

Oh, but they certainly would have felt “**moved**”—as their friends and family in Christ were burned for light by Nero in the games. As they were used as food for lions. It would have been easy to give over. And yet, **PT** called them to remember—to trust and to place confidence in a Christ who is coming.

1PT 5.8 ~ *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.* They were under constant persecution and attack, the enemy seeking to undermine and overwhelm all the church. But, if they’d keep themselves fixed upon the reality of the coming of Christ—they could endure.

1PT 5.8-11 ~ *Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.* ¹⁰ *But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you.* ¹¹ *To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.*

EX: The devil was attacking. Christians were suffering. Friends were dying. But they could survive: for none of that changed the fact that Christ was coming. And when they knew that, they could follow His call: to **continue in good works** and **stand as an example in submission**. And today, that same example stands to us. We, today, can all stand and resist so long as we truly believe in what is to come. It changes how we live, and it changes how we respond to the wickedness of the world around us.

EH 6.10-11 ~ *Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.* ¹¹ *Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.*

PT points to some final examples: *By Silvanus, our faithful brother as I consider him, I have written to you briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God in which you stand.* ¹³ *She who is in Babylon, elect together with you, greets you; and so does Mark my son.* **(1PT 5.12-13)** Silvanus (the one in whose hand Paul’s letter was written), the church in the modern Babylon that was Rome (who’d likely been taking the brunt of the persecution), Mark: all of these examples of faithful and dedicated trust and confidence in the promised coming of Christ. These had all stood faithful: and **PT** called the audience of his letter to do the same.

1PT 5.14 ~ *Greet one another with a kiss of love. Peace to you all who are in Christ Jesus. Amen.* Show your faithfulness in **good works**; show your trust in submission to one another. All originated in your **truth faith in Christ and His coming**.

MT 11.28-30 ~ *Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* ²⁹ *Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.* ³⁰ *For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.* ”

INVITATION

#694 [Exp-NTGE][4.4]

01/24/2026

What to do When You Really Believe 1PT 4.12-5.14 (NKJV)

PC _____ Pchd _____

QUESTION: How should our faith affect us?

TRN TO 1PT 4

INTRODUCTION

ILL—**Having to File Taxes** (living with parents, Dad took care of it for me; walked me through it, showed me how to handle it) But when I moved out and was on my own, I remember driving by the local tax office: fooling myself: next time. Next week. Some other day. But one April 15th, I looked over and realized I couldn’t fool myself any more—the day had come, whether I was ready or not.

BACKGROUND (1PT 4.1-2,4,7)

PT speaks of their persecution with certainty: *Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,* ² *that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God.* **(1PT 4.1-2)** As they refrained from sin, he knew they’d face hatred from those who would *think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation* **(1PT 4.4)** But this would not go on forever. He called them to understand: *the end of all things is at hand* **(1PT 4.7a)**

“But, it hasn’t ended! We have 2,000 years of history to show that the end of all things wasn’t really ‘at hand’.” Yet, so far as the church was concerned, the coming of the Lord was “*at hand*”—nearly coming, any day!

Does that mean Peter was wrong? No, just our perspective. Some would read Peter’s words and criticize, even in his own time, saying: *Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation.* **(2PT 3.4)** And Peter would remind them: *with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.* **(2PT 3.8b)** From a divine perspective, the next thing is the last thing: *the end of all things*. From His perspective, it truly is “*at hand*”.

PT raises an interesting thought: **what happens when we don’t try fooling ourselves?** What happens when we all live from God’s perspective: as though *the end of all things is at hand*; **PT** continues, providing us the answer. When we live that way, we are *serious and watchful in [our] prayers* **(2PT 3.7b)**. When we live believing that *the end of all things is at hand*, we take His things—our lives, our devotion seriously, and the way we live and act changes! For the rest of the letter, he explains how that kind of unfoolish and serious mindset impacts how we live. **What would happen if His church and all people truly lived with the understanding that the end of all things is at hand?**

BD1: Glorify Christ’s Name by Doing Good (1PT 4.12-19)

PT begins with a bit of a humorous turn of phrase: *Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you;* **(1PT 4.12)** The imagery is of naive shock. They say that, most often, the thing that kills a person following a bullet wound or stab wound is this shock: **“How could this have happened to me?”** **PT** urges them to drop the shock: it was bound to happen. Instead, recognizing that *the end of all things is at hand*, they ought to

glorify Christ because through these sufferings, they were partaking in greatness: *but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.*¹⁴ If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. *On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified.* (1PT 4.13-14)

EX: This seems strange and unlikely—but, in truth, when we take Christ and His coming seriously, it makes sense that we **glorify Christ** even in our sufferings. For in that, we are partners with the Lord of all creation—sharers in His same sufferings.

RM 8.16-18 ~ *The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,*¹⁷ and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.¹⁸ For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

But he calls us to be aware of ourselves—our actions and the cause of our sufferings—and not jump to the assumption that even our suffering for evil is somehow a praise to God. *But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people's matters.* (1PT 4.15) No, we ought to **glory not in false victimhood, but in doing good.** *Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter.* (1PT 4.16) To us, this was a simple phrase: we all have heard the term “**Christian**” a million times. But this is only the third time it’s used in Scripture—and **PT** used it the same way we’d use any identifier: suffer not as a Roman, or a Jew, or a Gentile—but suffer for the reason of being a Christian—a person living and striving to follow the image of God.

PT knew that it was a difficult time to be alive. There was war and rumors of wars and strife for all people—but especially those who were Christian. *For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?* (1PT 4.17) He recognized as tough as things could be for the faithful, it would be noticeably worse for the faithless. *Now “If the righteous one is scarcely saved, Where will the ungodly and the sinner appear?”* (1PT 4.18)

AP: **PT** encouraged the church to have the natural reaction that comes from living in constant trust in the coming of God: glorifying God by doing good. For there will be suffering and struggles, regardless. But how better it is if we suffer for doing right: for being Christians. *Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls to Him in doing good, as to a faithful Creator.* (1PT 4.19)

AC 5.40a-41 ~ *and when they had called for the apostles and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go.*⁴¹ So they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name.

BD2: Learn How to Lead, Show How to Follow (1PT 5.1-6)

ILL—Business Conferences (first hated it; started to see the appeal; only one person who does my job; chance to connect to those doing the same) **PT** takes a moment to “**connect**” with those in the same position as himself: to *The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed:*² Shepherd the flock of

God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; ³ nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; (1PT 5.1-3)

EX: He points to those in leadership and calls them to be examples. And even this is grounded in the reality of Christ’s coming: *and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.* (1PT 5.4) He speaks to the leaders and calls them to **learn how to lead**—that they need ought serve with the right motives and in the right manner: leading by example and **showing how to follow.** Peter wants his fellow elders to **lead by example**—showing the flock an example of submission to God that can then be echoed out to the rest of the flock.

1PT 5.5-6 ~ *Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for “God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.”*⁶ *Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time,*

AP: God shows a trail of **submission**: elders to God, the flock to elders—living in a cycle of **submission** and not pride. As we look towards the coming of Christ—living in certainty that He will come both in judgment in this present age and in fullness at the end of time, we ought to submit first to the will of God and then to service to others. This **submissive leadership shows the congregation how to follow.** The righteous eldership leads not by prideful dictate, but by humble submission to the will of God, **showing how to follow** God that the congregation might follow the example shown in these righteous men as they follow the example of the righteous God.

TS 2.11-14 ~ *For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men,*¹² *teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age,*¹³ *looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,*¹⁴ *who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.*

CONCLUSION: Depend on Christ’s Grace and Defend Against the Devil (1PT 5.7-14)

I have no doubt that tax day is coming—thanks to Erin, we already have our taxes done, and filed! **Why?** Because we know that it’s coming—and there’s no point in living in denial. It’s going to arrive whether I’m ready or not. So, I might as well be ready!

PT desired the church to truly be ready for the coming of Christ—knowing that this would create a true belief. And true belief in coming of Christ changes you. It was one thing for SAY that Christ was coming. **But when we really believe it?** It impacts every part of our lives.

True belief in the coming of Christ leads to a life **glorifying God in doing good**—a life of continual and constant service. And true belief impacts the church, top to bottom: having a leadership that has **learned how to lead, showing** the congregation **how to follow**—in humble submission to God, showing a pattern for all to follow. Ultimately, every one of us *casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.* (1PT 5.7) **PT** speaks in echo of the **55th PS:** *Cast your burden on the Lord, And He shall sustain you; He shall never permit the righteous to be moved.* (vs 22)