

# 1 Peter 4:1-6; 5:10 and Victory Over Sin

by Karl Kemp; August, 2014

All quotations from the Bible were taken from the New American Standard Bible, 1995 edition, unless I mention otherwise. I frequently make comments in the middle of quotations using brackets [ ] or [[ ]] to make them more obvious. cf., e.g., means compare, for example

**Therefore** [[This word demonstrates the strong connection between what the apostle Peter just said in 3:18-22 and what he will go on to say here in 4:1-6. I discussed 1 Pet. 3:18-22 at the end of my paper "More on God's Salvation Plans for the Nations" that is on my internet site (Google to Karl Kemp Teaching).]], **since Christ has suffered [has suffered death]** [[Significantly, as the margin of the NASB rightly shows, the Greek verb "pascho," as it is used here (and often), means "suffered death." Also see Luke 22:15; 24:46 ("and He said to them, 'Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer [suffer death] and rise again from the dead the third day [He had to die before He could rise again]....' "); Acts 1:3 ("to these [the apostles] He also presented Himself alive after His suffering [suffering death; He had to die before He could present Himself alive to the apostles over a period of forty days]...."); 17:3 ("explaining and giving evidence that the Christ had to suffer [suffer death] and rise again from the dead...."); Heb. 13:12 ("Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, suffered [suffered death on the cross] outside the gate [outside the gate of the city of Jerusalem (not that Jerusalem just had one gate)]." Hebrews 13:12 is one of a large number of passages that show that the holiness of believers is based on the atoning death (and subsequent resurrection) of the Lamb of God. I'll say more on this super-important point as we continue.)); and 1 Pet. 4:1b (the use of "pascho" in the second half of this verse). It is very important for us to understand how Peter used the Greek verb "pascho" here in 4:1, especially in 4:1b, as we'll see.]] **in the flesh** [I would translate "**to the (realm of the) flesh,**" or the equivalent], **arm yourselves with the same purpose, because he who has suffered [suffered death (died)] in the flesh** [I would translate "**to the (realm of the) flesh,**" or the equivalent] [[The words translated "in the flesh" by the NASB here, and earlier in this verse, are one word in the Greek, the word for flesh in the dative/instrumental/locative case. The idea is that Christ has died to the realm of the flesh and left it behind, and we, in union with Christ (the crucified but now resurrected Christ), and in the power of the Holy Spirit, by faith, are to die to living in the flesh, which includes dying to sin (dying to living in sin) and living/walking by the Spirit as born-again Christians in the righteousness and holiness of God.

For Christians to suffer death (die) to the (realm of the) flesh/to the flesh yields the same result as crucifying the flesh/the old man (see Gal. 5:24; Rom. 6:6); or dying to sin (see, for example, 1 Pet. 2:24 and many verses in Romans chapter

6). The three verses I just mentioned are quoted and briefly discussed, as we continue, along with some closely related verses/passages, including Romans chapter 6. (See under verse 3.)

The translation "in the flesh" isn't acceptable for this second use of the noun in this verse. Something like "[suffered death (died)] to the flesh" is required. It must be understood that the only way we can die to sin and (to the realm of) the flesh is through union with Christ in His atoning death (and resurrection), which He died in our place. He bore the guilt of our sin, so we could be forgiven. He bore the penalty for our sin back to Adam (very much including the major penalties of spiritual death and bondage to sin), so we could be born again and walk in the righteousness and holiness of God with the victory over all sin, being dead to sin (and Satan's evil kingdom of darkness).] **has ceased from sin** [[What Peter said here (which is right in line with what he said in 1:13-19 and 2:24, 25, for example, and right in line with what Paul taught [e.g., Rom. 6:1-14; 7:4-6; 8:1-14; 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 5:16-25; and 6:14, 15], and is found many other places in the New Testament) is that Christians are called to repent and submit to the gospel in faith and then to live/walk in righteousness and holiness by the grace/Spirit of God on a continuous basis. By doing so we will ensure that we will truly be dead to the flesh (to the old man) and to sin; WE WILL CEASE SINNING! (The old man won't be able to manifest itself in sin.) This is, at least, the ideal, and the New Testament doesn't present it as an unrealistic or unattainable ideal. (These things, including essentially all of the passages I just listed, are discussed in some detail in my book "Holiness and Victory Over Sin: Full Salvation Through the Atoning Death of the Lord Jesus Christ" and my recently published e-book, "Righteousness, Holiness, and Victory Over Sin." Both books are available at amazon.com.)

The apostle Peter clearly included the idea here in 1 Pet. 4:1-6, and throughout this epistle, that being faithful to Christ and the gospel will involve some suffering, referring especially to spiritual warfare and persecution (cf., e.g., 1 Pet. 1:6, 7; 2:11, 12, 18-23; 3:9, 14-17; 4:12-19; 5:8-10 [I'll discuss 1 Pet. 5:10 after we finish this study on 1 Pet. 4:1-6]).

Many Christians interpret Peter as saying that after Christians have suffered enough they can begin to experience something of victory over sin. It is true that chastening judgments can help wake Christians up, but this is far from what Peter was talking about here. The sad fact is that many Christians, even most Christians, don't believe that we can ever be dead to sin and walk in victory over all sin before Christ returns and we are glorified. But the victory over sin can only come by grace through faith, faith in God and His Word.

I believe that the New Testament clearly teaches that Christians are called to walk in righteousness and holiness with the victory over all sin (everything that God considers to be sin), and that this is a big part of what salvation is all about. The issue, however, is whether the New Testament teaches victory over sin

through the sufficient grace of God in Christ, obtained at a very high cost to Himself, not whether we in our strength can stop sinning - we can't. We don't need more condemnation in the Body of Christ, but we need much more transformation (by grace through faith [faith based on God and His Word] to the glory of God). Amen!

I certainly am not saying that the victory over all sin is automatic or always easy. Powerful enemies are arrayed against us: the world; the flesh (the old man who wants to continue in sin); and the devil and his multitudinous hosts, but the saving, sanctifying grace of God in Christ is greater than those arrayed against us, and God hates sin!

The following verses (4:2, 3, 6) strongly confirm the interpretation just given for 4:1.], **(2) so as to live the rest of the time in the flesh** ["The rest of the time in the flesh" here (cf. Gal. 2:20; 2 Cor. 10:3; and Phil. 1:22, 24) means as long as we still live in a physical body in this world. "In the flesh" is a good way to translate the Greek here. For one thing, the Greek preposition ("en"), which is very often translated "in," is used here; it was not used with the word for flesh in either of its two uses in 4:1. The "rest of the time in the flesh" starts when we become born-again Christians and ends when we die, or when Jesus returns and we are glorified.]] **no longer for the lusts of men, but for the will of God** [in His truth, righteousness, and holiness]. **(3) For the time already past** [speaking of the time before they became born-again Christians] **is sufficient for you to have carried out the [sinful] desire of the Gentiles** [Cf. 1 Pet. 4:4; 1:14, 18; 2:10-12.] [[Peter was writing (at least for the most part) to Gentile Christians (cf., e.g. 1 Pet. 1:18; 2:10). These words make it clear that Peter was speaking of a once-for-all breach with sin, not a gradual break with sin, or a break with sin after suffering enough. The blood of Jesus sanctifies in the power of the Spirit, but we must cooperate with the powerful, sanctifying, saving grace of God in Christ on a continuous basis, by faith, based on what the Word of God says.

Since this is so important, and since so many Christians (the majority) don't agree, I'll cite several clear examples, and many more can be cited. (See my paperback book, "Holiness and Victory Over Sin: Full Salvation Through the Atoning Death of the Lord Jesus Christ" and my recently published e-book, "Righteousness, Holiness, and Victory Over Sin." Both books are available at amazon.com.) 1 PETER 1:14-19: "As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts *which were yours* in your ignorance [before they were confronted with the gospel, and repented, and submitted (by faith) to the gospel of new-covenant salvation], (15) but LIKE THE HOLY ONE WHO CALLED YOU, BE HOLY YOURSELVES ALSO IN ALL YOUR BEHAVIOR [my capitalization for emphasis; how could you speak of holiness and the victory over all sin in more clear or powerful terms than being holy in all our behavior as the Holy One who called us is holy?]; (16) because it is written. 'YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY.' (17) If you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves in fear [being afraid to rebel and sin against

God, which is a healthy fear, a fear that is required of God's people under the old and new covenants] during the time of your stay *on earth*; (18) knowing that you were not redeemed by perishable things like silver or gold from your futile [and sinful] way of life inherited from your forefathers [We were redeemed out of the pitiful state of being in spiritual death and bondage to sin and demons through the all-important atoning death of the Lord Jesus Christ.], (19) but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, *the blood* of Christ." The Bible is packed with passages that speak of our being sanctified, with the victory over sin, through the sacrificial death of the Lamb of God, including the next four examples that I will cite.

1 PETER 2:24, 25: "and HE HIMSELF BORE OUR SINS IN HIS BODY ON THE CROSS [(my capitalization here and later in this verse) He bore our sins with the guilt (so we could be forgiven) and with the penalties (including the major penalties of spiritual death and bondage to sin, so we could be born again and walk in the righteousness and holiness of God with the victory over all sin).], SO THAT WE MIGHT DIE TO SIN [quit sinning] AND LIVE TO RIGHTEOUSNESS; for by His wounds you were healed. [[These words at the end of verse 24 are extra important because they come from Isa. 53:5. Isaiah chapter 53 is one of the most important prophecies in the Bible that shows that our salvation, very much including our being made righteous with the victory over sin (see Isa. 53:11), comes to us through the all-important atoning death of the Lord Jesus Christ. (Isaiah 53:4-6 and 11 are discussed in my book "Holiness and Victory Over Sin" and my recently published e-book, "Righteousness, Holiness, and Victory Over Sin." Both books are available at amazon.com.)

As the words of 1 Peter 2:24 and 25 show, the apostle Peter was dealing first and foremost with our being healed spiritually, but Isaiah chapter 53 and many passages in the Bible (Old Testament and New Testament) show that physical healing, mental healing, etc. is provided too.]] (25) For you were continually straying like sheep, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls."

I'll briefly comment on ROMANS CHAPTER 6, which is one of the most important passages in the Bible, if not the most important passage, that teaches victory over all sin through the atoning death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Peter 2:24, 25 has a lot in common with Romans chapter 6. In Rom. 6:2 the apostle Paul asked, "How shall we who died to sin still live in it?" He goes on to show that we have been united with the Lord Jesus in His atoning death (He died in our place) and resurrection. In verses 6 and 7 he says that we have been crucified with Christ, have died with Him, and have been freed from sin (freed from slavery/bondage to sin). The victory over sin isn't automatic: Paul exhorts his readers (including us) in verse 11, "Even so, consider [or, reckon (by faith)] yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus." I'll just quote one more verse, but this entire chapter is filled with this same message, the message that is at the heart of the gospel: "and having been freed from sin, you became

slaves of righteousness." (Romans chapter 6 is discussed in some detail in my e-book, "Righteousness, Holiness, and Victory Over Sin," which is available at amazon.com.)

Another super-important passage that shows that Christians are called, enabled, and required to walk with the victory over sin, in the righteousness and holiness of God, through the atoning death of the Lord Jesus Christ, is ROMANS 8:1-17. Much of the emphasis of this passage is on the fact that since God the Father has condemned sin in the flesh through the atoning death of Christ (Rom. 8:3), we are called, enabled, and required to walk by the Holy Spirit on a continuous basis with the victory over all sin. In Rom. 8:4 he speaks of our fulfilling the righteous requirement of the Law (God's moral law, which cannot change; not the ceremonial law of the old covenant) as we walk by the Holy Spirit (by faith) on a continuous basis. Galatians 5:16-25 is a similar passage. In Galatians 5:16 the apostle Paul says: "But I say, walk by the Spirit [on a continuous basis by faith] and you [certainly] will not carry out the [sinful] desire of the flesh [of the old man]." Both passages are discussed in my e-book (mentioned in the preceding paragraph) and in my paperback book, "Holiness and Victory Over Sin."

I'll also quote GALATIANS 5:24, which is another key verse that shows that Christians are called and enabled to live with the victory over all sin through the atoning death of the Lord Jess Christ: "Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh [the old man] with its [sinful] passions and desires." Compare Rom. 6:6: "knowing this that our old self [old man] was crucified with *Him*, in order that our body of sin might be done away with [our bodies should no longer be used in the service of sin], so that we would no longer be slaves to sin." I'll also quote Gal. 6:14: "But may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world." Compare Gal. 2:20.

Now Peter goes on to mention some of the things included in the sinful "desire of the Gentiles" that he just mentioned in the first part of verse 3.], **having pursued a course of sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, carousals, drinking parties and abominable idolatries. (4) And in all this, they are surprised that you do not run with them [like you used to before you became Christians] into the same excess of dissipation, and they malign you** [This explains where some of the suffering spoken of in this epistle that his readers were enduring came from (cf. 1 Pet. 1:6, 7; 2:12, 18-24; 3:13-17; 4:12-19; and 5:8-10).]; **(5) but they shall give account [cf. Matt. 12:36; Rom. 14:10-12] to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.** [[Most commentators understand these words ("the living and the dead") of the ones who will still be alive when Christ returns ("the living") and those who will have died before that time ("the dead"). These words are sometimes used this way in the New Testament (cf. Acts 10:42; Rom. 14:9; 2 Tim. 4:1)]. It is clear that all mankind will be judged at the end of this age, but "the rest of the dead" of Rev. 20:5 (those who aren't part of the believers; they aren't part of God's true Israel) will not be resurrected and judged until the end of the

millennial kingdom at the great-white-throne judgment (Rev. 20:11-15). However, as we will discuss, I believe "the living" here refers to born-again Christians, who have spiritual life by the indwelling Spirit of God, and "the dead" refers to those who are spiritually dead.

Peter is not speaking of God's judging all people (those still living and those who will have died) at the end of this age (but he would agree that all people will be judged at the end of this age, including all of the people who will have died physically before the Lord Jesus returns), but he is zeroing in on His judgment of the Christians ("the living") and those spiritually dead, with special emphasis on those who were persecuting his Christian readers (especially see 1 Pet. 4:3-5). Note that the "they" of 4:5, who shall give account to God, speaks of the same people as "they" of 4:4 (used twice). The spiritually dead will have to answer for persecuting Christians, but (on a more basic level) they will have to answer for rejecting the gospel/for being disobedient to God's Word, very much including the gospel (see, e.g., 1 Pet. 2:7, 8; 4:17; 2 Thess. 1:8, 9).

First Peter 4:5, like all of 4:1-6 and this entire epistle, was aimed first and foremost at the people of Peter's generation, but it also fully applies to the people of the following generations. For one thing, as I'll demonstrate as we continue, Peter was thinking in terms of the Lord Jesus returning VERY SOON, which would initiate the day of judgment. A major theme of Peter in this epistle was to exhort and warn his Christian readers of the need for them to live in the truth, righteousness, and holiness of God, so they will be fully ready to stand before God the Judge (cf. 1 Pet. 1:13-22; 2:1-3, 11-23; 3:1-17, 21; 4:1-3, 6-19; 5:1-12). This is a dominant theme of the New Testament, which was inspired by the Holy Spirit, and intended for all Christians of all generations.

I'll quote a few key verses of those I just listed that emphasize that we Christians must live in the light of the fact that we are going to have to answer to God: 1 PETER 1:17, (my capitalization for emphasis in this verse and in the following verses) "IF YOU ADDRESS AS FATHER THE ONE WHO IMPARTIALLY JUDGES ACCORDING TO EACH ONE'S WORK [cf., e.g., Matt. 16:27; John 5:28, 29; Rom. 2:6; 2 Cor. 5:9, 10; 11:15; Gal. 6:7-9; Eph. 5:6, 7; Rev. 20:12, 13; 22:12; I'll discuss the need for works of righteousness/for a righteous lifestyle (by the saving grace of God in Christ) when God judges Christians under 1 Pet. 4:6], CONDUCT YOURSELVES IN FEAR [having a healthy and necessary fear of rebelling and sinning against God] DURING THE TIME OF YOUR STAY ON EARTH." (This verse is extremely weighty in the context of 1 Pet. 1:13-19, which speaks of the need for us to be holy as God is holy in all our behavior, etc.); and 1 PETER 4:17-19, "FOR *IT IS* TIME FOR JUDGMENT TO BEGIN WITH THE HOUSEHOLD OF GOD, AND IF *IT BEGINS* WITH US FIRST, WHAT WILL BE THE OUTCOME FOR THOSE WHO DO NOT OBEY THE GOSPEL OF GOD? (18) AND IF IT IS WITH DIFFICULTY THAT THE RIGHTEOUS IS SAVED, WHAT WILL BECOME OF THE GODLESS MAN AND THE SINNER? (19) THEREFORE, THOSE ALSO WHO SUFFER ACCORDING TO THE WILL OF

GOD SHALL ENTRUST THEIR SOULS TO A FAITHFUL CREATOR IN DOING WHAT IS RIGHT." Our faith must be proved genuine when we answer to God (cf. 1 Pet. 1:7). As we walk by faith in God, His Son, and His Word, which includes walking by the Holy Spirit on a continuous basis, works of righteousness will necessarily be manifested. And if we should sin, we must be quick to run to God with repentance (cf., e.g., 1 John 2:1, 2).

Regarding Peter's perspective on the nearness of the coming judgment when he wrote 1 Peter, see 1 Pet. 4:7, 17, 18, and note that Peter said He "is ready to judge" here in 1 Pet. 4:5. I just quoted 1 Pet. 4:17-19. I'll quote 1 PETER 4:7, which comes right after the verses we are discussing in this paper (1 Pet. 4:1-6): "THE END OF ALL THINGS IS NEAR; THEREFORE, BE OF SOUND JUDGMENT AND SOBER *SPIRIT* FOR THE PURPOSE OF PRAYER [my emphasis]."

There is much difference of opinion regarding whether God the Father is the Judge here (cf. 1 Pet. 1:17; 2:23; Rom. 2:6; 3:6; 14:10-12) or the Lord Jesus Christ (cf. Matt. 25:31-46; Luke 21:34-36; Acts 10:42; 17:31; 1 Tim. 4:1). It is clear that God the Father will be involved in the end-time judgment of the world, and it is also clear that He has appointed His beloved Son to have a major role in the end-time judgment of the world (cf., e.g., John 5:22, 27; Acts 10:42). I'll quote Acts 17:31: "because He [God the Father] has fixed a day in which He [God the Father] will judge the world in righteousness through a Man [God the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ] who He has appointed, having finished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead."

On being born again/having life (being among "the living" of 1 Pet. 4:5) by the Holy Spirit of life in 1 Peter, see 1:3, 23; 2:2, 5; 3:7, 18-21; and especially 4:6; also cf., e.g., 2 Pet. 1:3; Matt. 8:22; John 5:24-26; Eph. 2:1, 5; and Col. 2:13. The concept of being spiritually dead (without the Spirit), or of being spiritually alive (by the Spirit) is, of course, common in the New Testament.]] **(6) For the gospel has for this purpose been preached even** [[Verse 6 shows that God had the gospel preached to those who were spiritually dead to get those who will (fully) submit to the gospel (fully) ready to "give account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead" (verse 5). Those who submit to the gospel in faith leave spiritual death behind and become part of "the living" of verse 5: they have life in union with the Lord Jesus Christ, being indwelt by the Holy Spirit of life (see the discussion of the words "they may live by the Spirit" below). Those who fully submit to the gospel end up living in full agreement with the will of God (in His truth, righteousness, and holiness), by the enablement of the Holy Spirit. They will, therefore, be fully ready to give account to God. Verse 6 (along with most of 1 Pet. 4:1-6, much of this epistle, and much of the New Testament) shows what is required of Christians (those who submit to the gospel with repentance and faith). It must also be understood that those who reject the gospel and "do not obey the gospel of God" (1 Peter 4:17) will have to give account to God for that foundational sin that shows where their hearts are.

The fact that Peter spoke in terms of the gospel having been preached (using the aorist in the Greek), instead of being preached, undoubtedly includes the ideas that the gospel had been preached to his readers in the past, as in 1 Pet. 1:12, 25 (and to those who rejected disobeyed the gospel; see the next paragraph), and goes with his viewpoint expressed in this epistle that the Lord Jesus was coming very soon; apparently he wasn't thinking in terms of many more people leaving spiritual death behind and becoming Christians.

All the spiritual dead (all mankind) are called to repent and submit to the gospel, but many reject and disobey the gospel (see 1 Pet. 4:17; 2:8; 2 Thess. 1:8, 9; 1 Tim. 2:1-7; 1 John 2:2, for example). 1 Peter 2:8 shows that God isn't surprised when many reject and disobey the gospel. He also isn't surprised by those who submit to the gospel (see 1 Pet. 1:1, 2, for example; cf. Eph. 1:4; Acts 13:48; Rom. 8:28-30). For one thing, God knows (and foreknew) the hearts of all people. It is important to see that this epistle (along with most of the New Testament) was written for the most part to, and for, the elect, the people who would become Christians. See 1 Pet. 4:1-5, for example.

I'll mention a detail that is not of crucial significance. I prefer a translation without the word "even," with the NEB, but I would interpret this verse the same with, or without, the "even." "The dead" here undoubtedly refers back to "the dead" at the end of verse 5. (For the record, the definite article is not included before the word "dead" in verses 5 or 6 in the Greek.) The NIV has "even" and the KJV and NKJV have "also." "Kai," the word translated "even" by the NASB, is left untranslated in some verses in some English translations. In 1 Pet. 4:19, for example, the NASB translated "kai" "also," but the NIV, KJV, and NKJV left it untranslated.

One factor that confuses the interpretation of this verse is that some believe that the preaching here refers to Christ's supposed preaching to the dead in 1 Peter 3:19. I don't believe 1 Peter 3:19 says anything about such preaching. See my discussion of 1 Pet. 3:18-22 on pages 27-31 of my paper, "More Regarding God's Salvation Plans for the Nations," that is on my internet site ([karlkempteachingministries.com](http://karlkempteachingministries.com)). Also, many who do not see any connection to 1 Pet. 3:19 believe that "the dead" of verses 5 and 6 refers to those who are physically dead.

I'll quote three sentences from D. Edmond Hiebert ("First Peter" [Moody Bible Institute, 1984], page 249) that show that 1 Pet. 4:6 has been interpreted many different ways: " '[1 Pet. 4:6] has been described as the most difficult text in the Bible' (J. Howard B. Masterman, 'The First Epistle of S. Peter,' p. 143). Lillie notes that 'perhaps a score [twenty] different interpretations' of it have been proposed. (John Lillie, 'Lectures on the First and Second Epistles of Peter,' p. 269) It would be unprofitable to trace all the confusing and often contradictory views that have been advanced." ] **to those who are dead** [[or, better yet, "to the dead." In the Greek this is all one word, the adjective for dead in the dative case.



The dead here are the spiritually dead, as in 1 Pet. 4:5 (cf., e.g., John 5:25 with 5:28). The gospel always comes (is preached) initially to those who are spiritually dead. All mankind, which is spiritually dead, is called to repent and submit to the gospel. At one time all of Peter's born-again Christian readers (including us) had been spiritually dead, but after hearing the gospel and submitting to it in faith, they were born again; they became part of "the living" spoken of in 4:5.

As the words that follow in this verse demonstrate, Peter is zeroing in on those who had heard the gospel and repented and submitted to the gospel. His words (like 1 Pet. 4:1-3, 5 and so many other verses of this epistle and throughout the New Testament) exhort and warn his Christian readers with the need to live (with the spiritual life of God) by the Spirit, in accordance with the righteous and holy will of God.

We must make it top priority to believe and live in accordance with the truth of God. This in spite of the fact that living for Christ will involve some suffering, as (for one thing) we are judged in accordance with the judgments of people who are spiritually dead. We certainly cannot coast into heaven. Faith is active. We must make God, His Son, His gospel, and His righteousness and holiness top priority, and all the more so because of the very real opposition (the world, the old man, and the devil and his multitudinous hosts). We cannot be passive and coast into heaven.], **that though they are judged [or, condemned] in the flesh as men** [[First let's discuss the words "as men." For one thing, these two words come before "in the flesh" in the Greek, and it is probably better to translate in the order of the Greek words. Instead of translating "as men," I would translate "according to [or, in accordance with] men." The Greek preposition "kata," used here with the word for men, is normally translated this way. (This preposition isn't translated "as" anywhere else in the New Testament by the NASB, but it is translated "according to" 140 times and "in accordance with" 12 times.) It is significant that kata is used later in this verse, and it is translated "according to" by the NASB. As we have seen, Peter's original Christian readers were being judged/condemned "in accordance with" the wrong judgments of "men" (their non-Christian opponents). (1 Peter 4:4 shows that they were being maligned by non-Christians; 1 Peter 4:14 speaks of their being reviled for the name of Christ; and there are quite a few similar verses in this epistle.)

Now we'll discuss the words "in the flesh." These three words in English are one word in the Greek, the word for flesh in the dative/instrumental/locative case, as in 1 Pet. 4:1 (twice). Here the translation "in the flesh" would be acceptable, or we could translate "so far as the flesh is concerned," or "in the realm of the flesh." Spiritually dead men (men in the flesh, men without the Spirit) are doing the judging, condemning, maligning, and reviling. The "flesh" here is contrasted with the "Spirit" (as it often is throughout the New Testament) spoken of later in this verse, even as "in accordance with (*kata*) men" is contrasted with "in accordance with (*kata*) God."], **they may live in the spirit according to the will of God.** [[The order of the words in the Greek is preferable to show the symmetry with

"though they are judged/condemned in accordance with men in the realm of the flesh": We could translate, "they may live in accordance with God in [or, by] the Spirit."

Let's discuss the verb [Greek "zao"] "they may live." They live by the life of God, through the indwelling Spirit of God as born-again Christians. The BAGD Greek Lexicon says the Greek verb "zao" is used here with the meaning "have eternal life," as in, for example, John 6:51, 58; and 1 John 4:9. They are "the living" of 1 Pet. 4:5, and it is understood that they are living righteous and holy lives (in accordance with God). Their faith and transformed lives were what brought about the judging/condemning of the non-Christians.

We very much need to keep in mind that Peter (and the other writers of the New Testament) doesn't just assume that his Christian readers are all living in the truth, righteousness and holiness of God. As I have pointed out, this passage (1 Peter 4:1-6) along with the much of the rest of this epistle and much of the New Testament, exhorts and warns Christians with the need to live as they are called, enabled, and required to live, and all the more so in that the coming of the Lord Jesus and the day of judgment is near. As I demonstrated, the apostle Peter wrote from the point of view that it was very near (1 Pet. 4:7, 17, 18). Peter was apparently thinking in terms of his being the last generation. Apparently WE ARE living in the last generation!

Now we'll discuss the words "according to [or, in accordance with (*kata*)] *the will of God*," which come before "in [or, by] the Spirit [the NASB has "spirit"; so too do the NIV, KJV, and NKJV]" in the Greek. The three words added in italics by the NASB ("the will of") are reasonable in the light of 1 Pet. 4:2, which speaks of living for the will of God. I would, however, skip these added words in the translation. For one thing, this simpler translation will better bring out the intended contrast with the words "in accordance with men" used earlier in the verse.

For another thing, living "in accordance with God" means more than living in accordance with the will of God. Our life by the Spirit comes from God and is in accordance with His nature and with His plan of salvation. With His life/salvation comes His righteousness and holiness. The new man Christians put on is in accordance with (*kata*) God (see Eph. 4:24 and Col. 3:10). When judgment day comes, which was just mentioned in 1 Pet. 4:5, there is only one judgment that matters, the judgment of God, and He will judge us according to our works (e.g., 1 Pet. 1:17), works that come by grace through faith, works that demonstrate what is in our hearts (faith is of the heart).

You very often hear Christians say that works are not required for salvation. It is true that the apostle Paul said we are saved by faith, not works, but he would agree with James that faith without works is dead (it isn't saving faith). We must have the works of righteousness (the righteous lifestyle) which the grace of God

(including the work of the indwelling Righteous Holy Spirit) enables us to do (cf., e.g., Eph. 2:10). Paul was against works without faith in Christ. He was against bringing the ceremonial works of the old covenant (like circumcision) into the new covenant. He was against works being done for the glory of man when God must receive all the glory for our salvation. And he was against trying to earn the salvation that comes to us 100 percent by the grace of God in Christ.

What Jesus said to Christians in Rev. 2:4, 5, 23, 26; 3:1-4, 8, 15, 16 should suffice (but there are a large number of similar verses in the New Testament) to confirm that righteous works (the works that are produced by the grace of God in Christ as we walk by faith) are required. 1 Peter 4:6 puts the primary emphasis on the need for Christians to make sure they are ready for judgment day, even though this will involve some suffering, as it did for Peter's first readers.

1 Peter 4:1-6 (and a large number of passages in the New Testament) make it clear that the non-Christians ("the dead" of 4:5) will have to answer to God for their sin, including the sin of persecuting Christians (e.g., 1 Peter 4:5; 2 Thess. 1:4-6), and, significantly, for not submitting to, and obeying, the gospel (e.g., 1 Pet. 4:17, 18; 2 Thess. 1:8, 9).

The words "in/by the Spirit [spirit]" are one word in the Greek, the word for Spirit/spirit in the dative/instrumental/locative case. I understand these words here in the sense, "they may live as far as the Spirit is concerned"; that is, "they may have life in/by the Spirit." They are born-again Christians, indwelt by the Holy Spirit of life; they are "the living" of 4:5. Because of this they have the ability to live in God's righteousness and holiness, in accordance with God and His will. We must understand the gospel and submit to the gospel in faith, and we must walk by the Holy Spirit on a continuous basis by faith (cf. Gal. 5:16) or we will be sinning to one degree, or another. We will be forgiven if we sincerely repent, but we must be aiming at the target of not sinning. This is good news!]]

1 PETER 5:10: **After you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect [put in order], confirm, strengthen *and* establish you.** The reason I wanted to discuss this verse is because I disagree with this translation (NASB). This translation clearly communicates the wrong idea that God will not "perfect [put in order], confirm, strengthen and establish" Peter's readers until after they "have suffered a little while." The Greek sentence starts with the words "the God of all grace," then the words "who has called you to His eternal glory," then "after you have suffered a little while," then "He Himself will perfect, confirm, strengthen *and* establish you."

I'll quote the NIV: "And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast."

The idea is that God has called Christians to His eternal glory after they have suffered for a little while, not that He will perfect [put in order], confirm, strengthen and establish them after they have suffered for a little while. That's quite a difference! It is clear that all faithful Christians will know some suffering, including spiritual warfare and persecution ((cf., e.g., Acts 14:22 ("strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and *saying*, through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God"; the Greek verb ["sterizo"] "strengthening" is related to the Greek verb "sterizo" that is translated "confirm" in 1 Pet. 5:10); Rom. 8:17, 18; 2 Cor. 4:16-18; 1 Thess. 3:3, 4; and many verses in 1 Peter)). I'll quote a sentence from I Howard Marshall ("1 Peter" [InterVarsity Press], 1991), page 172): "During this period of affliction God will help his people." We need God's strengthening, etc. help now, when we are in the middle of trials, temptation, etc. I'll also quote a few sentences from R. C. H. Lenski ("The Interpretation of I and II Epistles of Peter..." [Augsburg Publishing House, 1966], page 228): "The aorist participle [which is translated "after you have suffered" by the NIV] should not be construed with the following future tenses [which are translated "will himself restore you and make you strong..." by the NIV] so that Peter would appear to say that *after* his readers have suffered the God of grace will equip, firm, strengthen them. To be so equipped, etc., is needed *now* and not *after* all suffering is over with. God's equipping will be done for this little while of suffering." And I'll quote a sentence from Scot McNight ("1 Peter" [Zondervan, 1996], page 279): "Finally, Peter's *prayer* is for their strength - strength to endure, to remain faithful, and to resist the temptations to the flesh (2:11; 4:4)."

The Greek verb ("katartizo") that was translated "will perfect" by the NASB and "will restore" could be translated "put in order."

May the will of God be fully accomplished through this paper and His people be edified!

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