

How to handle Persecution & Suffering

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Main Scriptures: 1 Peter 3 [Recap] ; 1 Peter 4: 1-9

Supporting scriptures: Romans 6: 2-4, 6-8; Galatians 2: 20; Romans 12: 1-2; Matthew 12: 50; Romans 14: 8; Romans 13: 14; Romans 13: 13-14; Romans 1: 27; Ephesians 4: 19; Jude 1: 4, 7; 1 Peter 2: 11; Mark 4: 19; 1 Corinthians 6: 10; Revelation 20: 12

Referenced: Luke 9: 23; Matthew 16: 23-25 - John 6: 38

Notes:

Condition your mind with the same attitude that Jesus had in this world. Living for Jesus is not easy. Peter is telling the church you are seeing others being physically persecuted and suffering for what they believe and they do it for the sake of the gospel. If you want to stand and be counted to live for righteousness we have to prepare our minds to have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. He came into this world and he suffered physically - even unto death.

Are believers supposed to be prepared to die for the sake of the gospel? Yes - we will have to prepare our minds to face our cross for the sake of the gospel

How does that look?

- Peter says the man who has physically suffered is finished with Sin. 1 Peter 4: 1-2

What does arming yourself with the mind of Christ look like?

- **Being prepared to give up - dying to self.**

Sin brings pleasure that's why people are attracted to sin but Peter says the man who is arming his mind or himself with the mind of Christ - Sin becomes distasteful. He has concluded that he has sinned enough and he will do the will of God for the rest of his life.

Self has a great ambition - Self is never satisfied that is why Jesus said it's the first hurdle to cross if he intends to make the Lord Jesus Master and ruler over his life. He has to know to deny himself.

A man who can not deny himself can not be saved.

Jesus says - let him deny himself and follow me - [Luke 9: 23; Matthew 16: 23-25] - John 6: 38

There are other options we have but have we decided to make Jesus my choice.

The christian man must keep his thoughts on righteousness and seeing the end goal of being with his master.

Why prepare your mind to stand? - Because Jesus is coming back as the judge of this entire world.

- **Doing God's will for the rest of your life.**

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What God desires is what he will do for the rest of his life. It means we won't be chasing our own desires and lusts for wealth and positions.

Seek ye first the kingdom of God - your whole life is based on what God desires you to do. You must understand that lusting after power and fame does not = to the will of God.

Romans 12: 1-2 - The will of God - Paul says it's presenting our bodies as a living sacrifice to God which is our reasonable service. - Don't copy the customs of this world.

The man who has armed himself with the mind of Christ does not look to this world for the answers but looks to God to give him the answers on how to live in this world.

It has everything to do with Jesus - now that we walk with him means that a transformation of the mind must be evident. Reject the customs of the world

Whether we live or die we belong to the Lord. - Romans 13: 14; Romans 14: 8

- Being fed up with sin and knowing you have sinned enough.

Giving up: Immorality, lust, feasting, wild parties, drunkenness and adultery
The believer understands where God has taken him from and how much he is forgiven and he is not trying to attach himself to this world to experience the lusts and lasciviousness, indecency, shamelessness, unrestrained evil thoughts and behaviour.

The believer has one mind made up to serve the Lord Jesus.

Romans 13: 13 - we live in the world where we can see a lascivious lifestyle promoted and is now legal -
Romans 1: 27 homosexuality is still a sin

It doesn't matter if man makes a doctrine and law the word of God is absolute and can not be changed. It stands firm as a sure foundation.

The Christian believer is fed up - and knows where God has saved us from and there is no desire for that lifestyle. - Ephesians 4: 19; Jude 1: 4, 7 The word of God shows this lifestyle is reserved for judgment.

Lusts - God knows we are living in a time with an immense amount of lusts shown. No one is content and at peace with what the Lord has provided.

Someone may say the Pastor doesn't know what he is talking about - but I too am looking at every area of my life and looking if this is greed or if it's lust.

Lust is a strong desire and craving and passion. Sin pulls us and it comes in different forms and that lustful desire would take us to places we never intended to go and the end result is death. A man who is lustful is never satisfied.

Romans 13: 14 is the answer for the Lustful desires - desire more of Jesus. Make no provision for the flesh because the flesh is telling us that our lusts are needed.

1 Peter 2: 11

To lose one's state of mind as it relates to being drunk is a mockery. Knowing that it is the mind that the believer uses to worship God, mankind's mind is what God communicates with. To be given to Alcohol and drugs and people do this to satisfy their desire but the Lord tells us through his word that our body is his temple. We are to present this temple as a living sacrifice. It means God has high regard for the body
- Mark 4: 19; 1 Corinthians 6: 10

Drunkenness and open sex [orgies] is a sin

This is the lifestyle of the world and the Lord has delivered him from this and some of us go back trying to fit into a lifestyle contrary to the will of God.

Drinking Alcohol to fit in with a crowd and there are some who will ask what is wrong with these things and they will want the church to bend to accept this lifestyle so that they can feel comfortable but the Lord speaks against this and we will have to be prepared to be different.

The believer must be disgusted with sin and live by the word.

Doesn't matter what my former friends think, it's what Jesus thinks about me. I can go through the mockery because my mind is attached to him.

Those who belong to him and those who will be condemned are separated at the judgment - Revelation 20: 12 - Every man will have to face God and give an account - so if I give into persecution then am I standing with Jesus?

If Jesus is living in us and he could stand the test it means we have what it takes to stand.

The world is now going to come to an end very soon. People are beginning to talk about it and brothers and sisters when Moses was coming into this world Pharaoh gave a command to kill all the male children under 2 years old. Why? because a deliverer appointed by God was coming and the kingdom of darkness was against it.

When Jesus was coming into this world the same decree was given. Why? because light was coming into this world. Emanuel had arrived and the kingdom of darkness was against it. Many mothers suffered. If Christ is coming back for his church and the time is near - how will we escape suffering in this world. The kingdom of darkness knows and it will become more difficult for christians. But be earnest and disciplined in our prayers.

Show deep love and share - the love for each other is the strength of the church. This is how men will know that we are His disciples.

It's time to go home.

- **Understand you are a stranger in this world.**
- **Following the example of those who came before us.**

Jesus is salvation so to keep our minds on our salvation is to keep our minds on HIM. Jesus became salvation when the word became flesh.

Understand we are empowered to handle the times we are in we do not need to be fearful. We may feel fear but do not be overcome by fear. Speak back to the fear that Christ has empowered me - I serve the true and living God who has the final say. Be encouraged to live for him and worship him. If you keep your focus on Jesus He will show up in the midst of your fire. He will put food on your table. Don't be afraid. This world is going to get crazy against the church but we know our God who has become our salvation will stand with us. Live with your mind on the Lord and worship him because he is good.