

Our Faith
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1 Peter 4:1-11

How different are you today than you were in high school? If we asked your high school friends to compare the “you” back then to the “you” today would they say your personality is “pretty much the same” or “different than I would have expected?” What about your personality before trusting Christ and after trusting Christ?

Consider this statement: Because I have followed Christ, I am not as good as I will be, but I am different/better than I used to be before I followed Christ. In other words, there is a difference between the OLD ME and the NEW ME. OLD ME, meet the NEW ME! NEW ME, say goodbye to the OLD ME. Peter said those who are now in Christ should send the behaviors of the old me packing and not let them back into our lives.

In the short time we have today, let’s look at this passage verse by verse focusing on the description of how the NEW ME (in Christ) should live to glorify God.

For context, look at chapter three verse 18 (NLT) — **18** Christ suffered for our sins once for all time. He never sinned, but he died for sinners to bring you safely home to God. He suffered physical death, but he was raised to life in the Spirit. **22** Now Christ has gone to heaven. He is seated in the place of honor next to God, and all the angels and authorities and powers accept his authority. **1 Peter 4:1–11 (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.

- Verse one: Living for Christ in a pagan world requires us to put on some “armor.”
- That armor is the mind or attitude of Christ. The NEW ME in Christ should THINK like Jesus. How can I learn to think like Him? What is my part and His part?
- That verse also says if we become like Him, we should expect to suffer for it (3:13-17). Then Peter says the NEW ME should be “finished with sin.”
- The NEW ME may be different, but it doesn’t feel like I’m finished with sin!
- Fair enough; but look at what Peter told them in verses two and three:

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.

- When I follow Christ, He doesn’t just clean up OLD ME, He makes a NEW ME.

2 Corinthians 5:17 (ESV) — 17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

Romans 6:6 (NLT) — **6** We know that our old sinful selves were crucified with Christ so that sin might lose its power in our lives. We are no longer slaves to sin.

Ephesians 4:22–24 (NLT) — **22** throw off your old sinful nature and your former way of life, which is corrupted by lust and deception. **23** Instead, let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes. **24** Put on your new nature, created to be like God—truly righteous and holy.

- Verse 23 reveals how this works: The Spirit “renews our thoughts and attitudes.”
- Christ alone creates the NEW ME, but verses 22-24 say I must do my part: “...throw off the old sinful nature,” “...let the Spirit renew...”, “Put on the new nature...”
- Not everyone will like the NEW ME. My old crowd was comfortable with OLD ME.

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.

- The NEW ME no longer lives to fit in with the old crowd but to please Christ.
- The old crowd will likely reject us for “getting religion” and being a “kill joy.”
- Instead of wallowing in the pain of their rejection, look at verse five.

5 But remember that they will have to face God, who stands ready to judge everyone, both the living and the dead.

- That is our motivation to keep loving the old crowd though we don’t live like them.
- Remember verse fifteen of chapter three? Hopefully they will ask about the change in the NEW ME, and I can lovingly and respectfully share about Christ.

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.

- The interpretation of verse six is debated and we don’t have time to unpack it. Peter was likely referring to early Christians who had died, perhaps as martyrs.
- In verse seven Peter shifted to how the NEW ME (in Christ) should live:

7 The end of the world is coming soon. Therefore, be earnest and disciplined in your prayers. **8** Most important of all, continue to show deep love for each other, for love covers a multitude of sins. **9** Cheerfully share your home with those who need a meal or a place to stay. **10** God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another. **11** Do you have the gift of speaking? Then speak as though God himself were speaking through you. Do you have the gift of helping others? Do it with all the strength and energy that God supplies.

- The NEW ME lives expecting Christ to return at any time!
- The NEW ME is a PRAYING ME! Praying requires practice!
- The NEW ME loves, forgives, and overlooks minor offenses (Prov. 19:11).

- The NEW ME is generous and helpful to those in need.
- The NEW ME knows that God gives every follower of Christ gifts to use in service to others. The NEW ME serves with energy supplied by God Himself.
- What is the outcome of living this way? Look at the last sentence of verse 11:

Then everything you do will bring glory to God through Jesus Christ. All glory and power to him forever and ever! Amen.

So, What's the Takeaway?

- When we trust Christ as Savior and Lord, He not only promises us eternal life after we die, but new life NOW. Not turning over a "new leaf" but living a new life.
- That new life comes because He supernaturally changes OLD ME to NEW ME!
- These eleven verses are a great overview of how NEW ME can live in a new way and with a new purpose because I've been MADE NEW by Christ.
- So, this week if OLD ME starts hanging around again, send him packing with the reminder that Jesus has replaced him and his sinful ways with a NEW ME.