



1 Peter 4:1-6 Living for God's Will

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Purpose: Abuse suffered for Christ's sake transforms our view of the world's way of life and strengthens our resolve to live according to God's will.

¹Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because whoever suffers in the body is done with sin. ²As a result, they do not live the rest of their earthly lives for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God. ~ *1 Peter 4:1-2 (NIV)*

Context: Audience & purpose

(1) Understanding Suffering

- a. **Hope** – Suffering for righteousness is placed in context when Christians remember the resurrection and ascension of Jesus.
- b. **Jesus Suffered** – An example of unjust treatment.
 - i. Arm yourselves...
 1. NIV '*Same attitude*'
 2. ESV '*Same way of thinking*'
 3. NASB '*with the same purpose*'
 - ii. How does suffering in the body lead to being done with sin?

Notes:

- c. **Living for the will of God** (also see 3:17)

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. ~ *1 Peter 4:3-5 (NIV)*

(2) **Abused for Holy Living**

- a. The past way of life (how pagans live)
- b. Abuse for not following the crowd
 - i. Christians were alleged to be lawless and subversive because their “antisocial” behavior
 - ii. Nero accused the Christians of being “haters of humanity”
- c. Judgment for wild living and abuse

Debauchery – immoral and excessive indulgence

Orgies – feasts accompanied by wild immorality

Carousing – drunken parties

Detestable idolatry – idol worship which included actions deemed illegal by civil authorities.

Small Group Discussion Questions:

- How have you suffered abuse for Christ’s sake?
 - How should we respond to the abuse of those who do not understand our commitment to God’s will?
 - How might we help one another to avoid returning to wild, reckless living?
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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.

~ *1 Peter 4:6 (NIV)*

(3) **The Hope of Eternal Life** (v. 5)

- a. A difficult text
 - i. Physical death of Christians

1. Though Christians have already died physically ('now dead') the gospel was preached (past tense) to them so that they might be saved at the final judgment and enter spiritual life.

ii. Spiritually death to life (*spiritual regeneration interpretation*)

1. The gospel is proclaimed to those who are spiritually dead (pagans) so that they might understand God's will, leave behind their old ways of living and live according to the God approved way of life.

iii. Both convey a hope to different groups

1. We would not use this text to determine doctrine because of its ambiguity.
2. Perhaps, within the context of 1 Peter, the spiritual regeneration interpretation offers a more compelling concept.