

Women's Bible Study
1Peter 4:3-5, February 22nd, 2023

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Looking back to verses 1 and 2, we are to follow Christ's example which is living for the will of God – this is our purpose. Our trajectory has been changed from a focus on self to a focus on holiness.

1Peter 4:3-5 For the time already past is sufficient [for you] to have carried out the desire of the Gentiles, having pursued a course of sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, carousals, drinking parties and abominable idolatries. 4 And in [all] this, they are surprised that you do not run with [them] into the same excess of dissipation, and they malign [you]; 5 but they shall give account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.

1Peter 4:3 paints a clear picture of the change that is wrought in someone who is following Jesus. The audience Peter writes to understands the former life he describes. He calls the believers to recognize the sin they had been entrenched in and tells them this way of life is now in the past.

'For the time already past is sufficient [for you] to have carried out the desire of the Gentiles' – the apostle is continuing his exhortation to live in the example of Christ, giving yet another argument or explanation of what they used to be in contrast to what they are to be now. Recall that the Gentiles had been actively involved in a sinful lifestyle which included all forms of idolatry. And the Jews had also fallen into the wiles of sinful behavior. The word sufficient does not mean this lifestyle was acceptable for a time; it does mean emphatically that it must not continue. This is like saying, 'I've had enough already, it's done!'. Think of all the time wasted in living a way that dishonors God. Once you are called to understand His truths, you are motivated to turn completely from your sin and move in the opposite direction.

Matthew Poole's commentary suggests Peter's words were "to stir them up to holiness by minding them of their former sinful life; 'Ye are concerned to run well now, when ye have for so great a part of your time run wrong'.

One commentary reads, "for not even the past time ought to have been wasted in lust; but since you cannot recall it, at least lay out the future to better account", *Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Commentary*.

Romans 13:13 Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy.

Ephesians 2:1-2 And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.

Ephesians 4:17-18 This I say therefore, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart;

Titus 3:3 For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another.

1Peter 1:14-15 As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts [which were yours] in your ignorance, but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all [your] behavior;

We could go on to investigate each corrupted behavior listed in 1Peter 4:3, but it seems better to look at them as a whole lifestyle of sin. Perhaps we are not able to identify with the specifics of the words used, however, we are able to identify with living for selfish desires. Consider who you were before being saved and who you are now. Your pursuits, your way of thinking, and your priorities should be as different as night and day. Only God is able to change a soul to desire His holiness. This was true a few thousand years ago, and remains true today.

In this passage, the new converts, Jewish and Gentile Christians, are being reminded to live for Christ – behaviors quite different than before. When you change completely in your actions and thinking, those around you are either pleased and impressed and encouraged, or they are bothered and feel disdain because there is pressure on them to make a change. When you no longer follow the ‘status quo’, you stick out, and it causes friction. This is the arena these new believers found themselves in. It is no different today.

Think of the culture we are in right now. What happens if you do not go along with majority thinking? The wording in the KJV for verse 4 reads, “[wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them ...](#)” It is quite possible that others will think you are strange. Are you singled out for not having the same views? Do you think people are pressured to think and act in a way which accepts sin? There is a choice to make, are we choosing to glorify God with our lives despite any negative feedback?

Remember how the Jewish leaders acted when they saw others being drawn towards the Apostles’ teaching of Jesus? [Acts 13:45 But when the Jews](#)

saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy, and [began] contradicting the things spoken by Paul, and were blaspheming. They felt threatened by this different thinking and were concerned that people were listening. So they spoke against the truth. The response of Paul and Barnabas was to continue to boldly live for God. Acts 13:46 And Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said, "It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first; since you repudiate it, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles.

The Apostle reminds the converts that they ultimately will answer to God for their actions. It is not for us to judge, but instead to share the truth because we know judgement is coming.

Acts 10:42 "And He ordered us to preach to the people, and solemnly to testify that this is the One who has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead.

Matthew 28:19-20 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

- Our purpose is to live for God. Your pursuits, the way you spend time, the words you share, should bring glory to His name.
- Think of how God has changed you. Are you willing to stand for Him?
- Unfortunately, it is easy to judge others. Yet what we are called to do is share the truth so that others are saved from God's eternal judgment.