

## Hold onto Triumph (1 Peter 3:18-4:6)

It seemed like he was defeated, as if suffering and the powers that put him on the cross had won the day. Then, in what will forever be the greatest reversal, Jesus accomplished total victory over every power. He did it *through* suffering and he did it *for* us. Jesus' triumph is ours to celebrate. His thinking, in the midst of suffering, is ours to imitate. Are you facing temptation, opposition or suffering? Peter invites us to hold onto Jesus' triumph and take on Jesus' thinking.

### 1. Jesus' triumph is ours to celebrate (1 Peter 3:18-22)

Jesus' death was substitutionary = in our place. *the righteous for the unrighteous* Isaiah 53:11

His goal? *"That he might bring us to God."* Reconciliation. Restored relationship.

Romans 5:2; Ephesians 2:18, 3:12

VV19-22 A lot of questions fill our minds when we read these verses. It is complicated.

I think this is a declaration of victory before fallen angels – spirits or "spiritual beings" who rebelled in Noah's day. Genesis 6 background; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6

Jesus is announcing his absolute victory and their total defeat.

Just as Noah was brought through the waters of judgment, so we too, in baptism are brought through the waters of judgment (of sin + death!). Baptism *"puts you right there, right beside the conqueror himself!"*

V22 *"at the right hand of God"* Psalm 110:1 language = a place of honor, power and authority

### 2. Jesus' thinking is ours to imitate (1 Peter 4:1-6)

This new way of living requires a new way of thinking (mindset yes; also inspiration).

A resolve, *"Enough already! I'm done with it!"* This is about resistance, not sinless perfection.

V3 You've wasted enough time on these things! Ephesians 4:17-25; Hebrews 12:1-3

V4 They're surprised! They think it strange and totally "unnatural" for you *not* to go along with them.

V5 don't worry about their judgment of you, *"You don't answer to them."*

V6 There should be a real priority placed on speaking the gospel to those who are alive.

Peter basically says of followers of Jesus who have already died, *"They experienced what we will all face one day – but even death itself, with its seemingly definitive victory, does not have the final say!"*

**QUESTIONS** (Pray, read the passage and pick 4-5 questions to discuss. Trust the Holy Spirit to guide.)

1. How did Sunday's Talk encourage or challenge you?
2. Read 1 Peter 3:18-22. What observations do you have? Just say what you see!
3. In what ways do VV18-22 emphasize Jesus' triumph? How is this relevant in light of the overall subject matter of 1 Peter 3?
4. In what ways is the story of Noah and baptism similar? One author says, your baptism *"puts you right there, right beside the conqueror himself."* How does this affect your understanding of the significance of baptism? Consider Romans 6:3-4; Matthew 28:19-20
5. How do you think a message like the announcement of triumph over all *angels, authorities and powers* would have encouraged Peter's original audience? How does it encourage you? Consider 1 Peter 3:22; Psalm 110:1 and Ephesians 1:16-23
6. Read 1 Peter 4:1-4. Why are followers of Jesus to turn away from the behavior and attitudes of their former lives? How has Jesus rearranged your priorities and values?
7. Have you faced a situation like 1 Peter 4:4? If so, how did you deal with it?
8. In 1 Peter 4:6 Peter mentions those who heard the gospel when they were alive (and believed it) BUT who are now dead. How do his words both challenge *and* encourage you?

Take a few minutes and (through prayer) celebrate Jesus' triumph. Then ask the Spirit of God to *"arm you with the same way of thinking"* as Jesus - in the midst of suffering, in the face of temptation and in your pursuit of God's will.