

## Chapter Four

### 1 Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh

Peter continues two of the main themes of his letter. Jesus suffering and the suffering His disciples. This has been reference many times in the book. Here he sums everything up into one phrase “*arm yourself with the same mind.*” To fully understand this arming we need to review exactly what the same mind is. **Jesus suffering in listed as bold** *Our Suffering in italics*

### Suffering in Peter

*now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, 1Pet. 1:6-8*

*Coming to Him as to a living stone, **rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, 1Pet. 2:4***

**The stone which the builders rejected 2:7-8**

*19 For this is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully.*

*20 when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God. For to this you were called, **because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example,***

**when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten,**

*but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously;*

**24 who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, ...**

**by whose stripes you were healed. 2:19-25**

*14 But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you are blessed.*

*And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled. 3:13-14*

*that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed.*

*For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil. 1Pet. 3:16*

**For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, 1Pet. 3:18**

**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, 1Pet. 4:1**

*12 Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you;*

*13 rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings,*

*If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you,*

*on their part **He is blasphemed,** but on your part He is glorified.*

*if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter. 4:12-16*

*let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls to Him in doing good, as to a faithful Creator. 1Pet. 4:19*

*Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.*

*Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that*

*the  
same  
sufferin  
gs are  
experie  
nced by  
your  
brother  
hood in  
the*

### **1 Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh,**

“Therefore” is often used when drawing a conclusion. If you look back at all the verses on Christ’s suffering, it is evident that this is the last reference to His sufferings in Peter. This is therefore the final conclusion. This is what “*follows necessarily*” from all that has been said, and brings “*the conclusion to a process of reasoning.*”

“*oun...* a conj. indicating that something follows from another necessarily; Hence it is used in drawing a conclusion and in connecting sentences together logically, *then, therefore, accordingly, consequently, these things being so...*” (Thayer, p. 463-464; 3767)

*oun ... b:* markers of result, often implying the conclusion of a process of reasoning - ‘*so, therefore, consequently, accordingly, then, so then.*’ ‘therefore, everyone who hears these words of mine’ Mt. 7:24; ... ‘therefore they gathered and filled twelve baskets with pieces’ John 6:13. ‘therefore, truly blessed are (or ‘happy are ...’) those who hear the word of God and obey it’ Luke 11:28. (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT:3767)

If we sum up all that has been said about Christ’s suffering, these are the highlights:

- *Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example,*
- *when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously;*
- *who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, by whose stripes you were healed.*
- *For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, 1Pet. 3:18*

The most important fact that led to this conclusion is found in the final verse of the previous Chapter.

- *who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him.*

As we consider these truths, some important conclusions must be drawn and worked with. First, no one has or ever will suffer to the depth and extent that Jesus did. Regardless of how difficult one’s life might become, they can never complain that “*no one has ever suffered as much as what I am now facing!*” Second, we have a graphic illustration of the reward for that suffering. In Jesus case, He went from persecution and suffering unto death to being “*at the right hand of God,*” “*with angels, authorities and powers now in subjection to Him.*” Thus all the promises both here and in the rest of the Scriptures have been verified and sealed.

Though it has already been accomplished and the fruits of it are sweet, it must never be forgotten that it was Jesus willingness to suffer persecution that brought about the salvation of all men. Since Jesus suffered when He was in the flesh, it should not be remarkable if some of Jesus’ followers in their quest to be like Him will also suffer in this manner.

We must never forget or lose sight of this two fundamental truths. Our persecution is only a small imitation of what Jesus endured. There is no stigma attached to this. If we can search our conscience and know for certain that something we should feel is a stigma or something we brought on ourselves because we didn’t put something just right. It is because we are teaching what Jesus asked us to teach.

### **arm yourselves also with the same mind,**

The Holy Spirit now reveals the proper response and conclusion to all we have learned. The term “*arm*” originally meant to prepare, make or get ready, or furnish. It was used in a broad manner of preparing food, getting one’s chariot horses ready. By the time the NT was written, it had come to focus primarily on soldiers and ships that were being prepared for war by arming them for protection and victory.

*hoplizo ...* -to make or get ready, of meats and drink, to prepare oneself a meal, to cause a sacrifice to be prepared, 2. of chariot-horses, to get ready, harness, II.; Med. to get them ready for oneself, Ib.: -Pass., of ships, Od.; of any implements, ... 3. of soldiers, to equip, arm, Hdt., etc.: -also, to train, exercise, Id.: -in Att. Prose, ... to prepare or equip oneself, accoutre or arm oneself, get ready, ... inf.

to prepare oneself to do a thing, (Liddell and Scott, Abridged Greek Lexicon. NT:3695) *hoplízœ*, from *hóplon* ... (3696), weapon. To furnish, prepare, referring to food or drink; to equip with arms, as a chariot or ship. In the NT, only in the middle, *hoplízomai*, to prepare oneself for a work, to arm oneself, take up arms; used metaphorically in a moral sense with the acc. (1 Peter 4:1). (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:3695)

When a battle is imminent, secular men prepare as quickly and completely as possible. Selecting the best arms that are available. Our own military is constantly seeking for more powerful weapons so they can win by one must prepare for it. Such a battle is always possible for the Christian. It will be a battle for the mind and emotions. Most persecution is only given to get someone to submit and change their position. If they would renounce Christ, most of the time the persecution would cease, but the battle would have been lost. Before persecution or suffering arrives, every disciple must be forearmed. They must be prepared. The means of preparation is to arm the mind with a great weapon.

*For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. 4 For **the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds**, 5 casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, 6 and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled. 2Cor. 10:3-6*

*We give no offense in anything, that our ministry may not be blamed. 4 But in all things we commend ourselves as ministers of God: in much patience, in tribulations, in needs, in distresses, 5 in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in sleeplessness, in fastings; 6 by purity, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Spirit, by sincere love, 7 by the word of truth, by the power of God, **by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left**, 2 Cor 6:3-8*

*The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us **put on the armor of light**. Rom. 13:12-13*

This arming is clearly both offensive and defensive. In Ephesians as Paul spoke of the armor of God he focused on both.

*Finally, my brethren, **be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might**. 11 Put on **the whole armor of God**, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ... 13 Therefore **take up the whole armor of God**, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. 14 Stand therefore, having **girded your waist with truth**, having **put on the breastplate of righteousness**, 15 and having **shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace**; 16 above all, taking **the shield of faith** with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. 17 And take **the helmet of salvation**, and **the sword of the Spirit**, which is the word of God; Eph 6:10-17*

If we add all these things together, we see both the offensive and defensive weapons side by side.

<b>Offensive</b>	
<i>the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds,</i>	
<i>the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; <u>Eph. 6:10-17</u></i>	
<b>Defensive</b>	
<i>armor of righteousness — right hand and left,</i>	<i>strong in the Lord — power of His might.</i>
<i>put on the armor of light.</i>	
<i>the whole armor of God,</i>	<i>girded your waist with truth,</i>
<i>the breastplate of righteousness,</i>	<i>shod feet with preparation of the gospel</i>
<i>the shield of faith</i>	<i>the helmet of salvation,</i>

Peter adds one more thing to this list. **“Arm yourself with the same mind.”** There is something about Jesus suffering that needs to be appropriated as a battle weapon with which to arm ourselves. “Mind” is more literally *“in the mind or within the mind.”* It is used of the intentions and purposes we form in our mind. It is the formulation of an idea or concept also describing perception and insight.

*ennoia* ... **that which is intended or purposed as the result of thinking - 'intention, purpose.'** ... b: 'it judges the thoughts and **purposes** of the heart' Heb 4:12. ... *epinoia* ... 'perhaps he will forgive you for having such a purpose in your heart' Acts 8:22. (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT:1771)

ennoia. ... 1. Use outside the New Testament. **"What takes place in the nous (mind) "deliberation," "consideration" as an act ... In the vocabulary of philosophy ennoia means "idea," "concept," ... In the LXX (septuagint), ennoia is a favourite word in Proverbs, where it occurs 12 times, always in the sense of "consideration," "insight," "perception," "cleverness."** (Kittel, TDWNT, NT:1771)

*ennoia* ... primarily **"a thinking, idea, consideration," denotes "purpose, intention, design"** (*en*, in, *nous*, mind); it is rendered "intents" in Heb 4:12; "mind," in 1 Peter 4:1 (Vine's, NT:1771)

There are two passages that are very helpful in identifying exactly what the Spirit is seeking here.

***Have this mind among yourselves, which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied Himself taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in human form, He humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Phil. 2:5-9***

*Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Heb. 12:1-2*

Both of these passages speak of the same thing the Spirit is describing here. In Philippians, He takes it all the way back into eternity. Jesus came here by His own choice. There was no force or compulsion. He did not allow His superior position to hinder him from coming to do the will of God, which in this case was to suffer and die for man's sins. The second one joins all the other Old Testament as a great cloud of witnesses then focuses on Jesus joy as he viewed the cross. When we can find this joy, we will have very powerful armor indeed.

**for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,**

Peter now gives an additional point of consideration regarding this arming of the mind. He uses a conjunction that gives both the reason and grounds for why this arming should be done.

*"hoti... Il the reason why anything is said to be or to be done, because, since, for that, for, (a causal conjunct. ...)... a. it is added to a speaker's words to show what ground he gives for his opinion;..."* (Thayer, Joseph Henry; P. 458-460; 3754)

Those who suffer in the flesh "cease" from sin. What does this mean? What is the Spirit affirming about suffering. The term "cease" is defined:

*"pauo,... to make to cease or desist:... to restrain [A. V. refrain] a thing or a person from something... to cease, leave off,... the action or state desisted from is indicated by the addition of a present participle..."* (Thayer, Joseph Henry; P. 496-497; 3973)

This is a complicated concept. Some think of suffering to the point of death and thus no longer sinning because we have passed from this life. Others see Paul's words in Roman's Six on dying with Christ, yet though these things are both true, it seems a little bit of a stretch to make suffering into dying, and Romans 6 did not lead us to cease sinning. The apostle John revealed that if we said such a thing we would be lying or making God a liar.

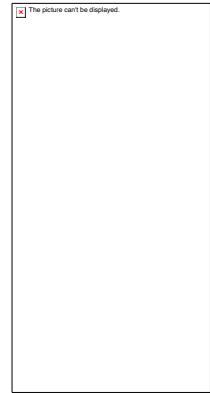
*If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us. 1Jn. 1:8-10*

Because this is in the perfect tense this is actually an action that occurred in the past and the affects of it have continued right up to the present. The only thing I read today that helps is something written by H. A. W. Meyer.

*"the meaning of which is, that by suffering as to the flesh, a ceasing of sin is effected. This idea, in many respects a true one, may according to the connection be defined thus: he who suffered on account of sin that is, on account of his opposition to sin, has in such wise broken with sin that it has no more power over him.*

Once armed with the mind of Christ regarding suffering, when the suffering commences, instead of the sin of falling away or compromise, the power to endure develops. With this power to endure growing out of suffering, James says something similar to what Peter says here. On several levels, being perfect and complete is similar to the one here, "ceased from sin"

*My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. 4 But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete,*



*lacking nothing. James 1:2-5*

The “*perfect/mature*” and “*complete and lacking nothing*” disciple appears to be just as big a stretch to our understanding as a disciple who has “*ceased from sin*.” I think Meyer has a good thought. You can’t suffer in the flesh to keep from sinning while at the same time easily giving in to sin in other realms of weakness. Suffering is a strengthening implement to those who have armed their minds with the proper attitude. Those with the strength to suffer for Christ are also gaining the the strength to cease from sin. Because “*cease*” is in the perfect tense it is an event that occurred in the past, while the affects have continue to the present moment. This affirms that those who arm themselves in the manner above, and then suffer, will find sin easier to stop and avoid. One cannot give this kind of commitment to the Lord without finding the other commitments becoming easier.

## **2 that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh**

However we understand this “*having ceased from sin*,” it is the end adapted to attain “*living to the will of God*.” The decision to endure suffering brings with it another decision of a similar magnitude. By using “*eis*, the Spirit now reveals either “*the end to which a thing reaches or extends: measure or degree*,” “*the end which a thing is adapted to attain: object, purpose, or the end by which a thing is completed: the result or effect*.” (Thayer, NT:1519). Hence the *measure* and *degree* to which arming our mind will lead us will expand to this. The *object* and *purpose* of arming the mind is to bring us to this. The *result* and *effect* of arming the mind will bring us to this. When we are fully prepared to suffer and our mind is armed with it, the ceasing to sin that Peter is describing will manifest itself this this as it end.

This is the end to which our suffering for Christ reaches after we have armed the mind. The purpose of arming our minds and preparing for suffering will also bring about this secondary goal. Once armed, “*no more*,” “*no longer*,” and “*not hereafter*” will the selfish desire to live as we choose without first ascertaining if it be God’s will, be the focus for whatever remains of our life.

“*meketi...* (fr. *me* and *eti*), adv., employed in the same constructions as *me*; *no longer*; *no more*; *not hereafter ...*” (Thayer, p. 412; 3371)

(1) *ouketi ...* a negative adverb of time, signifies “no longer, no more” (*ou*, “not,” *k*, euphonic, *eti* “longer”), denying absolutely and directly...” (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:3765)

2. *meketi* with the same meaning as No. 1, but generally expressing a prohibition, e. g., Matt 21:19; John 5:14; Rom 14:13; Eph 4:28; 1 Tim 5:23; 1 Peter 4:2; indicating some condition expressed or implied from Vine's Expository Dictionary (

God desires to see within the hearts of His people this change in attitude and direction. No more, from this day forward, this will no longer be.

“*epiloipos... remaining besides, left over...*” (Thayer, NT:1954)

There is nothing that will wake up God’s people to the momentary nature of the time we live in the flesh than to have to endure suffering that leads one to consider the true value of life under the sun. Those who “*number their days*,” have a keen sense of what is remaining or left over of their lives. Whether in youth, middle age, or aged, each group reckons and understands what is left over from what has already been spent. Like the hourglass, there is sand already passed through and there is the sand left over.

This is how God pictures the time left to us and to Him after our conversion. It is what is remaining beside or left over. Our aim must be to have specific uses for the time that is left to us in this life after our conversion.

## **for the lusts of men,**

Those who prepare their minds to suffer are also preparing their minds to remove all lusts that are contrary to the will of God. These “*strong desires*” tend to be kindled after God has forbidden something. To the sinners of this world, the fact that it is forbidden adds to the enticement and

excitement of engaging in it.

*epithumia*, NT:1939) denotes “strong desire” of any kind, the various kinds being frequently specified by some adjective (see below). The word is used of a good desire in Luke 22:15; Phil 1:23, and 1 Thess 2:17 only. Everywhere else it has a bad sense. In Rom 6:12 the injunction against letting sin reign in our mortal body to obey the “lust” thereof, refers to those evil desires which are ready to express themselves in bodily activity. They are equally the “lusts” of the flesh, Rom 13:14; Gal 5:16,24; Eph 2:3; 2 Peter 2:18; 1 John 2:16, a phrase which describes the emotions of the soul, the natural tendency towards things evil. Such “lusts” are not necessarily base and immoral, they may be refined in character, but are evil if inconsistent with the will of God. (Vine’s NT:1939)

*epithumia epithumeo* ... are derived from *thumos* first “spirit, courage, wrath, sense” ... then also “passion, passionate desire,” in which the formation of the word is based on the motif of desire and striving in *thumos* ... (Exegetical Dictionary of NT NT:1939)

The desires and cravings of men that cause them to use their precious gifts of God to rebel against His will and plan. The *thumos* is the part of the mind that can swell and surge in an instant when an enticement presents itself. Those who crush that swelling before it can strengthen keep it from becoming a lust and remaining only an enticement. But those who add *epi* to their *thumos* not only allow but encourage the swelling until it completely fills the mind. In the folly of youth these things are introduced and not knowing what they are and allowing them to become a lust, we then must put the emotions back into the containment of God’s will.

### but for the will of God.

The will of God is a phrase that is often repeated in the Scriptures. It is what God intended, determined and desires to be done. God is the Creator and He had specific plans for each of the things He created.

*thelema*,... will, i.e. a. *what one wishes or has determined shall be done*, [i.e. objectively, *thing willed*]... [...act of willing, the subjective] will, choice... *inclination, desire*...” (Thayer, p. 285; 2307)

What He desires and determined for everything that does not have a will of its own (everything but mankind), have continually and exactly done to His will. Those with freewill have to choose whether they will live as He directs and desires or whether they will rebel and live to their own desires (lusts). God wants us to do the former. He wants us to be interested in doing things exactly as He wants them done. The more closely we can match this desire the better a servant we become. God wants us to spend what is left of our life after our conversion to doing what he wants and desires.

Yet from the time of Adam and Eve, we have seen this clash of wills in action. God reveals His will and desire, which is always best and man sees another way.

What we do when there are two opinions (mine and God’s). Two desires (mine and God and only one can be fulfilled. Two goals (mine and God’s yet only one can be reached. Two destinations in opposite directions (mine and God’s).

That is the life of a Christian, the clash between the will of men and the will of God, the will of the Gentiles and the will of God and my will and the will of God. Torn in both directions, only one can prevail. If it is God’s we will abide forever.

*Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world — the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life — is not of the Father but is of the world. 17 And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever. 1Jn. 2:15-17*

This puts an entirely different perspective on the “*rest of your time*.” The rest of our time is very short if we do our own will. But if we do the will of God the time left is only until the transition to eternity.

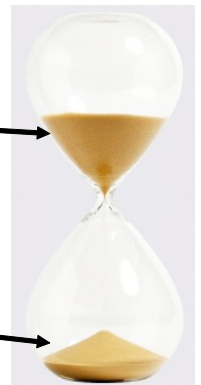
### 3 For we have spent enough of our past lifetime

The Spirit now uses “*gar*” as the transition. With this term He introduces this thought as “*the reason and cause*” for the transition regarding what we do with the “*rest of our time*.” This will “*give the reason and illustrate it*.”

The time is short! We must live the rest of it to the will of God because we have already wasted “*enough*” of our lifetime on our own pursuits.

Time Left over to  
the will of God

Time Spent doing  
the will of the  
Gentiles



*arketos* ... pertaining to what is sufficient for some purpose and accordingly resulting in satisfaction - 'sufficient, adequate.' 'sufficient for the day are its troubles' Matt 6:34; 'the time in the past is sufficient' 1 Peter 4:3; 'it is sufficient for a pupil to be like his teacher' Matt 10:25. (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT: 713)

That terrible time in which we wasted and squandered like the prodigal son was sufficient. We should not and do not want any more. The things we look back on should be shameful enough without seeking to add more. That was the "past," what has "gone by" and "passed by." The bottom of the hourglass that is forever gone.

*parerchomai* ... from *para*, "by," *erchomai*, "to come" or "go," denotes (I), literally, "**to pass, pass by,**" (a) **of persons**, Matt 8:28; Mark 6:48; Luke 18:37; Acts 16:8; (b) **of things**, Matt 26:39,42; of time, Matt 14:15; Mark 14:35; Acts 27:9, KJV, "**past**" (RV, "gone by"); 1 Peter 4:3; (II), metaphorically, (a) "to pass away, to perish," Matt 5:18; 24:34,35; Mark 13:30,31; Luke 16:17; 21:32,33; 2 Cor 5:17; James 1:10; 2 Peter 3:10; (b) "to pass by, disregard, neglect, pass over," Luke 11:42; 15:29, (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:3928)

As we look back on that what has already passed by it can't be changed or modified. Now we know God's will and ought to be living to do it. Paul expressed this Himself in a different but more graphic way. We have already used up "enough" of our lives:

*For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. 21 What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. 22 But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life. 23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Rom 6:20-23*

**in doing the will of the Gentiles—**

He uses a different word for the "will" of the Gentiles. But it works out to essentially the same thing. It "*denotes the "will as plan, project, purpose, goal, intention or tendency."*

*boulema* "a purpose or will" (akin to *boulomai*, "to will, wish, purpose"), "a deliberate intention," occurs in Acts 27:43, "purpose"; Rom 9:19, "will"; 1 Peter 4:3, (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:1013)

*boulema*. ... 1. The comparatively rare *boulema* occurs in the LXX only in 3 (4) passages ... Yet it is not very difficult to discover a basic meaning which gives the word its own nuance. **It denotes the "will as plan, project, purpose, goal, intention or tendency."** The question of purpose or intention is predominant (Kittel, TDWNT; NT:1013)

What God wills has little consequence to the Gentiles. They have their own purpose and goal. While God wants man to live under the prospect and realization of the eternal consequences of our behavior, the Gentiles who refused to have God in their knowledge, have their own ideas in mind as to what life is and exists to accomplish.

There is a great chasm between the will of God and the desires of the Gentiles. There are two interesting observations to make here. First, this is the very heart of why Gentiles persecute Christians. The good conduct of Christians places the evil conduct of the Gentiles in stark contrast. When the Gentiles see those living life as it ought to be lived, it makes them uncomfortable, leading them to lash out and seek to destroy the discomfort. While this discomfort is designed to bring them to eternal salvation, they reject that outcome and seek to destroy all who disagree. Second, this is the stark choice of how each Christian will choose to do with what is left of their lives. Suffering will help them make the right decision and live the rest of the time they have doing God's will. They have wasted enough of their ability and time on the other.

The will, intent, and purpose must ultimately come out into the light of day. That which they desire and purpose they "*perform, accomplish, and achieve.*" They "*do that from which something results.*" The consequences of their plans are their actions.

*katergazomai*... a. *to perform, accomplish, achieve* [RV often *work*]... b. *to work out*... i.e. *to do that from which something results... bring about, result in*,... c. ... *to fashion*, i.e. *render one fit for a thing*... (Thayer, P. 339; 2716)

*katergazomai*... -to effect by labour, to achieve, accomplish, Hdt., Soph., etc.: -so pf. ... but in the passive sense, to be effected or achieved, ... b. to earn or gain by labour, to achieve, acquire, (Liddell and Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon. NT:2716)

*katergazomai* ... a: to do something with success and / or thoroughness - 'to accomplish, to perform

successfully, to do thoroughly.' ...” (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT 2716)  
We were once among them. We were alienated from the life of God and walked with them in ignorance and hardness of heart. Paul described this time in our lives in a very graphic way.  
*This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, 18 having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; 19 who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. Eph. 4:17-19*

### when we walked

The term “walk” is defined:

“*poreuo... to lead over, carry over, transfer,... a. prop. To lead one’s self across; i.e. to take one’s way, betake one’s self, set out, depart... b. By a Hebraism, Metaphorically, a. To depart from life... b. To follow one, i.e. become his adherent... to seek [cf. Eng. Run after]... g. To lead or order one’s life... To lead or order one’s life... foll by a dative of the thing to which one’s life is given up... I Pet 4:3...to follow one’s moral preferences...*” (Thayer, Joseph Henry; P. 531; 4198)

Of the 150 times this word is used in the New Testament, the vast majority are literal. They walked from this place to that place and back again. In this sense it simply means to walk. It is often translated “*walk, depart, journeyed, go, or went,*” Peter is using it here in the sense of “*leading or ordering one’s life...*” Before becoming Christians people were slaves to their lusts, and ordered their lives around the lusts that controlled them.

### in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries.

The term “lewdness” is defined:

“*aselgeia... the conduct and character of one who is aselges ...unbridled lust, excess, licentiousness, lasciviousness, wantonness, outrageousness, shamelessness, insolence... wanton (acts or) manners, as filthy words, indecent bodily movements, unchaste handling of males and females...*” (Thayer, p. 79-80; 766)

“*aselgeia... If our Translators or the Latin had impurities and lusts of the flesh exclusively in their eye, they have certainly given to the word too narrow a meaning. aselgeia, which, it will be observed, ... is best described as wanton lawless insolence; ... , as Passow observes, is very closely allied to the hubrikos and akolastos, being one who acknowledges no restraints, who dares whatsoever his caprice and wanton petulance may suggest. None would deny that aselgeia may display itself in acts of what we call ‘lasciviousness;’ for there are no worse displays of hubris than in these; but still it is their petulance, their insolence... ( Trench’s Synonyms of the New Testament. NT:766*

*aselgeia ... behavior completely lacking in moral restraint, usually with the implication of sexual licentiousness - ‘licentious behavior, extreme immorality. (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT: 766)*

This is a term that captures both a specific set of sinful emotions and an attitude that can encompass many others. It is any lust that goes to seed and fruition. It is the lust that first bore the sin, and then sin became full grown. This sinful attribute cannot be entered until the person has passed through the time of shame for sin and an attempt to hide it. Once they no longer care who sees or knows, it is now lasciviousness.

This is it’s general meaning, it has moved into a sexual connotation because all sexual thoughts that are carried out become *aselgeia* the moment we show another we feel them which must be done before sexual activity can occur. One must become open, brazen and shameless when seeking to commit fornication or adultery.

### Lusts

This is a repetition of the same term used in the previous verse: “*lusts of men*” coming from the term *epithumos*. The *thumos* is the part of the mind that feels like it is swelling and surging the instant an enticement is seen. Once *epi* is added to the *thumos*, this swelling not only completely fills the mind, but it is sought, enjoyed and relished. Man seeks ways to increase it. Sadly, it soon passes the realm of enjoyment and becomes and enslavement.

*For when they speak great swelling words of emptiness, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through lewdness (aselgeia), the ones who have actually escaped from those who live in error. 19 While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage. 2Pet. 2:18-19*  
**drunkenness (oinophlugia) , revelries (komos), drinking parties (potos)**



These three terms drunkenness, revelries, and drinking parties, are all synonyms and will be considered together. Trench in his Synonyms of the NT takes each of these terms and reveals that they are all in some degree or another related to alcohol and the affects of alcohol.

*Methe* occurring in the N. T. at Luke 21:34; Rom 13:13; Gal 5:21; and *potos* found only at 1 Peter 4:3, **are distinguishable as an abstract (conceptual) and a concrete(material or phisical form).** *methe*, (stronger, and expressing a worse excess, than *oinosis* ... ***potos* ... the drinking bout, the banquet, the symposium, not of necessity excessive** (Gen 19:3; 2 Sam 3:20; Est 6:14), **but giving opportunity for excess** ... The next word in this group, ***oinophlugia* ("excess of wine," A. V.), occurs in the N. T. only at 1 Peter 4:3;** and never in the Septuagint ; but *oinoflugein* Deut 21:20; Isa 56:12. **It marks a step in advance of *methe*** Thus Philo names *oinophlugia* among the *hubris esxatai* .... **Commonly, however, it is used for a debauch; no single word rendering it better than this; being as it is an extravagant indulgence in potations long drawn out ... such as may induce permanent mischiefs on the body** (Aristotle , Eth. Nic. iii. 5. 15); **as did, for instance, that fatal debauch to which, adopting one of the reports current in antiquity, Arrian inclines to ascribe the death of Alexander the Great ... *Komos* in the N. T. found in the plural only, and rendered in our Version once 'rioting' (Rom 13:13), and twice 'revellings' (Gal 5:21; 1 Peter 4:3), may be said to unite in itself both those notions, namely, of riot and of revelry ... At the same time komos is often used of the company of revellers themselves; always a festal company, but not of necessity riotous and drunken; ... Still the word generally implies as much, being applied in a special sense to the troop of drunken revellers, ... who at the late close of a revel, with garlands on their heads, and torches in their hands, with shout and song ... pass to the harlots' houses, or otherwise wander through the streets, with insult and wanton outrage for every one whom they meet; cf. Meineke, Fragm. Com. Græc. p. 617; and the graphic description of such in Juvenal 's third Satire, 278-301; and the indignant words of Milton: 'when night Darkens the streets, then wander forth the sons Of Belial, flown with insolence and wine.'** (Trench's Synonyms of the New Testament.)

Before considering other definitions, it is very enlightening to consider what Trench had to say. He makes clear that these terms are primarily related to various stages of the use of alcohol. While not used here, *methe* is the most common word for drunkenness, it simply describes a state of intoxication from alcohol. While the first term Peter used simply means to drink too much. It is the process by which one becomes drunk. Drunkenness is the consequence of excess of wine. Hence it can be translated drunkenness, but it is more the process by which one becomes drunk.

*oinophlugia*, ... drunkenness In 1 Peter 4:3 the pl. is used of isolated outbreaks of excessive drinking (Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament NT:3632)

"*oinophlugia*... to bubble up, overflow), *drunkenness*,..." (Thayer, P. 442; 3632)

The second term "revelry" is a difficult word to translate. Trench says, "...of riot and of revelry ... komos is often used of the company of revelers themselves; always a festal company, but not of necessity riotous and drunken; Still the word generally implies as much, being applied in a special sense to the troop of drunken revelers. This term focuses on the gathering. It is a festive group gathered together to create an environment where sin and excess can occur. Alcohol is present and excess is probable. It is often created by and in consequence to the loosening of tongues and actions by those who are in evil company and alcohol is generally present.

*komos* masc. noun. A feasting, used in the pl. only in the NT meaning riotous conduct (Rom 13:13); revellings (Gal 5:21; 1 Peter 4:3); festivities in honor of several gods, especially Bacchus, the god of wine, hence feastings and drunkenness with impurity and obscenity of the grossest kind. Therefore, it always presupposes a festive company and drunken revellers. (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:2970)

*komos* "a revel, carousal," the concomitant and consequence of drunkenness, is used in the plural, Rom 13:13, translated by the singular, RV, "reveling" (KJV, "rioting"); Gal 5:21 and 1 Peter 4:3, "revellings." (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT 2790)

"*komos*... a revel, carousal, .e.e in the Grk. Writ. Prop. A nocturnal and riotous procession... generally, of feasts and drinking-parties that are protracted till late at night and indulge in revelry..." (Thayer, Joseph Henry; P. 367; 2970)

Trench defines "*potos* as "the drinking bout, the banquet, the symposium, not of necessity excessive (Gen 19:3; 2 Sam 3:20; Est 6:14), but giving opportunity for excess ."

*potos* lit., "a drinking," signifies not simply a banquet but "a drinking bout, a carousal," 1 Peter 4:3

(RV, "carousings" KJV, "banquetings"). Synonymous is *kraipale*, "surfeiting," Luke 21:34. (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:4224)

"*potos... a drinking, carousing...*" (Thayer, Joseph Henry; P. 533; 4224)

As synonyms, it is clear that the main thought of the three has to do with the improper use of alcohol. But the specific differences are not easy to distinguish. Consider Trench's words in his synonyms of the NT. (NOTE: Trench deals with the two other terms "*methe* and *kraipale*).

The definitions bounce back and forth between alcohol involvement to no alcohol involvement.

The fun loving, loud, boisterous and often foolish and sinful activities that occur when people become too emotional generally occurs when people become intoxicated. Those who become so relaxed and whose inhibitions have been lowered to a degree where they can and do make a fool of themselves. But it doesn't have to be alcohol induced. Loud music can do it, a sports event where emotions run too high can do it, banquets can do it. Alcohol that leads to is sin, anything that leads to it is sin. Many people put the modern dance which leads to the lowering of inhibition toward sexual movements and immorality as a form of *komos*. Our word *riot* which causes people to break loose from civil authority in looting and destroying is also an act of revelry.

The final term drinking parties (*potos*), is "... the drinking bout, the banquet, the symposium, not of necessity excessive... but giving opportunity for excess." This would be the office party where alcohol is present. While some are involved in *methe*, *oinoflugous* or *komos*, the person who is *potos* is simply there where the excess could occur. This keeps Christians out of the bar, and away from friendly gatherings where alcohol is freely available. The term *potos* just means drinking:

"*potos... A drinking, drinking together, drinking-bout, comptation*, I Pet. 4:3 Harpers p. 325

It begins with being where it is, continues through the first few drinks, and ends with *methe*, *oinoflugia*, or *komos*. God wants us to stay away from such things. We have had enough time to fulfill such a will of the Gentiles. It is now time to keep a clear head and spend the rest of our days doing the will of God.

1Pet. 4:3-6

**in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries.** Some of these words are difficult to translate into English. A look at the translations beginning with the KJV in 1611 and moving up to the most current translations show how some of the words have varied.

lasciviousness,	lusts,	excess of wine,	revellings,	banquetings,	abominable idolatries:	KJV
lasciviousness.	lusts,	winebibbings,	revellings,	carousings,	abominable idolatries:	ASV
sensuality,	lusts,	drunkenness,	carousing,	drinking parties	abominable idolatries.	NAS
lewdness,	lusts,	drunkenness,	revelries,	drinking parties,	abominable idolatries.	NKJV
debauchery,	lust,	drunkenness,	orgies,	carousing	detestable idolatry.	NIV
insolent wantonness,	lustful desires	drunkenness,	reveling,	drinking bouts	abominable, lawless idolatries.	AMP
sensuality,	passions	drunkenness,	orgies,	drinking parties,	lawless idolatry.	ESV

The term “lewdness” is defined:

“*aselgeia*... the conduct and character of one who is *aselges* ...**unbridled lust, excess, licentiousness, lasciviousness, wantonness, outrageousness, shamelessness, insolence...** *wanton (acts or) manners, as filthy words, indecent bodily movements, unchaste handling of males and females...*” (Thayer, p. 79-80; 766)

“*aselgeia*... If our Translators or the Latin had impurities and lusts of the flesh exclusively in their eye, they have certainly given to the word too narrow a meaning. *aselgeia*, which, it will be observed, ... is **best described as wanton lawless insolence**; ... , as Passow observes, is very closely allied to the *hubrikos* and *akolastos*, being **one who acknowledges no restraints, who dares whatsoever his caprice and wanton petulance may suggest**. None would deny that *aselgeia* may display itself in acts of what we call ‘lasciviousness;’ for there are no worse displays of *hubris* than in these; but still it is their petulance, their insolence... ( Trench's Synonyms of the New Testament. NT:766

*aselgeia* ... **behavior completely lacking in moral restraint**, usually with the implication of sexual licentiousness - 'licentious behavior, extreme immorality. (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT: 766)

This is a term that captures both a specific set of sinful emotions and an attitude that can encompass many others. It is any lust that goes to seed and complete fruition. It is the lust, as James describe that first bears sin and then become full grown. This term is the next step in what occurs in the mind and heart of those who have allowed sin to become the full grown.

*but each man is tempted, when he is drawn away by his own lust, and enticed. 15 Then the lust, when it has conceived, bears sin: and the sin, when it is fullgrown, brings forth death. Jas. 1:14-15*

When the conscience is dulled, social pressure removed, and sin allowed to become the master, one is entering into “*lasciviousness*.” When shame begins to fade, and we no longer care who sees or knows that we have committed this sins, it is lasciviousness.

This is the general meaning of this term. It is unfortunate that it, in English, the mind moves toward sins in the sexual realm. There is no question that it works here. Any sexual activity requires the loss of shame that allows another to know that we have sinful desires toward them. When the sin is still young, fear and shame would keep one from revealing it. But as the desires strengthens and the shame lessens, we begin to show our intentions. This is when sin moves toward lasciviousness. Yet it is not exclusive to the sexual realm. Any sinful desire that reaches the strength to move one to no longer care if others see this sin is lasciviousness.

*Because from the least of them even to the greatest of them, Everyone is given to covetousness; And from the prophet even to the priest, Everyone deals falsely. 14 They have also healed the hurt of My people slightly, Saying, 'Peace, peace! 'When there is no peace. 15 **Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? No! They were not at all ashamed; Nor did they know how to blush.** Therefore they shall fall among those who fall; At the time I punish them, They shall be cast down," says the Lord. Jer 6:13-16*

When one becomes open and brazen, shamelessly committed sin, they are in the grip of this sin.

### Lusts

This is a repetition of the same term used in the previous verse: “*lusts of men*” coming from the term *epithumos*. The *thumos* is the part of the mind that feels like it is swelling and surging the instant an enticement is seen. Once the *epi* is added to this *thumos*, the swelling not only completely fills the mind, but it is sought, enjoyed and relished. Man then seeks for ways to

increase this lust.

Sadly, it soon passes the realm of enjoyment and becomes an enslavement.

*For when they speak great swelling words of emptiness, **they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through lewdness (aselgeia), the ones who have actually escaped from those who live in error. 19 While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage. 2Pet. 2:18-19***

**drunkenness (oinophlugia), revelries (komos), drinking parties (potos)**

Because two of these terms (*drunkenness* [oinophlugia] and *drinking parties* [potos]) are only used here in the New Testament, and their meanings are broad and yet vague, we will first look at the three of them together. By grouping in this manner, the variable meanings of the term take on a more concrete application. When viewed as synonyms, the common thread that holds them together is easier to see. Trench in his "Synonyms of the NT" takes each of these terms, discusses the variations of meaning and then shows that the one thing that ties them together is the use of alcohol and the affects and consequences of its use.

*Methe* occurring in the N. T. at Luke 21:34; Rom 13:13; Gal 5:21; and *potos* found only at 1 Peter 4:3, **are distinguishable as an abstract (conceptual {fixed state — akh} and a concrete (material or physical form {process that leads to drunkenness— akh}). *methe*, (stronger, and expressing a worse excess, than oinosis ... *potos* ... the drinking bout, the banquet, the symposium, not of necessity excessive (Gen. 19:3; 2 Sam 3:20; Est 6:14), but giving opportunity for excess ...** The next word in this group, *oinophlugia* ("excess of wine," A. V.), **occurs in the N. T. only at 1 Peter 4:3; and never in the Septuagint ; ... It marks a step in advance of *methe*** Thus Philo names *oinophlugia* among the *hubris eschatai* .... **Commonly, however, it is used for a debauch; no single word rendering it better than this; being as it is an extravagant indulgence in potations long drawn out ... such as may induce permanent mischiefs on the body (Aristotle , Eth. Nic. iii. 5. 15); as did, for instance, that fatal debauch to which, adopting one of the reports current in antiquity, Arrian inclines to ascribe the death of Alexander the Great ... *komos* in the N. T. found in the plural only, and rendered in our Version once 'rioting' (Rom 13:13), and twice 'revellings' (Gal 5:21; 1 Peter 4:3), may be said to unite in itself both those notions, namely, of riot and of revelry ... At the same time *komos* is often used of the company of revellers themselves; always a festal company, but not of necessity riotous and drunken; ... Still the word generally implies as much, being applied in a special sense to the troop of drunken revellers, ... who at the late close of a revel, with garlands on their heads, and torches in their hands, with shout and song ... pass to the harlots' houses, or otherwise wander through the streets, with insult and wanton outrage for every one whom they meet; cf. Meineke, Fragm. Com. Græc. p. 617; and the graphic description of such in Juvenal 's third Satire, 278-301; and the indignant words of Milton: 'when night Darkens the streets, then wander forth the sons Of Belial, flown with insolence and wine.'** (Trench's Synonyms of the New Testament.)

While these terms have no point of reference in the Scriptures since they are only used here, Trench does a survey of its various uses in the Koine Greek to give us a clearer understanding of their meanings.

Trench begins with the most common term used in the NT for drunkenness. It is the state of someone who has completed the process and is in the final state. They are intoxicated to the point of diminished capacity or have become completely incapacitated with alcohol.

*methe*... 1. In the NT we find *methusos* ("drunkard") only in the lists of vices in 1 Cor 5:11 and 6:10, and *methe* ("drunkenness") only in similar lists (along with *komoi*, "excessive feastings") in Rom 13:13; Gal 5:21. ... 2. *methuo* and *methuskomai* are mostly used literally in the NT for "to be drunk" and "to get drunk." (Kittel, TDWNT NT:3178)

Although not used here, this is the word group that is most often found in the lists of sins and vices. The completed state of using alcohol is always a sin.

*The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. 13 Let us walk properly, as in the day, **not in revelry (komos), and drunkenness (methe), not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. 14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts. Rom 13:12-14***

*But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard (methusos), or an extortioner — not even to eat with such a person. 1 Cor 5:11*

*Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, 10 nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards (methusos), nor revilers, nor extortioners*

will inherit the kingdom of God. 11 And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God. 1 Cor 6:9-11

Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, 21 envy, murders, **drunkenness (methe), revelries (komos), and the like**; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. Gal 5:19-21

And do not be **drunk with wine, (methusko)** in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, Eph. 5:18-19

### **drunkenness (oinophlugia),**

Peter does not use this *methe*. It has already been clearly revealed and established as a sinful activity. He begins with a term that we see translated drunkenness (the only word we have), but it is a synonym. As a synonym, it has a slightly different meaning. This is not the finished state of *methe*, but with the process. "*oinophlugia... marks a step in advance of methe,*" because it describes the steps leading up to drunkenness. It may never get there, but because it is the process that leads to it, The Holy Spirit is warning us it is not just drunkenness, but the process leading up to it.

*Elah the son of Baasha became king over Israel ... 9 Now his servant Zimri, commander of half his chariots, conspired against him as he was in Tirzah **drinking himself drunk** in the house of Arza, steward of his house in Tirzah. 1 Kings 16:8-9*

It is difficult to determine at what point in this drinking of alcohol that one enters this sin. Clearly, if we are "*drinking ourselves drunk,*" whether we are interrupted or not, it was the intent to use wine in excess. As Trench said, "*oinophlugia is used for a debauch; ... it is an extravagant indulgence in potations long drawn out.*" Many go to the bars for this purpose. Others purchase enough alcohol for a wedding reception or funeral (wake) that this can be the outcome. So while drunkenness will often be the outcome, it is the process and the intent to become drunk by overusing wine that is the essence of this sin.

### **revelries (komos),**

The second term "revelry" is another difficult word to translate. Trench helps by saying that it is, "... riot and of revelry ... *komos* is often used of the company of revelers themselves; always a festal company, but not of necessity riotous and drunken; Still the word generally implies as much, being applied in a special sense to the troop of drunken revelers." This term focuses almost as much on the gathering and the purpose of the gathering as it is in the activities that are engaged in once gathered together. It is a festive group gathered together to create an environment where sin and excess can occur. This is the party used in the worldly sense, a gathering of adults, coming together to have fun, but that fun is closely tied to sin. For the most part Alcohol is present and excess is probable.

*komos* masc. noun. **A feasting, used in the pl. only in the NT meaning riotous conduct** (Rom 13:13); revellings (Gal 5:21; 1 Peter 4:3); **festivities in honor of several gods, especially Bacchus, the god of wine, hence feastings and drunkenness with impurity and obscenity of the grossest kind.** Therefore, it always presupposes a festive company and drunken revellers.

(Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:2970

*komos* "a revel, carousal," the concomitant and consequence of drunkenness, is used in the plural, Rom 13:13, translated by the singular, RV, "reveling" (KJV, "rioting"); Gal 5:21 and 1 Peter 4:3, "revelings." (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT 2790)

"*komos... a revel, carousal, .e.e in the Grk. Writ. Prop. A nocturnal and riotous procession...*

**generally, of feasts and drinking-parties that are protracted till late at night and indulge in revelry...**" (Thayer, Joseph Henry; P. 367; 2970) ‘

Alcohol is not the primary meaning of the term, but it is so often used to create this atmosphere, that it became connected. It is always in the company of alcohol in the New Testament.

**"drunkenness (oinophlugia), revelries (komos), drinking parties (potos)"** 1Pet. 4:3

"Let us walk properly, as in the day, **not in revelry (komos), and drunkenness (methe),** Rom. 13:13

**"drunkenness (methe), revelries (komos), and the like:"** Gal. 5:21

The definitions bounce back and forth between alcohol involvement to no alcohol involvement.

The fun loving, loud, boisterous and often foolish and sinful activities that occur when people

become too emotional generally occurs when people become intoxicated. Those who become so relaxed and whose inhibitions have been lowered to a degree where they can and do make a fool of themselves. But it doesn't have to be alcohol induced. Loud music can do it, a sports event where emotions run too high can do it, banquets can do it. Alcohol that leads to is sin, anything that leads to it is sin. Many people also use dancing, giving opportunity to dance with others spouses which leads to the lowering of inhibition toward sexual movements and immorality is also a form of *komos*. Our word *riot* which causes people to break loose from civil authority in looting and destroying is also an act of revelry.

### **drinking parties (*potos*)**

This final term is also only used here in the New Testament. Trench defines "*potos* as "the drinking bout, the banquet, the symposium, not of necessity excessive, but giving opportunity for excess ." Though placed last in the list, it is clearly the lightest use of alcohol in the list. It is not always excessive, but it gives the opportunity for excess.

*potos* lit., "a drinking," signifies not simply a banquet but "a drinking bout, a carousal," 1 Peter 4:3 (RV, "carousings" KJV, "banquetings"). Synonymous is *kraipale*, "surfeiting," Luke 21:34. (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:4224)

"*potos... a drinking, carousing...*" (Thayer, NT: 4224)

The best possible way to understand this word is any gathering where alcohol is present, for wherever alcohol is present the potential for excess is also present. The best course for the Christian is to avoid any gatherings where alcohol is going to be used and the opportunity for us to drink is present. Alcohol is so dangerous that God wants us to avoid it completely.

So the sin begins when one enters into place where alcohol is present and drinking is occurring. It then continues through the first few drinks, and then moves to *methe*, *oinophlugia*, and *komos*. God wants us to stay away from such things. We have had enough time to fulfill such a will of the Gentiles. It is now time to keep a clear head and spend the rest of our days doing the will of God.

God also made this clear in the Old Testament.

*Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has complaints? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes? 30 Those who linger long at the wine, those who go in search of mixed wine. 31 Do not look on the wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, when it swirls around smoothly; 32 At the last it bites like a serpent, and stings like a viper. 33 Your eyes will see strange things, and your heart will utter perverse things. 34 Yes, you will be like one who lies down in the midst of the sea, or like one who lies at the top of the mast, saying: 35 "They have struck me, but I was not hurt; they have beaten me, but I did not feel it. When shall I awake, that I may seek another drink?" Prov 23:29-35*

*Wine is a mocker, strong drink is a brawler, and whoever is led astray by it is not wise. Pr 20:1 Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight! 22 Woe to men mighty at drinking wine, woe to men valiant for mixing intoxicating drink, Isa 5:21-22*

*Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! 21 Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, And prudent in their own sight! 22 Woe to men mighty at drinking wine, Woe to men valiant for mixing intoxicating drink, Isa. 5:20-22*

### **abominable idolatries**

"*athemitos... a later form of the ancient and preferable (*themitos*, *themistos*, *themizo*, *themia*, law, right), **contrary to law and justice, prohibited by law, illicit, criminal ...**" (Thayer, NT: 111)  
*athemitos... Opposite to *themitos* ... whence "contrary to statute," "illegal," or "criminal," always with the idea of a higher will... To the Jews **unlawful sacrifices** (2Macc 6:5), **eating swine's flesh** (2Macc 7:1), and leaving the doors of the temple open at night (Jos. Ap., 2, 119) are *athemiton*..." (Kittel, TDWNT NT:111)**

*athemitos* **pertaining to being bad and disgusting on the basis of not being allowed - 'disgusting, bad.'** '... disgusting worship of idols' 1 Peter 4:3. (Lou & Nida Greek-English Lexicon NT:111)

*athemitos* (late form of *athemistos* ... *themis* (**custom, right**), (a) **of persons, lawless** (Ill Mac, l.c.); (b) of things, **lawless, unlawful**: Acts 10:28, 1 Peter 4:3. (Abbott-Smith Manual Greek Lexicon NT:111)

The word itself simply means what is the opposite or the negation of "*custom, law, right, or statute.*" It describes things that are "*criminal, illegal, illicit, contrary to law.*" Yet as the term

“abominable” infers, these are things that are criminal because they are socially and morally unacceptable. Under the guise of worshiping their gods, man has devised the most obscene and corrupt practices that can be imagined. This is the very essence and nature of idolatry.

*“eidol-latreia... The worship of false gods, idolatry; Gal 5:20; used of the formal sacrificial feast held in honor of false gods... in plur. The vices springing from idolatry and peculiar to it...”* (Thayer, NT: 1495)

*eidolon*, (1497) ... image of a deity, (pagan) deity, idol ... *eidololatries* (1496 idolater ... *eidololatria*, (1495) idolatry ... *eidolon* derived from *idein* “to see” ... *eidos* “a form”), means form, image, ... in the OT the two meanings overflow to each other (e.g., Ps 135:18 LXX: the silver and golden *eidola* ... of the Gentiles are human works; 1 Chron 16:26 LXX contrasts the human-made *eidola* of the Gentiles to God, who made heaven). (Exegetical Dictionary of the NT: 1497).

*For all the gods of the peoples are idols, But the Lord made the heavens. 1Chron. 16:26*

*The idols of the nations are silver and gold, The work of men's hands. 16 They have mouths, but they do not speak; Eyes they have, but they do not see; 17 They have ears, but they do not hear; Nor is there any breath in their mouths. 18 Those who make them are like them; So is everyone who trusts in them. Ps. 135:18*

Idolatry is the worship of idols (the images made by man to represent something he devised in his own heart). Yet although Jesus made it clear that God would set the parameters of his own worship. How did the Gentiles gain the insight to worship their idols? The reality is that pagans who were not under the commands of the one true and living God were not only free to create their gods, but also free to create the worship that would please them.

The term “abominable” truly sums up many of these practices. They were so evil, corrupt and disgusting that the Scriptures sanitized these practices as much as possible, by summarizing but seldom giving details. But the few details we can glean from Scripture we can see clearly why Paul said that what they do in secret is shameful.

*And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them. 12 For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. Eph 5:11-12*

Depending on the character of the people, their gods would approve their wicked and evil propensities. Some were cruel, savage, brutal and vicious. Their practices would allow them to practice these things on their captives and innocent victims. The Mayans would cut open the chests of their victims and while they were still alive take out and offer their still beating hearts to their gods. Abominable barely captures this disgusting and revolting practice.

The laws and customs these idolaters would violate were the laws of love, decency and righteous found in the statutes of the true and living God. One can see how easily one could be captivated by these violations that could be imagined by those who had propensities in that direction.

*“When the LORD your God cuts off from before you the nations which you go to dispossess, and you displace them and dwell in their land, 30 **“take heed to yourself that you are not ensnared to follow them, after they are destroyed from before you, and that you do not inquire after their gods, saying, “How did these nations serve their gods? I also will do likewise.”** 31 **“You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way; for every abomination to the LORD which He hates they have done to their gods; for they burn even their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods. Deut 12:29-31***

The thought of creating an idol that would allow a fire to be kindled inside and then create arms and a mouth to enter the fire and then take their newborn children and drop them into this fire is an abomination those with natural affection would view with disgust. Yet this was a common practice for those whose other worship (sexual immorality) would often create illegitimate children no one wanted.

God sternly warned them that all the practices of the heathen who created and then worshiped gods of their own devising, were an abomination to Him. Even those things that because of our own propensities don't seem so bad must be understood by applying them to the things we do think of as an abomination.

*“When you come into the land which the LORD your God is giving you, **you shall not learn to follow the abominations of those nations.** 10 **“There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, or one who practices witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, 11 “or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. 12 “For all who do these things are an***

**abomination to the LORD, and because of these abominations the LORD your God drives them out from before you.** 13 “You shall be blameless before the LORD your God. 14 “For these nations which you will dispossess listened to soothsayers and diviners; but as for you, the LORD your God has not appointed such for you. Deut. 18:9-14

One of the most common forms of abomination were the creation of sexual practices that led them far from the one man one woman in marriage plan that God devised. As the mind went further and further into this evil, normal practices no longer satisfied and new things that would have been disgusting abominations became normal. Nothing is out of bounds to the fertile evil minds of men in conjuring up things to give to their god.

“And you shall not let any of your descendants pass through the fire to Molech, nor shall you profane the name of your God: I am the LORD. 22 “You shall **not lie with a male as with a woman. It is an abomination.** 23 “Nor shall you mate with any animal, to defile yourself with it. Nor shall any woman stand before an animal to mate with it. It is perversion. 24 “Do not defile yourselves with any of these things; for by all these the nations are defiled, which I am casting out before you. 25 “For the land is defiled; therefore I visit the punishment of its iniquity upon it, and the land vomits out its inhabitants. Lev. 18:21-30

Nothing was out of bounds for these people. Even family relationships posed no boundary to them. God sternly warned Israel they were not to follow the practices of Egypt where they had been or Canaan where they were going.

According to **the doings of the land of Egypt, where you dwell, you shall not do; and according to the doings of the land of Canaan, where I am bringing you, you shall not do; nor shall you walk in their ordinances.** Lev 18:3-4

After forbidding sexual intercourse with every family relationship one could imagine, God said this:

“Do not defile yourselves with any of these things; for **by all these the nations are defiled, which I am casting out before you.** 25 For the land is defiled; therefore I visit the punishment of its iniquity upon it, and the land vomits out its inhabitants. 26 You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, and shall not commit any of these abominations, either any of your own nation or any stranger who dwells among you 27 (**for all these abominations the men of the land have done, who were before and thus the land is defiled**), 28 lest the land vomit you out also when you defile it, as it vomited out the nations that were before you. 29 For whoever commits any of these abominations, the persons who commit them shall be cut off from among their people. 30 “Therefore you shall keep My ordinance, so that you **do not commit any of these abominable customs which were committed before you**, and that you do not defile yourselves by them: I am the Lord your God.” Lev. 18:24-30

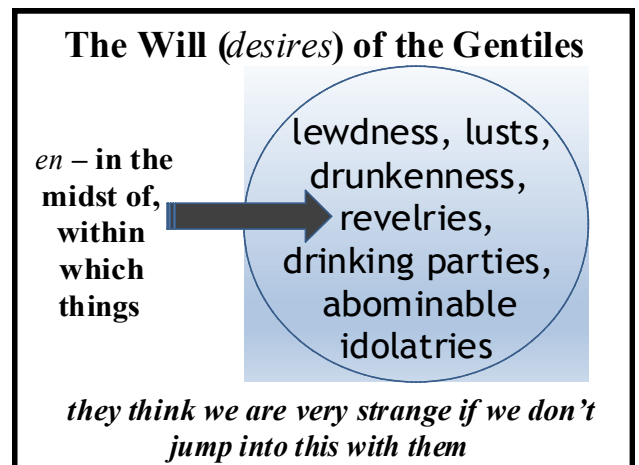
The abominable practices of those who worshiped idols included murder and violence performed in the most wicked and obscene ways. Sexual practices committed in the most vile and evil forms of relationships. They were against law and custom, but they were also, to decent people who were still partakers or seeking to become partakers of the divine nature were abominable, disgusting and revolting and nauseating.

11 **Harlotry, wine, and new wine enslave the heart.** 12 **My people ask counsel from their wooden idols, And their staff informs them. For the spirit of harlotry has caused them to stray, And they have played the harlot against their God.** 13 **They offer sacrifices on the mountaintops, And burn incense on the hills, Under oaks, poplars, and terebinths, Because their shade is good. Therefore your daughters commit harlotry, And your brides commit adultery.** 14 **I will not punish your daughters when they commit harlotry, Nor your brides when they commit adultery; For the men themselves go apart with harlots.** Hos. 4:11-14

**4 In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them**

Peter joins the relative pronoun “*hos*” which sums up “*the will of the Gentiles*” with the preposition “*en*” to draw a circle around the six wicked activities that he summed up under the heading of the “*the will of the Gentiles.*”

In and among these six things, those Gentiles who have not obeyed the gospel think that we are





strange and odd. This is so often the case with people. They become so accustomed to their ways of doing things that it never occurs to them that what they are doing may be the strange thing.

Since this is the basis of all persecution it is important to stop and think about this word "strange." It is interesting that in the Greek language a stranger is at the same time both someone who is a sinister threat and also someone who is worthy of hospitality. In the study of the eldership we saw that "*given to hospitality*" is literally "*lover of strangers*" (*philozenia*).

*zenos, zenia, zenizo, zenodocheo philozenia, philozenos ... Words from the stem zen - bear on the one side the concept of "foreign," "alien" (also "appearing strange" or "creating distaste") and on the other side that of "guest." ... In the NT it is used predominantly in the sense of "strange" (adjective 3 John 5; Heb 13:9; also Matt 25:35 ff.; noun Eph 2:19; Heb 11:13), "foreign" (adjective Acts 17:18, noun v. 21, Matt 27:7), also "surprising" (1 Peter 4:12). The verb zenizo can mean in the NT both "to surprise," "to be strange to" (Acts 17:20; 1 Peter 4:4,12) and also "to entertain," "to lodge" (Acts 10:23 etc.; Heb 13:2). All the other derivatives found in the NT (zenia, zenodocheo pilozenia, philozenos) belong exclusively to the domain of hospitality ... In the first instance the zenos is the "stranger." Between the stranger and those around him there is reciprocal tension. He is a man from without, strange, hard to fathom, surprising, unsettling, sinister. But to the stranger his odd and different environment is also disturbing and threatening. There thus arises mutual fear, especially of the magical powers of what is foreign. This is the first and basic mood associated with zeno, no less in early antiquity than in other cultures. (Kittel, TDWNT NT: 3579)*

As Thayer pointed out, in this case the strangeness is first "*a surprise and astonishment*," at the "*novelty and strangeness*" and then "*to think be shocked*."

*zenizo... 2. To surprise or astonish by the strangeness and novelty of a thing... pass. To be surprised, astonished ... to think strange, be shocked...* (Thayer, NT:3579)

We see this progression reaching its final conclusion and outcome when they begin "*speaking evil of you*." What is so surprising and astonishing? What is so novel that it even appears shocking and even sinister? To the Gentiles it is inconceivable that every one would not enjoy and find contentment in living the same way and engaging in the same pleasures they have. That is what they found so shocking. These "strangers and pilgrims" did not "*run with*" them:

*suntrecho... 1. To run together... of the gathering of a multitude of people... 2. To run along with others; metaph. To rush with i.e. cast one's self, plunge, 1 Pet 4:4...* (Thayer, Joseph Henry; P. 606; 4936)

*sun-trecho ... :-to run together so as to meet, to encounter, 2. to assemble, gather together, Hdt.; of clouds, to gather, of liquids, to be mingled with, ... 3. to come together, concur, agree, ... 4. to concur, coincide, of time, ... II. to run alongside, (Liddell and Scott, Abridged Greek Lexicon. NT:4936)*

The general meaning of this term doesn't fully capture it's fullness. A look at the other two uses help us better see the emotions behind this word.

*But the multitudes saw them departing, and many knew Him and ran there on foot from all the cities.*

*They arrived before them and came together to Him. Mk. 6:33*

*Now as the lame man who was healed held on to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them in the porch which is called Solomon's, greatly amazed. Acts 3:11-12*

There is a powerful emotional component. In both literal cases, these people were running together with a strong sense of amazement and intensity. In both cases, it was miracles and the excitement they generated that created this excitement.

When Gentiles devise new and novel ways to indulge in lusts, they have the same excitement. When others do not run with them with the same intensity and excitement at first it seems strange, but quickly turns to a sense of outrage that they do not concur with their judgment. The idea that there would be something to hold them back in these areas had long since vanished from their ignorant mind and dying conscience.

**in the same flood of dissipation,**

This is where they were and they were shocked that these Christians were not right there with them, running alongside. Yet this is actually another summation of those six terms we have already considered. These lusts, like a flood of water will carry them along uncontrolled. This term when used literally refers to a profusion of water. But when used morally we have all these pent up lusts let loose in a profusion of uncontrolled and uncontrollable desires.

“*anáchusis*; , fem. noun from *anachéœ* (n.f.), **to pour forth**, which is from *aná* (303), an intens., and *chéœ* to pour out. A **profusion, effusion, gulf, or pool of water, but not used in this sense in the NT**. In a figurative sense, a sewer of vice or debauchery (1 Peter 4:4). (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:401)

“*anachusis*... **an overflowing, a pouring out**... metaph, 1 Pet 4:4 ... **the excess(flood) of riot in which a dissolute life pours itself forth**...” (Thayer, Joseph Henry; P. 43; 401)

One is reminded of Paul’s warning to Timothy about the love of money.

*But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. 1 Tim 6:9-10*

Except here it is not just the love of money, but the love of sinful excess. The term “riot” or “*dissipation*,” is a synonym of first word on this list, “*lasciviousness*.” Trench gives an overview of how these two terms are used. *Riot* and *dissipation* refer to someone who is wasteful. First in his goods, and then of himself. He who cannot control his spending after some time will not be able to control the use of his more precious possessions, his body, his soul, and his health.

*asotia* and *aselgeia* **It is little likely that he who is asotos will not be aselges also; but for all this asotia and aselgeia are not identical in meaning; they will express different aspects of his sin, or at any rate contemplate it from different points of view.** *asotia*, a word in which heathen ethics said much more than they intended or knew, occurs thrice in the N. T. (Eph 5:18; Titus 1:6; 1 Peter 4) ... We have further the adverb *asotos*, at Luke 15:13; and *asotōs* once in the Septuagint (Prov 7:11). **At Eph 5:18 we translate it ‘excess;’ in the other two places, ‘riot,’ ... the Vulgate always by ‘luxuria’ and ‘luxuriose,’ words implying in medieval Latin a loose and profligate habit of living which is strange to our ‘luxury’ and ‘luxuriously’ at the present: ... asotos is sometimes taken in a passive sense, one who cannot be saved, ... or as we used to say, a ‘losel,’ a ‘hopelost’ ... the asotos is one who himself cannot save, or spare, ... a ‘scatterling.’ ... But it is easy to see that one who is asotos, in this sense of spending too much, of laying out his expenditure on a more magnificent scheme than his means will warrant, slides easily, under the fatal influence of flatterers, and of all those temptations with which he has surrounded himself, into a spending on his own lusts and appetites of that with which he parts so freely, laying it out for the gratification of his own sensual desires. Thus the word takes a new colour, and indicates now not only one of a too expensive, but also and chiefly, of a dissolute, debauched, profligate manner of living; ... The waster of his goods will be very often a waster of everything besides, will lay waste himself—his time, his faculties, his powers; and, we may add, uniting the active and passive meanings of the word, will be himself laid waste; he at once loses himself, and is lost. ... aselgeia, then, and asotia are clearly distinguishable; the fundamental notion of asotia being wastefulness and riotous excess; of aselgeia, lawless insolence and wanton caprice.** (Trench’s Synonyms of the NT:810)

“*asotia*... (the character of an *asotos*, i.e. of an abandoned man, one that cannot be saved,... hence prop. incorrigibility), an abandoned, dissolute, life; profligacy, prodigality...” (Thayer, p. 82-83; 810)

Thus the prodigal son wasted his goods on harlots, then wasted himself.

Yet when those who have wasted their goods, look upon those who have protected themselves, there is a sense of outrage and anger, leading to judgment and condemnation.

**speaking evil of you.**

The amazing thing here is that this sets up one of the reasons for the suffering that leads to forever putting such away. The Gentiles will “speak evil” of those who do not follow them in these excesses:

“*blasphemeo*... **to speak reproachfully, rail at, revile, calumniate** ... those who by contemptuous speech intentionally come short of the reverence due to God or to sacred things...” (Thayer, NT:987)

*blasphemeo* “to speak slanderously, impiously, profanely” (*blapto*, “to injure,” and *pHEME*, “a saying”) ...” (Vine’s Expository Dictionary NT 987)

In secular Gk. **blasphemia** is a. “abusive speech” (misuse of words) in contrast to *euphemia* ... translates *blasphemia* as a “word of evil sound.” b. The word means further the strongest form of “personal mockery and calumny.” (Kittel, TDWNT NT: 988)

*blasphemia*, [NT 988] ( **disparagement; slander; reviling**) *blasphemeo* [NT:987] **slander, accuse wrongfully**; blaspheme *blasphemos*, [NT:989] abusive; slanderous .... The word group *blasphemia* appears 56 times in the NT: 34 of these are verbs, 18 are nouns, and 4 are adjectives ... When persons are named or presupposed as objects, **blasphemeo can have the simple meaning**

**disparage, slander, defame** (1 Cor 4:13 v.l.; Titus 3:2; cf. Philo Spec. Leg. iv.197), as in secular Greek blasphemia likewise means **disparagement, reviling, slander, vile gossip** ... (Exegetical Dictionary of the NT:988)

This is the strongest term for speaking evil. Blasphemy was considered an offense worthy of death when directed toward God. But it is just as evil when it is directed toward our fellow man. Although it is used indiscriminately of God and man, when used of men it is translated, but when used against God it is transliterated. Hence men will blaspheme God but speak evil of men. It probably would have been more powerful if the translators had been consistent either way.

These Gentiles were speaking reproachfully, and reviling them and the things they stand for.

### **5 They will give an account to Him**

One of the reasons why Christians will not be partakers with them is also the reason why they had nothing to fear from their blasphemy against them. God has made it very clear to all that the day of reckoning is coming.

*Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now **commands all men everywhere to repent**, 31 because **He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.**" Acts 17:30-31*

This reveals even more strongly that those who think Christians are stranger because they will not follow their lead the precarious and slippery ground these foolish people are walking. Each Christian will give an account. The "giving" of this account is a term used 48 times in the New Testament. Most of the time it speaks of the rendering or giving back or repaying. In this case, it is the demand that God will make of them that they give up all the reasons why they did what they did.

*"apodidomi.. The 48 NT occurrences of the verb are distributed among nearly all of the NT writings. ... The compound of didomi formed with apo means **give away, give out, yield, and give back, repay, recompense...**" (Exegetical Dictionary NT:591)*

*"apodidomi... 1. a. "To give or do something which one should in fulfillment of an obligation or expectation." Mt 20:8; 2 Tim 4:8 (a reward); Mt 21:41 (fruits of the leased vineyard); Mark 12:17 (Mt 22:21; Luke 20:25) (taxes); Mt 27:58 (the requested body of Jesus); ...**More particularly "to repay in the form of reward or punishment": of the divine retribution, Mt 6:4,6,18; to each according to his works, Rom 2:6; 2 Tim 4:14; Rev 22:12; cf. 61:12 ; Prov 24:12; according to his action, Mt 16:27 ... evil with evil (cf. Prov 17:13), Rom 12:17; 1 Thess 5:15; 1 Peter 3:9. ...**" The thought of twofold retribution according to works in the last judgment is presupposed in the proclamation of the NT, even in that of Jesus. One of the main purposes of this proclamation is to set men as impressively as possible under the threat and promise which it holds out. In the NT retribution belongs essentially to the future world rather than to the present. The thought of retribution is not a key to the understanding of the experiences of life, but a rule for the expectation of eternity. (Kittel, TDWNT NT:591)*

Their soul, body and spirit were given to them by God. They were expected to be grateful to Him and use these things as He demands. The time will come when God will seek an explanation from each man and women on how they used the wonderful gifts and blessings He gave them. Everyone is a steward of what God has given. Not only the righteous, but also the wicked will give this account.

***For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. 11 Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are well known to God, and I also trust are well known in your consciences. 2Cor. 5:10-11***

Before we "receive" we will "give" and "account." This term is the general word *logos* which not only means word, but speech, and then any collection of words or things.

*logos* The great variety of meanings for *logos* — **word, speech, language, narrative, statement, pronouncement, question, report, account, sermon, teaching, call, sense** — can be accounted for esp.: a) on philological grounds and b) on theological grounds. a) **The root *leg-* represents a comprehensive and overarching unity of meaning: gather, collect, select, report, speak.** (Exegetical Dictionary of the NT:3056)

*logos* .... B. Lat. ratio, thought, reason, ... agreeably to reason, 2. an opinion, expectation, ... 3. a reason, ground, plea, ... 4. *ho logos* ... it stands to reason that. . II. **account, consideration, esteem, regard, ... to make account of a person or thing, 2. an account, ... to give an account of a thing,** (Liddell and Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon. NT:3056)

After each man has given his own account of his life, God will render a verdict and render back to them exactly what their lives and deeds have prepared them for.

### **who is ready to judge the living and the dead.**

God is ready at any moment to do this. He is capable and prepared.

*hetoimōs* "readily" (akin to A, No. 1), is used with echo, "to have," lit., "to have readily," ie, "to be in readiness, to be ready," Acts 21:13; 2 Cor 12:14; 1 Peter 4:5. (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:2093)

*"hetoimos... hetoimazo, hetoimasia, proetoimazo ... The clear meaning of this word group is preparation both in the active sense of "making ready" and in the passive of "readiness," "ability" or "resolution." The group takes on religious significance only in biblical Gk., ...* (Kittel, TDWNT, NT:2092)

While on man's side, the preparation is ongoing, on God's side, it has all been completed. There is nothing more to do. We live in the "last days" and at "the end of the days." Salvation has been fully prepared for the vessels of mercy, and retribution has also been prepared

*Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: Mt. 25:34*

*"Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: Mt. 25:41-42*

The preparations all being complete, we wait only on the will of the Father to end this age. After the end, comes the "judgment" and decision on which side of this preparation we will be deemed worthy.

*"krino... 1. to separate, put asunder; to pick out, select, choose... 2. to approve, esteem... 3. to be of opinion, deem, think... 4. to determine, resolve, decree... 5. to judge; a. to pronounce an opinion concerning right and wrong... Pass. to be judged, i.e. summoned to trial that one's case may be examined and judgement passed upon it,... b. to pronounce judgment; to subject to censure; of those who act the part of judges or arbiters in the matters of common life, or pass judgment on the deeds and words of others... "* (Thayer, p. 361-362; 2919)

God intends to pronounce judgment which will include approving those who are right and censuring those who are wrong. This is one of the reasons why we must live the rest of our days doing the will of God and why we need not concern ourselves about the vile conduct of the wicked. God will take care of them. The Spirit affirms that God can judge both the "living" and the "dead."

*"zao... to live... I prop. 1. to live, be among the living, be alive (not lifeless, not dead)... 2. to enjoy real life, i.e. to have true life and worthy of the name, --active, blessed, endless in the kingdom of god... 3. to live i. e. pass life, of the manner of living and acting; of morals or character..."* (Thayer, p. 269-270; 2198)

*"nekros... dead, i.e. 1. prop. a. one that has breathed his last, lifeless:... hyperbolically and proleptically l. q. as if already dead, sure to die, destined inevitably to die... b. deceased, departed, one whose soul is in Hades... c. destitute of life, without life, inanimate... 2. trop. a. [spiritually dead l. e.] destitute of a life that recognizes and is devoted to God, because given up to trespasses and sins; inactive as respects doing right... b. univ. destitute of force or power, inactive, inoperative..."* (Thayer, p. 424; 3498)

It will make no difference to God or to the individual whether he has been dead for 1000's of years or still alive and gathered up to judgment. Those who die in this world before being punished for their evil deeds will not have any preference or favor. The true judgement and punishment does not occur in this life.

*And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment, Heb. 9:27*

*Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. Rev. 20:11-12*

### **6 For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead,**

The Spirit strongly emphasized this purpose clause. It is difficult to translate into English because there are Greek terms three terms. Literally this is "into" (*eis*) "this cause" (*touto*) "was the reason and cause for the previous statement" (*gar*). The preposition *eis* emphasizes "the end by which a thing is completed, the result, effect or purpose." The *touto* refers to what

precedes, making what follow the cause and reason for it). The *gar* ... refers back to the previous thought and gives the the cause or reason for the preceding statement).

*“gar... a conjunction which ... is properly a particle of affirmation and conclusion, denoting truly therefore, verily as the case stands, “the thing is first affirmed by the particle *ge*, and then is referred to what precedes by the force of the particle *ara*”... Now since by a new affirmation not infrequently the reason and nature of something previously mentioned are set forth, it comes to pass, that by the use of this particle, either the reason and cause of a foregoing statement is added, whence arises the causal or argumentative force of the particle,...”* (Thayer, p. 109-110; 1063)

An amplified translation that would approximate the Greek reader’s understanding would be: “for this purpose and cause (*eis*), the following (*touto*), as the case stands is the only logical and spiritual conclusion (*gar*).”

This statement forms the bridge that closes the previous section. No Christian should waste anymore time in the activities of those who are doing the will of the Gentiles. Though they think we are strange, and even speak evil against us, they will give an account to God who is prepared to judge them. This is exactly why the gospel was preached to the dead.

The previous cause that leads to this statement is that as a result of the will of the Gentiles, those who have not yet obeyed the gospel have given themselves to vile lusts and evil activities. Yet they must give an account of these things to God.

For the exact reason and end that God is fully prepared to judge the living and the dead, the gospel was preached.

*euaggelizo ... euáγγελος (n.f.), bringing good news, which is from eu (2095), good, well, and aggélloε (n.f.), to proclaim, tell. To evangelize, proclaim the good news, preach the gospel. ...”* (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT: 2097)

*euangelízomai* . This word means "to proclaim good news" (1 Kings 1:42). In view of 1 Kings 1:42 the basic sense might seem to be simply "to deliver a message," but the stem itself contains the element of joy, so that announcing a victory is a common use and the messenger views himself as the bearer of good tidings ... (Kittel, TDWNT NT 2097)

This is a difficult passage, with several views. The two that fit best with other Scriptures are based on two considerations. Since Peter said that God was ready to judge the living and the dead, if we take this as the physically living and dead, then the most likely explanation is that those who had the gospel preached to them were alive when it was preached but have now died. So the gospel was preached to those who are now dead. This has some merit and many of those who have studied this verse have gone in this direction.

The second view also centers on the previous verse. While we are accustomed to understand living and dead as speaking of physical life and death, sometimes it is speaking of spiritual life and death. If this verse is speaking of the spiritually dead, it makes much more sense that the former verse was also speaking of spiritual life and death. Since no one is alive until after they obey the gospel, it is an obvious truth that the gospel can only be preached to the dead, and God is ready to judge both the spiritually alive and the spiritually dead.

From the very beginning, spiritual life and death and physical life and death were both tied to sin. God warned Adam that He would “surely die” “in the day you eat it, but immediately after he ate, God then spoke of physical death, which did not come until over 900 years later.

*of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the DAY that you eat of it you shall surely die.” Gen 2:17*

*In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread Till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you are, And to dust you shall return.” Gen. 3:19*

*So all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years; and he died. Gen. 5:5*

Harmonizing these Scriptures, like harmonizing the ones in Peter becomes much easier after we see that there were two deaths that God revealed. Only a spiritual death occurred “on the day” when Adam “surely died.” The physical death followed later. Paul also spoke of spiritual death when he revealed that death and sin entered the world at the same time and that death also came to all men after they sinned.

*Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned — Rom. 5:12-13*

This verse certainly cannot mean that physical death only passed to those who sinned, because physical death comes to all. While spiritual death only comes to those who sin. Paul then

directly applied this to himself. On the day he sinned, he too died.

*I was **once alive apart from the Law**; but when the commandment came, **sin came alive and I died**; 10 and this commandment, which was to result in life, proved to result in death for me; 11 for **sin**, taking an opportunity **through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me**. 12 So then, the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good. NAS Rom. 7:8-13*

Paul simply further elaborated on what happened to Adam when he sinned, and exactly how this same death passed to all men as each one sinned. All are born spiritually alive just as Adam was created spiritually alive. Sin, using a commandment, deceived, killed, and left each one dead. It started with Adam and moved to each of his children as soon as each one sinned. Only the soul that sins will die. Since one can be born dead because of something done by a father, no one was born dead as a result of what Adam did.

*"Behold, all souls are Mine; The soul of the father As well as the soul of the son is Mine; **The soul who sins shall die**. ... 20 **The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son.** Ezek. 18:4, 20*

Once we understand the dual nature of death, this passage becomes much easier to understand. Spiritual death always precedes physical death. Every man and woman who has passed the age Paul described when the commandment came alive and he died has died spiritually. Unless something intervenes those who are spiritually dead will stand before God on the judgment day, only to now face the second death.

*Then **Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death**. 15 And **anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.** Rev. 20:14-15*

*But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall **have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.** Rev. 21:8*

So, in this interim period, two deaths lie side by side. The spiritual death we all died the moment "sin came alive and I died," and the physical death that must surely follow. It seems clear which death is being described when speaking of their condition as the gospel was preached. God cannot make anyone alive until "after" they hear the preaching and obey the gospel. Paul told the Ephesians that this was the exact state they were in when He came to Ephesus. He too "**preached the gospel to the dead**"

*And you He made alive, **who were dead in trespasses and sins**, 2 in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, 3 among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. 4 But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 **even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),** Eph 2:1-6*

There is nothing complicated or mystical here. The Mormon doctrine of preaching or being baptized for the dead is not taught here. The gospel can only be preached to the dead because only those who are dead can hear it.

After the gospel is preached each sinner is confronted with the choice of two additional deaths. There is the second death in the lake of fire or they can die now with Christ in baptism.

Paul reminded the Colossians and the Romans that before heard the gospel, they were spiritually dead in sin. But, having heard that Jesus died for their sins, they joyfully were buried with Him in the water of baptism. They went into the water dead in sin, while under the water they died with Christ and God gave them a spiritual resurrection. After they were baptized they were alive.

***buried with Him in baptism**, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. 13 And **you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him**, having forgiven you all trespasses, Col. 2:12-14*

*Or do you not know that **as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death**? 4 Therefore we were **buried with Him through baptism into death**, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, 6 knowing this, that **our old man was crucified with Him**, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. 7 For he who has*

died has been freed from sin. 8 Now **if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, Rom. 6:3-9**

There is nothing mystical here. No one will have the gospel preached to them after they are separated from their body and this world in physical death. But everyone who hears the gospel while still living physically in this world here is spiritually dead and is given the choice to die to sin Christ and come alive to God.,

*For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. 11 Likewise you also, **reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Rom. 6:10-11***

Those who are still in the world who are speaking evil of Christians and thinking it strange that Christians don't frolic in sin with them are still in that death. God was even then ready to judge the living (Christians who have died with and now live through Christ) and the dead (those who have not yet heard or obeyed the gospel).

**that they might be judged according to men in the flesh,**

With *hina*, (purpose and end: *to the intent that; to the end that, in order that*). The purpose and intent of the gospel being preached to those who were spiritually dead, but now are spiritually alive is now revealed. It is a contrast of two judgments This judgment is what was just described. The judgment of the "wicked dead" who based on fleshly judgment "who think it is strange" and the life of God "who are alive in the spirit" live to God. Although it can't be translated into English, there are two words here that express to the Greek reader that this is a contrast they are to take note of.

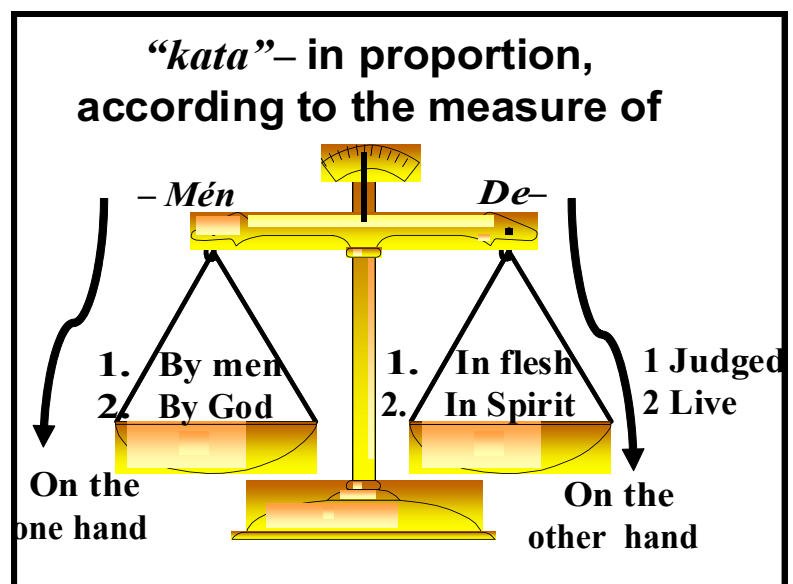
*mén* ... was widely used in classical Greek, less frequently in the popular Koine, and not at all in modern Greek. **In the NT it occurs 180 times**,... The intensifying particle *men*, ... has the function in the NT and its world — as also predominantly in classical Greek — of **setting the stage for a strong or weak contrast (most often with *de*)**, and thus it contributes toward linking individual words or clauses. The correlation of *mén* and *de* corresponds to English "certainly — but"; however, the particles often play a role through emphatic position or oral accentuation so that *mén* but not *de* remains untranslated..." (Exegetical Dictionary NT:3303)

*mén* particle, **used to shew that the word or clause with which it stands answers to a following word or clause**, which is introduced by *de*. Generally, *mén* and *de* may be rendered on the one hand, on the other hand, or as well. , as, while or whereas, but it is often necessary to leave *mén* untranslated. (Liddell and Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon. NT:3303)

The contrast is between the harsh judgment of men in the flesh and the life they were living to God in the spirit. Peter adds places another word in both clauses to show the relationship between them. "According to" is generally used to "denote reference, relation, proportion, of various sorts."

"*kata*,... II with the Accusative... 3. it denotes reference, relation, proportion, of various sorts; a. distributively, indicating a succession of things following one another... b... *as respects; with regard to; in reference to; so far as relates to; as concerning*...c. *according to, agreeably to; in reference to agreement or conformity to a standard, in various ways (aa) according to anything as a standard, agreeably to...(bb) in proportion to, according to the measure of...*" (Thayer, p. 328; 2596)

If we picture a balance scale, there are two magnitudes that are placed side by side and then with the "*mén ... de*," they are contrasted. Hence, on the one hand, spiritually dead men are judging after the flesh. On the other hand, Christians are living to God in



the spirit. Paul spoke a great deal about this in Romans 7-8 where he contrasted the flesh and the spirit. Jesus also warned the Pharisees that they were judging foolishly if they used their own fleshly judgment.

*You judge according to the flesh; I judge no one. 16 And yet if I do judge, My judgment is true; for I am not alone, but I am with the Father who sent Me. John 8:15-17*

Men can only judge in proportion and measure of the flesh. Their own assessments being used to determine the goodness or badness of what they are doing. In this respect they have judged them strange for not running with them. What they cannot measure and do not understand and could not possibly understand is those who loving according to God's standards.

**but live according to God in the spirit.**

Those living according to God are those who are walking by the Holy Spirit. They are the people Paul spoke of in Galatians 5-6.

*I say then: **Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.** 17 For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. 18 **But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.***

*Gal 5:16-18*

*Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. 8 For he who **sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption**, but he **who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.** Gal. 6:7-9*

The carnal man cannot possibly understand why Christians live as directed by God.

*For **those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh**, but those who live **according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.** 6 For **to be carnally minded is death**, but to **be spiritually minded is life and peace.** 7 **Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.** 8 So then, **those who are in the flesh cannot please God.** Rom. 8:5-8*

Since God has decreed that we live the rest of the time in the flesh according to His will, those who are spiritually minded are going to fulfill that regardless of what the men in the flesh say about them. He will judge on upon that basis. What do we care what men think about our flesh? We must be concerned about God's judgment in the spirit.

**7. But the end of all things is at hand:**

This puts everything into the perspective of eternity. The end of all things can be seen in the universal sense of the second coming. But that doesn't seem to be the case here. It is also used of the end of all things in a more personal setting. For each man and woman the end of all things occurs at the moment of death. At death all that is in this life comes to an "end."

*"telos,... 1. end, i.e. a. termination, the limit at which a thing ceases to be... b. the end i.e. the last in any succession or series... c. that by which a thing is finished, its close, issue... d... the end to which all things relate, the aim, purpose I Tim. 1:5..." (Thayer, p. 619-620; 5056)*

Since the material creation has continued without any change for over 1900 years, the termination and finishing does **not** refer to the end of this age. The term "at hand" requires something much nearer.

*"engizo **to draw near, to approach**," from engus, "near," is used (a) of place and position, literally and physically, Matt 21:1; Mark 11:1; Luke 12:33; 15:25; figuratively, of drawing near to God, Matt 15:8; Heb 7:19; James 4:8; (b) **of time, with reference to things that are imminent**, as the kingdom of heaven, Matt 3:2; 4:17; 10:7; the kingdom of God, Mark 1:15; Luke 10:9,11; the time of fruit, Matt 21:34; the desolation of Jerusalem, Luke 21:8; redemption, 21:28; the fulfillment of a promise, Acts 7:17; the Day of Christ in contrast to the present night of the world's spiritual darkness, Rom 13:12; Heb 10:25; the coming of the Lord, James 5:8; the end of all things, 1 Peter 4:7. It is also said of one who was drawing near to death, Phil 2:30...." (from Vine's Expository Dictionary, NT:1448),*

This is the term used by the Holy Spirit to discuss things that are "imminent." So whatever it is that Peter is referencing it must come quickly and soon. The end of all things for the destruction of the Jerusalem, the temple and the Jewish nation is only about five years away. That is definitely imminent. Severe persecution of the church that would come in waves was also only a few years away and imminent. Paul referenced this to the Corinthians about ten years earlier.

*I suppose therefore that this is good because of **the present distress** — that it is good for a man to remain as he is: ... But this I say, brethren, **the time is short**, so that from now on even those who have wives should be as though they had none, 30 those who weep as though they did not weep,*



those who rejoice as though they did not rejoice, those who buy as though they did not possess, 31 and those who use this world as not misusing it. For the form of this world is passing away. 1Cor. 7:29-31

But there is a simpler and more obvious explanation to every reader of the epistle from that time to the present moment that is also imminent. The end of all things for each individual it is always at hand and approaching. In every moment of every day, every Christian us walks inches and seconds from death and the end of all things.

*Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit"; 14 whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow.*

*For **what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.*** Jas. 4:13-15

*And as it is **appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,*** Heb. 9:27-28

Death is only one heartbeat at a time away from any of us. People die in accidents, from unknown health problems in multitudes of different ways every day. No Christian thinking clearly can live in this life thinking that he has many years and as much time as he needs to fix flaws and become what God would have him to be. We are only vapors, and the possibility of vanishing away at any moment ought not to escape our notice. The second coming will end all things for all time here in this life, but so also will the individual deaths of each person.

One of these things is central to the Holy Spirit's revelation.

### **therefore be serious**

Peter uses another conjunction "*oun...*" a conjunction indicating that something follows from another necessarily; used in drawing a conclusion and in connecting sentences together logically, *then, therefore, accordingly, consequently, these things being so.*"

The obvious conclusion to be drawn as one considers the brevity of life and the magnitude of the outcome in eternal life or eternal condemnation, it clearly follows that each Christian be "*serious.*"

*"sophroneo... to be of sound mind, i.e. a. To be in one's right mind of ... b. To exercise self-control; i.e. a. To put a moderate estimate upon one's self, think of one's self soberly... b. To curb one's passions..."* (Thayer, Joseph Henry; P. 612; 4993)

*"sophroneo... to be sound of mind, 2. to be temperate, discreet, shew self-control, ... 3. to come to one's senses, learn self-control, ... (Liddell and Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon. NT:4993)*

*sophroneo ,NT:4993) signifies (a) "to be of sound mind," or "in one's right mind, sober-minded" ... Mark 5:15 and Luke 8:35, "in his right mind"; 2 Cor 5:13, RV, "we are of sober mind" (KJV, "we be sober"); (b) "to be temperate, self controlled," Titus 2:6, "to be sober-minded"; 1 Peter 4:7, RV, "be ye... of sound mind" (KJV, "be ye sober"). See also Rom 12:3. (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:4993)*

There are so many thing that can disrupt the mind the Holy Spirit is seeking to produce within us. Lusts, fears, cares and concerns, persecutions, tribulations and trials, personality weaknesses and other things as well can immediately cloud the mind and destroy our ability to think clearly and soberly. Passion can do it, alcohol can do it, and ignorance and prejudice can also do it. Paul used this term in a similar way giving the steps necessary to do it.

*And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by **the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.** 3 For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but **to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.*** Rom. 12:2-3

The mind must be renewed for this transformation to take place. Only then will Christians be able to have a standard to judge all their conduct. It is not safe to judge anything by culture and upbringing, but only by the word of God. When God's word is our only guide we will have this *serious sober and sound mind.*

### **and watchful in your prayers.**

The term "*watchful*" is such a small portion of this term. It comes from the literal meaning of having no intoxication with wine. Then having no mental fuzziness because of any other emotion or activity. But most literally it is the readiness to obey every command of God the moment we understand it.

*nepho ... The verb is found in the NT only in the figurative sense, always in exhortations. It is used with **gregoreo (watch) in 1 Thess 5:6 and 1 Peter 5:8; with sophroneo (sound mind) in 1 Peter 4:7; and in the sense of sober watchfulness in 1 Thess 5:8 and 1 Peter 1:13.** 2 Tim 4:5 reads:*

“you, however, show sound judgment in all things.” (Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament 3525)

*nepho*... The concept which underlies the verb *nepho* = "**to be sober**" and the whole word group, is formally negative. It is **the opposite of "intoxication"** *methuo* 1. in the **literal sense of intoxication with wine**, and 2. in the **figurative sense of states of spiritual intoxication attributable to other causes**. ... what is in view is the unequivocal and immediately self-evident **antithesis to all kinds of mental fuzziness**, ... Each man is called to a form of service which demands *nephein* ... In this world there is knowledge of a **living God whose service constantly means obedience**. Also known are **the severe, and to the pagan world absurd, burdens of this obedience**. Nevertheless, there is also **an unperturbed and proud readiness to bear them**. In Greek terms **this readiness is *nephein* or sobriety**..." (Kittel, TDWNT NT:3525)

Other translations:

*be ye therefore of sound mind, and be **sober** unto prayer: ASV*

*be of sound judgment and **sober spirit** for the purpose of prayer. NASU*

*be self-controlled and **sober-minded** for the sake of your prayers. ESV*

*be clear minded and **self-controlled** so that you can pray. NIV*

*keep sound minded and **self-restrained and alert** therefore for [the practice of] prayer. AMP*

Between "serious" and "watchful" there is much common ground. They both refer to the ability to see things clearly and not to allow anything to hinder that clarity of thinking. Not lust, not wine, not ignorance, not prejudice, not persecution, nor anything else should keep the Christian from seeing things clearly.

### **in your prayers**

These two qualities will lead us into prayer. The preposition "eis" is when used of physical locations, means to enter into from the outside. Such an entrance in logic and relationships between two actions usually is translated for the purpose of, or will result in.

Sober minded and serious people who have a sound and clear mind will often find reasons to enter into prayer. As one considers all the things that lead one to become frantic and unable to think clearly, prayer is the solution. When we can't find any solution and we are moving into panic, we remember that God knows all and is all powerful. The quickly and safest way to remain sober minded and thinking clearly is to pray. If it is guilt, anxiety, food, safety, or any other aspect of the unstable ways of life, prayer is the answer.

### **8 And above all things have fervent love for one another,**

The term "above" comes from the Greek word

"*pro* ... This prep. with gen. occurs 47 times in the NT. ... ***pro* means "before" in the comprehensive sense and refers to time and world at large** wherever God's salvation plan is discussed, with phrases such as "before the foundation of the world" (John 17:24; Eph 1:4; 1 Peter 1:20) or "before the ages" (2 Tim 1:9; Titus 1:2;) **Figuratively *pro* is used only as an expression of precedence**... "above all/especially" (James 5:12; 1 Peter 4:8;). (Exegetical Dictionary NT:4253) "***pro*... marker of primary importance - 'more important than, of greatest importance, above.'** 'more important than all else, my fellow believers, do not use an oath' James 5:12; 'more important than everything else, earnestly love one another' 1 Peter 4:8. (Lou & Nida Greek-English Lexicon NT:4253)

Because the end of all things is at hand, of the highest importance above everything else is love.

"*pas*,... I. adjectivally, and 1. with anarthrous nouns; a. *any, every one*(sc. of the class denoted by the noun annexed to PAS);... *all* or *any* of the class indicated... b. *any and every, of every kind*, ... 2. with nouns which have the article, *all the, the whole*,... with a Plural, *all(the totality of the persons of things designated by the noun)* ... *always, perpetually*,... *in every condition, or in every matter*, ... *in everything, in every way, on every side, in every particular or relation*,..." (Thayer, p. 491-493; 3956).

Before and above in pre-eminence all other things, everything, and the whole of things. Those who are sober minded and praying will see the great need here and with all their being will seek to make it a part of their lives. When one considers the definition of the term, and it's use elsewhere in Scripture, it is easy to understand why this is the highest of all priorities.

"*agape*,... a purely bibl. and eccl. word... in signification it follows the verb AGAPAO; consequently it denotes 1. *affection, good-will, love, benevolence*:... Of the love of men to men; esp of that love of Christians towards Christians which is enjoined and prompted by their religion, whether the love be

viewed as in the soul or as expressed:... of the love of men towards God... of the love of God towards men... of the love of God towards Christ;... of the love of Christ towards men:..." (Thayer, p. 4-5; 26)

This is the good will, benevolence and attitude of wanting what is best for all other people. It is the desire to help everyone and to harm no one. Although this is the first use of the verb, Peter has already commanded this in different words twice.

*Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, **see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:** 1Pet. 1:22*

*Honour all men. **Love the brotherhood.** Fear God. Honour the king. 1Pet. 2:17*

There are several reasons why Peter could put "above all things" here. First, as Jesus revealed this love is the foundation of all the laws and commands in the Old Covenant. Second, it is greater than faith and hope. Third, God is love and all who love are born of God, know God, and God abides in us.

*37 Jesus said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." 38 "This is the first and great commandment. 39 "And the second is like it: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." 40 **"On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."** Mt. 22:37-40*

*And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but **the greatest of these is love.** 1Cor. 13:13  
Beloved, let us love one another, **for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 8 He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. 9** In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. 10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. 11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. 12 No one has seen God at any time. **If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us.** 1Jn 4:7-12*

With all the above, it is evident that love is the greatest single quality a Christian can cultivate. to see why this should be done above all things. why Peter puts such emphasis here. Paul put a similar emphasis on love buting it ahead of mercy, kindness, humility, meeness long suffering, forbearing and fogiving one another.

*12 Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; 13 bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. 14 But **above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection.** Col 3:12-14*

Without love all falls to dust. God is love and if we do not become like our Father, then we are not truly his children. Peter does add something here. This is to be a "fervent" love. This is a term that has the primary meaning of stretching out as far as one is able. It goes in two directions. The first is fervency where it means intent, earnest, and eager. The second is frequency where it can mean assiduou, without ceasing, continuous and constant. All of our translations went with the former.

*"ektenes... Stretched out; fig. Intent, earnest, assiduous..." (Thayer, Joseph Henry; P. 200; 1618)  
ektenes a: (derivatives of ekteino 'to stretch out,' 16.19) pertaining to an unceasing activity, normally involving a degree of intensity and/or perseverance - 'without ceasing, continuously, constantly.'  
'above everything, love one another without ceasing' 1 Peter 4:8. ... ektenes b: pertaining to being eager to persevere in some state or activity - 'eager, eagerly, earnest, earnestly.' 'above everything, love one another earnestly' 1 Peter 4:8. (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon, NT:1618)*

God wants us every Christian to stretch ourselves out on this one, to become intent and earnest about it. This is a quality God wants his people stretching and reaching for the goal of manifesting love toward all brethren in a local church. As a reflexive pronoun, "one another" is reciprocal. The more we receive the more we give and the more we give the more we receive.

*"heautou... a reflexive pronoun of the 3d person. ... 3. It is used frequently in the plural for the reciprocal pronoun *allelon*, ... reciprocally, mutually, one another..." (Thayer, p. 163; 1438).*

Yet regardless of whether it is ever returned, for our part, we will give as much as we possibly can.

**for "love will cover a multitude of sins."**

This is placed in quotation marks because it is found in the Proverbs and is also quoted in James.

*Hatred stirs up strife, But love covers all sins. Pr. 10:12*

let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins. Jas. 5:20

Covering here is not necessarily forgiveness, which may or may not come later, it is the desire to minimize and cover them as much as possible. The term is only used a few times in the NT, sometimes literal as covering a light with a basket, or a ship being covered by waves.

"kalupto... to cover, cover up... trop. To hide, veil, i.e. to hinder the knowledge of a thing..." (Thayer, NT: 2575)

What is the nature of this covering, hiding, veiling, covering up of sins? It is evident that this is not meant to remove all the teaching in the Scriptures on going to a brother to seek repentance for sin. Love cannot cover any unrepented of sin.

15 "Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. 16 But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that 'by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.' 17 And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector. Mt. 18:15-17

Nor can it mean that our love to others will cover our own sins. God has given specific steps to receive forgiveness either from God or from one another. There must always be repentance and confession of sins to receive remission.

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1Jn. 1:9-10

What then is Peter describing? The true meaning of this term can be understood by considering how we treat sins based on our relationship. An enemies sins are much more difficult to cover than a beloved spouse or child. Ones view of sin is modified and and tempered by love. If we find ourselves forgiving and overlooking the sins of our nearest and dearest and then becoming intolerant and impatient with the sins of all others then we have not yet become fervent in our love for one another. When we reach the point where all our Christian brethren hold the same nearness and dearness that we can forgive and overlook the flaws and imperfections of all our brethren as easily as our own family and closest friends, then we have come to where we are fulfilling this scripture.

### **9 Be hospitable to one another without grumbling.**

Not only will love cover a multitude of sins, but also ought to lead to hospitality. In the Greek speaking world, loving a stranger and being given to hospitality were equated as being close to the same thing.

"*philozenos, (philos and zenos), ...hospitable, generous to guests, [given to hospitality]:* I Tim 3:2; ; Titus 1:8; I Pet 4:9" (Thayer, p. 654; 5382)

Since hospitality refers to the generosity which opens ones home to guests, it requires us to be willing to give up free time to learn about others. To give them food, rest, or shelter, and also encouragement and exhortation. To get to know one another, to bear one another burdens, to weep and rejoice with one another we have to open our homes to each other. Jesus emphasized the "stranger" in His admonition about caring for the poor and needy.

Then He also said to him who invited Him, "When you give a dinner or a supper, **do not ask your friends, your brothers, your relatives, nor rich neighbors, lest they also invite you back, and you be repaid.** 13 **But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind.** 14 **And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you; for you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just."** Lk. 14:12-14

The writer of Hebrews also stressed the need to be willing to entertain complete strangers.

Let brotherly love continue. 2 Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some have unwittingly entertained angels. Heb. 13:1-2

The story of both Abraham (Gen. 18:1-15) and Lot (Gen. 19:1-11) come to mind. They both entertained strangers, and in both cases they were entertaining angelic beings. The term translated "*entertain strangers*" is the same basic term as the one used here.

Why would Peter warn not to murmur about this? Wouldn't Christians willingly want to do it. As noted above, it takes time and expense and doesn't always work out to be an enjoyable experience. But regardless of the outcome of the encounter, no one should be "*grumbling*." This is the same term often translated "*murmur*" and means to grumble, complain

*gogguzo* ... "to mutter, murmur, grumble, say anything in a low tone" (Eng., "*gong*"), an

onomatopoeic word, representing the significance by the sound of the word, as in the word "murmur" itself, is used of the laborers in the parable of the householder, Matt 20:11; of the scribes and Pharisees, against Christ, Luke 5:30; of the Jews, John 6:41,43, of the disciples, 6:61; of the people, 7:32 (of debating secretly); of the Israelites, 1 Cor 10:10 (twice), where it is also used in a warning to believers. (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT: 1111)

*goggusmos* ... "a murmuring, muttering" (akin to A, No. 1), is used (a) in the sense of secret debate among people, John 7:12 (as with the verb in v. 32); (b) of displeasure or complaining (more privately than in public), said of Grecian Jewish converts against Hebrews, Acts 6:1; in general admonitions, Phil 2:14; 1 Peter 4:9, (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:1112)

There are many reasons why people have difficulty with hospitality and might grumble about it. Often we are so busy that it is hard to find the time, or when we have the time, it is quality time we want to use on ourselves, or perhaps we would rather spend our free time with others or on our hobbies. We can murmur and manifest secret displeasure over this, or we can do it cheerfully. Peter points out that such murmuring is unbecoming to a Christian. All must learn to share their free time with others.

### 1Pet 4:10-16

#### End of all Things is at Hand

Be **serious** and **watchful** in your **prayers**

Have **fervent love** for one another

Be **hospitable** to one another without grumbling

A received a gift, **minister** it to one another

**Speak** — speak as the **oracles of God**.

**Minister** — with the **ability God supplies**

#### that in all things God may be Glorified

#### 10 As each one has received a gift,

As Peter continued to make practical applications since "*the end of all things is near,*" he spoke of the personal assessment each Christian must make regarding his relationship to his abilities and opportunities. First, each Christian must assess the gifts they have been given by God. Second, they must assess the opportunities to minister it among themselves.

It is evident from the wording that everyone is included. Every Christian has one or more of these "gifts." The root meaning of *charisma* is gift or favor bestowed on the basis of grace. It is not something we earned by our own efforts or even deserved to have. It is always tied directly to something God has done for us. The word is better understood as the tangible "*results of grace,*" and is thus a "*gift of grace.*" By its use, we are being forced to recognize that only through God's agency and favor do we possess it.

*charisma* ... **occurs 17 times in the NT... Before the NT the word apparently occurred only rarely.** ... The basic premise is that there are different *charismata* (1 Peter 4:10: "varied grace"; Rom 12:6: "different charismata") and **that each person** (1 Peter 4:10; 1 Cor 7:7; 12:7: "to each") **has his own** (*idios*, 1 Cor 7:7). ... (Exegetical Dictionary NT:5486)

*charisma*, ... **a gift of grace; a favor which one receives without any merit of his own; in the N. T.** (where (except 1 Peter 4:10) used only by Paul) **the gift of divine grace ... used of the natural gift of continence, due to the grace of God as creator,** 1 Cor 7:7; **deliverance from great peril to life,** ... bestowed upon us, 2 Cor 1:11; the gift of faith, knowledge, holiness, virtue, Rom 1:11; ..." (Thayer's Greek Lexicon, NT:5486)

*chárisma charísmatos* neut. noun from *charízomai* (5483), **to show favor. A gift of grace, an undeserved benefit. The suffix -ma, indicates the result of grace.** ... **In the NT used only of gifts and graces imparted from God, deliverance from peril** (2 Cor 1:11); **the gift of self-control** (1 Cor 7:7); **gifts of Christian knowledge, consolation, confidence** (Rom 1:11; 1 Cor 1:7); redemption, salvation through Christ (Rom 5:15,16; 6:23; 11:29). **Specifically of the gifts imparted to the early Christians and particularly to Christian teachers by the Holy Spirit** (Rom 12:6; 1 Cor 12:4,9,28,30,31; 1 Peter 4:10). **As communicated with the laying on of hands** (1 Tim 4:14; 2 Tim 1:6). (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT 5486)

It is a simple and straightforward concept. What has made it difficult is Paul's use of it in 1Cor. 12-14, to describe the "*spiritual gifts*" bestowed on those who, after have the hands of an apostle laid upon them, (Acts 8:14-18), could perform miraculous actions. Because the focus of the religious world today is on the miraculous gifts, this passage has become more controversial. What all must understand as it is made clear in the definitions above, even during the age of spiritual gifts, it was never a term to be understood exclusively of the spiritual gifts given by the Holy Spirit.

These are the special things we can do well. Whether intelligence, athletic prowess, popularity, or any other natural gift given at birth, they are “*gifts of grace*.” Things that arose because of God’s care, like deliverance, prosperity, etc are also “*gifts of grace*.” No matter what abilities we now possess, if we look at them in the proper perspective, they are all “*gifts of grace*.” While there may have been some who had received Peter’s letter who did have a spiritual gift, and they should certainly use that gift in the manner described here, those who did not have a “spiritual gift,” still had gifts of grace and favor. This was Paul’s thought in his letter to the Romans. Every Christian has special gifts and abilities from God. Again, while Paul started with the “*spiritual gift*” of prophesy, he then moved to the “*gifts of grace*” we have as a result of God’s grace and mercy. Those who can minister and serve, teach, exhort, give, rule or show mercy.

*For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, **not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.** 4 For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, 5 so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. 6 **Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; 7 or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; 8 he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.** Rom. 12:3-8*

Any ability, possessed by any Christian, is a gift of grace and favor, bestowed at birth or at any time after birth. Obviously, the first step in fulfilling Peter’s exhortations and admonitions here is to make a careful assessment of our abilities and opportunities. All that we possess in any capacity is a gift since we did nothing to merit anything of them. Not only that, but every opportunity God gives us to work in His kingdom is also grace. Every person in Hebrews 11 was given a gift of grace to be able to do what God needed them to do.

The first step is for each one to assess what gifts and abilities they possess, then, just as we received it, we should minister it. This is Peter’s thought here. We are to do this “as” we have received it.

*“kathos,...1. according as, just as, even as: in the first member of a comparison:...2. according as i.e. in proportion as, in the degree that:...3. since, seeing that, agreeably to the fact that.” (Thayer, p. 314; 2531).*

In direct proportion to the value of the gift you have received, minister it among yourselves. Since each of us have special abilities and talents we can use to become blessing to one another, it is God’s will that we used these abilities to serve the congregation and its members.

Dorcas could sew,	Barnabas could sell his property and exhort,
Paul could preach,	The widow could give her mite,
Mary could anoint Jesus for his burial.	Ananias could go to Saul of Tarsus and baptize him.

*And whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, assuredly, I say to you, he shall by no means lose his reward.” Matt 10:42*

All should do that which is in their power to hear the words of the Lord that gave to Mary on the day she used her gift to minister.

*“Let her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a good work for Me. 7 For you have the poor with you always, and whenever you wish you may do them good; but Me you do not have always. 8 **She has done what she could.** She has come beforehand to anoint My body for burial. 9 Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, **what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her.**” Mk. 14:6-9*

Opportunities to do good, using our gifts are precious opportunities to do what we can. **minister it to one another,**

What are we encouraged to do with these gifts? Minister them to one another. This term had a very special place in Peter’s heart. During the early days of Jesus’ ministry, as He began to teach them about humility and service, Jesus took this word that had only been used of slaves, and made it the essence of his own “*ministry*” as well as theirs.

In secular Gk. *diakoneo*, which is first found in Herodotus and is never too common, means a. “**to wait at table**”: ... In Greek eyes serving is not very dignified. Ruling and not serving is proper to a man... The formula of the sophist: “How can a man be happy when he has to serve someone?” expresses the basic Greek attitude (Kittel TDWNT NT:1247)

It all started with a dispute on the road between the twelve. They were vying for the position of

being the greatest in the kingdom that Jesus had come to establish. Jesus sat them down and spoke candidly with them. First, He made it known that He had heard them while they were having this discussion. It appears they were embarrassed by this and clearly knew better when they refused to talk about it.

*Then He came to Capernaum. And when He was in the house He asked them, "What was it you disputed among yourselves on the road?" 34 But they kept silent, for **on the road they had disputed among themselves who would be the greatest.** 35 And He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, "**If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant (MINISTER) of all.**" Mk. 9:33-37*

Not long after this, James and John, former partners and friends of Peter, came to Jesus with their mother and asked to receive the right to sit on His right and left hand in the kingdom He had come to establish. They sought greatness and Jesus told them this was not something He had the right to do since His kingdom would hold every righteous man and woman who had ever lived. When the ten (including Peter) heard what they had done, they became angry (possibly because they hadn't thought of it first). Jesus once again sat them down and explained that greatness in His kingdom would come to those who ministered to one another (same word as here).

*And when the ten heard it, they began to be greatly displeased with James and John. 42 But Jesus called them to Himself and said to them, "You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. 43 Yet it shall not be so among you; but **whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant (Minister).** 44 And **whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all.** 45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be **served (MINISTER),** but to **serve (MINISTER),** and to give His life a ransom for many." Mk. 10:41-45*

Even after the institution of the Lord's supper they were still vying for the position of greatness and Jesus was still teaching them what Peter now teaches here.

*Now there was also a dispute among them, as to which of them should be considered the greatest. 25 And He said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those who exercise authority over them are called 'benefactors.' 26 But not so among you; on the contrary, **he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves (MINISTERS).** 27 For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves (MINISTERS)? Is it not he who sits at the table? **Yet I am among you as the One who serves (MINISTERS)** Lk. 22:24-27*

Greatness in the kingdom of God is based on how well we minister. It is hard to imagine how Peter must have felt about these things so many years later as he finally understood exactly what Jesus was seeking. He had strongly rebuked the Pharisees for the attitude all His apostles had exhibited throughout their earthly sojourn with him. Peter now understands.

*But you, do not be called 'Rabbi'; for One is your Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brethren. 9 Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven. 10 And do not be called teachers; for One is your Teacher, the Christ. 11 **But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant (MINISTERS).** 12 **And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.** Mt. 23:8-12*

For all these reasons, every Christian should be especially interested in this word "minister." There were many words for slaves and service in the Koine Greek. Jesus chose this one and Peter repeated it because it is the highest and most exalted type of service. A service that especially benefits those who are served. Yet like *agape-love*, this was not a term the Greeks considered to be special. They looked down on it just as they did love.

"Fundamental to an understanding of *diakoneo* in all its uses is the fact that it has an original concrete sense which is still echoed in its figurative meanings. In secular Greek *diakoneo* which is first found in Herodotus and is never too common, means a. "To wait at table";... b. **Rather more generally it means "to provide or care for" ... in this sense it is often used of the work of women... On the basis of these original senses, it has c. The comprehensive meaning "to serve,"** (Kittel, TDWNT, Vol 2 p. 82)

This term was given a complete renovation as it was brought into the kingdom of God. Jesus came to serve us in this capacity and He expected and demanded that we serve Him and one another in the same capacity. Peter asked us to take the abilities we have and use them to serve others in the congregation.

"*heautou*... a reflexive pronoun of the 3d person. ... 3. It is used frequently in the plural for the reciprocal pronoun *allelon*, ... reciprocally, mutually, one another..." (Thayer, p. 163; 1438).

Reciprocity is the ability and desire to both give and to return. There will be times when we are the ones ministering and there will be times when we are the ones who are being ministered unto. Both are a vital part of the church and should be accepted with gratitude. Often it is easier for Christians to minister and serve than it is to be ministered and served. Yet if all want to serve and not to be served, then there is no one to serve.

### **as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.**

A "*steward*" is one who has been given the responsibility of overseeing that which belongs to another:

"*oikonomos*... (*oikos*, *nemo* [ 'to dispense, manage' ]...) *the manager of a household or of household affairs; esp a steward, manager, superintendent, whether free-born, or, as was usually the case, a freed-man or slave) to whom the head of the house or proprietor has intrusted the management of his affairs, the care of receipts and expenditures, and the duty of dealing out the proper portion to every servant and even to the children not yet of age... the manager of a farm or landed estate, an overseer, ... the superintendent of the cities's finances, the treasurer of the city... (see *oikonomia*)"*

(Thayer, p. 441; 3623)

Jesus described exactly what Peter meant by this stewardship in the parable of the talents. The "*talent*" there is "*gift*" here. Every favor God has given to us is a gift of grace. The expectation is that not only we enjoy the gifts and their benefits, but that we will share them. The obligation to share them is our stewardship.

*"For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. 15 And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. Mt. 25:14-15*

Jesus then concluded with the accounting of that stewardship when He returns. The five talent and two talent men heard exactly the same praise.

*After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them. 20 "So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.' 21 His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' Mt. 25:19-21*

The one talent man did nothing. He dug a hole in the ground and forgot about it. When the Lord returned, he "blamed" the one who had given him the gift for his attitude. But the Lord saw right through his excuse to what he was wicked and lazy. He still could have been faithful if he had done something, but he did nothing.

*24 "Then he who had received the one talent came and said, 'Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. 25 And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.' 26 "But his lord answered and said to him, 'You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. 27 So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. 28 So take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents. Mt. 25:24-28*

Jesus also spoke of this in the parable of the unjust steward, it is once again made very clear what the role of the steward ought to be and what happens when it is not properly executed.

*He also said to His disciples: "There was a certain rich man who had a steward, and an accusation was brought to him that this man was wasting his goods. 2 So he called him and said to him, 'What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward.' Lk. 16:1-2*

Just as Paul considered all that Jesus had given him as a gift, he too recognized His stewardship and the obligations it brought.

Paul also spoke of stewardship.

*Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. 2 Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful. 1Cor. 4:1-3*

*For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel! 17 For if I do this willingly, I have a reward; but if against my will, I have been entrusted with a stewardship. 1Cor. 9:16-18*



Just as Paul was a steward of the mysteries of God, we are all “good stewards” of the gifts God has given to us, either at birth, through our own efforts, or any other manner in which we gained possession of them. Since God created everything, nothing is ours, we are simply stewards of what God has given us. Paul uses the term “*grace*” (*charis*) instead of “*gifts*” (*charisma*), but it amounts to the same thing. In order to fully express how integral this is to our life, he uses the term “*manifold*.” This is a very comprehensive concept. If it is in colors, then it would be the rainbow, showing all the colors of the spectrum. If it is in gifts, it is any and everything we can do.

“*poikilos* ... **many-colored, spotted, mottled, pied, dappled**, of leopards, fawns, Hom., etc. II. of robes, wrought in various colours, brodered, ... III. metaph. *changeable, various, diversified, manifold*, Aesch., Plat.:- (Liddell and Scott, Greek Lexicon. NT:4164)

The grace of God, His favor and kindness manifested in the gifts He has given us were not earned or merited. At birth, God gave each of us various types of gifts. Intellectual, personality, athletic, etc. Each of us has different talents and gifts. Some are buried, some are hidden, some are selfishly squandered, but all are given by God as a gift. What we do with them will one day be required of us and we will be judged. This is the idea of stewardship. God expects us to use them in a way that is pleasing to him. This requires an unselfish giving on our part.

### **11 If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God.**

This may refer to the preaching the word of God, but it could also refer to all of the words that we have the opportunity to speak. While *laleo* has a different etymology than *lego*, by the time the NT was written they had very similar meanings.

*laleo* ... appears **very frequently in the NT: 269 times (eleventh in frequency among vbs.)**, ...

The **original meaning of *laleo* was *babble, stammer*; it was onomatopoeic for the unassisted expression of small children**. Then, transferred to adult usage, it came to mean *chatter, prattle*, in deliberate contrast to reasonable speech (*lego*). However, already in classical Greek *laleo*, like *lego*, meant speak, talk... In the NT ***laleo* is found only with the meaning speak, talk, in which the nuance *be able to speak* is characteristic in many passages...**; .. "the dumb man could speak again" (Matt 9:33 par. Luke 11:14; cf. Mark 7:37; Matt 12:22; 15:31); ... "he could again speak correctly" (Exegetical Dictionary NT:2980)

*lego / laleo* There are **two leading aspects under which speech may be regarded**. It may, first, be contemplated as **the articulate utterance of human language**, in contrast with the absence of this, from whatever cause springing; whether from choice, as in those who hold their peace, when they might speak; or from the present undeveloped condition of the organs and faculties, as in the case of infants ... This is **one aspect of speech, namely articulated words, as contrasted with silence**, with mere sounds or animal cries. But, secondly, speech ('oratio' or 'oris ratio') may be regarded as **the orderly linking and knitting together in connected discourse of the inward thoughts and feelings of the mind**, ... But if in *lalein* the fact of uttering articulated speech is the prominent notion, in *legein* it is the words uttered, and that these correspond to reasonable thoughts within the breast of the utterer. (Trench's Synonyms of the NT 2980)

The ability to use the tongue, to form words and disclose our thoughts is an amazing gift of grace. Yet, in all conversations, whether proclaiming God's word or simply in conversation with other Christians or unbelievers, we must only speak as the oracles of God allow. The term “*oracles*” is a derivative of *logos*, which simply means words. But when we see how it is used in the NT we see that *oracles* is only used in reference to Scripture.

*"This is he who was in the congregation in the wilderness with the Angel who spoke to him on Mount Sinai, and with our fathers, the one who received **the living oracles** to give to us, Acts 7:38*

*Much in every way! Chiefly because to them were committed **the oracles of God**. Rom. 3:2-3*

*For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of **the oracles of God**; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. Heb. 5:12-13*

Whenever anyone is speaking. Whether it is as a preacher or teacher of the Scriptures, or just in every day conversations with others, the Scriptures need to be the limitation. If the Scriptures do not allow it, or it is not in the Scriptures, we should not speak it.

This would include making certain we are doctrinally correct in all our statements, and morally upright and pure in all our words. When we speak, let your tongue be guided and led by the oracles of God.

### **If anyone ministers,**

Peter simply repeats “*minister*” from the previous verse. After we have sized up our gifts and the

manner in which we will manifest our faith and faithfulness to God, we begin to use them in service to one another. Whenever we find the opportunity to minister, there is one final consideration we must factor into our assessment of whether we are faithful. If we truly desire to be a steward by serving others we must serve up to the fullest extent and capacity of the ability which God has given.

**let him do it as with the ability which God supplies,**

There are two limitations in this passage. Both of them are limitations on what God expects from us in our stewardship. All too often in ministering, the needs are far greater than the resources. Time, money, stamina, and most other things necessary to ministering are limited. It is impossible for any Christian to meet all the needs that will present themselves to them in their lifetime. God only wants us to minister up to the limitation of the strength of our own ability.

*“ischus... ability, force, strength, might... power... with strength, mightily,...”* (Thayer, p. 309; 2479)  
*ischuo, ischuros, ischus katischuo* 1. The word group *ischu* - has the meaning **"to be able," "to be capable," "capacity," "power," "strength."** It is largely co-extensive with *duna-* and the derivatives overlap. In the case of *ischu* - there is more **emphasis on the actual power implied in ability or capacity, i.e., on the power which one possesses, ...**” (Kittle, TDWNT NT:2480)

The force, strength and ability that God has supplied to us is what God wants us to use. There are two passages that help further understand what Peter is speaking about. They both give the basic requirement of stewardship. If God has given us much, then He expects and requires much. If God has only given a little, then it is accepted what he has and not what he doesn't have.

*For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more. Lk. 12:48*

*For if there is first a willing mind, it is accepted according to what one has, and not according to what he does not have. 2Cor. 8:12*

We can all imagine all the things that could and should be done. We can wear ourselves out with guilt and remorse over them, when they were never things we could do. If we don't have the time, financial resources, or the ability to do it, then we can feel the need, but don't have the ability to fulfill it. Under those circumstances, it is not our responsibility to do any more than we can. That was Jesus point in the parable of the talents. They were given *“to each according to their ability.”*

This is not only true of our own strength and resources, but also of the limitations God has given in His Word. The church was created with the mission of seeking and saving what is lost, edifying, training, teaching and encouraging the members, and taking care of the benevolent needs of the saints. That is the extent of the strength God has given to the church. If we seek to minister, but we change the mission of the church to do so, we have still violated this passage. It is the strength God supplies, and sometimes God chooses weak things.

*But **God has chosen the foolish things of the world** to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen **the weak things of the world** to put to shame the things which are mighty; 28 and **the base things of the world and the things which are despised** God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, 29 that **no flesh should glory in His presence.** 30 But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God — and righteousness and sanctification and redemption — 31 **that, as it is written, “He who glories, let him glory in the Lord.”** 1Cor. 1:26-31*

This is often a test of our fidelity and trust. If God did not *“supply”* it, then it is not within our strength to do it. If we pass over into that forbidden realm, we will no longer be glorifying God, but only ourselves. As can be deduced from the definition, *“supply”* went through a transformation in meaning. Originally leading and supplying the expense for the chorus, by the time of the writing it had lost everything of its former meaning except supply.

*“coregeo... 1. To be a chorus-leader, lead a chorus. ... to furnish the chorus at one's own expense; to procure and supply all things necessary to fill out the chorus... in later writ... To supply, furnish, abundantly...”* (Thayer, NT:5524)

*choregeo ... primarily, among the Greeks, signified **“to lead a stage chorus or dance” (choros, and hegeomai, “to lead”)**, then, **“to defray the expenses of a chorus”**; hence, later, metaphorically, **“to supply,”** 2 Cor 9:10 ... 1 Peter 4:11...”* (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:5524)

What God supplies in His oracles, in His gifts, and in His opportunities the Christian seeks to the

best of his ability to fulfill. God wants us to buy up these opportunities with all the strength He has given us. No more and no less. There is no room for shirkers in the kingdom. But just as important, there is no need for people to feel guilty when they have done the best they could. God expects His people to assess their gifts from Him and then use them the best they can.

### **that in all things God may be glorified**

The purpose (*hina — to the intent that; to the end that, in order that*) of everything is to bring glory to God. When everything is added up and weighed in the balance, this is all we have to offer God. He has created everything we possess. He has created the gospel, the church, Christ's blood, everything is because of His will. We don't have anything to offer God except submissive obedience and the goal of seeing God glorified.

*"You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created." Rev. 4:11*

In everything we say and everything we do in service to Him is done to bring glory to Him. As the source of all things and the highest goal of every Christian just as the highest goal of Jesus their master is to do with will of God and give him the glory.

*For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen. Rom. 11:36*  
**through Jesus Christ,**

The preposition "through" (*dia — the means or agency by which something is accomplished*). Jesus is the mediator. Without His work of redemption, we could not give God glory because we would still be dead to Him. Jesus is the way truth and life and no one comes to the Father but through him (Jn 14:6). He is the head of the corner, He is the one through whom in these last days God has spoken through. He is our Savior and our Redeemer. All that we do to glorify and honor God must be done through Him. He is our mediator, our only access to God.

*"Worthy is the Lamb who was slain To receive power and riches and wisdom, And strength and honor and glory and blessing!" 13 And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying: "Blessing and honor and glory and power Be to Him who sits on the throne, And to the Lamb, forever and ever!"*  
*Rev. 5:12-13*

### **to whom belong the glory and the dominion**

As creator and the one who sustains all things to him belongs glory and dominion forever and ever. The term "glory" is the noun form of the verb "glorified" used in the last phrase. They both contain the same meaning. It began as an opinion, then became a good opinion, but by the time of the writing of the NT it was used in connection to God.

*doxa ... Found already in Homer and Herodotus, this word has in all non-biblical Greek a **basic meaning which reflects its link with dokeo, namely, "what one thinks," "opinion."** This takes two forms: a. from *dokeo*, "I think," "the opinion which I have"; b. from *dokeo* "I count as," "the opinion which others have of me." .... **Even a cursory survey of the position in the NT reveals a totally different picture. The old meaning a., "opinion," has disappeared completely.** There is not a single example in either the NT or the post-apostolic fathers. ... The meaning b., "repute" or "honour," is still found: ... There has been added the meaning c., "radiance," "glory," which is not found in secular Greek ... **In the NT, however, the word is used for the most part in a sense for which there is no Greek analogy whatever** and of which there is only an isolated example in Philo. That is to say, it denotes **"divine and heavenly radiance," the "loftiness and majesty" of God, and even the "being of God" and His world.** ... In the NT, as in the LXX, the meanings "divine honour," "divine splendour," "divine power" and "visible divine radiance" are fluid, and can only be distinguished artificially. In content, however, there is always expressed the divine mode of being, though with varying emphasis on the element of visibility ..." (Kittel, TDWNT, NT:1391)*

*"doxa, ... I. opinion, judgment, view... II ... in the sacred writings always, good opinion concerning one, and as resulting from that, praise, honor, glory... to give or ascribe glory to God, why and how being evident in each case from the context: thus, by declaring one's gratitude to God for a benefit received, ... so as to honor God, to promote his glory... III As a translation of the Hebrew in a use foreign to Greek writings... **splendor, brightness**; 1. ...of the sun, moon, stars, ... used of the heavenly brightness, by which God was conceived of as surrounded, ... 2. **magnificence, excellence, preeminence, dignity, grace**... 3. **majesty**; a. that which belongs to God; and b. the kingly majesty which belongs to him as the supreme ruler; ... 4, a **most glorious condition, most exalted state**;... b. *the glorious condition of blessedness into which it is appointed**

*and promised that true Christians shall enter after their Savior's return from heaven... " (Thayer p 155-156; 1391)*

The definition makes clear that this is a very big word conveying a large variety of ideas. Its root meaning is opinion and judgment was modified by the Holy Spirit to describe the good opinion we have when something great occurs. It is therefore the word used to describe the glory, honor, and praise man feels toward God as he sees something revealing all that God can do. This is a word that is not of this creation. We see reflected glory of God in the sun moon and stars. We see it in His wisdom, power, majesty and mercy. But the true fulness of glory is beyond our comprehension. We can't comprehend it fully, so we simply do the best we can to give all our praise adoration and the submission to Him.

The term "dominion" like the term glory has a small domain here in this world, but it's primary meaning is also not of this creation.

*"kratos, ...1. force, strength. 2. power, might... the might of his strength, Eph 1:19; 6:10;... mightily, with great power,... a mighty deed, a work of power.... 3. dominion..." (Thayer, p. 359; 2904)*

God's true and full power and dominion are only dimly reflected here. The complete and absolute dominion God holds in heaven should be reflected to the best of our ability in the lives of His servants.

*who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power. Amen. 1 Tim 6:16*

*To God our Savior, Who alone is wise, Be glory and majesty, Dominion and power, Both now and forever. Amen. Jude 25*

*To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen. 1 Peter 5:11*

### **forever and ever.**

The term here translated forever has several different meanings in the NT. It can be the age in which we live our lives, the age in which this universe exists or the age in which God exists.

*"aion... 1. age ... a human lifetime ... life itself... 2. an unbroken age, perpetuity of time, eternity..." (Thayer, NT: 165)*

"forever and ever" is more literally "for the eons of the eons," God sums up all eons and then has His own eons above that. Since we can't comprehend it, forever and forever is about the best we can do to visualize it, because it too is a concept not of this creation.

### **Amen.**

This is a Hebrew word that was translated into Greek and English, and most of the languages of the world. The word is not found until God commanded it to be used as confirmation and agreement.

*amen ... An adverb meaning verily or truly. The word is used more often as the declaration may it be so. It comes from a root meaning to confirm; to support; to be faithful. The major idea behind this word is constancy and reliability. It is used as a declaration to acknowledge affirmation of a statement (1 Kings 1:36); acceptance of a curse (Neh 5:13); affirmation of a prophecy (Jer 28:6). (Complete Word Study Dictionary: OT:543)*

With this OT background, it moved into the NT without any real change of meaning.

*"amen,... 1. verbal adj. ... firm, metaph. faithful... 2. it came to be used as an adverb by which something is asserted or confirmed: a. at the beginning of a discourse, surely, of a truth, truly; so freq. in the discourses of Christ in Mt. Mk. and Lk.... the repetition of the word (amen amen), employed by John alone in his Gospel (twenty-five times), has the force of a superlative, most assuredly... b. at the close of a sentence; so it is, so be it, may it be fulfilled... It was a custom which passed over from the synagogues into the Christian assemblies, that when he who had read or discourse had offered up a solemn prayer to God, the others in attendance responded Amen and thus made the substance of the prayer their own..." (Thayer, p. 32; 281).*

This gives the solemn assurance and confirmation that it will be so, whether men participate in it or not.

## 12 Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial

Peter and some of these brethren had seen some persecutions in their lives. The book of Acts shows the persecution of the early church in Jerusalem culminating in Saul laying waste the church, casting men into prison, and voting to put them to death.

*I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women, Acts 22:4-5*

*many of the saints I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them. 11 And I punished them often in every synagogue and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly enraged against them, I persecuted them even to foreign cities. Acts 26:10-11*

As Paul went on his journeys to different cities, he and the brethren were persecuted, either by the Jews or by the Gentiles. Peter had been imprisoned, James beheaded, Paul beaten, stoned, harassed and abused. But nothing could compare with what was about to occur. That has been the theme of this book since the first chapter. The severity and ferocity of the persecutions would be a “fiery trial.” The hatred and ingenuity with which the heathen went about destroying those who loved the Lord was an epoch of sorrow and anguish, but not of despair. Families were torn apart and compelled to watch each other die with the knowledge that at any moment they could stop it all if they would but deny the Lord.

Yet this is not strange, It has always been so. Jesus spoke of the blood of all the righteous who had been killed from the foundation of the world beginning with Abel.

*Therefore, indeed, I send you prophets, wise men, and scribes: some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city, 35 that on you may come **all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, Mt. 23:34-35***

*Others were **tortured**, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. 36 Still others had trial of **mockings** and **scourgings**, yes, and of **chains** and **imprisonment**. 37 They were **stoned**, they were **sawn in two**, were **tempted**, were **slain with the sword**. They wandered about **in sheepskins and goatskins**, being **destitute, afflicted, tormented** — 38 of whom the world was not worthy. They **wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth. Heb 11:35-38***

Yet though this would be far more concentrated, planned and executed with a hatred and a desire to torture and destroy their will, hoping to remove faith from their hearts. It still was not “strange.” This is the same term Peter used back in verse four. This term conveys the sense of foreign, alien, and surprising.

*zenos, zenia, zenizo, zenodocheo philozenia, philozenos ... **Words from the stem zen - bear ... the concept of “foreign,” “alien” (also “appearing strange” or “creating distaste”) ... In the NT it is used predominantly in the sense of “strange”** (adjective 3 John 5; Heb 13:9; also Matt 25:35 ff.; noun Eph 2:19; Heb 11:13), “foreign” (adjective Acts 17:18, noun v. 21, Matt 27:7), also “surprising” (1 Peter 4:12). ... (Kittel, TDWNT NT: 3579)*

This was how the Gentiles saw the Christian. They thought it very “strange” to the point that they seemed like aliens and foreigners. Since they would not engage in the sinful activities that made up their life. Here, it is used of the Christians view of their response. One would think that being pure and holy, loving and merciful, and fair and honest would bring praise and acceptance. But that was not the response they were receiving.

If the Jews with the law could find means of destroying those who pointed out their hypocrisy how much worse would the Gentiles act when they found the same problem?

*Now brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death. 13 And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end shall be saved. Mk. 13:12-13*

Some things are so strange that they surprise and astonish. They are a novelty. Like lightning out of a clear blue sky. When people, are kind and treat others with love and concern, it sometimes might appear shocking that others would want to harm them. This is not a shocking or surprising thing at all. But still this warning needs to be burned into our minds and prepared for. It happened before, it could happen again. The term “fiery trial” is defined:

*“purosis... a burning, the burning by which metals are toasted or reduced, by a figure drawn from the refiner's fire... calamities or trials that test character...” (Thayer, Joseph Henry; P. 559; 4451)*

This has happened so many times and under so many circumstances that it should not be

shocking or surprising. The fiery trial reminds us of the fiery furnace that Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego were forced to pass through. This can happen to any Christian at any time. We have been lulled into a sense of security that is actually the “strange” thing. For over 200 years, it has stopped in this country. But it can start again at any time. Every first day of the week while partaking of the Lord’s supper in communion with the Lord all ought to remember that fiery trials can come to anyone.

### **which is to try you,**

The purpose of this fiery trial is to put them to the test. It is interesting that this test if done by Satan and his followers it is done by them to try and destroy them, but at the same time, if it is allowed by God, as it is here, it is also used to test, purify and strengthen.

*peirasmós* masc. noun from *peirázōe* (3985), **to make trial of, try, tempt. Trial, temptation, a putting to the test, spoken of persons only.** When **God is the agent, *peirasmós* is for the purpose of proving someone, never for the purpose of causing him to fall.** If it is the devil who tempts, then it is for the purpose of causing one to fall. (l) Generally, trial of one’s character (1Peter 4:12, “to try [or prove] you”). (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:3986)

Peter used this same term at the very beginning of the book, as did James.

*In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been **grieved by various trials, 7 that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, 1Pet. 1:6-7***

*My brethren, **count it all joy when you fall into various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. 4 But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. 5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. Jas. 1:2-6***

The things that Satan and those who think like him are using to try and destroy Christians have been taken by God and used to strengthen and purify them. After being given the vision of paradise in the third heaven, God saw the need to humble Paul with some form of “*thorn in the flesh.*” At first, Paul saw this as “*strange,*” thinking this was a hindrance to his work. Jesus revealed that His grace was more than sufficient because the strength that He offered His people was enhanced by the very things Paul had asked to have removed. After Paul learned this, his entire attitude changed, not only about the thorn in the flesh but about all trials and persecutions. That is the same thought that James and Peter are bringing out.

*And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, **a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. 8 Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. 9 And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for **My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ’s sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong. 2 Cor. 12:7-10*****

Like gold that one puts into the fire and comes out purer and of more value, so also men and women who have passed through such fires of trials and tribulation will pass through it and be strengthened by it.

### **as though some strange thing happened to you;**

Peter repeats the term “strange” as an adjective. It is not a strange occurrence or event. There is nothing strange or astonishing about ungodly people turning on Christians. They hate the light and Christians are the light. When they hear that their conduct is condemned by God, and they will be judged for it, they hate it and those who bring those things into their minds. Christians are a concrete evidence that some look down upon and feel their conduct is wrong. For many such people are not fit to live. Christians who understand this are prepared and will not consider it to be something to be astonished or startled by it. *But **you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, 11 persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra — what persecutions I endured. And out of them all the Lord delivered me. 12 Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. 2 Tim 3:10-13***

### **13 but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ’s sufferings,**

This is a mighty leap for some. Moving from not thinking it is strange is a big step by itself. It takes a lot of thinking and making applications to get make it seem normal. But Peter urges us

to go far above normal to joyfully expected. Peter and the apostles had learned this very early in their work.

*when they had **called for the apostles and beaten them**, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. 41 So they departed from the presence of the council, **rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name.** Acts 5:40-42*

This is exactly what Jesus has taught all His disciples to respond. This is a very difficult command to keep until we see things exactly as Peter reveals them here.

*Blessed are you when men hate you, And when they exclude you, And revile you, and cast out your name as evil, For the Son of Man's sake. 23 Rejoice in that day and leap for joy! For indeed your reward is great in heaven, For in like manner their fathers did to the prophets. Lk. 6:22-23*

The basis of support for this joy comes from a very well known place. Our suffering brings us into fellowship with Christ's suffering, for we are suffering for some of the same reasons He did. It was because of his firm stand on all God's commands, and His preaching that all who want to be right with God must do the same, that He was persecuted and killed. While Stephen linked Him with the suffering of all the prophets, Peter links him with the suffering of His people.

*Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers, 53 who have received the law by the direction of angels and have not kept it." Acts 7:52-53*

"Partaking" here is the term that is generally used for fellowship or communion.

*"koinoneo,... a. to come into communion or fellowship, to become a sharer, be made a partner... b. to enter into fellowship, join one's self as an associate, make one's self a sharer or partner..."*

(Thayer, p. 351-352; 2841).

*koinonos, koinoneo, koinonia, ... koinonos* means "**fellow,**" "**participant.**" It implies fellowship or sharing with someone or in something. Sometimes *koinonos* is accompanied by a second noun indicating the nature of the participation... By stem (*koinos*) the participation is differently orientated from that of e.g., *philos*, where the bond is that of relationship or love, *etairos*, which implies sharing a common enterprise, *sunergos* (fellow-worker), or the colourless *metochos* (participant). The main element in *koinonos* is that of fellowship. Hence **the word is esp. adapted to express inner relationship.** *koinoneo*, from *koinonos*, means 1. "**to share with someone (to be koinonos) in something which he has, "to take part,"** 2. more rarely, "to have a share with someone (to be fellow) in something which he did not have," "to give a part," "to impart," ..." (Kittel, TDWNT, NT:2841)

There is both honor and privilege in using this term here. Since our sufferings come from the same source as His, God bestows this wonderful privilege, allowing us to suffer in communion and fellowship with Him. It helps to see this term used of our communion (*koinonia* 2842) with Christ on the first day of the week.

*The **cup of blessing** which we bless, is it not **the communion (koinonia) of the blood of Christ?***

*The **bread which we break**, is it not **the communion (koinonia) of the body of Christ?** 17 For we, though many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread. 1 Cor 10:16-17*

Thus in the same way we commune with Jesus during the Lord's Supper we also commune with Him in persecutions and sufferings. How can this not elevate our understanding to the level where we could rejoice. This sheds some light on one of Paul's more difficult statements:

*I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and **fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ**, for the sake of His body, which is the church, Col. 1:24*

The difficulty of this passage is in trying to understand what could be "lacking" in the afflictions Christ endured? Obviously this statement is not speaking of any lack on Jesus part while He suffered, but the lack that is now being filled by Paul's suffering. That is the very nature of fellowship. Both doing their part and thus sharing and jointly participating together. Paul had told the Philippians the something similar in speaking of his desire to be in fellowship of his suffering.

*that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and **the fellowship (koinonia) of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, Phil. 3:10-11***

Once we have all these facts, it creates a sense of peace and understanding. We are suffering with and for Him. Each act of suffering must be evaluated, and to the "extent" that they are suffering because of Christ. This is a term that places two things into equality. To the degree and in proportion as these sufferings are in fellowship and communion with Jesus.

*katho ... b: in accordance with a degree as specified by the context - 'to the degree that, just as.' katho b: 'to the degree that you share Christ's sufferings, rejoice' 1 Peter 4:13. ... 'each one to*

the degree that he was able' Acts 11:29. ... 'they divided these among all to the extent that anyone had need' or '... in proportion to anyone's need' Acts 2:45. (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT:2526)

*katho* from NT:2596 and NT:3739; **according to which thing, i.e. precisely as, in proportion as:** (Strong's Concordance Greek-Hebrew Dictionary. NT:2526)

**that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.**

Peter uses *hina* - in order that, purpose and cause) to stress the reason why we should be able to rejoice under such suffering. We must remember that the sufferings under the fiery trial that was coming to them was far more severe than what the experiences many have today. Social stigma, scorn and anger are certainly part of suffering for Christ, but loss of liberty, possessions and lives are what they were facing. So this must be powerful enough to keep them faithful and unmoved even up to that extreme. When Jesus returns, those who endured such things will be greatly blessed and thus rejoice greatly in His presence.

*"Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. 12 "Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you. Mt. 5:11-12"*

The suffering endured now will never be in vain. Even if it is the loss of life, it is still a living hope. At His coming there will be both gladness and great joy. Hence there should be gladness now, because by faith we can see into the future and the joy we will feel at His return for all these things that were suffered and by that same faith we should be able to transfer that joy from the future into the present. Peter repeats joy from the previous verse then adds greatly rejoice.

*"chairō... to rejoice, be glad b. in a broader sense, to be well, to thrive; ... "* (Thayer, NT: 5463)

*agalliao* ... The vb. occurs 11 times in the NT, the noun 5 times. These words occur only in the language of the Bible and the Church, and speak of the joy which encompasses the whole person and radiates from the person. ..." (Exegetical Dictionary NT:21)

*agalliao* ... *agalliáce*; contracted *ágan* (n.f.), much, and *hállomai* (242), to leap. To exult, leap for joy, to show one's joy by leaping and skipping denoting excessive or ecstatic joy and delight. Hence in the NT to rejoice, exult. (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:21)

Such great joy should not wait until that day, or it will not do what it has been designed to do. We must make the applications of how great that joy will be and by faith move it into our lives today.

**14 If you are reproached for the name of Christ,**

It always starts the same way. Something that is taught causes anger, bitterness or guilt. The darkness hates the light, but through the words and actions of a Christian, that light has found its way into their soul. Such a soul will recoil from that darkness and lash out at the light.

*And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. 20 For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. 21 But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God." Jn. 3:19-21*

We saw it in Sodom and Gomorrah with Lot, and with all of the prophets. When those in the world do not like the message, their only recourse is to attack the messenger. There is something about reproaching another that soothes the offended conscience of the wicked. That is why John was put to death. The woman did not like that John had said it was an adulterous marriage. It often ends in death, but it begins with reproach.

*"oneidizo,... to reproach, upbraid, revile;... of deserved reproach,... of unjust reproach, to revile:... to upbraid, cast (favors received) in one's teeth..."* (Thayer, p 446; 3679)

*"oneidizo,... l. to throw a reproach upon one, cast in one's teeth, object or impute to one, Lat. objicere, exprobrare, ... . to impute it to him that. . to reproach, upbraid, (Liddell and Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon, NT:3679)*

Because of their relationship with Jesus Christ, because they have submitted to His authority and cannot back down or retract His doctrines no matter how offensive or how much anger or danger they generate, there can be no compromise.

**blended are you,**

Peter is only reminding them of what Jesus said in the beatitudes in the sermon on the Mount. Those who are persecuted for righteousness are considered by God to be worthy of being



blessed. While the world seeks to make the Christian feel that they are small and that what they are teaching is wrong, God wants us to understand that it is exactly the opposite. They are standing with the God of heaven and earth, and they should feel that sense of strength and blessedness that comes from it.

**for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.**

Although there are different views on this phrase, there seems to be no valid reason not to conclude that it is simply referring to the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit was promised to all of Christ's disciples. We are led by the Spirit and walk by the Spirit. The world seeks to portray us as evil doers and those who are in the wrong, but the Holy Spirit has borne witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. Because He is resting upon us we understand all these things through the Word that He revealed to the holy apostles and prophets.

*For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. 15 For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." 16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs — heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together. Rom. 8:14-18*

*If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Gal. 5:25-26*

*how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, 4 by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), 5 which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets: Eph. 3:3-6 6*

What Peter is writing here is from the Spirit of glory and of God. If we accept these things as true, then His influence will completely counteract all of the evil things others have said about us. So it comes down to this. Does our faith in the revelations from the Holy Spirit rise up high enough that we can rejoice over our sufferings, and completely reject the judgment of the world?

**{{(On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified)}}.**

Although these two statements are clear and obviously true, there is some doubt among those who have studied all of the manuscripts as to the validity of them. The Textus Receptus has used them, but so many of the other manuscripts lack them that they are not even in the Nestle Interlinear. We can leave it to these scholars, and in this case it is not critical because they are not revealing something that is not clear and evident and discussed in other Scriptures.

The world has always blasphemed (reviled and reproached) both Jesus and the Spirit who became our other comforter. They reproach us and blaspheme the Spirit who has revealed the very things they are reproaching and reviling us for. Yet while the world is blaspheming, reviling and speaking evil of the Holy Spirit, Christians are glorifying and honoring Him. How could they not blaspheme the Holy Spirit when they are persecuting Christians for the things He wrote? How can Christians not glorify the Holy Spirit when they are being persecuted and refusing to change their convictions based on His writings?

**15 But let none of you suffer as a murderer,**

As he did in Chapter Two, he repeats in different words here. We must be very careful. If our suffering is due to our own sin, there is nothing commendable or blessed about it.

*For this is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully. 20 For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God. 1 Pet. 2:19-21*

Only when suffering wrongfully, because of our conviction that the Scriptures are inspired and must be followed exactly as written is it commendable and are we blessed. So everytime we are punished or suffer, this must be the very first question we ask ourselves. If it is because we are a sinner and have fallen short of God's glory, then we must repent and ask forgiveness, not only of God, but of those we have offended. But if we are suffering because of our convictions about the truth of the Scriptures there is nothing to repent of or to ask forgiveness. So this is a very important question to consider.

When civil government steps in to use its authority, if it is a lawful and legitimate charge of murder or being a thief, and it is proven that they are guilty and are being punished by any civil authority none of the things written above would apply to them.

Those who kill and steal are under the same condemnation by the Holy Spirit as by civil government. There is nothing to rejoice about.

Any deserved affliction is not under consideration here. A murderer who is put to death for his crime is on a totally different level than a Christian who is put to death for living faithful to his Lord till death.

**an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people's matters.**

These are likely not civil charges but individual. Not only should a Christian be concerned about violating civil law, but all interactions on a private level are also to be assessed. Is this trouble we are facing as a result of something evil we have done? Evildoer is a term Peter also used back in 2:12. Since this evil doing also includes meddling in other peoples business, these are often intangible things that the civil government would not involve itself.

So these are personal matters. A "busybody" is one who takes supervision of affairs belonging to others. It is defined:

*alotrio-episkopos*, from *alotrios*, "**belonging to another person**," and *episkopos*, "**an overseer**," translated "busybody" (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:244)

"*alotrio-episkopos*... one who **takes the supervision of affairs pertaining to others** and in no wise to himself, [a meddler in other men's matters] ..." (Thayer, Joseph Henry; P. 29; 244)

There is a fine line between preaching the gospel and helping our brethren and becoming an overseer over someone else's life. It is a fine distinction but an important one. Preaching and making applications of preaching are the duty of all Christians. Seeing a brother sin and rebuking while showing his fault is also a duty. But looking into the lives of others to seek these things is none of our concern. Christians are not detectives looking into the lives of others seeking to find things that there is no reason to be looking for. Each Christian is to work out his/her own salvation with fear and trembling. It is not the right of any Christian to interfere or even seek to find out such things.

Since the term overseer was used of a foreman, manager, superintendent or overseer, this would be the attempt for a Christian to try to micro manage the lives of others. The line between preaching and teaching on the one side and meddling and interfering is often blurred and difficult to see. Peter put it here for us to give careful thought to. We must not be preaching in such a way that we are meddling.

It would be shameful and dishonorable for any child of God to be punished or rebuked for any of these things. Only when the suffering is a result of their trying to do what God asks can they have the blessed feelings which Peter here speaks of.

**16 Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian,**

If after careful consideration and contemplation, there is no taint of sinful behavior in this suffering, then and only then can one be certain they are suffering only as a Christian. Thus God narrows this down to one specific reason. Only those who suffer because they are a Christian, because they have taken a stand for Jesus and are faithfully striving to fulfill his will. If he be suffering for sinful behavior, they should hang their head in shame, but if he be suffering as a faithful child of God, then:

**let him not be ashamed,**

If it is truly persecution for righteousness, then there is no place or reason for shame. Everyone has been taught from youth that when you are punished, you should feel shame and remorse. Yet in this case, there is no place for shame. Nothing disgraceful was done, there is no reason to feel fear, shame or guilt.

*aischuno* from *aischos*, "**shame**," always used in the passive voice, signifies (a) "to have a **feeling of fear or shame** which prevents a person from doing a thing," e. g., Luke 16:3; (b) "the feeling of shame arising from something that has been done," (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:153)

*aischunomai* ... (derivative of *aischune*, 'shame,'... ) to **feel shame or disgrace because of having done something wrong** or something beneath one's dignity or social status - 'to be ashamed, to feel disgraced.' (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT:153).

**but let him glorify God in this matter.**

This takes our suffering to an even higher level. First, we are never to see persecution and hatred for our faith as a strange thing. Second, we are to rejoice and feel happy that we are suffering for Christ. Now we are to give God glory honor praise and adoration for our suffering

as a Christian. This takes our need for faith to an even higher level.

Think of it as if one who is an Olympic contender who becomes angry at his coach for all the hard work, toil and sacrifices he has been enduring for months on end. But, after winning the race and getting the gold medal, he finally understands what a great blessing this coach really was. Now he is ready to honor and praise him. But would he not also feel shame? He had reviled his coach for doing what was best for him.

This is what all Christians need to learn and understand. If we don't appreciate God for His grace and honor at letting us toil and labor here so that our reward might be all the greater there. All Christians should learn to appreciate God here and now. They should trust that all things work together for good to them that love God. God is our friend, he wants to help us, and all that he does is for our good always. Nothing that happens to us in this life because of our faith in him will go unrewarded. No one should revile God when they are in difficult straights.

### 1 Peter 4:17-19

#### **The FIERY TRIAL to Try You**

- 1 — **NEVER** consider it a **STRANGE** thing.
- 2 — **Always** look at it as **NORMAL** 1Tim. 3:12
- 3 — **Change outlook to create REJOICING**  
... Since God counts us worthy to partake in Christ's sufferings, we should feel blessed.
- 4 — We know we are making progress when we can **BE GLAD WITH EXCEEDING JOY**.
- 5 — Those reproached for Christ: **BLESSED**.
- 6 — **BE CAREFUL**: Not all suffering brings blessings. If suffer due to own sin, (murderer, thief, evildoer, busybody) we need to **REPENT** not **REJOICE!** We are **NOT BLESSED!**
- 7 — If **we truly SUFFER** as Christian, we should feel no **SHAME** or need to **REPENT**.
- 8 — Those who are mature: Final step is a sense of blessedness leading to true sincere praise and a heartfelt need **GLORIFY GOD**)

#### **Time has come: JUDGMENT to Begin**

- Will **BEGIN FIRST** at the house of God;  
What will be the **END** of those who do not obey the gospel of God?  
"If the **RIGHTEOUS** one is **scarcely saved**,  
Where will the **UNGODLY** and the **SINNER** appear?"  
**THEREFORE** — **Logical conclusion** that follows these truths about the **WICKED** and the **RIGHTEOUS**.  
let those who **SUFFER** according to the will of God **COMMIT / DEPOSIT** their souls to Him in doing good.  
as to a **FAITHFUL CREATOR**.  
**What is this judgement?**  
A The **FINAL JUDGMENT** on the last day?  
B A **NATIONAL JUDGMENT** — Jerusalem and

C God **TESTING THE FAITH** of His people ||

Because some of the parts of this final section are very difficult to understand, it is important to take a few moments and look over the review. It is evident from Peter's conclusions about suffering (4:2-16) that he wanted the emotional and intellectual makeup of these brethren to be conditioned in preparation for the fiery trial that would most surely come upon them. By using the conjunction "*hoti*," all Greek readers would be prepared to read these words as the the "*substance and contents*" of what was said. It is the "*the reason why it must*" be true and must be diligently fulfilled. This next section is added to the previous words to "*show what ground he gives for his opinion.*"

"*hoti*... a conjunction ... I. **the substance or contents (of a statement)**, *that*; 1. joined to verbs of saying and declaring... II the **reason why anything is said to be or to be done**, *because, since, for that, for*, (a causal conjunction ...)... a. it is **added to a speaker's words to show what ground he gives for his opinion**;... b. *hoti* makes reference to some word or words that precede or immediately follow it..." (Thayer p 458-460; 3754)

Since this next section reveals things we can't validate with any other Scriptures, we only have the context to guide us. The closer we tie this to the previous section, the easier it will be to be confident in our interpretation if we use his previous words as the basis for it. Hence, the conjunction separating these section is pivotal to our understanding.

**17 For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God;**

This comment "*the time has come*," is the basis upon which to build our understanding. It lays

the foundation of the “*substance and contents*” of what Peter just said and in now offered as the “*the reason why it must*” be true and must be diligently fulfilled. The fiery trial is coming, and the time has come. In this case, Peter is using time exactly the same way as the Spirit used it in Ecclesiastes.

**For everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven: 2 a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; 3 A time to kill, And a time to heal; A time to break down, And a time to build up; 4 A time to weep, And a time to laugh; A time to mourn, And a time to dance; ... 8 A time to love, And a time to hate; A time of war, And a time of peace. Eccl. 3:1-4, 8**

The “*season*” and “*time*” for the fiery trial was upon them. It was the “*the proper time or season for this action.*” It is the “*point of time consisting of occasions for*” this “*particular event.*”

*kairos*... III. of Time, the right point of time, **the proper time or season of action**, the exact or critical time, Lat. *opportunitas*, ... to be in season, ... 2. adverbial usages, ... **in season, at the right time, opportune**, ... IV. advantage, profit, fruit, ... (Liddell and Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon. NT:2540)

*kairos* ... **points of time consisting of occasions for particular events - 'time, occasion.'** ... 'and **when the time of the harvest comes**, I will say to the reapers' Matt 13:30. ... 'and **when the time drew near for God to keep his promise**' Acts 7:17. ... '**the time has come for the Son of Man to be handed over**' Matt 26:45. (Lou & Nida Greek-English Lexicon NT:2540)

It is right on the verge of beginning. God would soon “*initiate an action, process, or state of being*” for this fiery trial. It would soon “*begin*” and “*commence.*”

*archomai* ... to **initiate an action, process, or state of being - 'to begin, to commence, beginning.'** ... 'from that time Jesus began to preach (his message)' Matt 4:17. 'when Jesus began, he was about thirty years old' Luke 3:23. (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT:756)

The dilemma is set forth here. Although he has been speaking of the preparations of the fiery trial, and this is why he has proclaimed the need for their preparation, he does not repeat “*fiery trial*,” but instead substitutes “*judgment.*” Since everything Peter just said is the basis, whatever this judgment is referring to, it can’t be taken out of the context of the fiery trial that is coming upon them.

This term for “*judgment*” is not used of the process of judgment, but the verdict. It might be a verdict of “*condemnation of wrong*,” but it could also be “*judgment as an assessment.*”

*krima*... 1. **a decree... judgments;**... 2. *judgment* i. e. **condemnation of wrong, the decision (whether severe or mild) which one passes on the faults of others...** In a forensic sense, the **sentence of a judge... of the punishment to which one is sentenced...** where **the justice of God in punishing** is to be shown, *krima* denotes **condemnatory sentence, penal judgment, sentence...** 3. **a matter to be judicially decided, a lawsuit, a case in court...** (Thayer, p. 360; 2917)

*krima* ... appears 27 times in the NT, of which 10 occurrences are in the Pauline letters. It **commonly denotes the result of an action: the judge's verdict.** However, it can also take on the meanings of *krisis*: **the action of judging, dividing, or accusing.** ... Jesus' warnings against the scribes threaten them, on the basis of their misconduct in their social obligations, **with "a greater condemnation"** (Mark 12:40)... **Jesus' statement on judging** (Matt 7:1...) is based on the concise statement that **"with what judgment you judge, you will also be judged."** ... It refers to **divine condemnation** in Rom 2:2,3 (Exegetical Dictionary NT:2917)

*krima* ... denotes (a) **"the sentence pronounced, a verdict, a condemnation, the decision resulting from an investigation,"** e. g., Mark 12:40; Luke 23:40; 1 Tim 3:6; Jude 4; (b) **"the process of judgment leading to a decision,"** 1 Peter 4:17 ("judgment"), where *krisis* (see No. 3, below) might be expected. In Luke 24:20, "to be condemned" translates the phrase *eis krima*, "unto condemnation" (i. e., unto the pronouncement of the sentence of "condemnation"). For the rendering "judgment," see, e. g., Rom 11:33; 1 Cor 11:34; Gal 5:10; James 3:1. (Vine's Expository Dictionary NT:2917)

Because there is such a diversity of meaning to this word, it is entirely possible that this could be referring to the final judgment. But it could also be a national judgment, or a judgment in the sense of a decision God has made as a decree. It certainly was God’s decree that this fiery trial begin.

*Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His*

**judgments** and His ways past finding out! Rom 11:33

Since this is clearly in the context of God's allowing the judgment of the world upon Christians that would bring about severe persecution and even death to some, we must be careful to keep it in that context. Peter has revealed that the judgment of the world is condemnation and reviling, while the judgment of the Holy Spirit is that we have glory and honor.

**at the house of God;**

This is not the first time Peter has referred to these Christians as being a part of God's house. They were "*living stones being built up a spiritual house.*"

*Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, 5 **you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ** 1Pet. 2:4-5*

Paul identified the "house of God" as the church of the living God.

*These things I write to you, though I hope to come to you shortly; 15 but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in **the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.** 1Tim. 3:14-16*

So now we have all the pieces that must somehow be put together exactly what the Holy Spirit has revealed through Peter. The fiery trial is coming as the result of a judgment. It was time for it to begin with the house of God, the church. But what is this judgment? It could be referring to the judgment of the final day, but there are several things that lead us away from it. First, if it truly was time for the judgment of the final day to begin, it is nearing 2000 years ago. Although we could consider the time as a figure, that would just add another layer of difficulty. Perhaps the strongest reason why we need to be careful to jump to the final day of judgement is it would be the only place in the NT where the final judgment begins at the house of God, then moves to the ungodly. This certainly could be the case, but since this is a complicated passage, it is never wise to base a doctrine on it alone (Duet. 29:29).

Another possibility is that this is the judgment on the house of Israel which had been the house of God long before Jesus died on the cross. Guilt for His death added to all their other sins would bring the final judgment of God upon them. Because of their close tie to Israel in many ways, the Gentiles would not bother to make the distinction.

*For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God which are in Judea in Christ Jesus. For you also suffered the same things from your own countrymen, just as they did from the Judeans, 15 who killed both the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they do not please God and are contrary to all men, 16 forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved, so as always to fill up the measure of their sins; but wrath has come upon them to the uttermost. 1Th. 2:14-16*

This would fit well with the book of Hebrews which was written at nearly the same time. The Holy Spirit warned them that they needed endurance. God was sending judgment upon Israel through Rome, just as He had in the days of Habakkuk through Babylon. They were therefore in Habakkuk's shoes and needed to have the same faith God had told him he needed.

*For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise: 37 "For yet a little while, And **He who is coming will come and will not tarry.** 38 Now the just shall live by faith; But **if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him.**" 39 But we are **not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.** Heb. 10:36-39*

Even with the benefit of 20/20 hindsight, it is not easy to choose between these three possibilities. Yet any one of them would be the proper motivation for what Peter has just finished saying. The time is come, it is the season, the time has ripened, it is now upon them. Judgment would soon begin at the house of God as the fiery trial dawned upon them.

**and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?**

Whether it be the final judgment, a national judgement, or an individual judgment, if God will allow His own people to be treated in such a fashion for His own purposes, what will He do with the ungodly? Think of Jesus as one example. If God allowed all the terrible things that befell Him to fulfill His purpose and judgement, what will God do with those who crucified Him? Think of His people as another example. If God allowed such terrible and horrible things to happen to

His own elect and precious people, whom He truly loves as beloved children, what will He do with those who never obeyed the gospel? They will not go unpunished. Paul spoke in a similar way to the Romans as He compared vessels of wrath with vessels of mercy.

*What if God, wanting to show His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, 23 and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had prepared beforehand for glory, 24 even us whom He called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles? Rom. 9:22-24*

If God allowed Israel to be so mistreated by Egypt and Pharaoh, what will be the end for Egypt and Pharaoh? We already know the answer to that one. God also judged Egypt, allowing his entire army to drown in the Red Sea, but for them that was not the end. After this first and terrible judgment would come one much worse and terrible.

### **18 Now "If the righteous one is scarcely saved,**

As the quotations reveal, this is a statement found in the Old Testament that is being used now to prove Peter's point more fully. It is found in Proverbs 11:31 and like many prophecies is adjusted by the Holy Spirit to fit the fulfillment.

*If the righteous will be **recompensed** on the earth, How much more the ungodly and the sinner. NKJV*

*If the righteous will be **rewarded** in the earth, How much more the wicked and the sinner! NASU*  
*If the righteous is **repaid** on earth, how much more the wicked and the sinner! ESV*

*If the righteous **receive their due** on earth, how much more the ungodly and the sinner! NIV*

Peter's use of it here is very similar to some of the conclusions in Ecclesiastes. Righteous servants of the Lord, living in a sin-cursed creation will often be caught up in the terrible events placed here due to sin. They are recompensed, rewarded and repaid on the earth. Even though they are not among those who deserve such conduct, God still allows it to occur. Paul revealed that this did not change when Jesus died on the cross. The righteous are still caught up in the time and chance and terrible things that can happen in this sin cursed world.

*For I consider that **the sufferings of this present time** are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. 19 For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. 20 For **the creation was subjected to futility**, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; 21 because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. 22 For we know that **the whole creation groans and labors** with birth pangs together until now. 23 Not only that, but **we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. Rom. 8:18-24***

The point is clear, if the righteous, who do not deserve such things because they are forgiven are still immersed in them, what of those who truly deserve them?

But how do we move from that to what Peter said?

*"If the righteous one is scarcely saved, Where will the ungodly and the sinner appear?" KJV / ASV and if it is with difficulty that the righteous is saved, what will become of the godless man and the sinner? NASU*

It all hinges on the word "scarcely," which is used of things that are very difficult to accomplish and can hardly be found to have been.

*"molis... a. **With difficulty, hardly...** b. **Not easily**, i.e. *scarcely, very rarely...*" (Thayer, NT: 3433)*

*molis ... b: pertaining to that which **can be accomplished only with difficulty** - 'with difficulty.' ...*

*Even with these words, they could only with difficulty keep the crowds from offering a sacrifice to them' Acts 14:18. (Lou & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon NT:3433)*

*molis, mogis ... "**Hardly**," "**with difficulty**," In literature *molis* and *mogis* are interchangeable ...*

*There is no Heb. equivalent. It is used in the LXX only in Proverbs ... in the sense of "hardly." ... The word has the same meaning in the NT ("hardly" in Luke 9:39; Rom 5:7; 1 Peter 4:18 quoting Prov 11:31; "with difficulty" in Acts 14:18; 27:7,8,16). (Kittel, TDWNT; NT:3433)*

While some are uncomfortable with this rendering, thinking it reflects upon and minimizes God's grace, Peter is not looking at it from the perspective of God's grace, but of our response to that grace. Throughout the entire OT period, the righteous were scarcely saved. Of the 600,000 who left Egypt, only two entered the promised land and even the Hebrew writer used this to prove the same thing Peter is affirming here.

*Therefore I was angry with that generation, And said, 'They always go astray in their heart, And they*

have not known My ways.' 11 So I swore in My wrath, 'They shall not enter My rest.'" 12 Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; 13 but exhort one another daily, while it is called "Today," lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. Heb. 3:10-13

For who, having heard, rebelled? Indeed, was it not all who came out of Egypt, led by Moses? 17 Now with whom was He angry forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose corpses fell in the wilderness? 18 And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey? 19 So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief. 1 Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it. 2 For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it. Heb. 3:16-19, 4:1-2

Perhaps this is the real reason behind the righteous having to deal with the same terrible outcomes of the curse as the wicked. It is only with the greatest of difficulty that someone can hold fast to their righteousness their entire life. All too often God's needs these setbacks to get His people back to where they belong.

Those who are still uncomfortable with the idea that the righteous are scarcely saved need only listen to Jesus.

*"Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. 14 Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and **there are few who find it.** Mt. 7:13-14*

*So the last will be first, and the first last. For **many are called, but few chosen.**" Mt. 20:16*

*Then one said to Him, "**Lord, are there few who are saved?**" And He said to them, 24 "**Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able.** Lk. 13:23-25*

We could soften this to only refer to the fiery trial, and that may be all the Spirit is inferring here. Because these horrible days will bring such severe hardships that even the righteous will have a difficult time holding to their integrity and being saved. Life or righteousness was their choice and God allowed them to be in that position.

**where will the ungodly and the sinner appear?"**

It seems evident that this passage is designed to create awe, fear and reverence. Certainly such tribulations do not always place God in a good light for those who have a weak faith. If the righteous man can scarcely hold to his righteousness and receives salvation because of the difficulties and trials of life, how will the unrighteous sinners appear? Upon which side do we wish to stand? An ungodly person is one who has no concern for God, for His feelings or for His ways. A sinner is one whose activities due to such an ungodly attitude will lead them to miss the mark of God's standards, will live as one who has no regard for moral law. Where will these people be in such a situation. This really is the choice of all Christians. They can remain scarcely saved and persevere through all the difficulties and trials, or they can become ungodly and a sinner. But if they are wise they must consider the implications of such a move.

**19 Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God**

Like "*hoti*" in verse 17, this too is a conjunction that expresses consequence or result. So because of what Peter said in 12-16, 17-18 follows, and because of what was said in 17-18, 19 follows as a result.

*'hoste ... a consecutive conjunction, i. e. expressing consequence or result,...1. so that,... it is also used of a designed result, so as to i.q. in order to, for to... 2. so then, therefore, wherefore...'*

(Thayer, NT: 5620).

The fiery trial is coming and it is "*according to the will of God.*" They had two choices, they could stand before God doing all that Peter said they ought to do, or they can stand before God with the ungodly and sinners. That is the only choice since God is in complete control, and if it be His will be that Christians suffer, then they will suffer. Each Christian must pass through this time in full and complete trust in God. Maybe we cannot see and understand it all, maybe it makes no sense at all, but the alternatives are awesome and terrible. If God has willed this to occur then as His child, we most certainly do not want to become His enemy through rebellion. Yet these were not the only ones. There would be more down through the centuries. The only way we can be absolutely certain that our suffering is according to the will of God is to assess



the reasons for our persecution. If it is for righteousness sake, then it is according to the will of God.

**commit their souls to Him in doing good,**

Since this is the same context and same word as that which Jesus uttered on the cross, it is easy to understand why Peter would use it here. After everything was finished, Jesus entrusted his soul to God:

*And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, "Father, 'into Your hands I **commit** My spirit.'" Having said this, He breathed His last. Lk. 23:46*

*Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God **commit** their souls to Him in doing good, as to a faithful Creator. 1Pet. 4:19*

This is the true nature of what Christians are called upon to do. We deposit our souls into His hands. This is a term that had the financial element of a deposit. Just as God entrusted a soul into our body for us to use as a steward, so in these circumstances, we place that same soul back into God's hands.

*paratithemi* lit., "to put near" (*para*, "near"), in the Middle Voice, denotes **"to place with someone, entrust, commit."** In the sense of commending, it is said (a) of **the Lord Jesus in "commending" His spirit into the Father's hands, Luke 23:46;** (b) of **"commending" disciples to God, Acts 14:23;** (Vine's Expository Dictionary; NT:3908)

*paratithemi* ... The verb has a local sense "to set alongside," "before," also transferred e.g., "to place something before someone in elucidation," "to present," ... b. Very important is ... **"to give someone something in trust," "to entrust,"** e.g., ... mean **"deposit,"** i.e., **"goods placed in trust"** or "agreement in respect of entrusted goods," "a trust agreement," e.g., ... **"to leave a deposit with someone,"** In the ancient Gk. and Jewish sphere, as well as the ancient Roman, one finds **the legal device whereby an object can be entrusted to another's keeping for a specific period. This object was to be kept free, unused and undamaged until restoration.** The trustworthiness of the trustee was thus most important. ... **The Septuagint a. *paratithemi* occurs 42 times,** ... b. As a term in commercial law "to give money to someone for safe-keeping," we find the middle at Lv. 5:23 ; Tob 1:14; 4:1,20. The responsibility of the trustee for the money handed to him is regulated in Ex 22:7-13 .... In the NT, **The verb occurs 19 times, mostly in the literal sense, "to lay" food before someone,** Mark 6:41 and par., also ***paretheken parabolon* (cast down a parable)** ... Matt 13:24,31, and cf. "to expound," "to allege," of teaching, Acts 17:3. **Jesus in a saying from Ps 31:4-5 ... which was an evening prayer of pious Jews, commends His spirit into the hands of the Father, Luke 23:46, cf. Acts 7:59. The persecuted in their sufferings should entrust their lives to the faithful Creator, 1 Peter 4:19. ..."** (Kittel, TDWNT; NT:3908)

Everyone has plans for their lives. Things they hope and dream they will do. Yet one by one those plans are shaped and molded by the Scriptures and we willingly sacrifice them, just like the man who found the treasure in the field, we too are willing to sell all that we have. When persecution arises, other plans are also disrupted. Yet by continuing to trust the Lord with all our heart, we place our souls in His hands Just as Jesus did.

This is exactly what Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego did as they faced the consequences of keeping God's command. They told the King of their absolute decision to entrust their lives into God's hands.

*"O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. 17 If that is the case, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king. 18 But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up." Dan. 3:16-18*

Multitudes, before and after this event have found themselves in the same position.

*And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. 39 He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it. Mt. 10:38-39*

*Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. 25 For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. 26 For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? Mt. 16:24-26*

This is the last time Peter will use the term "doing good" in his letter. He started back in 2:11 when speaking of abstaining from fleshly lusts and instead having their conduct honorable among the Gentiles, doing good works.

having **your conduct honorable among the Gentiles**, that when they **speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works (*kalon ergon*)** which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation. 1Pet. 2:12

Then, he spoke of doing good just as he does here. This is doing good as God defines it. Being faithful to Him, serving him and doing good to those around them for Him.

*agathopoieo*, do good (verb – NT 15), *agathopoiia*, (doing good (noun NT:16), *agathopoiios*, good, upright (adjective NT:17) .... 1. The verb is attested in the NT in Luke 6:9,33 (bis), 35; 1 Peter 2:15,20; 3:6,17; 3 John 11, the noun in 1 Peter 4:19, and the adjective in 1 Peter 2:14. *agathopoieo* is used synonymously with *agathon poieo* (Mark 3:4; Matt 19:16; Eph 6:8), *kalos poieo* (Matt 12:12; Luke 6:27, cf. vv. 33,35), and *ergazomai* to *agathon* (Gal 6:10; Rom 2:10; Eph 4:28) and designates, as an ethical summation, the behavior appropriate to faith. (Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament NT 16)

For **this is the will of God, that by doing good** you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men — 1Pet. 2:15

For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But **when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God.** 1Peter 2:20

For it is better, **if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.** 1Pet 3:17

We must trust God and do the good works He prepared beforehand for us to walk in.

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. Eph. 2:10

### **as to a faithful Creator.**

It all comes down to this. God is the Creator of the heavens and earth and all that is within them. He has been faithful to His creation since the very beginning. He has never failed or forsaken anyone and has always done exactly what He said.

In every other thing where God has been tested, He has always always gone far above what man could expect. It is no different here.

