

Dying to Old Habits

1 Peter 4:1-7

1 Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same way of thinking, for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,

2 so as to live for the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for human passions but for the will of God.

3 For the time that is past suffices for doing what the Gentiles want to do, living in sensuality, passions, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and lawless idolatry.

4 With respect to this they are surprised when you do not join them in the same flood of debauchery, and they malign you;

5 but they will give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.

6 For this is why the gospel was preached even to those who are dead, that though judged in the flesh the way people are, they might live in the spirit the way God does.

7 The end of all things is at hand; therefore be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers.

Last week's sermon primarily concerned the atonement that is found in the death of Jesus. We found out that Jesus suffered and died for the purpose of taking away our sins in order to make us right with God. A life lived by faith in Christ has nothing to fear because we are reconciled to God and no longer under the judgment of his eternal wrath.

The authority that has been given to Christ because of his death and resurrection gives him the authority to actually deliver us from sin, both in its effects and its power to hold sway over our lives.

1 Peter 4:1-7 is a continuation of the discussion about the implications of the suffering death of Christ. In this passage, we explore how Jesus teaches us to adopt a mindset that will actually lead us to a life that is conquering sin.

Life teaches us with Hank Williams Jr. that "old habits are hard to break." In fact Peter seems to be implicitly acknowledging that leaving a life of slavery to sin does not come easy.

"for whoever **suffers** in the flesh ceases from sin."

"the time that is **past** suffices for what the Gentiles do."

"they **malign** you."

"the **end** of all things is at hand."

To live in Christ will require suffering in one form or another. To defeat sin will require a *mindset* of suffering through the waging of spiritual war.

In his sermon, Austin gives four hard but necessary teachings that this passage is giving us about the Christian mindset toward our sin.

- 1) We must have the mindset that Christ displayed in his suffering to defeat our sinful desires.
- 2) The lost world is ironically offended by righteous living.
- 3) We can actually live the way God does...we are not destined to sin.
- 4) Surrendering to sin negatively affects our relationship with God.

Let your discussion in group focus on the type of mindset that is necessary to defeat sin.

Discussion Questions:

- **Is it easier in the short term to fight sin or to give in to sin?**
- **How do you think Jesus came to the decision to go to the cross?**
- **Was Jesus surrender to the cross based on short term or long term benefits?**
- **What were the long term benefits of Jesus' death?**
- **Why do we as humans find it difficult to make decisions based on long-term considerations over short-term considerations?**
- **How does Jesus' suffering challenge your mindset toward sin?**
- **How does living for the will of God look different than living for human passions?**
- **What are some of the hardest human passions (or old habits) for you to put away?**
- **What have you had to give up in order to put human passions away?**
- **Do you think it is worth what you are giving up?**
- **Why do sinners hate seeing people leave sin to live righteously?**
- **What is the irony that happens when you are condemned for living righteously?**
- **Give an example of how you have been condemned by the condemned for living righteously.**
- **What is the Bible speaking of when it says to be "sober-minded and self controlled?"**
- **How can you adopt a Christian mindset of sobriety this week?**