

June 5th, 2026

Title: **God's Will 1 Peter 4**

1 Peter 4:1-6

Psalm 119:105 (ESV)

Your word is a lamp to my feet and light to my path.

(Thank you for the Word)

Church Scripture Verse for today:

1 Peter 4:1-6 (NLT)

¹ So then, since Christ suffered physical pain, you must arm yourselves with the same attitude he had, and be ready to suffer, too. For if you have suffered physically for Christ, you have finished with sin. ² You won't spend the rest of your lives chasing your own desires, but you will be anxious to do the will of God. ³ You have had enough in the past of the evil things that godless people enjoy—their immorality and lust, their feasting and drunkenness and wild parties, and their terrible worship of idols. ⁴ Of course, your former friends are surprised when you no longer plunge into the flood of wild and destructive things they do. So they slander you. ⁵ But remember that they will have to face God, who stands ready to judge everyone, both the living and the dead. ⁶ That is why the Good News was preached to those who are now dead—so although they were destined to die like all people, they now live forever with God in the Spirit.

How do you spend your time wisely? The average American spends an average of 5 hours per day on their phone. Have you ever said, "**I am just going to check my text,**" and then, three hours later, wondered how you spent that much time? A lot of people try to stop using their phones or ***fast from them, but then end up back where they started.*** But what if there is something that can help you to use your time wisely?

So, let's dig into God's Word. We have been on 1 Peter for the past month, and now we are in 1 Peter chapter 4. ***One of the main themes in 1 Peter is***

suffering. Now the Bible talks about suffering all throughout it, but in **1 Peter, it appears 17 times** in just 5 chapters. In fact, the word “**suffering**” appears in Peter more than in any other book in the Bible.

Short Summary of 1 Peter 4

- How should Christians respond when faced with persecution?
- Expect God’s purpose for your life to include suffering.
- Choose God’s will instead of yourself.
- God uses suffering to refine your faith.

We will be honing in on “**Choose God’s will instead of yourself**” today. Now, in the middle of 1 Peter chapter 4, something strange appears. It’s a bit weird, and it can be confusing. So, what I will be doing today is tackling this tough scripture first, then going back to the front of chapter 4 and finishing up to verse 6.

1 Peter 4:6 (NLT)

That is why the Good News was **preached to those who are now dead** – so although they were destined to die like all people, they now live forever with God in the Spirit.

Wow! What in the world does that mean? To understand 1 Peter 4:6, we have to look back at 1 Peter 3:18-20.

1 Peter 3:18-20 (NLT)

¹⁸Christ suffered for our sins once for all time. **[Jesus died on the cross for our sins.]** He never sinned, but he died for sinners to bring you safely home to God **[Before heaven, there is a place called paradise]**. He suffered physical death, but he was **raised to life in the Spirit.** ¹⁹So **he went and preached to the spirits in prison**— ²⁰those who **disobeyed God long ago** when God waited patiently **while Noah was building his boat**. Only eight people **[Noah, his wife, his three sons, and their daughter in alws]** were saved from drowning in that terrible flood.

- ***Raised to life in the Spirit - Jesus preached to the spirits in prison - disobeyed God long ago while Noah was building his boat.***

“Raised to life in the Spirit”: Jesus's last words before His death were, **“Jesus called out with a loud voice, “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.” When he had said this, he breathed his last” (Luke 23:46)**. In other words, after Jesus died, His Spirit departed his body. The question is, where did Jesus’ Spirit go? So hold onto that thought.

“Disobeyed God long ago while Noah was building his boat”: So what were they disobeying while Noah was building his boat? Remember, God commanded ***Noah to build a massive ship because there is going to be a great flood*** that will cover the entire earth. So who are the people who disobeyed God long ago?

Genesis 6:11-12 (NLT)

¹¹ Now God saw that the earth had become corrupt and was filled with violence. ¹² God observed all this corruption in the world, **for everyone on earth was corrupt.** (*Meaning that their hearts were rebelling against God*)

Corrupt: a moral decay and departure from God's intended order. Remember, the Bible tells us that ***Noah was a righteous man, a blameless man, and walked in close fellowship with God.*** And since the world was filled with evil, God tells Noah to **“bring a pair of every kind of animal-male and female-into your 450-foot-long boat and keep them alive during the flood.”** So the question is, where did all those people with evil hearts go?

Hades (Greek) / **Sheol** (Hebrew) [*Sometimes Sheol is used as a place of grave on the ground, but in this context, it is used as the “Realm of the Dead.”*]
[Realm of the Dead]

TORMENT

Chasm

PARADISE

(Abraham’s Side)

If you're in a place of Torment, then you cannot cross into Paradise, and vice versa. Once you die, you are in one or the other. In death, there are no second chances.

In 2 Peter 2:5, Peter mentions Noah as **“a preacher of righteousness.”** So during the time Noah was building the ark, ***Noah was making a public***

proclamation for the people to repent and change their ways. Because the people were filled with moral decay and violence.

When we think about the flood, we might think that God is angry and just wants to punish people. This is the beautiful grace of God, that He did not see that they were evil and then destroyed the earth with the flood. Our God is such a gracious God, even though we deserve the wrath of God, He gives His people plenty of time to repent and change their ways.

God, through Noah, gave people time to change. We know that this ark took about 120 years to build (Genesis 6:3), so we can conclude that Noah was sharing the good news for over a hundred years. The **ungodly men of Noah's day had a chance to repent and be saved**, but they rejected the good news. Listen, God does not force anyone to go to heaven. If you do not want to be with God, why would God want you in heaven?

Now, looking at the graph, where did all the people go in Noah's time who rejected the "righteous news from God?" **They were in the place called "Torment."**

In Luke 16 you have a story of a certain rich man who lived in luxury, and while the poor man at his gate, named **Lazarus**, who was covered with sores and blisters, longed to eat the scraps of food from the rich man's table. Well, **they both died and went to Hades or Sheol.**

Luke 16:23-26 (NLT)

²³ and he went to the **place of the dead**. There, **in torment (The Rich Man)**, he saw Abraham **(A righteous man, who is in paradise. Abraham is also a rich man)** in the far distance with **Lazarus at his side**. ²⁴ "The rich man shouted, 'Father Abraham, have some pity! Send Lazarus over here to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue. I am in anguish in these flames **(Torment)**.' ²⁵ "But Abraham said to him, 'Son, remember that during your lifetime you had everything you wanted, and Lazarus had nothing. So now he is here being comforted **(Paradise)**, and you are in anguish. ²⁶ And

besides, there is a **great chasm separating us**. No one can cross over to you from here, and no one can cross over to us from there.'

[Go back to the graph: Torment - Chasm - Paradise]

Now remember this is before Jesus' ascension into heaven. So, in the realm of the dead (Hades, Sheol), you have a place of **torment (all those who reject God)**, and you have the **paradise** or **Abraham's side**. Pastor Joe, how do you know that there is a paradise side in Hades?

Now, in the story in Luke 23, you have two thieves who were crucified with Jesus. One thief mocked Jesus, so he died, **he went to the torment side**, but the other thief repented before God. And this is what happened.

Luke 23:42-43 (NLT)

⁴² Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom."

⁴³ And Jesus replied, "I assure you, today **you will be with me in paradise.**"

[Go back to the graph: Torment - Chasm - Paradise]

So, right before Jesus breathed His last, He said, **"Father, into your hands I commit my spirit."** (Luke 23:46). Jesus Spirit went into paradise. And based upon Jesus' statement with the thief, Jesus and the thief went to paradise. Who are the people who are already there? **People like Noah and his family, as well as those who believed in Yahweh (God), such as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, were all in paradise.** So now you have Jesus' spirit going into paradise after He died, as said in 1 Peter 3:19, to the people in torment.

1 Peter 3:19 (ESV)

in which he went and **proclaimed** to the **spirits in prison**,

So you have now **Jesus making a proclamation or an announcement of His victory over death and evil to all those in Sheol or Hades, while in paradise.** Jesus is declaring that He has conquered death. And then, three days later, He appears to His disciples and over 500 people who witnessed His resurrection. Jesus conquered death, and this victory now makes sense.

1 Corinthians 15:55-57 (NLT)

⁵⁵ O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?"⁵⁶ For sin is the sting that results in death, and the law gives sin its power. ⁵⁷ But thank God! **He gives us victory over sin and death** through our Lord Jesus Christ.

This is the good news. ***As believers, we have a second chance in life.***

Lazarus was in a place of comfort, peace, joy, and gladness with no more tears and no more pain. When Jesus comes back again, we will be in eternal peace.

Now that you have a good understanding of this Scripture verse 6, we can move to 1 Peter 4:1-5. Let's begin!

1 Peter 4:1 Amplified Bible

Therefore, since Christ suffered in the flesh [and died for us], **arm yourselves** [like warriors] with the same purpose [being willing to suffer for doing what is right and pleasing God], because whoever has suffered in the flesh [being like-minded with Christ] **is done with** [intentional] **sin** [having stopped pleasing the world],

"Is done with sin": Other versions will say, **"has ceased from sin,"** or **"you have finished with sin."** In other words, "whoever suffers in the body is done with sin." So, let's break this down.

You are born again, and as a believer, when you die, you will be in heaven. But until that time comes, Peter tells us that since Christ suffered on the cross for our sins, we need to **"arm ourselves."** What does that mean to "arm yourselves"?

"Arm yourselves": a military phrase. Picture this: a soldier is putting on his gear and getting ready to go to battle. However, our preparation is to take place not outwardly, but inwardly. ***Arm yourselves with the same mind is another way to put it.*** Some will say, **"Get mentally prepared for the fight."** The idea is for believers to prepare to battle in the mind first, before entering any physical battle.

So, what kind of mind do we need?

We need a militant attitude towards sin. We need an aggressive stand toward sin. We can not get comfortable with sin. ***If you don't make time to battle sin, sin will take time away from your life.*** We should resist sin not only because of what it does to us, ***but we should hate sin and resist it because of what it did to Him - it killed Jesus on the cross.*** Jesus died on the cross for our sins. Remember, sin is something that naturally comes out of you, like jealousy, hate, and lust. No one has to teach you these things; it just comes out naturally. That is sin!

I need to arm myself with the same mind that Jesus had. What mind did Jesus have when He came here on earth? When Jesus came to earth, He had a militant attitude toward sin as he approached the cross.

At the cross:

- He came to deal with our sin
- He came to die on the cross for our sins
- Jesus went to the cross to deal with our sin (That's Good Friday)

So what is the ultimate aim and goal when it comes to sin? It is to stop doing it. It's to cease from it. That is our ultimate goal. Now we can't completely eradicate all of our sin here on earth because we still live in our flesh. However, if there is ever a battle that we need to fight, it's our sin.

"You need to win more than you lose."

James says we should ***"resist the devil."*** Jesus said to His disciples, ***"Pray that you will not enter into temptation."*** This is all military language. Fight it, resist it, and fight the good fight. This is how we arm ourselves mentally.

Did you know that God sometimes allows you to go through suffering to help you fight against sin? Why? Because suffering gets your attention like nothing else. When suffering gets your attention, ***it cuts away things that are worthless, superficial, and entertaining.*** Suddenly, because of suffering, all those pleasures don't mean that much to you.

It's like "eating an apple," but your teeth hurt. So the apple or other hard foods become painful to chew. **You are focused on figuring out how you can recover from your toothache.** You're not focused on the apple, but you're driven to heal your teeth.

1 Peter 4:3-5 (NLT)

³You have **had enough in the past** of the evil things that godless people enjoy—their immorality and lust, their feasting and drunkenness and wild parties, and their terrible worship of idols. ⁴Of course, your former friends are surprised when you no longer plunge into the flood of wild and destructive things they do. **So they slander you.** ⁵But remember that they will have to face God, who stands ready to judge everyone, both the living and **the dead.**

The "**dead**" simply refers to Christians to whom "the gospel was preached" when they were alive **but who have since died.** So both the living and those who have died in the past will have to face God on judgment day.

In 1 Peter 4:1, other versions will say: *living in sensuality, passions, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and lawless idolatry.* This list has not changed for over 2,000 years, since Peter wrote it. **The condition of the human heart has not changed for thousands of years.** This is why we all need Jesus.

You spent your time living like the world. You are now a follower of Jesus Christ; enough is enough. **And when you leave that lifestyle and your old friends, they are going to slander you and speak evil of you.** So, Peter is telling us, "**This was your past life; now move on.**"

Now, you have to remember that in the ancient world, many of those things on the list took **place at pagan temples** that also had meeting rooms, restaurants, and houses of prostitution, all together.

- Meeting room - Community center
- Restaurant - House of prostitution

And when you go there, ***you would partake of everything that goes there.*** A little bit of idolatry, prostitution, and you hang out with your friends, drinking, eating, and just partying.

Today, if you go to some Asian countries, you can visit a Buddhist temple, light a candle, bow, and offer prayers, and right next to some of the temples, you have restaurants and seating areas for gatherings. The only part you don't have is prostitutes.

So, when you become a Christian and you don't join them, the Bible says they will **slander and speak evil of you**. Your old friends will say, **"Hey man! You don't want to come over with us to the temple of Aphrodite, which is close to the city of Corinth. It's famous for its one thousand sacred prostitutes. Come on, man! You'll have some fun! Come join us!"**

You're like, **"Look! I am not condemning you, and it has nothing to do with you, but it has everything to do with me. This Jesus has changed me from the inside out. All that stuff was my past; I am a new creation in Christ now."** Listen, my friends, no matter what others say, ***the unbelievers do not have the last say.*** His Words to our hearts should be the lasting words we take to heaven.

Pastor Joe, there are many powerful testimonies of alcoholics, drug dealers, and criminals who have become followers of Christ. This is all great and powerful. But Pastor Joseph, ***I don't fall into any of those categories. I grew up in church, and I never had dramatic testimonies like what I hear.*** Listen, the most powerful testimony is people like you. Because all throughout your life, ***God has kept you and covered you.*** God keeping you is the best testimony. So don't change that.

Now, I intentionally skipped verse 2 for a reason. We want to address the question: ***How do you spend your time wisely?*** So, let's begin.

1 Peter 4:1-2 (NLT)

¹ So then, since Christ suffered physical pain, you must arm yourselves with the same attitude he had, and be ready to suffer, too. For if you have

suffered physically for Christ, you have finished with sin. ²You won't **spend the rest of your lives chasing your own desires**, but you will be anxious to do the **will of God**.

In other words, ***don't waste your time but make the most of your time doing the will of God***. If there is a question I have been asked by many young people, it is "**What is the will of God for me?**" What does the Bible tell us?

Romans 12:1-2 (NLT)

¹ And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him. ² Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person **by changing the way you think (The Renewal of your mind)**. Then you **will learn to know God's will for you**, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

Other versions will say, "**what is good and acceptable and perfect,**" or "**prove what that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.**"

It is interesting that knowing God's will begins with "**changing the way you think.**" So, discerning the will of God means changing the way you think. **So, how you "change the way you think" will be good, acceptable, and pleasing to God.** In other words, ***if we are renewing our minds to the likeness of Christ, then this will be good, acceptable, and the perfect will of God.***

That is why the Bible tells us that "My sheep will hear my voice." **One of the ways you can know the will of God or hear God's voice is if you are "renewing our minds to the likeness of Christ."**

So if I want to know God's will, it's my job as a believer to change the way I think. Then you will be able to test and approve God's will. This will be a pleasing and "**perfect will of God.**"

Perfect will of God: It's ideal to hit the bullseye, but if you don't hit the bullseye, it's ok to hit the parameters of his good and pleasing will because

your heart is right with God. ***Sure, there is an idea of the perfect will of God,*** but the outside parameter, the “bullseye,” is his good and pleasing will. Listen, ***your goal is to aim for the perfect will of God.*** As long as you don’t quit trying, God is pleased, and the renewing of your mind is good and acceptable.

Listen, God is sovereign enough to direct you into His good, sovereign, perfect will. ***Don’t feel that you are not in God’s perfect will. Listen, you cannot fail when you head towards God’s goodness. Look, our lives will be on a zig-zag line.*** What I love about our God is that He is constantly redirecting our lives to His good and pleasing will. Let God’s will be your lifelong pursuit.

If you want a satisfying, fulfilling, and purposeful life, then make sure to put God’s will as your high priority. ***Did you know that finding the will of God is the most important and exciting thing in your life? The most exciting and important thing in your life is discovering what God wants from you.*** Discover it and make it your pursuit, and wherever you are and whatever you do, your life will be more purposeful and meaningful. And it will happen supernaturally and naturally. You don’t have to force it.

There was a time I wanted to find out what God’s will is for me, and I randomly selected a Scripture verse, and it said, ***“So Judas threw the money into the temple and left. Then he went away and hanged himself.”*** There was another time in which I said to God, ***“God, if I am able to get to that front parking space, knowing that it will be crowded, then I will know that you want me to buy that. Well, God answered! After the tenth time of driving around, I found the front parking space.”***

Listen, the will of God is never a burden, but a blessing.

Matthew 11:28-30 (NIV)

²⁸ “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

²⁹ Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in

heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

Jesus said, “**We obey His commandments and His commandments are not burdensome.**” The will of God actually makes your life light and fulfilling. No burden of the will of God is a heavy weight.

How do you spend your time wisely?

Pursue after the Will of God in the place you are in and in the season of life you are in.