

## A Study of The Epistle of 1<sup>st</sup> Peter

### Theme: “A LIVING HOPE!”

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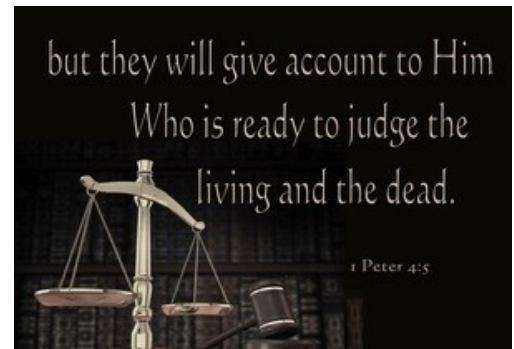
**Lesson: 28**

**Chapter 4:1-5**

**Date: 3-7-21**

### BIBLE TEXT:

(1) 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**. (3) 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**.



### STUDY NOTES:

(1) 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,

**(Jn 1:14; Rom 6:1-18; Gal 5:24; Eph 6:13; Col 3:3-5)**

(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**.

**(Rom 14:7; 2 Cor 5:15; Gal 2:20; Titus 2:12; 1 Jn 2:16)**

(3) 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.

**(Ezek 44:6; 45:9; Rom 13:13; 1 Cor 12:2; Eph 2:2; 4:17-19; 1 Th 4:5; Titus 3:3)**

(4) With respect to this they are surprised when you do not join them in the same flood of debauchery, and they malign you;

**(Eph 5:18)**

(5) but they will give account to **him who is ready to judge the living and the dead**.

**(Jn 5:27; Ac 10:42; 17:30,31; Rom 2:5; 2 Tim 4:1; Jas 5:9)**

### Luther's Works – Volume 30 pp. 117-199

“St. Peter continues on the same path. Just as so far he has exhorted us all to suffer if it is **God's will** and has presented **Christ** to us as an example, so he now confirms this further and repeats it. He wants to say: Since **Christ, who is our Leader and Head**, suffered in the flesh and gave us all an example—besides, He redeemed us through His suffering—we should imitate Him, equip ourselves in this way, and put on armor of this kind. For in Scripture **the life of the Lord Christ**, and particularly His suffering, is presented to us in a twofold manner. In the first place, as a gift, as St. Peter has already done in the third chapter. First he stressed faith and taught that we are redeemed by **the blood of Christ**, that our sins have been taken away, and how He has been given to us as a gift. This cannot be grasped in any other way than through faith. The apostle spoke about this when he said: “**Christ** also died for sins once for all” (3:18). This is the chief article and the best part of the Gospel.

In the second place, **Christ** is held up and given to us as an example and a pattern for us to follow, for if we now have **Christ as a gift** through faith, we should go forward and do as He does for us. We should imitate Him in our whole life and in all our suffering. That is the way St. Peter presents this here. But here St. Peter is

not speaking primarily of the works of love with which we serve and benefit our neighbor, which are really good works—for he has said enough about this above—but he is speaking about works that relate to our bodies and serve us ourselves—works through which faith is strengthened, so that we mortify sin in the flesh and thus are able to serve our neighbor better. For if I subdue my body, so that it does not become lascivious, I can also let my neighbor’s wife and child alone. Thus if I suppress hatred and envy, I become all the more willing to be kind and friendly to my neighbor.

Now we have stated often enough that although we are righteous through faith and have **the Lord Christ** as our own, we are nonetheless also obliged to perform good works and to serve our neighbor. For we never become perfectly pure while we are living on earth, and everyone still finds evil lust in his body. To be sure, faith begins to slay sin and to bestow heaven; but it has not yet become perfect and really strong, as **Christ** says about the Samaritan (Luke 10:33 ff.), whose wounds were not yet healed. But he was bandaged and looked after, in order that his wounds might be healed. This is also how it is here. If we believe, our sin, that is, the wound we have brought from Adam, is bandaged and begins to heal. But in one person this healing is less, and in another person it is more, the more each one chastises and subdues the flesh, and the more firmly he believes. Therefore if we have these two things, faith and love, we should henceforth devote ourselves to sweeping out sin entirely until we die completely.

For this reason St. Peter says: “Arm yourselves with the same thought”; that is, make a firm resolution, and strengthen your hearts with the thought you receive from **Christ**. For if we are Christians, we have to say: “My **Lord** suffered for me and shed His blood. He died for my sake. Should I, then, be so worthless as not to be willing to suffer?” For since **the Lord** steps to the front in the fray, how much more should His servants rejoice to step forward! In this way we gain courage to prevail and to arm ourselves in our thoughts, in order that we may go through with joy.

In Scripture the little word “flesh” means not only the body externally, where there is flesh and blood, bone and skin, but everything that comes from Adam. Thus **God** says in Gen. 6:3: “**My Spirit** shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh.” And in Is. 40:5 we read that all flesh shall see **the glory of the Lord**; that is, this glory will be revealed to all mankind. Thus we also confess in the Creed: “I believe in the resurrection of the flesh”; that is, that mankind will rise again. Accordingly, flesh means the whole man through and through, as he lives here in this life.

Now the works of the flesh are enumerated by Paul one by one in Gal. 5:19–21, not only the coarse, carnal works, such as unchastity, but also the costliest and most sublime vices, such as idolatry and heresy, which are not only in the flesh but also in reason. Therefore one must understand this to mean that man, together with his reason and will, internally and externally, together with body and soul, is called flesh because with all his powers, externally and internally, he sees only that which is carnal and which benefits the flesh. Accordingly, St. Peter now adds here that “**Christ** suffered in the flesh.” Now it is certain that His suffering extended farther than into the flesh alone; for, as the prophet Isaiah says (53:11), His soul suffered the great travail.

In this way you must also understand what follows here: “Whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin.” For this, too, refers not only to cutting off someone’s head and to dismembering the body but to everything that can hurt man, to whatever misery and distress he suffers. For many people have sound bodies, and yet inwardly they feel much heartache and wretchedness. If this happens **for Christ’s sake**, it is profitable and good. For, as Saint Peter says, “whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin.” The holy cross is a good means with which to subdue sin. When it attacks you in this way, your tickling, envy, and hatred, and your other rascality, vanish. **God** has laid the holy cross on us in order that it may drive and compel us, so that we have to believe and to extend a helping hand to one another.”

### LIFE APPLICATION

How can we arm ourselves with this same way of thinking, and live for the rest of our time in the flesh, while here on earth, no longer for human passions, but for **the will of God**?