

## Why do we do what we do?

- Why do we do what we do?
  - whole range of things come into play...
  - **emotions** - how we are feeling, happy, sad, excited, scared, grumpy, put-upon...
  - **habits** - how we are in the habit of reacting, routines, up-bringing...
  - **expectations** - what other people think of us, what we think would be appropriate in the group we are in...
  - **choice** - decisions we make, from conviction, from self-interest, from expediency...
- All of these, and probably other things as well, mix together to make us do the things we do
  - for each of us there is probably a different mix - some of us conscious of emotion, others of habits, others of expectations, other of our choices...

## The Choice (v.1)

- This is a passage about a choice
  - a single choice, but an on-going, a wide-ranging, a life-shaping choice
  - **Its right there in verse 1: "arm yourselves also with the same attitude"**
    - Peter's first readers had a choice - we have a choice - **to take his advice, or to reject it and choose a different path?**
- But what is the choice?
  - **"arm yourselves also with the same attitude"**
  - what does that actually mean?
- First of all, **"same attitude"**:
  - clearly the same attitude as Christ - but what was his attitude?
  - its tied to his bodily suffering - but what? Masochism?
  - no, critically it is his attitude to sin - see the end of v.1
  - **we are to have the same attitude that Jesus had to sin**
- Which was...?!?
  - he would not sin, he chose at every turn to resist temptation, he hated sin, he resisted it even when the result was suffering - indeed, dreadful torture and suffering on the Cross
- **Sin is rebellion against God, and dreadfully poisons our relationship with God, marring his perfect universe**
- Second bit of the phrase: **"arm yourselves"**:
  - take up a weapon, something to be used in combat
  - so this attitude of resistance to sin, of the seriousness of sin, of hatred of sin is something we are to **arm** ourselves with
  - we are to consciously adopt a particular attitude
- But hold on - isn't attitude something you end up having, not something you choose to have?
  - don't you end up having a positive attitude to exercise, say, because your parents did, or your teachers did, or something like that?
  - well, perhaps partly, but choice plays its part too!
  - choice plays its part too - we choose how we react to our past experience, and we can be convinced by something outwith our past experience (eg, with exercise, medical advice, say) to adopt a particular attitude
- **So we are being asked to choose to hate sin, resist sin, know the seriousness of sin, to the point where we will suffer**

## Consequences of The Choice (vs.1b-6)

- *Not necessarily immediate or complete consequences, but these consequences will flow as we choose to hate/resist sin to the point of suffering, because of Jesus*

### Done with sin (v.1b)

- cf done with drugs or alcohol
  - has, in time, less of a hold...

### Lives for the will of God (v.2)

- Positively, goal is pleasing God; his will is my desire...
  - we want what God wants - people to come to know God, truth to be told, relationships to be positive and up-building, poor to be cared for, the sinned against to be defended, justice to be done...

### Different perspective from those around us (vs.3-5)

- There will, as a result, be a gulf between us and those around us - in what we do and how we evaluate what is important
  - Peter was writing to a situation where what pagans (non Christians) did was give full reign to "debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry"
  - this was what the Christians had previously done
  - but now there was a gulf - so those who had not become Christians viewed them as odd! (v.4)
  - there should be evidence of this gulf in our lives too - perhaps if you are a student during Freshers Week that list might apply directly - but for all a gulf: accumulating possessions? leisure pleasure (entertainment, TV, music, DVDs...), even family - good, but the best?
  - finally, the gulf is deeper than mere changes in behaviour or attitude here on earth - the gulf is one that will be seen most clearly when they have to give account to God for their actions

### Different evaluation in the judgement of God (v.6)

- Context - what happens to those who have died but who were Christians?
  - they are judged according to men in regard to the body - they die
  - but live according to God in regard to the spirit - they are now with God in heaven!
- Sin has no ultimate hold on them, because they chose to place their trust in Jesus Christ, they (began to here on earth) kill off sin within them through the Holy Spirit - and now they are completely done with it

## Spelling out The Choice (vs.7-11)

### Praying (v.7)

- Choose to pray - to give time to that, to give priority to that, to sense it is important and turn to God in it

### Loving (v.8)

- Choose to care for one another, to build one another up

### Welcoming (v.9)

- Choose to give hospitality, to welcome people - for meals, to stay, to church, to include people in conversations...

### Using gifts (v.10)

- All been given gifts by God, some natural and some supernatural - point here is that we choose to use them to serve others, not for our own glory or fulfilment

### Speaking (v.11)

- Choose to speak the words that God would speak - not sniping, not criticising, rather building up, encouraging, truth telling...

### Serving (v.11)

- Serve in God's strength:
  - hugely important note to finish on - our choice, God's strength!

## Conclusion

- Are we done with sin? Do we want to be? Will we pray, love, welcome...