

There is an ancient story about **Alexander III of Macedon** commonly known as **Alexander the Great**, was a king of the [ancient Greek](#) kingdom of [Macedon](#). Alexander the Great once, standing on top of a hill, watched as his army engaged in a fierce battle with the enemy. After a while, he noticed that one of his soldiers had fled the battlefield and ran towards the nearby forest. He immediately sent several of his horsemen to capture the deserter and bring him to him. When they brought this warrior, he noticed that he was still a very young boy. Alexander asked: "What is your name, lad?" "Alexander," the young man answered quietly and frightened. Alexander was silent for a while, and then he said: "Young man, you need to do one of two things - change your Name or change your life"

This story clearly illustrates that if you bear the name of your king, then your life must live up to that name. If you call yourself a Christian, you must live a life worthy of that name.

As Alexander the Great had a Demand for the young man, Christ Jesus has a demand for us, Christians to live a life worthy of his name. Our lives have to be radically different from the world around us. Our ethical and moral purity is the demand of our King.

Let us read the text. Please open your Bibles with me on 1 Peter 3:21. We will finish chapter 3 and read the entire chapter 4. Please pay attention and think deeply as you listen to the every word from here

### **(Slide 1) Demand for the purity in the trenches 1 Peter 3: 21 - 4:19 (NIV)**

1Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because whoever suffers in the body is done with sin. 2As a result, they do not live the rest of their earthly lives for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God. 3For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do—living in debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry. 4They are surprised that you do not join them in their reckless, wild living, and they heap abuse on you. 5But they will have to give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. 6For this is the reason the gospel was preached even to those who are now dead, so that they might be judged according to human standards in regard to the body, but live according to God in regard to the spirit.

7The end of all things is near. Therefore be alert and of sober mind so that you may pray. 8Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. 9Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. 10Each of you should

use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. 11If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

12Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. 13But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. 14If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. 15If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler. 16However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name. 17For it is time for judgment to begin with God's household; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God? 18And,

“If it is hard for the righteous to be saved,  
what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?”

19So then, those who suffer according to God's will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good.

Today I want us to do a very simple thing. I want to ask 3 questions, and find answers on these questions in the Chapter four we just read. Yes, you my dear brothers and sisters, live in a different world than we are living in Ukraine. It is also true that Christians that lived in the first century in the Roman empire lived in even more different world than both Ukrainians and Americans live today. However, God

has to say to me and you today something equally important to the first century

Christians reading and listening to these words

So Here is the first question.

**( Slide 2) Question # 1. Are there invisible differences between a christian and a pagan?**  
Yes!!!!

The world in which Christians lived there, religiously wise, was a pagan world. Christians lived with and among pagan people. It is impossible to look inside of human heart. There are things that make us very different from the worldly people, even they are invisible for our eyes and can not be heard by an ear.

Gods word says that there is a clear difference. So, First

**(slide 3)**

- **Attitudes for the suffering are different 1 Peter 4:1:**
  - **For the pagan it has no good sense and meaning.**

For Pagan then and for today's worldly person - suffering is always evil. Suffering has to be avoided at no cost. It can not be valued as something glorious, as something that shows power and has a good sense and meaning. For the pagan worshiper all the purpose of the worshiping to gods was to try to please them r protection and escape any suffering. All of them believed in the Prosperity Gospel. That is why for them suffering on the cross Messiah, the Savior of the world was the most stupid, foolish and crazy idea, one would ever imagine. Even for the Jews suffering was always a curse from God for mistreating his Laws and a payment for one's sins. However,.
  - **For the Christian it has a good purpose, and therefore a great sense and meaning.**

read the verse one, Sufferings of Jesus had been the powerful power to redeem the World, to conquer the power sin and death. That same way bodily sufferings do something in a Christian. They turn you and me away from sin. I so a brother in Reya, who suffered cancer. It was so hard to see him slowly dying. However, how much this suffering helped him to change his life. He came to the Lord through the suffering. His previous life was a big ruin because of alcohol. His health was destroyed and turn him and his family to the poverty. Then he heard the Gospel and met Christians from our church who served them. His life changed. God healed him and they started to live better. Then Sin again had a power over him and he was struggling with it, then he found out he has a cancer. This suffering pushed him to the Lord so close. He became a very different person. His life, his family relationships, his commitment to the Lord and had changed.

What else even invisible still makes a Christian different from a worldly person?

**(slide 4)**

- **Passions and motives are different 1 Peter 4:2:**

- **A non christian lives for his/her evil human desires**

Peter in the second verse does it black and white picture. He says that Christians today, in the past lived for evil human passions. In the contemporary world people tend to think more positively about human kind. They believe that people in general are good, they are just broken and needy. And if we can fulfill their needs. If we will somehow help them repair their past, we will make them better version of themselves. No, Jesus and Apostles saw people as those that are full of "evil human desires". Every person and not just some of us have evil human desires. Sin lives in us and it produces these desires and people are following these desires. They are hidden. These true desires are often are so evil, that they are not only hidden from other people, they are unnoticed by a person. Thats happens so often, that we ourselves find ourselves proving ourselves, we are good people, and our desires are pure, good and holy. however we see, that a

- **A christian lives for God's holy desires**

He lives for God's will. He is doing God's will, not his own. You may say, Oh I wish that was true about me. Far not everyone who is claiming to be a Christian live solly for the will of God. Homan evil desires do not disappear, when you become a committed disciple of Jesus Christ, they simply are being occupied by the power of Christ in you. You find freedom from sin, after you went through the turmoil of suffering. You learned the lesson that the way you can escape from those destroying passions is the full commitment to the Lord and his gracious presence of th Holy Spirit that will give you a strong desire to live for the will of God.

I have a second question:

**(slide 5)**

**Question # 2 Are there visible differences between a christian and a pagan? Oh, Yes!!!**

An attitudes and passions you can not see, they are invisible. However, every visible life flows out of those hidden attitudes and passions. So

**(slide 6)**

- **Behavior is different 1 Peter 4:3-4, 7-11**

**(slide 7)**

- **A pagan person lives in**

- **debauchery,**
- **lust,**
- **drunkenness,**
- **orgies,**
- **idolatry,**
- **reckless and wild living.**

Of course, this is far from being a full list of the sins and vices of humanity. Peter could continue much longer. But look it doesn't mean this people had nothing good in them. It is I think that same way today. You may meet many non Christian people that visually live a moral and ethical life. I came out of the non Christian environment as a child. My family was not christian. Fighting and physical abuse was considered normal. Sexual lust was praised, drunkenness was part of our culture. Orgies - at that time I was too young to see that. But I know what happens, when people get drunk on the parties. These things go together. I have

escaped many of these things myself, just because I became a Christian in my early age. I would have done many crazy things if I wasn't captured by Christ. I remember like my non christian friends have been accusing me in not being with them anymore in the things i have taught them to do. I was just 10-12 years old boy and already then I had many things I had to stop doing. I was a big liar. I was disobedient to my mother, I smoked, My words have been so dirty and already at that age my behavior and my lifestyle was so far away from a christian. Can you imagine if I continue to go that same way, what would happen with me later. I would certainly try alcohol and I would certainly would try to get any woman i could for my own pleasure. Oh, I do not want even think what kind of man would I become if Christ wouldn't come into my life and if I wouldn't follow him and his way. I would be like the worst of my friends. My life would be a ruin already in the early age. I am 100 percent sure. I am a follower of jesus Christ for almost 30 years already. Even during my life with Christ, my evil human passions took ove me, and I did things i regret and which I had to repent again and again. What would be with me if i had no Jesus as my master, and my beloved Savior. How far would I go in my sin if the Holy Spirit would not live in me and convict me in my sin? Friend, no one knows better how sinful you are except you. If you feel being descolated, broken inside, like a ancient city without a wall around it. If you feel being robbed of the purity you once had when you have been a a little child. I want to tell you something. Jesus may give it to you today. He can wipe out all your sins. You may clear your conscience out of you sins. He wants to do it for you and he wants to give you a totally different life.

If we look several verses below we will see how should live and behave christian people. This is of course is not full list of what Christians should do and how shoud they live. However these are the things, that a nonchristian world should see in us as christians right away. If they do not see this difference in us, they do not see Christ in us. W

**(slide 8)**

- A Christian person:
  - not do anything listed above,
  - is alert and of sober mind,
  - loves others deeply,
  - is hospitable without grumbling,
  - uses his gifts to serve others,
  - speaks the Word of God,
  - serves others with the strength provided by God.

**(slide 9)**

- They are suffering differently and for different reasons
  - A pagan's sufferings are the consequences of his/her passions and sins
  - A Christian sufferings are the consequences of his/her beliefs and holy behavior

**(slide 10)**

**Question # 3** Is there a difference in how christian and a pagan will be treated at the judgement?

**(slide 11)** if it is too much for one slide you can make 3 slides

- Both (a Christian and a pagan) will be judged at God's Judgment.
- First will be judged those who obeyed the gospel of God. They will be declared righteous and will be saved!

- Second will be judged those who didn't obey the gospel of God. They will be declared ungodly and condemned!

### **Concluding questions**

#### **(Slide 12)**

- Have you obeyed the Gospel?
- Did you repent of your sins?
- Have your inner attitudes, values, motives have been changed?
- Has your life been purified in your baptism in the name of Jesus Christ?
- Do you behave like a Christian?

If you can not answer with a strong "yes" on these questions, I beg you to

#### **(Slide 13)**

obey the Gospel of Jesus today in a prayer now.

If you have answered with a strong "Yes" on my questions, I want to leave for you the last verse of the 4th chapter.

#### **(Slide 14)**

"So then, those who suffer accordingly to God's will should commit themselves to their faithful creator and continue to do good" 1 Peter 4:19

#### **(Slide 15)**

"To Him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen." 1 Peter 4:11

Life of the Christian person