

# Living the Will of God

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Date: 25 May 2025

Preacher: John Howard

[ 0 : 00 ]     Okay, you're in trouble today. Or I am, I'm not sure what yet. We come to 1 Peter 4, verses 1-6.

! I want you to open a Bible to that. We've been studying Peter's letter for quite some time now, and in some ways he's already exposed the ideas that are in today's text.

Because Peter's already talked about suffering. He's talked recently, I think in chapter 3, suffering for doing good rather than doing evil.

Now he's going to talk about it in a different context. It's a very profound text. If you actually think about it, pray about it, allow it to soak into your head and your heart, this text should have a profound effect on your heart, and that it would change your whole perspective on how you approach life, as a Christian in particular.

I think. That's just me. Maybe I'm the one who needs to be affected profoundly by this text. That's a very good possibility. He's telling us, basically, that we need to be prepared to suffer, if need be.

[ 1 : 31 ]     Just like Christ suffered for us. So, let's read the text. Mark, can you bring up the slide? So, since Christ suffered in the flesh, you also arm yourself with the same attitude.

Because the one who has suffered in the flesh is finished with sin, in that he spends the rest of his time on earth concerned about the will of God and not human desires.

For the time that has passed was sufficient for you to do what non-Christians desire. You lived then in debauchery, evil desires, drunkenness, carousing, drinking bouts, and wanton idolatries.

Next slide. There you go. So, they were astonished when you do not rush with them into the same flood of wickedness, and they vilify you. They will face a reckoning before Jesus Christ, who stands ready to judge the living and the dead.

Now, it was for this very purpose that the gospel was preached to those who are now dead, so that though they are judged in the flesh by human standards, they may live spiritually by God's standards.

[ 2 : 42 ]     And so, to get our minds focused on this, because he says we should suffer the same way, or have the same attitude in suffering that Christ had. How did Christ suffer?

Think about that. How did Christ suffer? And of course, we immediately almost always go to where? The cross. The cross. That whole scene from, you know, from the time he was arrested down through the time he died on the cross.

And that's true. He was beaten, and he was berated, and he was mocked, and he was crucified, and he died a horrible, horrible death on the cross. Yet, he suffered in submission to God's will.

If you remember in the garden, the night that he was arrested, Luke records him praying, Father, if you are willing, take this cup away from me.

Yet, not my will, but yours to be done. Now, Peter tells us, we too need to be willing to suffer. Now, I can ask for hands.

[ 3 : 50 ] You know, how many of you are going to volunteer? You know, and the answer is, next slide. He said, we are to arm ourselves with the same attitude that Christ had.

That attitude is spelled out in that prayer. If you are willing, but not my will, but yours be done. The word that Peter uses here, arm, is a military term.

When a soldier is getting ready to go into battle, he arms himself. He goes into wherever his equipment is stored, and he gets on his armored vest, and he makes sure that his boots and all that stuff fit, and everything's in order.

He puts his helmet on. They wear goggles now. They have night vision stuff. Stuff we didn't have. You know, and their rifle, and they make sure they have magazines full, and they have whatever their basic load of equipment and armament is for the mission.

They arm themselves. They prepare for action. It's the same type of image that you see that Paul uses in Ephesians 6, when he says, put on the armor of God.

[ 5 : 01 ] You know, we're to arm ourselves. Now, in Ephesians, he makes it very clear that our role as soldiers is not offensive. We're not going out there to take on unbelievers.

We are to stand firm in defense of the truth. And I think that's basically what Peter is referring to, too, because think about it.

When Jesus was arrested, who was willing to fight for him? Peter. He had a sword, and he used it. He was going to go on the offense.

And what did Jesus say? Enough of that. And he restored the man's ear, and he said, we're not going to do that. And he said, take me if you want me.

And if you remember the story, what happened? When they tried to capture him, to actually take hold of him, they fell back twice before they actually were able to take him into custody.

[ 6 : 04 ] See, we are to be prepared to engage our enemies. And they're going to come, and they are coming, with the intent on causing us to suffer.

Now, I think we need to sort of figure out who our enemies are. Who are our enemies? The ultimate enemy is the devil and all his demons, obviously.

But we have other enemies. And by the way, the one main enemy that we have that all of us are faced with is self-inflicted. You know what it is?

Death. God's plan didn't include death. Who chose death? Adam and Eve and humanity chose death.

In their wisdom, they said, I'd rather have that than that. And God said, but that way leads to death. This way leads to life. And what did they do?

[ 7 : 09 ] He said, no big deal. And we do that all the time. Think about it. How many of us have bad habits? How many of us have dangerous occupations and or proclivities that would lead us to death quicker than if we were to avoid that?

I mean, the safest thing to do is to go find someplace and just sit there on an island and eat the coconuts as they fall out and hope that no land-crawling sharks come up or something.

I don't know. But we always are faced with the possibility of death. You know, we say that sometimes. I've said that. When we talk about death as a future or someday probability, it's possible I'm going to die someday, but not now.

But what do we know? When can you die? Anytime. Anytime. I can remember we went to a Christmas play up in Raleigh to one of the big churches up there and there was hundreds of people in the sanctuaries that were doing the play and all of a sudden there was a huge commotion as a man had a heart attack right there in one of the pews and the whole thing had to stop while they got the paramedics in there and tried to save his life.

You never know. Now some of you are going to go, man, I wish he'd die now before this is over with. But we do, we have enemies that want to, that assault us and vilify us and attempt us.

[ 8 : 44 ] Now this is probably where most of us, we don't have too many people vilifying. I remember Kathy Greenlee when she was working at Northwood and the English department had a department chair that did everything she could to discredit Kathy because of her faith.

That doesn't happen to us very often. It does happen. But we have more, our enemies are the ones that tempt us to do things and to be involved in things and to be pulled away from God and to turn our back on Him and to go to this and to do that and not give up that and pursue this and you know how all that works out because you have to deal with it day in and day out.

But we're to have the same attitude that Christ had and that is one that trusted God to win the victory. In fact, it says in Scripture that Jesus endured the cross knowing that God had the victory already planned.

Peter tells us to arm ourselves but this time rather than putting on the whole armor of God he's really telling us to arm our minds, equip our minds with the attitude that he had that Christ had.

To stand firm and resist evil without fear. Now, it's interesting if you go back to Ephesians after Paul talks about the armor of God he says, the next line goes, and do not grumble.

[ 10 : 15 ] Do not grumble. And I thought, what a transition. Prepare for warfare, stand firm, and by the way, when you get all ready and you're standing there, don't grumble.

We're engaged in spiritual warfare against powers and dominions of the kingdom of this world. And I think that sometimes that's what we forget. We forget that this world system to include all the governments and all the social and cultural things going on in our world belong to the enemy and were surrendered to him when Adam and Eve fell.

That doesn't mean there isn't good things because God made us creative beings, right? And we create good things. Music and art and even good things like roads are good, cars are good if they're used right until you see the idiot that tries to cut you off right and you go, you know, that one wasn't good.

That car should never be made. We don't struggle against mere flesh and blood but against forces of evil, of the devil.

And our goal and our job is to bring light and be light in this dark world. We're like, and some of you won't know this reference, but we're like a fifth column.

[ 11 : 41 ] Anyone know what a fifth column is? Renee does. A fifth column are people who are inside an occupied area and they're working against the forces that are in control there.

They're the underground. We're the fifth column. God has sent us as spies and agents and soldiers into enemy territory.

And we work there often covertly because the world doesn't recognize that we're there. or they don't want to recognize we're there. We're working there to bring down this kingdom of darkness.

That's our goal is to bring down this kingdom and allow God's kingdom to rise up. The kingdom of God has come. We're his agents.

We're in enemy territory. We're in occupied... What happens if you find a spy during warfare? You execute him. Don't be surprised when the world says you should be executed or imprisoned or you should be vilified or you should be persecuted or you should...

[ 12 : 52 ]    Whatever. Why? Because you're an enemy agent working against the interests of the kingdom of this world. You're supposed to be anyway. Peter said that we were aliens and strangers in this world.

Serving a king in a kingdom that's not of this world. Remember Jesus told Pilate? My kingdom is not of this world. That's the kingdom we belong to.

Our citizenship is in heaven. We're here as his advanced party if you want to call it that. The kingdom of God is invading the kingdom of darkness and we're its soldiers its spies and agents.

Now I just finished a book on the kingdom of God and at the very end the guy made a point. He said do you realize that in the 11 months from the time that the troops the allied troops landed at Normandy and Germany surrendered 11 months more soldiers died than did in the five years prior.

Think about that. Fighting had been going on in Europe for five years and fewer soldiers died during those five years than did in those 11 months. When was our Normandy talking about spiritual warfare?

[ 14 : 15 ]    When was our Normandy when Christ came to earth? What did he keep saying? The kingdom of God is at hand. The kingdom of God has come. It invaded.

We have a beachhead. In Jerusalem the church was the beachhead of God's kingdom and he was going to invade the whole earth. What did he say? Preach until where?

All the earth. To the ends of the earth. Are we there yet? Not quite. Not quite. Now think about that.

Think about all those who have died for their faith since Christ came. And he hadn't even come back yet. We know of many martyrs.

In fact, there's an organization that's what their job is. They keep track of that and they actually say there have been more martyrs in the modern age than there was in the ancient times. But we are the Lord's army and the enemy knows we've got this beachhead and are starting and been moving forward.

[ 15 : 24 ]    Reclaiming the earth and territory for our kings. But he's not going to capitulate. He's not going to go, oh well, I'm not going to win.

I just will give up. You think about it. I play a war game as a civilization. Anyway, I always say, you're going to lose. I'm talking to the AI that I'm playing against.

You're going to lose. I'm going to beat you. Why don't you just capitulate? Well, guess what? He doesn't. Satan's the same way. You're going to lose. You know you're going to lose.

Why don't you just capitulate? Give up. Let us have it. He says, not to the very last soul I won't. He's trying to take down as many of God's soldiers as he possibly can in the time that he has left.

Remember what Peter says, and it's coming up, somebody else gets to preach this, that Satan is what? A roaring lion looking for whom he may devour. That implies that he's looking to inflict suffering, loss, discouragement, misdirection, and deception on God's people.

[ 16 : 32 ]    And we shouldn't be surprised when things happen to us. Now some things happen to us that are common to all men, all people. That's just being human in a sinful world. But some things God allows to happen.

How many of you said, why did you let that happen in my life, or in my friend's life, or in my whoever's life? Why? What's the purpose of all this?

Well, we live in a sinful world. We live in a fallen world. We live in a world ruled by the prince of darkness. We're going to experience those things. It's part of who we are as people, human beings, but also as Christians.

Now the difference between us and the rest of the world is we're supposed to respond differently. We're supposed to arm ourselves with the attitude that Christ had, which is, not my will, but yours.

Does that include when you get thyroid cancer, saying, Lord, heal me no matter what. I want to live. Lord, if it's your will, let me survive this.

[ 17 : 37 ] But don't let it be dependent on my choice. Do what you know is best. Or you find yourself flying through the air, landing on your back in front of your motorcycle with a broken neck.

You go, oh no! Get an engine, you've got to save my life. Well, Lord, here I am. What do we do now?

Whatever you have is fine. Think about that. Whatever you have for me is fine. Your will be done. Now, I'm not saying you should go out looking for suffering for suffering sake.

By the way, that was a problem in the early church at one point. It was sort of an undercard. There have been so many martyrs that it was like, if you don't get martyred, you're not going to heaven.

And so people were just going looking for opportunities to confront people. You know, walk up to the ministry. I believe in Jesus Christ, he's Lord. What are you going to do about it? Take his head off, of course.

[ 18 : 43 ] No. And they said, no, no, that's not what God wants. He's not looking to multiply martyrs. Don't go looking for suffering.

if it's possible for it to pass, let it pass. We shouldn't have to drink from that cup unless it's the Lord's will.

And we know that the Lord has only good for us, even if that means death. Because if this body dies, what happens? We're going to be with God.

And we're going to be resurrected. See, that's sometimes we get saved and then we forget we get raised. We get saved. Oh, good, I'm going to live a good life for the rest of my life.

And hopefully that will be forever because I don't plan on dying, right? But the answer is, yes, you will die. But for us, that's not bad news. It's just a transition from this life to an eternal life.

[ 19 : 47 ] From this fallen world to a perfect world. It's not the end. We shouldn't grumble then. We shouldn't try to save ourselves, but to trust God for strength and peace and grace to endure faithfully standing firm in our faith.

You know what that means, though, if we do that? It means that God gets the glory. God gets the glory. And that is the way it's supposed to be.

glory. And not only will He get the glory, He will ultimately fulfill His ultimate purpose in and through us. He gave us life as a gift.

It's precious and it needs to be embraced. But the death of the body is not the end of things, but just a transition. It will be an end to suffering.

Because on the other side, in the resurrected bodies we have, there is no suffering. There is no pain. There are no tears. But eternal joy and fulfillment. Now, most of us here will not face death for our faith at the hands of evil men.

[ 21 : 06 ] You know, we're going to probably suffer for some other reason. And I see it all the time. And I'm going to tell you this, I haven't got any answers here.

we do prayer requests. The ones I don't like are the ones that don't tell me anything. Pray for Johnny. He's sick.

Well, first of all, who's Johnny? And what is the spiritual situation? Because if he's a Christian, he's a saved person, I'm going to pray for him differently than if he's unsaved.

If he's unsaved, I'm not really worried about his health, I'm worried about his soul. If he's a Christian, then I'm going to pray, not Lord, I'm not going to beg and plead, please pray, please heal, please heal.

I'm going to say, Lord, in your goodness and in your purpose, heal this person, but your will be done. And may you be magnified. You understand what I'm saying?

[ 22 : 06 ] So if you see me, Teresa calls you up and says, John's in the hospital and he's dying. You go, Lord, have your way with him. And if you're kind to us, you'll take him soon.

But we need to think how we pray. We need not only to ask God, petition him for whatever solution we need or want or think we need, but also add to the second part of that prayer which we often forget and that is, but not my will, but yours.

Not my will, but yours. Suffering is not something to be avoided at all cost or something to be feared.

Rather, it can be, if we allow it to be, a tool used by God to train us in holiness and in trust. It can mean God's demonstrating his love and grace has an opportunity to demonstrate his love and grace to us through a peace that passes understanding.

Next slide. I don't know where I'm at on that, but it's Peter said in this section, he says, because the one who has suffered in the flesh has finished with sin.

[ 23 : 30 ] Think about that. The one who is finished with sin is the one who has suffered in the flesh.

How many have ever hit your thumb with a hammer? Yeah, I've done it. Have you done it again? Never on purpose.

You go, I learned a lesson there, don't do that. Yeah. I learned don't run off the side of the road on a motorcycle, because that's not a very smart thing to do. You don't want to do that.

If we suffer, and we survive on the other side, you go, wow, there has to be something more life than what I've been living. And you start asking God, what is the purpose of me being here now, still?

What is it that you want to accomplish through me and in me? And you understand that you go, wow, I used to do all that stuff.

[ 24 : 36 ] I now see that's foolish. I need to be doing this stuff. This is the way the world lives, and I used to live. This is the way God is calling me. And you change.

You finish with a sin that has consumed you. And you spend the rest of your time on earth, concerned with the will of God, not human desires.

Things that were important then, all of a sudden, aren't so important anymore. It might take suffering to get us to take God's call to serve Him seriously.

It may take suffering to get us to submit to His Lordship seriously, to release all the things of this world so that we can pursue the things of the kingdom.

And God's not going to miss an opportunity. If something happens to you and it's causing you discomfort, pain, or suffering, God's not going to waste that.

[ 25 : 38 ] He's not going to waste it. He's going to use it to help develop you in holiness and to draw you to Himself. He's going to use it to draw you away from the transient things of this life, to produce fruit, in your life, of trust, if nothing else, and in faith.

Now, what we do, unfortunately, is that we suffer and it doesn't go the way we want, and then we say, you're at fault, God, you didn't come through. You didn't do what I wanted you to do.

We blame Him for it. I'm suffering because of you. Think of people. We know people like that. We're so short-sighted.

We can't see beyond the painful moment they were suffering to view the eternal glories that are beyond that moment. You know what Hebrews said about Christ?

He says He fixed His eyes on what? He fixed His eyes on the cross and went to the trembling and suffering and go, no, I don't want to do this. No, that's not what it says. He fixed His eyes on the prize.

[ 26 : 57 ] The prize and endured the cross. When you go into suffering, whether it's from loss or personal suffering or illness or whatever, what do you fix your eyes on?

Do you fix your eyes on getting healed or getting better or being restored or do you fix your eyes on the prize and say, Lord, whatever the reason for this in my life is, let me keep my eyes fixed on you as I go through it, no matter what happens.

And Peter tells us that we can do this with no regret. Somehow, feeling that we've missed out on something. if we give ourselves totally to following the Lord's will.

He says very clearly that we've had plenty of time to sin. We've had plenty of time to go after those things that the world pursues. Now is the time to put those aside.

You've done with that. When I was a child, I did childish things. When I was worldly, I did worldly things. Now is time to do godly things, to live for the Lord, to allow him to use whatever comes into my life for his glory.

[ 28 : 21 ] To let go of the things of the world and the vanity of the things that are passing away. You see, we've been free. And this is something that Paul in Romans says that we've been free.

We've been set free. The problem with being set free, people don't stay free long. They're going to submit to something.

We as Christians, when we get set free, have the same binary choice that we had before. Before it was, do I accept Christ or not? Do I follow the world? Do I follow Christ?

Once we become free, God says, now I want you to submit yourself to my lordship, to my kingship. I want you to be a disciple and a servant in my kingdom. And we go, well, that sounds good, but that sounds like hard work.

I'd much rather go play. How often do you have to make that choice? Every single day. That you're going to be a servant of God as opposed to a servant of Satan.

[ 29 : 29 ] By the way, that's what you are. When you fall back into the world, you're serving Satan's purposes. You're not serving God's purposes. You're mocking the salvation that Christ gave you.

And Peter says in verse 4, so they are astonished when you do not rush with them into the same flood of wickedness and they vilify you. The world isn't going to understand.

I remember when I became a Christian, I was in Germany, a 20-page letter home to my mom, explaining everything that had happened and what I had done and how I had given my life to Christ and how it was just amazing how much it changed in my thinking and my feeling and my activities and my wants and my desires and just everything was different.

And my dad read that letter and when I saw him, after I got out of the army, he said, that's a bunch of hooley. Eric, you're just playing a game.

This is foolish. My mom understood because she had done the same thing at one point in her life earlier. The world is going to go look at you and go, you did what?

- [ 30 : 41 ] You did what? What are you going to do with it now? Oh, I know it's going to do. The same thing my friends told me when I was in Germany. After I became a Christian, they came and said, we heard that you became a Christian.
- Yep, I did. Ah, it's no big deal. You'll be back with us shortly. We'll see you at the club. And I'm going, I hope not. I hope not. But they just, you're deluded.
- You don't know what you're doing. You're crazy. And then they try to tempt you. Hey, you want to go with us? You want to go with us? You want to go with us? Don't you? Yeah, you really want to do this. And sometimes they get violent.
- I remember sharing the gospel with a friend of mine. He was another Russian linguist. He'd gone to high school part of the time anyway. And we became pretty good friends at language school.
- And he went to Turkey and I went to Germany. And I can remember I became a Christian and I went home. His mom was a Christian and he had rejected the church and everything to have with it. and I was at his apartment one afternoon and we were going to go do something and I just said something about Christ again and he pulled out a pistol.
- [ 31 : 53 ] He literally pulled out a pistol and pointed it at me. He said, you say one more word about him and I'm going to shoot you. Do you understand me? I look back and go, oh yeah, I think I got the message.
- Some people act that way. I mean, I actually tried to kill you. I don't think you would have shot me, but he was making a point. I don't want to hear it. Now, he became a Christian later when he looked across the room in the student union and saw a girl.
- And he says, who is that girl? Well, there are 200 people in there or more. Who is that girl? I said, what girl? And he said, that one. And he kept pointing and I thought, well, I know her.
- She's the sweetest Christian lady I ever met in my life. I want to meet her. And so I can introduce you. I happen to know her. She goes to my fellowship. And I did.
- And he started going to church with us. And then one day in the middle of the service, he just stood up and says, I want to accept Christ. And he changed.
- [ 33 : 04 ] We just got to remember the world has a strong pull on us. I was flipping through the television streams. I think it was prime.
- And I was looking for something to watch. Well, then there are all these programs. I know what they're about. I'm going, ooh, that would be interesting. No, you don't want to watch that. Oh, there's another one. That would be interesting. No, you don't want to watch that.
- The world's pull on us is strong. Think about it. you get to something in your mind. You see something, you say, ooh, that would be great. I can afford that.
- I think I can. Well, I'd love to have that. Do you need that? No, I don't really need it. I just want it. The world has a strong pull on us. High school, middle school, think about it.
- What is the strongest force in your life at that time? social situations where people, I've got to have friends.
- [ 34 : 06 ] I've got to have friends. Who are the most friendly people in the whole world? The most ungodly. And they're glad to take you in, because what do they want to do?
- They want to share that misery with you. The world is strong. It encourages us to normalize sin and say it's okay.
- Have you ever had a favorite sin and you say, is it wrong? Is it really wrong? I'm not really sure. I don't remember ever being in one of the lists. It said, this, this, this, this, this, this, this.



There's 16 sins listed there, but I don't see mine. It must not be a sin. And then we normalize and say, well, it's okay, I can do that. And then someone comes along maybe one day and says, did you know that that's really a sin?

How do you know it's a sin? Well, does it honor God? No, but it feels good. Are you sure it's a sin? Yeah, I'm sure it's a sin. And you go, oh, I don't know if I want to accept that.

[ 35 : 09 ] Why? Because you want to do it. You've normalized it. You've made it the way it is. It's contrary to God's will. It's worldly.

It doesn't glorify God. It doesn't build you up in the spirit. It doesn't improve your fellowship with the saints. But you don't want to let go of it. God empowers us by his grace to resist that if we let him.

And the spirit would lead us in a different path, in a different direction, to live counter-culturally. Counter-culturally. Our problem is that we define that as I won't live like those guys.

See, our society is so divided that we can say, those are the bad guys, these are the good guys. The answer is, they're all bad guys. They're just bad guys for a different reason.

These guys do anything. These guys won't tolerate anything. These are hateful. These guys are just downright sinful. You go, they're all wrong.

[ 36 : 14 ] God wants us to live as saints, holy ones, entirely different. But, not conforming to our culture, but rather being what?

Salt and light. What happens when you put salt on slugs? What happens when you turn a light on in a dark shed?

That's what should happen when you walk in the room. Go, because we need to understand this what Peter says next everyone's going to give an account to him it says before Jesus Christ who stands ready to judge the living and the dead now we're going to be there initially because he's going to do what?

he's going to separate the sheep from the goats we're going to be sheep he's going to say you just stand by I've got something for you if you're like me you're going to go I'm standing here but it's going to be an awful trembly wait because I know I didn't live very well for him but turning to the goats he's going to say bow down and worship and they're going to say no we never did in fact I turned to Matthew 25 you just need to read that he said when I was naked you didn't clothe me when I was hungry you didn't feed me when I was a stranger you didn't welcome in when I was in prison you did not visit me when I was you name it you didn't do it and they said when did we ever see you like that and the answer was whenever you did it to one of these lowly ones you did it to me now we're going to answer the same question as sheep and it's not going to determine salvation it's going to determine reward but to those that are goats it's the eternal fires of hell he's going to judge righteously there will be no plea bargaining there will be no second chances it's already been recorded it's just a matter of declaring it let me give you a sum up I guess it's an action point that comes from this passage there you go he's doing it he's ahead of me that's what I need because I can't keep up with the slides first arm yourself with our attitude of Christ are you willing are we willing to suffer for righteousness are we willing to prioritize

God's will over our own comfort and desires it's a daily choice a continuing and continuous surrendering to the Lordship of Christ number two live for the will of God let this be your compass that guides you in every decision you make seek his word which is our sword pray for his guidance obey his commands that you find so that your life becomes a living testament of his sovereignty as our king three break decisively with the past I remember sharing the gospel with kids in high school guys in high school and I said now you need to change the way you're behaving and they go but if I do that I won't have any friends and they were unwilling to break those relationships in order to walk with Christ if there are lingering habits or attitudes or relationships that are pulling you back into the wild things that is the sin it's time to sever those four expect the world's reaction but don't be deterred when you try to live counter-culturally for Christ some will be surprised and some are going to heap abuse but remember

[ 40 : 58 ] God is the ultimate judge your vindication comes from him not them fifth embrace the hope of the resurrection and eternal life and I think that sometimes that's what we forget we get so involved in being saved we forget about that there's a purpose and a goal of that salvation what we're being saved from is sin we're saved to a new life in Christ that's going to be eternal on the new earth so whether in life or death our lives are secure in Christ you need to know that no matter if you're facing life or death your life is secure our citizenship is in heaven our true life is found in God and this perspective is an eternal one and that it should empower us to endure the earthly trials we have with joy and perseverance now the world wants us to conform to it but what did Paul say do not be conformed but be transformed the world says no no stay conformed stay conformed but Peter's words are a resounding call to radical discipleship calling us to live distinctly suffering willingly when needed and trusting wholeheartedly in God who will judge the living and the dead so let us arm ourselves with the attitude of Christ live for God not ours with desires and in the process give God the glory let's pray

Lord I don't know if I made sense and I don't know if all this fits what people are thinking but I just pray that you'll have your way first in my life and in the lives of each one of us here that we'll understand what Peter's trying to tell us and that we'll allow you to put it to work in our lives Lord your word is powerful transforming if we will just dwell in it help us to grasp what Peter has written here under your inspiration that we might be transformed my being fully yours in every way at every moment every day and to you be the glory in all things we pray in Jesus name Amen