

LIVING FOR THE WILL OF GOD IN THE TIME WE HAVE LEFT



1) To live for the will of God we need to be armed with the mind of Christ, 4:1-2.

- (1 Peter 4:1–2 ESV) 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.

Continues from 3:18 ...

- (1 Peter 3:18 ESV) For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit.
- a) **Arming ourselves with the mind of Christ we will set our minds on the things of God.**

WE SET OUR MINDS TO LOOK PAST THE SUFFERING TO THE VICTORY TO BE WON.

- (Hebrews 12:1–2 ESV) Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, **who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.**
- (Matthew 16:21–23 ESV) From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the

third day be raised. 22 And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, "Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you." 23 But he turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. **For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.**"

- (Romans 8:5–7 ESV) For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, **but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit.** 6 For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but **to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.** 7 For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot.
 - (Philippians 3:18–19 ESV) For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. 19 Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, **with minds set on earthly things.**
 - (Colossians 3:1–2 ESV) If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 **Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.**
- b) **Arming ourselves with the mind of Christ we will have a willingness to obey to the point of death.**
- (Philippians 2:5, 8 ESV) **Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, ... he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.**
- c) **If we arm ourselves with the mind of Christ, we will be cross-bearers who are looking ahead to the coming glory of Christ.**
- (Luke 9:23–26 ESV) And he said to

all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me." 24 For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it. 25 For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself? 26 For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when he comes in his glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels."

- d) **Arming ourselves with the mind of Christ we will possess a determination and a passion to live for the will of God.**
- (Matthew 26:39 ESV) And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; **nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will.**"
 - (Matthew 7:21 ESV) Not everyone who says to me, "Lord, Lord," will enter the kingdom of heaven, **but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.**
- e) **This determination and passion to live for the will of God gives evidence of the new direction of our lives toward righteousness and against sin.**
- (1 Peter 4:1b NLT) For if you have suffered physically for Christ, you have finished with sin.

Schreiner ... EXCELLENT ... ***** Peter explained why they should prepare themselves to suffer, seeing the commitment to suffer as evidence that they have broken with a life of sin. The point is not that believers who suffer have attained sinless perfection, as if they do not sin at all after suffering. What Peter emphasized was that those who commit themselves to suffer, those who willingly endure scorn and mockery for their faith, show that they have triumphed over sin. They have broken with sin because they have ceased to participate in the lawless activities of unbelievers and endured the criticisms that have come from such a decision.

The commitment to suffer reveals a passion for a new way of life, a life that is not yet perfect but remarkably different from the lives of unbelievers in the Greco-Roman world. [Schreiner, T. R. (2003). *1, 2 Peter, Jude* (Vol. 37, p. 201). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.]

2) To live for the will of God we need to be done with living as mere humans, 4:3-5.

- (1 Peter 4:3–5 ESV) 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.
- a) **We need to put an end once and for all to the old life—Enough is enough.**
 - b) **We need to be prepared for people to say awful things about us when we end our allegiance to the old life—this is who they are.**
 - (Ephesians 2:1–3 ESV) And you were dead in the trespasses and sins 2 in which you once walked, following the course of this world, **following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience**— 3 among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, **and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.**
 - c) **When they do say awful things about us, we need the perspective of the judgment of God.**
 - (1 Peter 4:5 ESV) But they will give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.

Apart from Christ people live in disobedience to God and are by nature living under the wrath of God.

3) To live for the will of God we need to have complete trust in the hope and promise of the gospel, 4:6.

- (1 Peter 4:6 ESV) 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.

To live for the will of God in the time we have left we need to have complete faith in and utter reliance on the scope and purpose of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The scope of something is ... the extent of the area or subject matter that something deals with or to which it is relevant.

MacArthur ... Finally, believers are to arm themselves with the genuine hope of the reality of eternal life. God has promised them that through death they will overcome sin, escape final judgment, and enter eternal heaven in holy perfection. Peter thus reminds his readers that the gospel (the saving message of Christ) has for this purpose been preached (announced) even to those who are dead (those who had heard and believed the gospel but had died by the time he wrote).

There were questions in the early church about whether believers who died and missed the Lord's return may have missed the promise of glory, especially if they were killed by enemies of Jesus Christ. Paul wrote the famous rapture passage to the Thessalonians to assure them that those who died did not forfeit the promises related to Christ's return [MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2004). *1 Peter* (p. 231). Chicago: Moody Publishers.]:

- (1 Thessalonians 4:13–18 ESV) But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. 14 For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. 15 For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. 16 For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught

up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore encourage one another with these words.

CONCLUSION: So are we making the best use of the time we have left on Earth?

Three questions ...

(I) Generally speaking ... am I living foolishly or wisely?

(II) Am I living for myself or am I living for the will of God?

(III) Do I know what the will of God is?

- (Ephesians 5:15–17 CSB) Pay careful attention, then, to how you live—not as unwise people but as wise—16 making the most of the time, because the days are evil. 17 So don't be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is.

Are you paying careful attention to the direction of your life? How you live ... how you use your time ... this is not a given ... the wise person understands the attention that needs to be given to living wisely ... *the fool thinks he knows* ...

Which brings us to ... Are you willing to examine your life this morning ... right now ... before God ... if you think about it ... isn't that exactly what our Lord instructs us to do every time before we take the bread and the cup ...

- (1 Corinthians 11:28 ESV) Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup.

The Apostle Paul cautions us to even examine to see if we are in the faith ...

- (2 Corinthians 13:5 ESV) Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you fail to meet the test!

So would you do that ... examine your life before the Lord ... like right now ... look past your pride and stubbornness to the victory to be won ...

We need to be sober minded and seriously consider that this pandemic that has overtaken the planet may be a foreshadowing of the judgment of God ... a mercy call to a sleeping Church to wake us up so we are not ashamed when he comes in power and glory ...

Are you ready to meet your God? Do you want to be ready? Then do this ... follow Jesus ... arm yourself with his way of thinking ... look past the suffering to the victory to be won ... arm yourself with a humble determination to obey to the death ... and present your body as a living sacrifice to God ... just as our Lord did ...

- (Hebrews 10:5–7 ESV) Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, **but a body have you prepared for me**; 6 in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. 7 Then I said, '**Behold, I have come to do your will, O God**, as it is written of me in the scroll of the book.' "
- (Romans 12:1–2 CSB) Therefore, brothers and sisters, in view of the mercies of God, **I urge you to present your bodies as a living sacrifice**, holy and pleasing to God; this is your true worship. 2 Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God.

And now having presented your body as a living sacrifice ... and now knowing what is the good, pleasing and perfect will of God ... will you spend the rest of your time on earth to the glory of God ... will you decide today to live for the will of God no matter what?

Will you decide to follow Jesus for the rest of your time on Earth?