

1Pet 4.1-6—Pursue Holiness in Light of Christ's Death

Christ died for your sins so that you can stop sinning, v.1

- I. In this verse we have a reference to what Christ did for us followed by a reference to the impact it's had on us. To put it another way, we have a gospel indicative followed by a gospel imperative.
- II. The indicative: Christ suffered in the flesh (i.e. died) for our sins, cf. 1.19; 2.21, 24; 3.18.
 - A. Christ had no sins of His own, 2.22, which made His atoning blood not only spotless but precious in God's sight, 1.19, and effective to reconcile us to God, 2.18.
 - B. Christ's death was therefore designed to effectively put an end to sin, to be the death of sin, Rom 6.9; 8.3.
 - C. The reason Christ suffered for our sins is because He was fortified with a certain way of *thinking* about sin—and this is what Peter highlights when he says *arm yourselves with the same way of thinking*.
 1. Christ had a disposition and resolve to put an end to sin because it stood in the way of our acceptance with God *and* in the way of our likeness to Him, 1Jn 3.4.
 2. Thus Christ was *of the mind* to redeem us from sin's guilt and curse and to free us from sin's tyranny, power, and presence, Jn 10.10; Lk 19.10; Jn 8.36; Mt 11.28; Jn 6.35; Rom 8.3.
- III. The imperative: arm yourselves with the same way of thinking because of *the impact* Christ's death has had on you. What impact?
 - A. You've been crucified with Christ, united to His death not only for sin, but to sin. Our old self was crucified with Him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, Gal 2.20; Rom 6.6.
 - B. That's how Paul can climactically declare that there is now no condemnation for those who are united to Christ's death, Rom 8.1.
 - C. It's in this way that we have *ceased from sin*, 1Pet 4.1, because it no longer has dominion over us, Rom 6.11, 14.
 - D. We no longer stand related to sin as we did because sin no longer stands related to us as it did. Our participation in Christ's death has radically and forever altered our relationship to sin in order that we might be reconciled to God and conformed more and more unto the holiness and life of Christ, cf. Rom 7.1-6.
 - E. And it's because of this *impact* that Christ's death has had on us that Peter charges us to *arm ourselves with the same way of*

thinking. This means, as he goes on to say, that we're to have nothing more to do with sin, cf. Rom 6.1-7.6; 1Pet 2.24.

- F. This is the greatest encouragement ever given to the church of Christ: that His death for our sins really and effectually equips us with invincible weapons to subdue the flesh in us.
 1. The death of Christ for you is the divine panacea for your battle against sin. The death of His sinless flesh works in you the death of your sinful flesh. To be united by faith to His death is not only to enjoy His death in your place as to the *penalty* of sin, but it's also to enjoy His death at work in your mortal body as to the *presence* of sin, Rom 7.24-25.
- G. This is the thinking, then, with which you're to arm yourself: the thinking that recognizes, believes, and lives in light of Christ's death for your sins and the radical break it causes in your daily life with sin, Gal 2.20. Is this your thinking?

Four arguments in support of a sinless life, vv.2-6

- I. Peter calls us to *cease from sin* because the very purpose of our redemption by Christ is that we might live the rest of our lives no longer for sin, but for the will of God, who calls us into the fellowship of His holiness, Tit 2.11-14; Eph 2.10; 2Pet 1.3-11.
- II. Peter calls us to *cease from sin* because the time past is more than enough for a life of sin. Oh! how much time we've wasted and lost in sin, and how little time and strength we have left to give God all our heart, life, and soul! The memory of our past life of sin is one of the greatest incentives to repentance and reformation.
- III. Peter calls us to *cease from sin* because though the world and your old companions in sin malign you for no longer joining them, they'll very soon stand before Christ in judgment. To follow Christ is not only to break with sin, but it's to break with the world, old friends, partners in crime, and all bad company, Pr 1.10-19.
- IV. Peter calls us to *cease from sin* because though many who have gone before you have suffered and died at the hands of this world, yet they're alive with God in the eternal joys of heaven, Heb 12.1-2.
- V. *Conclusion*: Take heart, fear not, stand firm, and lay hold by faith upon the saving power of God in Christ, because the sins you see today, you'll one day soon never see again, 1Jn 2.1-2; 3.1-3; Rev 21.1-5. So give thanks, rejoice in God, and fight on, because your victory over sin is certain!