

Christ Preached to the Spirits in the Spirit Prison (3:18–22)

18 For Christ also once suffered for sins on your behalf, a just person on behalf of the unjust, so that he might bring you and us to God, having been put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit. 19 And while still in the spirit, he went and preached to the spirits in prison, 20 some of whom had disobeyed when the long-suffering of God waited during the days of Noah while he was building the ark, so that by going into that ark a few people (that is eight souls) were brought safely through the water-ordeal. 21 And we now see that as a type of how baptism saves you. Baptism is not a removal of filth from the body but a covenantal promise made to God in good conscience made possible by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. 22 He is now on the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, with angels, authorities, and powers deferring to him.

Sin No More, and Do the Will of God (4:1–6)

1 Since Christ suffered in the flesh, you too should arm yourself with the same point of view as his, for he who suffered in the flesh has provided the cure for sin. 2 To this end, he no longer lives during this remaining time in the flesh according to the desires of men but according to the will of God. 3 For it was alright for you, before you joined the Church, to go along with the ways of the world, walking in outrageously lewd conduct, lusts, wine-drunkenness, boisterous merrymaking, drinking parties, and lawless idolatries. 4 While your old friends are surprised that you do not run with them any longer in the same old excesses of debauchery, and for this they revile you, 5 but they will have to account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. 6 For to this end also is the gospel made known even to the dead, so that all who have been judged according to men in the flesh might someday live in the spirit according to the will of God.

Have Fervent Charity, That God May Be Glorified (4:7–11)

7 Indeed, the end of all draws near for you. Therefore, be wise and be sure to pray, 8 and above all else, have fervent charity toward each other, for charity prevents a multitude of sins [compare Prov. 10:12]. 9 Be friendly to strangers, one to another without grudging. 10 Just as each person has received a gift from God, even so let all impart

similarly to each other as good stewards of the abundant generosity of God. 11 When any of you speak, do so using the revelations of God. When any of you minister, do so out of the strength which God furnishes, so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and authority for ever and ever. Amen.

In the Face of Adversity, Consecrate Yourself to Live as a Christian (4:12–19)

12 Beloved friends, when a refining fire comes upon you to test you, do not think that something odd is happening to you. 13 Instead, because you are members of the covenant community, rejoice in the sufferings of Christ, so that in the apocalypse of his glory you may also rejoice and be exceedingly glad. 14 If you are reviled because you are of Christ, you will be blessed, because the spirit of glory and “the spirit of God will rest upon” you [Isa. 11:2]. 15 But let none of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or as one who works with evil spirits or as a meddler or as an ecclesiastical usurper. 16 If, on the other hand, anyone of you suffers as a Christian, let that person not be ashamed but glorify God in the very name of Christ. 17 For the commencement of the judgment will begin with the house of God, and if it starts first with us, what shall be the end for those who obey not the gospel of God? 18 And if “the righteous are scarcely saved, how will it turn out for the impious and the sinner?” [Prov. 11:31 LXX] 19 Therefore, let those who suffer according to the will of God dedicate, consecrate, and by living a life of well doing entrust their souls to God, who is our trustworthy Creator.

Counsel to the Adults (5:1–4)

1 Being an elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ and who am also a partaker with you of the future glory that shall be revealed, I call upon the elders among you: 2 Feed the flock of God in your midst, watching over them not by compulsion but voluntarily, as God has instructed; and not for shameful money but eagerly; 3 and not lording over those entrusted to you but by being examples to the flock. 4 And when the High Shepherd shall appear, you will receive a crown of glory that shall never fade or wither away.

Counsel to Youth (5:5a)

5 In the same spirit, youth, stand arrayed behind your leaders.