

## 1 Peter 4:1-6

### Verse 1

Christ suffered in this world. Isaiah 53 is the chapter on the suffering servant which is referring to Christ. Peter has already stated in this epistle that Christ has suffered for us as an example (1 Peter 2:21). Not only did Jesus suffer unjustly, but the ultimate suffering in the flesh was His death on the cross.

*There are references to Christ suffering in the flesh which are referring to His death.*

- **1 Peter 3:18** For Christ also died for sins once for all, *the just for the unjust*, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the <sup>[a]</sup>spirit;
- **1 Peter 2:24** and He Himself <sup>[a]</sup>bore our sins in His body on the <sup>[b]</sup>cross, so that we might die to <sup>[c]</sup>sin and live to righteousness; for by His <sup>[d]</sup>wounds you were healed.

As Christ suffered unjustly, yet He did not sin, even to the point of death, this should be the same mindset of every Christian.

There is a union between the death and resurrection of Christ and all that believe. Christians are joined and share in the death of Christ on the cross and the resurrection of Christ. To the believer, as Christ has died, we have died to the old man through Him and have been raised into newness of life as did Christ in His resurrection.

This verse is referring to Christ suffering in the flesh (dying) and we are to have the same purpose (same mind or way of thinking) because all who have suffered in the flesh (died to the old man via the union of Christ and His death) have died and been released from the hold of sin. This does not mean that we are then sinless, but rather that we have died to sin and its power and hold on us. When Christ regenerates our souls, there is a sense to which the old man has died although we still sin. However, we have been released from the enslavement and bondage that sin had us and we have been raised into the newness of life which is desiring to walk in a manner worthy and pleasing to God via sanctification. The Christian should have the same mind that Christ had toward sin since we are His children and have been regenerated by the power of the Holy Spirit. God dwells inside every believer to grow in sanctification and conformity to His image. Christ suffered unjustly in this world, but without sin, this should be the desire of every Christian.

- **Romans 6:1-7** What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? <sup>2</sup>May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it? <sup>3</sup>Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? <sup>4</sup>Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. <sup>5</sup>For if we have become <sup>[a]</sup>united with *Him* in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be <sup>[b]</sup>in the likeness of His resurrection, <sup>6</sup>knowing this, that our old <sup>[c]</sup>self was crucified with *Him*, in order that our body of sin might be <sup>[d]</sup>done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; <sup>7</sup>for he who has died is <sup>[e]</sup>freed from sin.
- **Colossians 3:3** Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. <sup>2[a]</sup>Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. <sup>3</sup>For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.
- **Galatians 2:20** I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and <sup>[f]</sup>the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

There is also another sense in which would be applicable to exiles that Peter is writing to as well as us. Peter has labored the point throughout this epistle that the Christian is called to suffering and this is from God for His purpose. As the true Christian is more conformed to God and transformed from the world, the persecution and suffering will increase. When a Christian stands for the truth there will be suffering and those who truly chose to suffer for righteousness even to the point of death are those who truly have been saved and rescued from the power hold of sin. To suffer for righteousness at the expense of friends, family, and even death are those who are set free from sin and are alive to Christ. **Matthew 5:10-12** "Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."<sup>11</sup> "Blessed are you when *people* insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me."<sup>12</sup> Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

### Verse 2

As a result of being dead to sin in union with Christ's death, we are to put aside sin and grow in holiness and righteousness. This is the progress of sanctification which is a progressive process that will continue until we are with the Lord. Peter states that Christians are to no longer live for the lust of the flesh, but the will of God. Paul writes in Romans 12:2 that the way to be conformed to Christ and conformed to this world is to renew our mind. In renewing our mind, we then prove what the good, acceptable, and perfect will of God is. Paul will also instruct the church in Thessalonica that the will of God is sanctification, which is what this section of verses speak about. To grow in the sanctification is to grow in the knowledge of God and what pleases Him. The Bible is what we have in regards to the mind of God and His will.

- **Romans 12:1-2** Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, <sup>[a]</sup>acceptable to God, *which is* your <sup>[b]</sup>spiritual service of worship. <sup>2</sup> And do not be conformed to this <sup>[c]</sup>world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may <sup>[d]</sup>prove what the will of God is, that which is good and <sup>[e]</sup>acceptable and perfect.
- **1 Thessalonians 4:3** For this is the will of God, your sanctification; *that is*, that you abstain from <sup>[d]</sup>sexual immorality;

As Christians we are to abhor evil and cling to what is good (**Romans 12:9**)

### **Verses 3-4**

These verses discuss how before salvation, some of these people had lived in the sinful desires and lusts of the Gentiles. However, now that they were saved and set free from the old man and sin, they were to devote their lives to the will of God. The same applies to Christians today.

- o **Ephesians 2:1-10** And you <sup>[a]</sup>were dead <sup>[b]</sup>in your trespasses and sins, <sup>2</sup> in which you formerly walked according to the <sup>[c]</sup>course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. <sup>3</sup> Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, <sup>[d]</sup>indulging the desires of the flesh and of the <sup>[e]</sup>mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. <sup>4</sup> But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, <sup>5</sup> even when we were dead <sup>[f]</sup>in our transgressions, made us alive together <sup>[g]</sup>with Christ (by grace you have been saved), <sup>6</sup> and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus, <sup>7</sup> so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. <sup>8</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith; and <sup>[h]</sup>that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God; <sup>9</sup> not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. <sup>10</sup> For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.
- o **1 Corinthians 6:9-11** Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor <sup>[i]</sup>effeminate, nor homosexuals, <sup>10</sup> nor thieves, nor *the* covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. <sup>11</sup> Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.
- o **2 Corinthians 5:17** Therefore if anyone is in Christ, <sup>[a]</sup>*he is* a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

Augustine lived a life of sexual immorality and according to the lusts of the flesh. While in a Garden in Milan in 386 A.D, he overheard some kids playing a game that contained the phrase “pick up and read.” He felt the burden to pick up the Bible and when he opened the Bible, the passage that his eyes fell on was Romans 13:13-14 which states:

- o **Romans 13:13-14** Let us <sup>[a]</sup>behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy. <sup>14</sup> But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to *its* lusts.

### **Verse 4**

When people are saved and they become new creatures in Christ, the desires of their heart is toward Christ and the things that please Him. As a Christian, our actions change which may surprise and offend those whom we use to hang out with. As a result, people that used to be friends may want nothing to do with you and even malign you. Your walk with Christ may cost you friendships and even affect your family relationships. However, we are to consider ourselves blessed when we are persecuted for the sake of righteousness and never compromise.

### **Verse 5**

Peter expresses the thought that those who persecute and malign you for the sake of righteousness will give an account to God who is ready to judge the living and the dead. Paul also expresses the point in **2 Timothy 4:1** that God will judge the living and the dead and by His appearance and His kingdom. The view also in mind here is that we are to not take vengeance or revenge into our own hands and that belongs to the Lord who will distribute it perfectly in judgment (**Romans 12:17-19**). The Bible makes clear that we will all stand before God and give and account ourselves to God (**Romans 14:10-12**)

### **Verse 6**

This verse is in continuation in regards to those who malign the Christians and unless brought to repentance will suffer the judgment of God to whom they will give an account. The gospel has been preached to those in the past who are now dead and they suffered even to the point of death and were judged by men. The exiles are to look to these people as examples. These individuals were judged by men and their deaths may seem like Christ did not rescue or vindicate them. However, their physical death is not the end as their spirits have been made alive and will dwell with Christ forever. This verse is an encouragement to the exiles that even though they are maligned, persecuted, judged, and even killed they have a living hope and an eternal home with God. God will judge all evildoers and vindicate His people.