

Persevering in Personal Suffering

1 Peter 4:1-6



1 Peter: Holy Living in a Hostile Land

“...one of the pervasive marks of our times is emotional fragility. I feel it as though it hung in the air we breathe. We are easily hurt. We pout and mope easily. Our faith breaks easily. Our happiness breaks easily. And our commitment to the church breaks easily. We are easily disheartened, and it seems we have little capacity for surviving and thriving in the face of criticism and opposition...

“We see very few models today whose lives spell out in flesh and blood the rugged words, ‘Count it all joy, my brothers, when you fall into various trials’ (James 1:3). When historians list the character traits of the last third of twentieth century America, commitment, constancy, tenacity, endurance, patience, resolve and perseverance will not be on the list. The list will begin with an all-consuming interest in self-esteem. It will be followed by the subheadings of self-assertiveness, and self-enhancement, and self-realization.

“We need help here. When you are surrounded by a society of emotionally fragile quitters, and when you see a good bit of this ethos in yourself, you need to spend time with people—whether dead or alive—whose lives prove there is another way to live. Scripture says, ‘Be imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises’ (Hebrews 6:12).”

John Piper

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Peter gives us **three persevering perspectives** which serve as our weapons in our fight to remain steadfastly faithful to Jesus when we suffer for His sake.

I. Arm Yourself for Your Present (1 Peter 4:1-2)

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A call to arms, a call to war, it reflects our need to:

1. **Understand** our times
2. **Commit ourselves** to knowing who we are and what we are about as followers of Jesus Christ.

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Purpose: a willing and humble heart to suffer for the sake of what is right in the sight of God.

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Someone who has suffered in the flesh has adopted a willingness of heart for the purpose of suffering on behalf of Jesus Christ in doing what is right.

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“Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore, do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace.”

(Romans 6:11-14)

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II. Arm Yourself Against Your Past (1 Peter 4:4-5)

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Two considerations to make in this perspective about your past life of sin:

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II. Arm Yourself Against Your Past (1 Peter 4:4-5)

Two considerations to make in this perspective about your past life of sin:

1. Consider the **poison** of your past life without Christ
2. Consider the **people** of your past life without Christ

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II. **Arm Yourself Against Your Past** (1 Peter 4:4-5)

Two considerations to make in this perspective about your past life of sin:

1. Consider the **poison** of your past life without Christ

“...what benefit were you then deriving from the things of which you are now ashamed?”

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Two considerations to make in this perspective about your past life of sin:

1. Consider the **poison** of your past life without Christ

“...what benefit were you then deriving from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the outcome of those things is death.”

(Romans 6:21)

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II. Arm Yourself Against Your Past (1 Peter 4:4-5)

Two considerations to make in this perspective about your past life of sin:

1. Consider the **poison** of your past life without Christ

“For while we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were aroused by the Law, were at work in the members of our body to bear fruit for death.” (Romans 7:5)

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II. Arm Yourself Against Your Past (1 Peter 4:4-5)

Two considerations to make in this perspective about your past life of sin:

1. Consider the **poison** of your past life without Christ

“Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ, so that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God.” (Romans 7:4)

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II. **Arm Yourself Against Your Past** (1 Peter 4:4-5)

Two considerations to make in this perspective about your past life of sin:

2. Consider the **people** of your past life without Christ

This new supernatural spiritual reality about you is exactly why the **unsaved people** of your **past** and **present** life can't understand, appreciate, or tolerate you and, therefore, why they end up *maligning* you.

I. Arm Yourself for Your Present

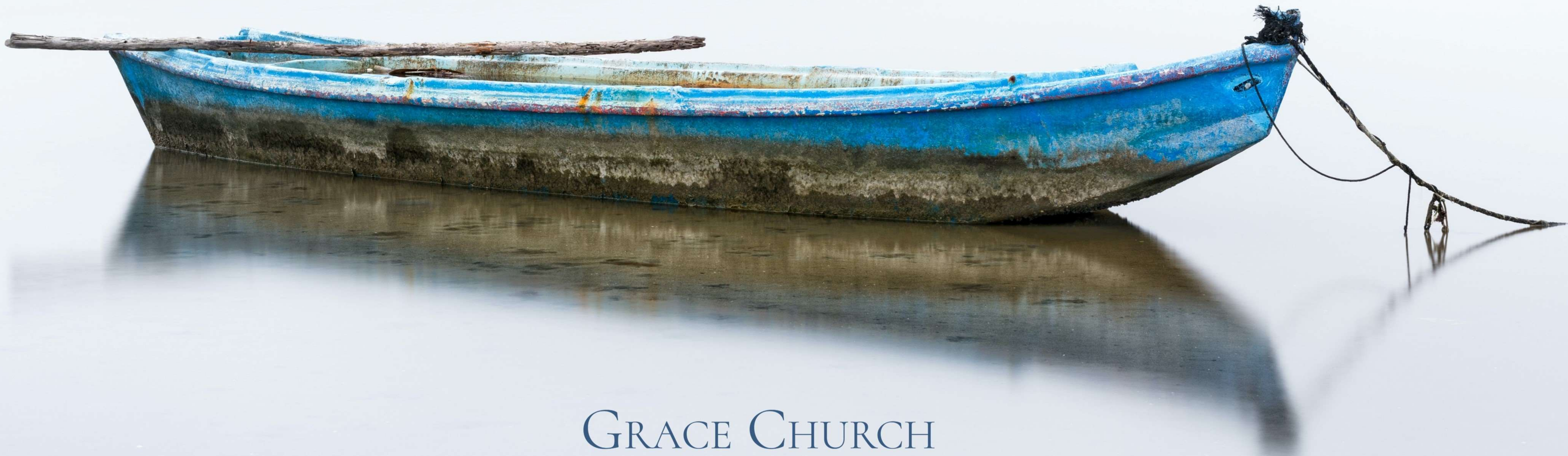
II. Arm Yourself Against Your Past

III. Arm Yourself with Hope for Your Future (1 Peter 4:6)

- I. Arm Yourself for Your Present
- II. Arm Yourself Against Your Past
- III. Arm Yourself with Hope for Your Future (1 Peter 4:6)**

Arm yourselves for **suffering** well by adopting a mindset, a heart-attitude, a tenacious resolve to live for Jesus **now**, to put off what you were **before** Jesus, and to look forward to your eternal **future** with Jesus.

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