

EXILES

“Live Ready”

Sermon Recap

Drawing from 1 Peter 4:1–8, Pastor Jared’s message calls believers living as “exiles” in a broken and sometimes hostile world to arm themselves with the same attitude and mindset that Christ possessed. Just as Jesus suffered physically, Christians should not be surprised by hardship or persecution, nor should they assume that suffering means God is angry with them. Instead, believers are urged to prepare like Roman soldiers putting on body armor—not with weapons, but with the resolute expectation that following Jesus involves self-denial and standing firm when the watching world misunderstands or slanders them.

The sermon addresses the reality of human suffering, noting that pain enters our lives through personal sin, the sin of others, or simply the brokenness of living in a fallen world. To combat acute, long-standing sin struggles, Pastor Jared emphasizes that trying harder or “white-knuckling” temptation is ineffective. True victory requires starving the flesh through spiritual disciplines like fasting and prayer while actively redirecting our affections toward Christ. Quoting German theologian and drawing on the metaphor of subduing the internal emotional child, the message highlights that only a Christ-seeking, sin-avoiding life leads to true abundance.

Looking toward eternity, the message reminds the congregation that eternity is rapidly approaching and that mortality remains at one hundred percent. While salvation is received freely by grace through faith alone in Jesus Christ, the sermon stresses that every person will also give an account to God for how they lived their lives. Grounded in the enduring hope of the resurrection—famously captured in the hymn “Because He Lives” by Bill and Gloria Gaither—believers are encouraged not to be anxious or tossed by cultural circumstances. Instead, with the end drawing near, the church is called to be earnest and disciplined in prayer and, most importantly, to continue showing deep, enduring love for one another.

Because he lives, you can face tomorrow.

Discussion Questions

Arming Yourself with the Mind of Christ

Pastor Jared explains that Peter uses military language in 1 Peter 4:1 to tell believers to arm themselves with an attitude prepared for suffering. Why does Peter argue that following Jesus involves suffering, and how does adopting Christ’s mindset change the way you respond when

you face hardships or opposition? Reflect on a current trial in your life and discuss how focusing on Jesus' victory can help you stand firm instead of assuming God is upset with you.

Confronting Acute Sin Struggles

The message highlights that overcoming long-term temptation is not about white-knuckling or trying harder, but about starving the flesh and redirecting your affections toward Christ. What are some practical ways your group can help one another practice self-denial and spiritual disciplines like fasting and prayer to overcome acute sin struggles? Discuss what it means to let God be king over your daily desires rather than letting your inner emotional child take control.

Living with Eternity in View

Drawing from the statistic that over ninety percent of people who have ever lived are now in eternity, Pastor Jared emphasizes that eternity is racing toward us. How does keeping the reality of eternity and the coming day of judgment influence the daily choices you make with your time, resources, and relationships? Share how keeping your focus on the hope of the resurrection can give you courage and peace when facing uncertainty in the world.

Loving Deeply in a Divided Culture

Peter urges believers in 1 Peter 4:7-8 to be earnest and disciplined in their prayers and, most importantly, to continue showing deep love for each other because love covers a multitude of sins. In what ways can our church community actively practice deep, sacrificial love when cultural hostility and spiritual division are on the rise? Discuss one concrete step your small group or family can take this week to support one another and point others toward the hope found in Jesus.

Prayer 🙏

- May we arm ourselves with the attitude of Christ, preparing our minds to stand firm and endure suffering as exiles in this world rather than expecting an easy path.
- May we actively starve our acute sin struggles and redirect our deepest affections toward Jesus through self-denial and spiritual disciplines like fasting and prayer.
- May we live with a clear eternal perspective, recognizing that eternity is racing toward us and allowing the reality of our future accountability to shape our daily choices.
- May we be earnest and disciplined in our prayers, continuing to show deep love for one another as we wait expectantly for the return of Christ.
- May we anchor our daily lives and our hope for tomorrow in the unchanging power of Jesus's resurrection, knowing that because He lives, we can face whatever comes our way.