forward to glory, to something better and something greater.

Yes, we may face insults, yes, people may laugh at us because we have left the past behind and we are now living for Christ, but the best is yet to come.

Look at verse 6. verse 6. For this is the reason the gospel was preached even to those who are now dead.

[18 : 44] So he's saying, look, there are people who have died, but before they died, they heard the gospel, they heard the good news about Jesus Christ and his death on the cross.

Verse 6. So for this reason the gospel was preached even to those who are now dead, so that they might be judged according to men in regard to the body.

In other words, they will die because of their sin, they will physically die, all sin leads to death, but, look at the end of verse 6, but they will live according to God in regard to the spirit.

In other words, the gospel is telling me that just as Christ died for my sin, but was raised to life in the spirit, so I will die because of my sin, but I am going to be raised to life.

All of us will die because of sin in our life, but because Christ took the judgment on the cross, I will be raised to share his glory.

[19 : 57] Rather than suffering hell for eternity, I will enjoy heaven for eternity. So when I am tempted to conform to the world, when I'm tempted to think that all there is is this life and just fit in for an easier life so I don't get laughed at, so I don't get mocked, when I fit in with this kind of life, I need to think back to the cross and remember that Christ suffered for my judgment.

He has given me a new inheritance that I might share in his glory. I have everything to look forward to so I don't have to indulge today because I have everything to come.

So, as we seek to live life in this world, first, we must live in the light of Christ's death on the cross.

Remember that our sin is done with we have put the past behind and we are looking forward to a new future. But there's a second way in which we are to live, and that is to live in the light of Christ's return at the end, which is a future event.

Look at verse 7. The end of all things is near. It's a short, simple statement to remind us that Christ is coming again.

[21 : 31] And when Christ returns, we will experience our glorious and eternal inheritance in all its fullness. Let's remind ourselves of what that inheritance is.

Go back to chapter 1, verse 4. Because Christ is going to come again, this is what we have to look forward to.

We have an inheritance, verse 4, that can never perish, spoil, or fade, which is kept in heaven for you.

Down at verse 9. Because of this, we are receiving the goal of our faith, the salvation of our souls. So we can look forward to Christ coming, and when he comes, we will receive the goal of our faith, the salvation of our souls.

We will enter a world untouched by the pain and heartache of death. We will experience a world unspoiled by the selfish, evil actions of people.

[22 : 45] We will enjoy a world that is unfading through the course of time and seasons. So as we look forward to Christ coming again, it will shape how I live today.

In particular, it shapes how I serve and support my church family as we seek to live for Christ. For Christ has put us into a church family as people who are going to help us through this life.

So, three things that the way Christ's return will shape us. First, we pray for the church family. Look at verse seven.

The end of all things is near. Christ is coming again. Therefore, be clear-minded and self-controlled so that you can pray.

So, instead of thinking that suffering as a Christian in this world is never ever going to end and that there's no hope beyond this life, he says we are to wait patiently to look for Christ's return and as we wait for his return, we're to pray.

[23 : 59] We're to pray for each other so that we will keep on living for Christ and not conform to this world. Through our prayers for each other, our prayers for the church family, we keep each other strong until Christ returns.

So, how am I going to make sure that I reach eternity and that I reach that goal? It's going to be through the prayers of each other. So, I'm going to ask you, will you pray for me?

Will you pray for me that I will remember the promise that Christ is coming again? That my struggles are not going to last forever? That I have an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade?

Will you pray for me that I will keep living for Christ and not conform to the world? You see, I do need you to pray for me.

And we all need to pray for each other that we will keep faithful and keep going to the end. That's why God has placed you into this church family so that you can have the support and the prayers of others as we wait for Christ.

- [25 : 23] So, pray for each other. Second, love each other. Verse 8. Above all, love each other deeply because love covers over a multitude of sins.

love each other and grief. Listen, we all get enough hassle and grief from being a Christian in the world. We know it's tough out there.

So, let's not be down on each other in the church family. We get enough headaches from people, so why should we come to the gathering of God's people and get more upset?

that. Verse 8 tells us we're to love one another, not remind each other of past failures. It's not saying that we should ignore sin, but where sin has been confronted and confessed, we move on.

Because, verse 8, love covers over a multitude of sins. So, you imagine what this would be like. you've had a really hard week. Your friends have given you a rough time because you're a Christian.

- [26 : 40] You feel pushed out and a bit isolated. And then you arrive into your church gathering, you're meeting with your church family, and somebody reminds you of something you did and criticizes you over some small thing.

And you go, I thought I was here for support. Well, we are here for support, not to remind each other of past failure. And one of the ways to love and support each other is, look at verse 9, offer hospitality to one another without grumbling.

That was a real and practical help when Peter wrote this letter, because as he wrote, there were many Christians who were literally being shut out of their homes.

Because they had taken a stand for Christ in society, they no longer had a home. They didn't have belongings. Chapter 1, verse 1 tells us they had been scattered.

They had been sent away. So other Christians had to give them a bed and welcome them in and give them some food and somewhere to stay. And that's the kind of support and encouragement we're to give to each other.

- [27 : 59] I remember my parents offering that kind of hospitality to young Christians who were not welcome in their own homes. For some, our home became like a refuge.

It was a place you could just turn up, be encouraged, be prayed for. Yes, it was costly, it took time, money, and energy.

And as a little kid wandering around the house I used to give off, why do we have to have all these people coming all the time? Well, simply because Christ is coming, because he has an eternal inheritance ready for us, that means we can give everything in this life now towards other people.

We can open up our homes and make it a refuge. we can welcome people in because we have an eternal home and Christ is coming again. So as we seek to live life in this world, which is tough and hard, let's not be down on each other, but love each other deeply, support each other, invite each other into your homes to encourage one another.

other. So we are to pray for each other, love each other, and we are to give grace to each other.

- [29 : 31] The church family is an incredible place of encouragement and support when we live in a world that is hostile towards us.

Look at verse 10. each one should use whatever gift they have received to serve others.

So that's an encouragement, isn't it? We all have a gift, or gifts from God, talents and abilities given to us by God, and how do we use those gifts?

Look at the rest of verse 10. We faithfully administer God's grace in its various forms. You see, it's God's grace that's going to sustain us and keep us until Christ returns.

Have a look over at chapter 5 verse 10. Chapter 5 verse 10. And the God of all grace who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, so God in his grace has given us a future to look forward to.

[30 : 50] After you have suffered a little while, so as we seek to live for Christ in this world, we will suffer. He will himself restore you and make you strong, firm, and steadfast.

God's grace is what's going to keep us until the end. God's grace is going to keep us going until Christ returns.

But here's the point. How do we get to experience God's grace? That grace comes to us from God, not just straight to us, but God's grace comes through one another.

The grace of God flows down to God's people, and as it flows into God's people, so it flows out to each one of us through the gifts that he has given us.

So if we're to experience God's grace, it comes through people to us. And there's two ways, two main ways we can bring grace to each other as we wait for Christ's return.

[32 : 06] Look at verse 11. Here's the first one. If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God.

And here's the second one. End of verse 11. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength that God provides. So two major gifts that we all have in some way or another.

We can speak to people, and we can serve people, and by speaking and by serving, we bring God's grace into each other's life. So let me show you what this looks like.

Imagine you're struggling, maybe you are struggling, to keep going. Your family don't understand you, your friends don't always include you, you've taken a stand to follow Christ, to love him, to walk with him, but you're suffering for it.

It's really, really tough to be a Christian where you are. And you're beginning to think it's not worth it, I can't keep going, it's just going to be easier to live like everyone else, just to blend in, keep quiet, say nothing, and escape all the hassle and all the grief.

[33 : 25] love. And then God's grace is poured out into your life. God's grace overflows into your struggling life.

How? Someone comes along to you and speaks to you a word of encouragement. They get alongside you and they pray for you.

they open up the Bible with you and they begin to read a little bit from it, reminding you, Johnny, Christ is coming again, your struggles will end, we're here for you, we're going to support you.

Another person comes along and they serve you, they welcome you into your home for dinner, they give you a secure and safe place where you can unload and listen, somebody can listen to all the struggles that you're going through and they go with you and they meet with your friends so that you're not the only Christian in the group.

Through the church family we experience God's overflowing grace into our life, sustaining us and keeping us as God's people.

[34 : 46] One of the great ways to do that is just simply as we're gathered here. when we have tea and coffee how many times do we say encourage one another and it's for this very reason as you speak to one another you are speaking God's grace to each other's lives.

That's why we say come to home groups. It's not just a meeting to fill up your week with, it's not to get God's attention and see how great you are, it's a place to receive God's grace and it's a place to give God's grace so that we can be built up so that we can keep going in the faith.

The message of 1 Peter is so clear. The Christian life is tough, it's hard and it's only going to get harder as we go on.

God's So how are we going to face this hostile world in which we live? Well together we look back to Christ's death on the cross.

We remember that we are done with sin, the past is put behind, we are to consider our sin treated, dealt with, done away with and looking forward to what Christ has prepared for us.

[36 : 08] So we look back to his death, we look forward to his return at the end, praying for each other, loving each other and pouring God's grace as we speak and as we serve.

And as we do this, we will continue to live for Christ and we won't conform to the world. God has placed you here with your gift so that we can support one another.

may God give us the help that we can do it. Let's pray. Amen. In the quietness, let's just think for a moment.

of somebody who we can draw alongside, use the gifts that God has given us to bring grace into their life, to help them as they seek to live for Christ.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[37 : 42] Amen. Amen. Noahe Mike Father, thank you that Christ died for our sin, has dealt with our past, and given us a new way to live.

Thank you that you have given to us wonderful gifts, and we pray that through us, we would use those gifts to build one another up, serve each other, and speak your truth.

Father, help us to do that well, so that we keep living for Christ, and that we do not conform to the world.

We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.