

1 Peter 4:1-11 "A Good Steward of Grace"

Community Group Questions

1. *What are the sins you need to kill?*
2. *What or who causes you to sin?*
3. *How welcoming are you?*
4. *What are your gifts?*
5. *How are you using those gifts?*

As Christians we are called to steward the grace that God has given us. To steward means to manage or look after...so to be a steward of God's grace is to manage and use what God has given you.

Today from 1 Peter 4:1-11 we are going to learn what we have by God's grace, and how we can manage (steward) those things in our lives.

By Grace we have...

-A new life... Verses 1-2 reminds us that Jesus put an end to sin in His death, burial and resurrection, paid for sin "once for all" so Peter goes on to tell us "to arm" ourselves with the same manner of thinking, so what he is saying is Jesus' focus was to kill sin, now we as Christians in our new life should be looking to kill the sinful patterns in our life.

The Puritan John Owen wrote extensively on the issue of putting sin to death in the life of the believer. His works such as *Mortification(subdue) of Sin and Overcoming Sin and Temptation* are classics.

Two things Owen states we need to know about putting sin to death in our lives.

- You will never kill sin if you are not a believer. GOSPEL
- You will never kill sin without sincere diligence and obedience

I think Owen sums this issue up in one quote *"Be killing sin or sin will be killing you"*

In our new life that we are called to manage we need to have a passion to follow the Lord rather than a passion to follow sinful ways. The consequences are bleak if you live an unhealthy life filled with sin...

We see that many of the problems in this world are due to the fact that people choose to sin. God knows what is good for us so He wants us to follow.

Managing our new life...Management Question

What are the sins you need to kill?

Then Peter goes on in verses 3-4 to remind them of their former life. Apparently the Christians he was writing to had a pretty rough past and being delivered from that past will be tough.

-It was pleasurable, you may have had a good time

-The people you did those things with are not going to let you go that easy.

Is this true for you? You have a new life because you trusted Jesus but the temptation of your old life is creeping in. Are the people from your old life trying to drag you down?

What or who causes you to sin?

Now we move into verses 5-6 in which Peter reminds them when your sinful desires are warring against you, when other people are trying to pull you down here are some things you need remember

-Vrs 5 The people that are trying to pull you down answer to the same God

-Vrs 6 That because of sin the Gospel is preached. The "dead" here is not that the Gospel is preached to the dead but that it was preached to those who are dead.

Most likely the people that were mocking the Christians knew that they believed Jesus was coming back and obviously he had not yet so they were probably saying things like “you are giving up these fun and pleasurable things for no good reason, look at your Christian friends that died, Jesus didn’t come back for them”

Peter is encouraging them that their Christian friends that physically died are “living in the spirit” like God “lives in the Spirit”

Because of sin the Gospel is preached...by who? US. The very people that mock you and try to drag you down also need Jesus.

What is your plan for reaching lost people? Remember with your “new life” comes new motivations for being around others.

Then in verse 7 Peter reminds them to be “self controlled” and “sober minded” “for the sake of your prayers” or in other words so your focus stays on the Lord and not your sinful desires or the crowd of people that try to entice you back into your old life.

How are you staying focused?

So we need to manage our “new life” in Christ. With that new life, by grace we also have...

-A new family Some of you may be thinking, “I can’t manage my old family”! There is good news, because our new family all has the Holy Spirit it may be a bit easier. The next directives he gives us are about how we handle ourselves in the new family.

-Love one another Vrs 8...why? It covers sin and that is what Jesus’ love did for us. Now as Christians we are called to love one another in such a way that even when someone wrongs us we still show love toward them. I think the most famous example of this type of love is in Luke 15 the parable of the Prodigal Son.

Management Question

How well do you show love to fellow believers?

-Show hospitality without complaints.

Someone once said "Hospitality is making your guests feel at home, even if you wish they were"

We need to be gracious hosts and make people feel welcomed. This is not just in your home this is right here at our church. One of the things that many new people say to me is "the people at our church are so friendly" so good job!

How welcoming are you?

So now that we are in this "new family" we need to be useful in that family and the next passage tells us by grace we have...

-New Gifts to use in His service Vrs 10-11

What are spiritual gifts? A Spiritual gift is a God given ability by His grace to be used for His service with the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Bible list these gifts in Romans 12, 1st Corinthians 12 & Eph 4

-*Serving*-doing things for others in view of the Lord

-*Teaching*-handling the Word of God in a way that others learn

-*Encouragement*-having something to say that helps build others up

-*Giving*-generous with resources..."I would be generous if I had it"

Dave Ramsey says *"more money makes you more of what your are"*

-*Leadership*-the type of person people trust and follow

-*Mercy*-highly compassionate

-*Wisdom*-able to make good decisions and apply knowledge

-*Knowledge*-ability to retain and deal with detailed information

-*Faith*-strong and unshakable confidence in God

- Discernment*-the ability to judge good and bad decisions and sometimes the intentions of people
- Intercession*-the desire and heart to spend extended times in prayer on behalf of others
- Helps*-aid and give others assistance
- Hospitality*-welcoming others into your life and the willingness to bring people into your home.
- Evangelism*-the ability to confidently tell others about the Lord in an inspiring and attractive way
- Exhortation*-able to confront people that are going the wrong way in a way that is helpful to that person
- Administration*- the ability to come up and deal with long range goals.

There are also the Sign gifts are Prophecy, Tongues, Miracles and Healing and I believe that these were gifts that were specifically used during the NT times until the Scriptures were complete.

Management questions

What are your gifts?

In order to manage your gifts is to figure out what they are.

Test-go to our resource link,

Try-volunteer

Talk-ask others around you

How are you using those gifts?

To further manage your gift you need to use in service in the local body of the church, that is why God brought you here.

By grace we have a new life, a new family and new gifts and we bring glory to Jesus by managing those things well in our lives.