



The Good News

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“...arm yourselves also with the same mind...”

By Michael McCleary

In considering the concept of arming ourselves with the same mind as Christ, it is important to understand what “mind” specifically Peter was speaking of in I Peter. 4:1. He says, “Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,” Peter continues to discuss how that the saints should live the rest of their time in fulfilling the will of God. We know that Jesus never sinned and was focused on fulfilling the Father’s will and thus was willing to suffer. The determination and focus of the mind that is willing to suffer and die should also be able and willing to cease from sin.

Conversely, we realize that, in arming ourselves with the mind of Christ to eliminate sin from our lives, we must be prepared to face the possible physical consequences of living such a life. Peter emphasizes to the saints in I Peter 3:13 the blessing of suffering persecution, “But even if you should suffer for righteousness’ sake, you are blessed.” They were to “rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ’s sufferings” (I Pet. 4:13). We also see how that the early Christians were willing to suffer in the statement made by Jesus to the church at Pergamum in Rev. 2:13, “And you hold fast to my name, and did not deny My faith even in the days in which Antipas, My faithful martyr, was killed among you...” We see that the saints were willing to suffer in order to hold fast the name of Christ, even to the point of death. This holding fast the name of Christ included the eliminating of sin in their lives.

If we had some fiery trial that would likely end in our death, would we have the fortitude to endure it, ceasing from the sins of our flesh and embracing the will of God? It is likely that in this country we will

not have to face this type of persecution, but are we willing to endure even a little? We are ridiculed for not joining in ungodly activities with our friends, and we are mocked when we quote Scripture or try to talk to a co-worker or family member about the Bible. How is it that we can have the willingness to suffer that the early Christians had? The answer rests in I Pet. 3:15, “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.” The saints were to sanctify – set apart, regard as holy – the Lord God in their hearts. Because the Lord is set apart in their hearts, they would serve Him as true servants, fulfilling His will in eliminating sin from their lives, and being willing to suffer for Him. Is the Lord set apart in our hearts to the point that we would cease from sin, and be willing to die for Him? Is He set apart to the point that we would give a defense to everyone of the reason for this hope that is in us, even if it means they will persecute us? If so, we should be glad, realizing the reward that awaits us for such a sacrifice. “Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven,” (Matt.5:11-12).

Let us become partakers of Christ’s sufferings, arming ourselves with a mind to cease from sin and do the will of God, no matter if we have to endure a little persecution or a lot of persecution. Persecution is certain- “Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.” (II Tim. 2:12). Are you prepared to endure?