



Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States



The First Catholic Epistle of St. Peter

Chapter 4

Bishop Youssef



Introduction

- Just as Christ was willing to suffer for us in the flesh, we should have the same attitude
- When we give up sins like drunkenness, drinking parties, etc., those in the world think it strange
- Yet they themselves will give an account to Him who will judge both the living (1-6)
- Living in the end times, St. Peter admonishes Christians to be watchful in their prayers, fervent in their love for one another, and hospitable



Introduction

- They are to make use of their gifts as good stewards of God's manifold grace (7-11)
- Suffering for Christ should not be considered a strange thing, but an occasion to rejoice
- Those who partake of Christ's sufferings will be exceedingly glad. The Spirit of God rests upon those who glorify Christ by their suffering
- As God's judgment draws near, those who do not obey the gospel have no hope, (12-19)

Our Duties As Sufferers For Righteousness' Sake (4:1-6)



- The saints must be equipped for warfare and suffering
- The mind that was in Christ when he suffered, a willingness to suffer to do the will of God
- Suffering with Christ puts an end to (or ceases) our connection with sin (Rom 6:7)
- Hence, because we have ceased from sin (1 Pet 4:1), we should live to the will of God
- That was enough time for sin

Our Duties As Sufferers For Righteousness' Sake (4:1-6)



- Lived the unholy lives common of the heathen
- Lewdness: impurity; Lusts: uncleanness
- Drunkenness: excess of wine
- Revelries: Riots (Rom 13:13) (Gal 5:21)
- Drinking parties: wine feasts,
- Idolatries: abominations at their idol feasts
- The outside world think it strange that you do not engage in these sins any longer

Our Duties As Sufferers For Righteousness' Sake (4:1-6)



- Their enjoyment is in them, and they cannot understand how one can enjoy life without them
- Speaking evil of *you* because you refuse to rush into their riotous sins
- Those sinners, who not only persist in their unholy lives, but persecute the saints because they will not sin with them will give an account to Christ
- Dead: spiritually; without opportunity to know the gospel they could not be judged for its rejection

Our Duties As Sufferers For Righteousness' Sake (4:1-6)



- These dead, who had heard, and received the gospel, though experiencing the judgment of physical death that rested on all men, were called to live according to God in the spirit; that is, live on, an immortal life
- Also judged according to men: the unbelievers will judge them and speak evil of them
- Live according to God in the spirit: fulfill the commandments of God in their spiritual lives



Serving for God's Glory (4:7-11)

- End of all things: the end of their wrongs, and your sufferings
- Temperance helps watchfulness, and both of them help prayer
- Watch, that you may pray; and pray, that you may watch
- Love is a veil which seeks to overlook sin rather than exaggerate it (Prov 10:12; 1 Cor 13:7)
- Without grumbling - With all cheerfulness



Serving for God's Glory (4:7-11)

- Hospitality. A duty needful in age of persecution when Christians were driven from home
- Spiritual gifts are primarily meant, but the principle is of general application (1 Cor 12:4,28)
- All these spiritual gifts are to be used for others
- Those to whom God has given gifts must use them, not as their own, but as God's
- He must speak not his own words, but speak as though they were God's oracles



Serving for God's Glory (4:7-11)

- Let him act with zeal as one of God's ministers and act in His strength
- That God in all things may be glorified. Since all is of God
- Through Christ alone can God be glorified in us and our sayings and doings
- To whom belong the glory - of his wisdom, which teaches us to speak
- And the dominion - Which enables us to act

Suffering for God's Glory (4:12-19)



- The fiery trial. Persecution
- Christians, with the world against them, must expect to endure such things
- Rejoice. Because thus you are made partakers of Christ's sufferings (Rom 8:17; 2 Cor 1:7)
- All who suffer with Him will be glorified
- For the name of Christ. Because you're a Christian
- The sufferer for Christ is happy because the glory of Christ awaits him, and God's spirit is with him

Suffering for God's Glory (4:12-19)



- While they are blaspheming Christ, you glorify Him in the midst of your sufferings, 1Peter 4:16
- Let none of you deservedly suffer, as an evildoer
- Let him glorify God, who gives him the honor so to suffer, and so great a reward for suffering
- Judgment begins at the house of God, the church
- In Mt 25:32-34, the righteous are judged first
- If even the righteous are called to judgment, what shall be the fate of the disobedient?

Suffering for God's Glory (4:12-19)



- A passage quoted from Prov 11:31. If sufferings and judgments (chastening) come upon good people, what hope is there for the wicked?
- Let all who suffer, not for doing evil but for righteousness sake, keep on in well doing and commit their souls to the care of the all seeing and faithful God
- Faithful Creator - In whose truth, love, and power, you may safely trust



Conclusion

- According to Saint Peter, why is it necessary for us to suffer in the flesh?
- Why was the gospel preached also to those who are dead?
- What is the apostle urging us to do since the end of all things is at hand?
- What is the significance of the virtue of love compared to all the other virtues?
- What is the condition for speaking?



Conclusion

- Under which condition should the believers be hospitable to one another?
- What is the condition for ministering? Why?
- What should we do when we experience the fiery trial?
- Why are the believers blessed when they are reproached for the name of Christ?
- What should we do if we suffer as Christians?