

# Pursuing Purity (Part 2)

## I Peter 4:1-2

### INTRODUCTION:

If you would open your Bibles this morning, in a few moments we will be reading from I Peter Chapter 4.

Last Sunday we looked at The Passion for Purity. That passion comes to us when we realize that "**Christ has suffered in the flesh**" for US!

When the believer looks at the cross, they not only see the wickedness of their sin, but they also see the magnificence of the Savior Who took the wrath for them. They look at Christ and say "What an amazing Savior Who took my guilt on that cross! **He died for me! He has redeemed me! He has purchased me! He has saved me!** And something builds up inside us that convicts us that we want people to praise and worship that great Savior **Who rescued me!**

Then we started to look at The Path to Purity.

Peter tells us that the pathway to purity is to "**Arm yourself with the mind of Christ**" even in the midst of suffering because that suffering is going to sever the root of sin so you may be able to live the rest of your time here not following the desires and lust of the flesh, but by living according to the will of God.

Then Peter told us that "**he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin**".

If you have read this verse and you fear for your salvation because you continue to sin, understand that Peter is **not saying** that we no longer sin and that we no longer feel temptation. We can never earn our own salvation by being sinless. We have been saved by Christ by His death on the cross for our sins. It is a free gift from God!

When you arm yourself with the mind of Christ through suffering, the power of sin has been severed and we have been freed from it. We no longer have the DESIRE to sin and shame our Savior.

If we are struggling with a lack of faith, we continue to put our faith in all of the things of the world such as, bank accounts, retirement funds, prestige, etc. Often God will have to strip all of those things away from us in order to free us from that sin.

This morning I want to continue with The Path to Purity and consider, what is the "Mind of Christ" and how can we attain it?

### All Stand and Read Scripture

1 Peter 4:1-6 (NASB)

4 Therefore, since Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same purpose, because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, <sup>2</sup> so as to live the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. <sup>3</sup> 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, carousing, drinking parties and abominable idolatries. <sup>4</sup> In *all* this, they are surprised that you do not run with *them* into the same excesses of dissipation, and they malign *you*; <sup>5</sup> but they will give account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. <sup>6</sup> For the gospel has for this purpose been preached even to those who are dead, that though they are judged in the flesh as men, they may live in the spirit according to *the will of God*.

## Prayer

Look with me again at verses 1 and 2.

1 Peter 4:1-2 (NASB)

<sup>4</sup> Therefore, since Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same purpose, (Or as some translations read, with the same MIND) because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, <sup>2</sup> so as to live the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for the lusts of men, but for the will of God.

## BODY:

### **II. THE PATH TO PURITY.**

The pathway to purity is to arm yourself with the mind of Christ in the midst of suffering.

I am not going to say much about suffering specifically because Peter has already talked about suffering a lot in this epistle. He talked about it in...

I Peter 1:6-9; 2:18-21; 3:13-17; and He will talk about it again in 4:12-19.

The point here is not the suffering itself. Peter is not telling you to go looking for suffering because he is assuming that it is going to occur. He is writing to people in the midst of suffering.

1 Peter 4:12 (NASB)

<sup>12</sup> Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you;

In other words, you live in a fallen world. The suffering is going to take care of itself.

### **IT'S GOING TO HAPPEN!**

You are going to...

- have financial hardships
- have sickness and disease
- be sinned against by someone you trusted
- have a loved one die unexpectedly

These things are going to happen and you are going to suffer. That is the reality. The point here is not that we should be looking for suffering. He says the suffering is inevitable. The command here is to "ARM YOURSELVES WITH THE MIND OF CHRIST".

To arm ourselves means to take up weapons.

We are familiar with the phrase, from our constitutional right to "KEEP AND BEAR ARMS". Weapons. Weapons of either defense or attack.

You see, if you are going to be pure you must be armed with **something**...and that "**something**" must be the "MIND OF CHRIST"!

The Greek word used here for "purpose" or "mind" is [ennoia \(ennoy-ya\)](#). The word means to have a notion, idea, thought, purpose, or intention. It only appears twice in the New Testament. The other occurrence is found in Heb. 4:12.

[Hebrews 4:12 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>12</sup> For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and **intentions** of the heart.

So, in order to be armed with "ennoia", we must **think**, **feel**, and **have** the desires of Christ!

[Philippians 2:5 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>5</sup> Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus,

So we ask, "**What is the mind of Christ?**"

May I suggest three principles that guided the mind of Christ in the midst of suffering?

The first principle that guided the mind of Christ during suffering was...

### **A. OBEDIENCE.**

[Philippians 2:8 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>8</sup> Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

That doesn't mean that Jesus decided to become obedient just at the cross. The whole time He was on earth, He was obedient.

[John 6:38 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>38</sup> For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

To have the mind of Christ, first of all, is to have a mind of submission and obedience to the will and the commands of God.

This obedience starts with the smallest, simplest things. If you are not willing to obey in the least little thing, you are not likely to obey in the bigger temptations.

You want to be pure? You had better start being obedient in the simple little things that you do not feel are that big of a deal.

The mind of Christ is one of absolute obedience.

- It means that we learn to be submissive to the earthly authorities over us. Whether it be parents, bosses, or governments.
- It means that we learn to forgive because God has told us to forgive.
- It means that we are to be faithful to church because God has told us to be faithful.
- It means that we avoid the "mature audience" movie on TV because God has told us that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has **already committed** adultery with her in his heart.

We are to be obedient in the simple things.

The mind of Christ is one of obedience to the will of God.

A second principle that guided the mind of Christ during suffering was...

## **B. SERVICE.**

Philippians 2:7 (NASB)

*7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.*

The King of Kings came as a slave.

Mark 10:45 (NASB)

*45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."*

We see no better picture of the servant mind of Christ than when He washed the disciples feet in **John 13**. The disciples had walked to the dinner on dusty dirt roads, wearing sandals, getting sweaty as they walked, and the dirt begins to cake up. And inevitably their feet would stink. Normally, there was a lowly slave who would have been expected to wash the guests feet, but there was no slave that day. So someone needed to wash the disciples feet. It was such a low job, that in some Jewish traditions that no Jewish slave could be asked to wash feet. It had to be reserved for some Gentile slave. Of course, none of the disciples were going to do this. So Jesus gets up, takes the bowl of water, wraps the towel around His waist and begins to wash the disciples feet. It wasn't His job. It wasn't His responsibility. If that job was beneath anybody, it was beneath Him! And remember this is the night before He is going to die for these disciples' sins! If there was ever a time to say, "Listen, guys, I am doing the dying tomorrow! One of you can do the foot washing." This was this time. But **He washed their feet!**

The mind of Christ is one of service. If we are going to be people of purity, it has to start with having a heart of service. If your heart is not willing to serve, it will not be pure!

The mind of Christ was one of OBEDIENCE and of SERVICE and thirdly it was a mind of FAITH

### C. FAITH.

1 Peter 2:23 (NASB)

<sup>23</sup> and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting *Himself* to Him who judges righteously;

What did Jesus do in the midst of suffering and persecution? He entrusted Himself to God. In other words, HE TRUSTED His sovereign Father Who was in control!

If we are to be people of purity, particularly in the midst of suffering and persecution, we must be a people who have a rock solid faith in the goodness and sovereignty of our Heavenly Father.

Peter, himself is going to tell us in

1 Peter 4:19 (NASB)

<sup>19</sup> Therefore, those also who suffer according to the will of God shall entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right.

When we were looking at the believer's armor in Ephesians 6, we looked at the shield of faith. We noted that every battle with temptation is really a battle with unbelief. There is a quandary that we face. God says this is the way to go. The world says this is the way to go. The root of all temptation sits right there. Which one will we trust and believe?

If we are to be people of purity when we are suffering, particularly when we are sinned against, or in pain and things are going wrong, we must be a people who have a rock solid faith in both the goodness of our Heavenly Father and His sovereign control over the situation. We must look to God and say "I TRUST YOU!"

**Do you have that mind?** A mind of obedience, a mind of service, and a mind of faith.

These are three guiding principles of the mind of Christ. It doesn't exhaust all of His mind, but it is part of it.

There is one last question in the call to arm ourselves with the mind of Christ.

That is "**How do I go about arming myself?**"

I get it Peter! I know that I am supposed to make Christ's mind, my mind. But how do I do that?

Here is the real simple answer.

By saturating ourselves in the Word of God. Turn in your Bibles to Psalm 119.

Psalm 119:9-11 (NASB)

<sup>9</sup> How can a young man keep his way pure?  
By keeping *it* according to Your word.

<sup>10</sup> With all my heart I have sought You;  
Do not let me wander from Your commandments.  
<sup>11</sup> Your word I have treasured in my heart,  
That I may not sin against You.

How does the Psalmist say a young man can keep his way pure?  
It tells us in verse 9, by taking heed to the Word of God.

He also tells us in verse 11 that we avoid sinning against God by hiding His Word in our heart. This is not complex, though it is not easy to put into practice.

However, if we want to have the mind of Christ it comes by saturating our minds in God's Word. It is important to remember Romans 8:5.

**Romans 8:5 (NASB)**

<sup>5</sup> For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.

If I am wandering into sin and I see my heart drifting, the real cause is that I'm not set my mind on the things of the Spirit. If I am going to walk according to God's will, the way to do it is to set my mind on the things of God.

### **LIFT UP BIBLE.**

It is this book that both reveals to us the mind of Christ and it is the scalpel that the Spirit uses to form Christ's mind in us. We will not have the mind of Christ and we will not be pure apart from being saturated with this Book. We are told, as you all know, in...

**2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NASB)**

<sup>16</sup> All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; <sup>17</sup> so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

Let me give you three practical ways in which you can saturate your mind with the Word of God in order to arm yourself with the same mind as Christ.

#### **1. Attend to the preaching and teaching of God's Word as often as possible.**

We start by making our attendance on Sunday morning a priority. We make it a priority to be where God's Word is sung, and God's Word is praised, and God's Word is preached when we have that opportunity on Sunday morning.

It means that we make an effort to get ourselves up early and be here for Sunday School where God's Word is taught. It means that we seek to get involved and participate in activities.

It means that we do not forget that there is a Wednesday night Bible study that is available for us.

I understand that people are busy and I am not a believer that everything is for everybody, but we need to make it a priority as much as we can to attend to the preaching and teaching of God's Word.

Some use the excuse that it is not interesting. May I suggest that it will **NEVER** be interesting until **you** are **IN-TER-ES-TED**.

A second way in which you can saturate your mind with the Word of God in order to arm yourself with the same mind as Christ is...

## **2. Personally read and study God's Word.**

Psalm 119:97 (NASB)

***97 O how I love Your law!  
It is my meditation all the day.***

You have to make it a priority to spend time each day in God's Word. You have time, you just have to do it. It may mean that you have to get up early by dragging yourself out of bed. You may have to schedule a time during the day, but we need to daily in God's Word so that our mind is saturated.

## **3. Entertain yourself with the things that teach God's truth.**

Many of you are readers. You will read a number of books this month. But, here is the question, "How many of those books will teach you God's truth and how many of them will say nothing of God's truth?"

Or, what radio stations and TV stations do you listen to each day? Do you always turn on the talk radio or secular music, or do you tune in to spiritual stations?

I'm not suggesting that we should never read books or listen to music or listen to talk radio, but do you ever turn to be entertained by things that teach God's truth?

If you come to church for an hour on Sunday and you spend all the remaining waking hours on the things of the world, why do you wonder why you are so impure?

Entertain yourself with the things that teach God's truth.

Last week we saw the Passion for Purity and then we took a long look at the Path to Purity. Next I would like to briefly look at...

### **III. THE PORTRAIT OF PURITY.**

1 Peter 4:2 (NASB)

***2 so as to live the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for the lusts of men, but for the will of God.***

Verse 2 is not the main command. But it is the purpose for the command. The command is to arm yourself with the mind of Christ. But verse 2 tells us why. Why? So we won't waste anymore of our time living according to the desires of the flesh of man but instead that we would do the will of God.

It is a plea here for purity. Peter has described purity for us here both negatively and positively.

His says negatively, that we should no longer live our time for the desires of man.

Understand this...there is a principle in all mankind. For the unsaved man it is a principle that is opposed to God. Paul talks of in ...

### Romans 7:23 (NASB)

<sup>23</sup> but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members.

Paul also speaks of it in...

### Ephesians 2:1-3 (NASB)

<sup>2</sup> And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, <sup>2</sup> 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. <sup>3</sup> Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.

There is a principle that is within all mankind that is at a rebellion against God. It wants to be its own God. It wants to magnify itself. That is the principle that guides the lost world. That is why we hear things such as...

- follow your heart.
- you only live once in this life, go for all the gusto.
- if it feels good, do it.

But they didn't get that from the Bible. The Bible says in...

### Jeremiah 17:9 (NASB)

<sup>9</sup> "The heart is more deceitful than all else  
And is desperately sick;  
Who can understand it?"

The Bible says that what feels good to you is probably sinful. Don't do it!

The world is driven by their natural desires and cravings and feelings. And Peter says **STOP!!!!** Don't live that way. Instead of living by your fallen nature, he says positively, live the rest of your time here according to the will of God.

There is a sharp contrast. There is an EITHER / OR. There are two choices not a third. You will either be driven and controlled by your own desires or you will be in submission to the will of God.

Peter is calling for believers to live in accordance with God's commands for the rest of their lives. He is not just talking of external commands such as...

- don't drink



- don't smoke
- don't chew
- don't have premarital sex
- and all those external things

He is talking of a deep down conformity to God's will. Such as...

- a heart of obedience
- a heart of service
- humility
- selflessness
- faith
- forgiveness

Those are the things we are to be shaped by and conformed to.

When Peter calls us to purity, he calls us to die to what we want, think, and desire and instead be shaped and formed entirely by God's will. That is a portrait of true purity. We need that kind of purity. A purity that ceases from following our own desires and conforms to the commands of God.

## **CONCLUSION:**

We have seen here the Passion for Purity, the Path for Purity, and the Portrait of Purity. But let me ask you this morning, "Are you Passionate for Personal Purity?"

If you answer that question with "No! I just want to go along, come to church and do my Christian duty, but I would really like to live my life as I want. Could it possibly be that you are that way because you are not a new creation?"

You have not come to experience the suffering of Christ on the cross for you. Maybe God's Spirit is telling you right now, the problem is that you are dead in your sins.

Know this. Christ HAS suffered for sins. He came and bore the guilt for all who would believe in Him. He took the wrath, He absorbed it all, He is the ark that saves if you would just put your trust and faith in Him.

Maybe you say you do not have much of a passion for personal purity. I know I am saved. I know there is a Spirit working in me, but I have lost any passion that I had. It has grown cold. Maybe it is because at some point you took your eyes off of the cross. It is the cross that warms the heart and fires the passion for purity.

We need to turn our heart back to the cross.

If you have not accepted Christ as your Lord and Savior, do it today. Don't wait until you have cleaned up your life. **You don't clean yourself up to come to the Christ; you surrender yourself to Christ, to let Him clean you up!**

**God be with You.**