

This Day Forward In God's Will

by Johnny Hunt

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| TITLE: | This Day Forward In God's Will |
| BIBLE BOOK: | 1 Peter 4 : 1-6 |
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| SUBJECT: | Suffering; The Will of God; Honoring Christ |
| OBJECTIVE: | The Scriptures teach that suffering is one of the tools that the Lord uses to conform us to the image of Jesus Christ. In this chapter, Peter gives three wonderful and blessed results that can come to the Christian when he goes through suffering in the will of God. Verses 1-6 teach that suffering humbles the Christian; verses 7-11 teach that it harmonizes the church, and verses 12-14 teach that it honors Christ. |

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Introduction

To understand suffering and the will of God is essential for the child of God to come to full maturity in Him. Peter deals with that in 1 Peter 4:1-6. Note three important truths that Peter shares.

I. The Example v.1-2

A. An Appeal 1a

Follows the principle of Hebrews 12:2, "Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Jesus Christ is our example. The "therefore" refers us back to I Peter 3:18ff. There was divine determination to obey His Father's will.

B. An Admonition 1b

"Arm yourself" - is a military term which refers to a soldier putting on his weapons to fight the enemy.

"with the same mind" - when the believer identifies completely with Christ, he knows that he "is done with sin." This means that the last few words of verse 1 apply to the Christian whose life is firmly established in Christ.

Romans 6:18, "Being, then, made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."

I John 3:9, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."

The follower of Christ has abandoned a life of sin, because the ruling power of sin has been broken. Granted that he is unable to live a perfect life, the believer is free from the dominance of sin.

C. An Application 1c-2

There is a note of triumph here. His old life, dominated by the power of sin, has been terminated. He, who in loyalty to Christ and in His power, has steadfastly endured persecution rather than join in the practices of the pagan world, has demonstrated that the pursuit of sin in his life has ended. He is now pursuing the will of God.

1. Negatively 2a

"does not live the rest of his earthly life for evil human desires." God's people are not to live merely to satisfy human appetites. This verse is a reminder of the brevity of life.

2. Positively 2b

"for the will of God" - faithful obedience; the key! You cannot have both. Living your life for the doing of God's will; guided by the will of God. Peter is saying that the arming of oneself with the mind of Christ imparts power to break with the former and to carry out God's will.

II. The Explanation v.3-4

A. Our Past Testimony 3

"You have spent enough time"

"Lasciviousness" - debauchery; suggests unbridled lustful excesses, conduct that shocks public decency

"Lusts" - illicit desires

"excesses of wine" - drunkenness; habitual in nature

"revelings" - orgies (to lie down); festal gatherings or merrymaking.

"carousing" - to drink

"abominable idolatries" - detestable, not allowed, unlawful

B. Our Present Treatment 4

Unsaved people do not understand the radical change that their friends experience when they trust

Christ and become children of God. They do not think it strange when people wreck their bodies, destroy their homes, and ruin their lives by running from one sin to another. But let a drunkard become sober, or an immoral person pure, and the family thinks he has lost his mind.

EXAMPLE: Acts 26:24. Festus told Paul, "You are beside yourself; much learning has made you mad."

"it strange" - they think you are strange

"ye run not" - run together

"excess of riot" - dissipation; the character of an abandoned man.

"speaking evil of you" - bitter resentment; slandering.

Why?: Blind to spiritual truth. We see this in 2 Corinthians 4:3-4, "But if our gospel be hidden it is hidden to them that are lost, in whom the god of this age hath blinded the minds of them who believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

Dead to spiritual enjoyment, Ephesians 2:1, "And you hath he made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins." When unsaved friends attack us, this is an opportunity to witness to them. 1 Peter 3:15, "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear."

III. The Encouragement v.5-6

A. Promise 5

Christ is vindicator of His people.

B. Purpose 6

Righteous dead are justified in spite of the accusations of the wicked. Unsaved friends may speak evil of us and even oppose us, but the final judge is God.

While we are in these human bodies (in the flesh), we are judged by human standards. One day, we shall be with the Lord (in the Spirit) and receive the true and final judgment.

Consistency will honor Christ and give a testimony that will affect our friends.