



5/28/26

I've had several women tell me that they find 1 John very convicting. I agree. It's sobering to think of what God wants us to "practice" as His little children. But I always remind myself what James said, "But He gives more grace" (James 4:6). And I also go back to 1 John 1-2... God is not surprised by our sin. And He is the replacement payment for it. Only, let us not use that as a justification to sin, but as God's grace helping us to get back up when we do.

*Blessings,
Jonna*

1 Peter 4:1-11

Every time I look to see scripture about the unity God wants with us, I am reminded of the fact that it starts with my relationship with God, with Jesus as my example. As I look at today's passage, I become acutely aware of how my flesh wants to avoid what it says... and where my flesh does want to use what it says, it wants to do it for all the wrong reasons. So Lord, as I dive a little deeper into these words, I pray that You will expose the deception that my flesh clings to, and help me to surrender anything to You that needs to go. You know I don't have the power in myself to overcome. I am completely dependent on You... and I'm so thankful that You are faithful.

Vs. 1-2 ~ "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, so as to live for the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for human passions but for the will of God."

"Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh..." Let me never miss this... Jesus Christ, God Himself, who was on His throne in heaven, stepped down from His throne and emptied Himself of His glory, beauty, and majesty... setting down His "form of God" and taking up the much lesser "form of man" so that He could suffer on the cross to take away my sin. I WAS His enemy. I was weak, sinful, ungodly... hostile to Him. But He loved me, so He did it anyway. Even now, until He takes me home, I am stuck with my flesh that is still hostile to Him. But... Jesus is my motivation for putting to death the thoughts, desires, and actions of my flesh.

His call is for me to "arm myself with the same way of thinking." To arm myself is a military term. When do people need to arm themselves? When they're going to do battle. Overcoming the flesh IS a constant battle this side of heaven.

What am I arming myself with? The mind of Christ!!! I need to think like He thinks! I literally need to suffer in the flesh. If I don't think like Jesus thinks, my flesh WILL take over. Just the thought of suffering in the flesh makes my flesh cringe!!! But there's a promise!!! In my willingness to THINK like Jesus, I will be free of sin and I will gladly spend the rest of my life on earth turning away from any earthly desires and living for what pleases my Father in heaven instead. After all, I would have no life if He had not sent His Son for me. Also, everything that pleases Him is incredibly wonderful for me!

Well... if I'm to arm myself with the way Jesus thought, how should I think?

- *In John 5:30, Jesus said He did nothing on His own, but only what the Father told Him to do. So my thinking should be, "I serve at the pleasure of my King, and ONLY at the pleasure of my King."*
- *In John 7:18, Jesus said that whoever speaks on his own authority seeks his own glory, but Jesus would only seek the glory of the Father, and only speak what is true. I need to lay down seeking my own glory and only seek the glory of God, and only speak what aligns with His word. Well... this makes it very clear that I need to be ready to fight because my flesh absolutely wants its own glory. O Lord, please help me!!!*
- *1 John 3:5, 8 says that Jesus came to take away my sin and to destroy the works of the devil. If I'm going to think like Him, I need to put to death my desires that lead me to sin. I need to crush the things that align with the devil.*
- *Colossians 3 tells me that I need to set my mind on Jesus and seek Jesus.*

Clearly, the reason I need to arm myself with this way of THINKING is because the actions that flow from my flesh desires start with what I think. I do what I do because I think what I think because I want what I want because I worship what I worship. O Lord, help me to DO... live for You, because I THINK... like Jesus, because I WANT... to glorify You, because I WORSHIP You.

Vs. 3-6 ~ "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. With respect to this they are surprised when you do not join them in the same flood of debauchery, and they malign you; 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."

I think of the parental statement, "You've fooled around long enough!" Hahaha. Everything the Gentiles (unbelievers) live for is sinful passions, and they think I'm nuts for not being like them. I remember watching one of my favorite movies, "While You Were Sleeping," and in one

the scenes, Lucy's friend was shocked that she got engaged and hadn't slept with her fiancée (of course, he wasn't really her fiancée), but that's what the world teaches. "Do what looks good, feels good, and shows you off. Christianity is prudish." No, God wants to save me from the suffering of sin.

The difference between suffering in the flesh and suffering in sin is huge! Suffering in the flesh for the Lord will result in peace, joy, hope, and even honor. Suffering in sin promises no suffering, but always leads to more suffering... destruction, hopelessness, frustration. What God wants for me is so much better!

Those who choose to live for their selfish desires and not turn to God will someday answer to Him for their choices. Let me not seek the approval of man. Let me not worry about what others think of me. But let me say as the song goes, "I have decided to follow Jesus... no turning back... Though none go with me, still I will follow... no turning back... The world behind me, the cross before me... no turning back." Praise the Lord, He preached the gospel to ALL people so that even though all are judged unworthy in their own efforts, those who receive the Holy Spirit through faith in Christ have eternal life. Praise His name.

Vs. 7-11 ~ "The end of all things is at hand;" This is a tough one to grasp. It's been 2000 years. But from the moment Jesus ascended to heaven, we started closing in on "the end of all things." I need to arm myself with an eternal perspective. What does that mean I need to do?

- *"therefore be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers." The opposite of that is to live according to the flesh... to do what feels good and to ignore what really matters... to get caught up in living like the world. When I am NOT self controlled and sober-minded, my prayers are few and far between. And the prayers I do pray have nothing to do with honoring God, but more to do with Him helping me continue in sin. He can't honor that. He loves me too much.*
- *"Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins." What is the best way to be free of my sinful passions? Look outside myself and love as Jesus loved... sacrificially, affectionately, constantly, and unconditionally. Whoa! Lord, that kind of love can only come as I abide in You. It is a supernatural love. I need Your help!*
- *"Show hospitality to one another without grumbling." How can I be hospital (generous to others) and not complain about it in my mind? I won't necessarily complain about it to them, but God knows my mind!!! The only way I can do that is if I think like Jesus... seeking the glory of God and not the glory of me. I will know that I'm truly seeking the glory of God when I'm genuinely hospitable to others who are not genuinely hospitable to me, and I don't complain.*
- *"As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—" Oh, this is huge!!! How often are gifts that God supplies used in pride and arrogance, or avoided altogether in shame? God*

gives EVERY ONE of His children gifts. He gives them to us, not so that we can use them to make a name for ourselves, but so that we can serve each other!!! And so that we will serve with the gifts He supplies IN THE STRENGTH He supplies.

- *"in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen." O Lord, ALL for Your glory!!! That's the mind of Christ! Let it be mine also.*

You are worthy of all glory. Please don't let my flesh deceive my heart and mind. Help me to ARM myself for this battle. It WILL be a battle. But the end of all things is at hand. The battle will soon be over, and I'm on the winning side. Please help me to live in that joy and hope!!! Yes, Lord, I say yes. I am willing to suffer in the flesh in any way You see fit, so that I can be free of sin. I want to live for the rest of the time in my flesh, no longer for human, earthly desires and passions, but for You. Please help me to use the armor You have so generously supplied.