

## GOOD SINCE

### "SINCE CHRIST SUFFERED IN THE BODY"

#### 1 PETER 4:1-6

#### **This Week's Core Competency**

**Eternity** – I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish his eternal kingdom. John 14:1-4, *Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going.*

Of four key doctrinal concepts mentioned in the creed above—heaven, hell, judgment, and kingdom—Peter comments on the third, *judgment*, in his first epistle. Concerning unbelievers, whom he calls "pagans" (lit., "Gentiles), who are surprised by believers' refusal to run with them, he writes: "They will have to give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead" (1Pe 4:5).

His statement raises a couple of questions. First, to whom does "him" refer? In other words, before whom will these unbelievers appear? On the one hand, according to 1 Peter 1:17, it is *God the Father* who judges. He writes: "Since you call on a Father who judges each man's work impartially, live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear." One commentator argues that "Peter's own usage suggests that he intended God the Father as 'the One who stands ready to judge the living and the dead.'" His other uses of

***The Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son.***

– Jesus (Jn 5:22)

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attributive participles [i.e., the one who . . .] for a divine being—i.e., not only 'the One who judges' (1:17; 2:23), but 'the One [or the Holy One] who called you' (1:15; 2:9; 5:10), 'the One who gave us new birth' (1:3), and 'the One who raised him . . . and gave him glory' (1:21)—refer not to Jesus Christ but to God the Father" (J. Ramsey Michaels, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 49, *1 Peter*, 235). On the other hand, the three other New Testament passages that refer to judging "the living and the dead" make it clear that *Christ is the judge* (Acts 10:42; Rom 14:9; 2Ti 4:1). What's more, Jesus himself has said, "The Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son" (Jn 5:22). Perhaps, it's best to conclude that Peter isn't splitting hairs at this point in his letter, since the distinction between God and Christ is not of paramount importance to him here. In fact, "the promise and threat of divine judgment are just as effective—perhaps more so—when the circumstances and results of that judgment, and even the identity of the judge, are left only partially defined" (235).

Second, when will unbelievers "give account" (cf., Mt 12:36)? In other words, when will they appear before the judge? Peter makes it clear that all must appear, both "the living and the dead" (cf., Heb 12:23), but when? Here again, Peter isn't interested in splitting hairs; for him, suffice it to say that *all* will be judged. In fact, Christ's judgment of unbelievers will occur sequentially—at the beginning and the end of his millennial reign. When the king returns he will judge those who are alive on the earth, *the living*. The righteous will be left to enter his kingdom while the unrighteous will be taken away in judgment. Jesus tells his disciples in the Olivet Discourse: "As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. For in the days before the flood, people

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were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. Two men will be in the field; *one will be taken* and the other left. Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; *one will be taken* and the other left" (Mt 24:37-41). Not only will Israel be judged at that time but the nations also will be judged. Jesus goes on to tell his disciples: "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left" (Mt 25:31-33). The sheep will be welcomed into the kingdom, while the goats will be excluded from it. "They will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life" (v. 46).

At the end of his kingdom reign, the king will judge *the dead* imprisoned in Hades. They will be resurrected to stand before him. The apostle John describes this final judgment. He writes: "Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and the books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done. The death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death" (Rev 20:11-14).

## day 1 ENCOUNTER – read God's word to put yourself in touch with him.

### 1 Peter 4:1-6

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

### Cf., another translation

*1 Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same way of thinking, for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, 2 so as to live for the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for human passions but for the will of God. 3 For the time that is past suffices for doing what the Gentiles want to do, living in sensuality, passions, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and lawless idolatry. 4 With respect to this they are surprised when you do not join them in the same flood of debauchery, and they malign you; 5 but they will give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. 6 For this is why the gospel was preached even to those who are dead, that though judged in the flesh the way people are, they might live in the spirit the way God does. (ESV)*

## EXAMINE – what the passage says before you decide what it means.

- \* Box "therefore" indicating *result* in v. 1.
- \* Bracket "he who has suffered" in v. 1.
- \* Bracket "done with sin" in v. 1.
- \* Underline "rest of his earthly life" in v. 2 and "in the past" in v. 3.
- \* Box "but" indicating *contrast* in vv. 2, 5, 6.
- \* Box "for" indicating *reason* in v. 3.
- \* Circle "debauchery" in v. 3.
- \* Circle "they" in vv. 4, 5.
- \* Circle "dissipation" in v. 4.
- \* Bracket "the living and the dead" in v. 5.
- \* Bracket "who are now dead" in v. 6.
- \* Underline "according to men" in v. 6.

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## day 2

**EXPLORE** – the answer to these questions to better understand what the passage means.

Consult the explanation of the message and the notes to follow if you need help.

1. Defend the conclusion that "therefore," indicating *result*, links 4:1 to 3:18.
2. Compare "he who has suffered" (NIV) with "whoever has suffered" (ESV) and explain the difference.
3. Peter says that whoever is armed to suffer like Jesus for doing the will of God is "done with sin." How so?
4. Explain the *contrast* in verse 2.
5. Peter refers to "idolatry" as "detestable" in verse 3. Why?
6. Illustrate the truth of verse 4 from personal experience.
7. Identify the judge alluded to in verse 5.
8. Does verse 6 teach that people will have a second chance to be saved after death? Explain *why* or *why not*.
9. **Discussion:** Talk about the meaning of the *contrast* in verse 6.

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## day 3 **EXAMINE** – an explanation of the message to better understand the meaning of the passage.

One commentator captures the gist of Peter's thinking expressed in 1 Peter 4:1-6 and puts it well with these words: "What are the practical implications for Christians of Christ's suffering and consequent triumph over death and the powers of evil? Recalling the opening of this section, back in 3:18, Peter reverts to the death of Christ. This is the example that believers should follow. They must turn their backs on the immoral practices of their pagan neighbors, formerly their own life-style, and wholeheartedly follow their Master by copying him. Christ suffered in his body, that is, he gave his all, including his very life, in carrying out the will of God. His followers must resolve to go to the same lengths" (Norman Hillyer, *1 and 2 Peter, Jude*, NIBC, 120).

Verses 1-6 comprise one paragraph in the NIV, suggesting that together they express a unified idea. That idea is clearly connected by "therefore," indicating *result* in verse 1, to what Peter has just written. Commentators agree that the apostle is drawing a conclusion from verse 18 of chapter 3. The close connection between this verse and the opening thought of chapter 4 is evident when the two are read together: "For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God . . . Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because he who has suffered in his body is done with sin." And while the unified idea is not expressed in so many words, it clearly unfolds in verses 1-3.

According to verse 1, Christians are to have the same attitude as Christ (cf., Php 2:5), who was willing to suffer for doing good. The military metaphor Peter uses, "arm yourselves," suggests that believers are engaged in spiritual warfare as was their Savior. "He who has suffered" should be understood in the generic or proverbial sense, "whoever has suffered" (ESV), since Peter is suggesting that any believer who chooses to do good like Jesus, even if it entails suffering, has made a clean break with sin, or in other words, "has acted in a way which shows that obeying God, not avoiding hardship, is the most important motivation for his or her action" (Wayne Grudem, *1 Peter*, TNTC, 167). "As a result" indicates that verse 2 specifies a *consequence* of being "done with sin." The believer who has turned from sin "does not live the rest of his earthly life for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God." Peter uses "but" (*Gk alla*) to indicate the strong contrast between these two ways of life. One pastor and

commentator writes: "If we do the will of God, then we will invest 'the rest of our time' in that which is lasting and satisfying; but if we give in to the world around us, we will waste 'the rest of our time' and regret it when we stand before Jesus" (Warren W. Wiersbe, "1 Peter," in *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, 2:420). And then in verse 3, the apostle gives the rationale for this radical change in the believer's life: "For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do . . ." Put differently, enough is enough! Believers spent enough time living in sin before they were saved, and now that they're saved and refuse to run with their pagan pack, former friends "heap abuse" on them and in so doing blaspheme their Savior. In a nutshell, Peter tells his readers they are to arm themselves with the attitude of Christ so they might live the rest of their lives in obedience to the will of God because they've spent enough time already doing what unsaved people do.

Verses 4 and 5 contain the apostle's comments on the pagan pack, i.e., their judgment of their former friends and God's judgment of them. First, he says they think it strange that their former pack members will no longer run with them. The same pastor writes: "Unsaved people do not understand the radical change that their friends experience when they trust Christ and become children of God. They do not think it strange when people wreck their bodies, destroy their homes, and ruin their lives by running from one sin to another! But let a drunkard become sober, or an immoral person pure, and the family thinks he has lost his mind!" (420). Then using *contrast* Peter says God will turn the tables on them. One day those who judged will be judged. As judge and jury, they had condemned and punished their former friends, but one day "they will have to give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead." One day they will stand before Christ, whom they blasphemed when they excoriated his followers, to answer for their "debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry" because he has been appointed by the Father to judge every person—the *living* when he returns and the *dead* following the kingdom age.

As far as verse 6 is concerned, one commentator calls it "merely a footnote to v 5" (J. Ramsey Michaels, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 49, *1 Peter*, 235). In other words, its contested meaning is not critical to the message of the passage as a whole. That

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said, Peter's point seems to be that the gospel was preached to the living, so that those who believed, even though they may have died physically like all do, might live spiritually like God does. One commentator explains this obscure verse this way: "The NIV has 'those who are now dead'. The fact that they died should not trouble the minds of those left alive, for, short of the second coming of Christ, the gospel was never intended to save people from physical death. All people, both

Christians and non-Christians, still have to die physically (and this is the apparent meaning of *judged in the flesh like men*). But even *though* they are *judged in the flesh like men* (the judgment of death which came with the sin of Adam still affects them as it does all men), the gospel of Christ *was preached* to them so that *they might live in the spirit like God*. It was with respect to the final judgment ('for this reason', referring to v. 5) that the gospel was preached, and it will save them from final condemnation" (Grudem, 171)

## *The Message of the Passage*

*Having lived in sin long enough, now that you're saved, arm yourself with the attitude of Christ, so that you may live the rest of your life in obedience to the will of God, even if doing so entails suffering.*

### day **4** **EMBRACE** – how God spoke to you in his word.

Our desire is to not be merely hearers of the word, but doers of the word as James teaches in James 1:22. Reflect on 3 *living questions* to apply what you have learned this week.

- **Journal your answers to the following *living questions*:**

–How is God making himself known to you?

–How does God want to change you?

–How is God calling you to change your world?

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## notes **N** STUDY – the commentaries to answer the questions.

- v. 1 **therefore** "The [*oun*, trans. therefore] suggests that Peter is now drawing a conclusion from 3:18-22, yet the conclusion is based not on the whole passage but solely on 3:18" (Michaels, 225).
- v. 1 **arm yourselves** "The NT makes use of military metaphors, for Christians are involved in spiritual warfare (Rom. 6:13; 13:12; 2 Cor. 6:7; 10:4; Eph. 6:11-17; 1 Thess. 5:8; 1 Tim. 1:18; 6:12; 2 Tim. 2:4; Rev. 12:17)" (Hillyer, 123).
- v. 1 **he who has suffered** Cf., "whoever suffers" (NIV 2011); "whoever has suffered" (ESV, NRSV, cf., GNT); "the one who has suffered" (NET). Peter's referent may be general or specific. "Some argue that Peter has in mind only the inevitable transfer (seen here as a suffering death) from a sinful to a saved state that takes place at conversion (or baptism), as can be seen in Paul (cf. Rom. 6:1-12) and John (1 John 5:18-19) [see Roger M. Raymer, "1 Peter," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament*, 852, and Thomas L. Constable, "Notes on 1 Peter," 2017 ed., 62, www.soniclight.com]. Others contend that Peter is dealing more generically: The one who suffers physically learns from such experiences not to sin but to value the obedient life. A variation of this second view is that the one who suffers has chosen to break definitively from sin [see Grudem, 166-67]. A final view particularizes the phrase 'he who has suffered' so that it refers only to the suffering of Christ [see Michaels, 225-27, and Hillyer, 120]. That is, 'he who has suffered' is Christ, and he is the example to whom Peter is appealing. In this context, 'is done with sin' means that Christ did away with sin" (Scot McKnight, *The NIV Application Commentary: 1 Peter*, 225). "Since Peter has moved in this verse from Christ ('since Christ suffered in his body') to Christians ('arm yourselves also with the same attitude'), it makes more sense to think he is still speaking of Christians in the next clause ('because he who has suffered in his body is done with sin'). Furthermore, the use of 'is done with sin' for describing the work of Christ is unusual and inconsistent with Peter's other expressions for the achievements of the cross (cf. 1:18; 2:21, 24; 3:18). Finally, 4:2 goes on to explain the Christian's subsequent life; this suggests Peter has the Christian (not Christ) in mind at 4:1b" (McKnight, 225).
- v. 1 **done with sin** This does not mean, "no longer sins at all" . . . The person who chooses to do good even when it entails suffering makes a clean break with sin. "It means 'has most definitely acted in a way which shows that obeying God, not avoiding hardship, is the most important motivation for his or her action'" (Grudem, 167).
- v. 3 **debauchery** The Greek word [*aselgeia*] "is living without any regard for moral restraint, especially in giving oneself over to acts of sexual immorality or acts of physical violence (the same word is used in Rom. 13:13; Gal. 5:19; Eph. 4:19; 2 Pet. 2:7 [of Sodom]; 2:18; Philo, *Moses* 1.305)" (168).
- v. 3 **detestable idolatry** Cf., "lawless idolatry" (ESV, HCSB); "abominable idolatries" (NASB, NKJV). "Lawless here must rather mean 'against the civil laws'—implying particularly evil kinds of idol worship which involved or incited people to kinds of immorality even forbidden by the laws of human governments" (Grudem, 169).
- v. 4 **dissipation** Cf., "the same flood of *wild living*" (CSB); "the same *wild and reckless living*" (GNT); "the same flood of *unrestrained wickedness*" (CEB). "*The same wild profligacy* [RSV] is literally 'the same rapid pouring out of unrestrained indulgence' or 'the same torrent of debauchery' (NIV: 'that you do not plunge with them into the same flood of dissipation'). The word translated *profligacy* (*asotia*) refers to uncontrolled indulgence in the seeking of pleasure (the same word is used in Eph. 5:18, and the related adverb is used of the 'loose living' of the prodigal son in Lk. 15:13—it suggests wastefulness, perhaps both of money and of life). The whole picture is one of people rushing headlong toward destruction" (169).
- v. 5 **the living and the dead** Cf., Ac 10:42. "This stereotyped expression is simply a way of saying 'all' (cf. 'the God and judge of all,' Heb 12:23, or 'each person' (cf., 1:17, 'according to each person's work'))" (Michaels, 235).
- v. 6 **who are now dead** Peter refers here to Christians who died physically as a result of sin just like all mortals do but who live spiritually as a result of believing the gospel that had been preached to them before they died. "In other words, 'It was because of the coming final judgment that the gospel was preached, even to those who believed in Christ and then later died.' In this way the dead means 'those who are now dead' (when Peter was writing), though when the gospel was preached to them they were still living on the earth" (Grudem, 170; see Hillyer, 124 and Edwin A. Blum, "1 Peter," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, 12:245).
- v. 6 **according to men** Cf., "judged in the flesh the way people are, they might live in the spirit the way God does" (ESV). "**Judged according to men** could perhaps relate to judgment at the hands of the civil authorities that Christians (now dead) had suffered during their days on earth. This might also suggest that some believers had therefore died as martyrs. Or the phrase may simply be a reference to the experience of death through which all human beings have to pass (Rom. 5:12; Heb. 9:27)" (Hillyer, 124).
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### Family Talk

#### Encouragement from one parent's heart to another

By God's grace, the western church has not experienced the persecution that our brothers and sisters have in other parts of the world. For the most part, we are free to express our faith openly and without restraint. However, there will likely be a day when that changes. In describing the events of the end times, Jesus said "Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me" (Mt 24:9). While we are not there yet, we do face being misunderstood, rejected and ridiculed when we stand up for righteousness. As adults we face this in our workplaces and in the community. Our kids may be experiencing the same thing in school and in their extracurricular activities. My son has been mocked more than once for reading his Bible in public school. How can we prepare our kids for the day of persecution? (1) Pray. Ask God to protect them and help them to be bold as they head out the door each day. Praying out loud with your kids every day before school will encourage them and let them know that God and you are on their side. (2) Model righteous living. Are we, as parents rejecting sin in our lives and choosing to live for God in spite of what others may think or say? Our kids are empowered when they see us live boldly for Christ.

#### What Does The Bible Say

Weekly Verse: Read 1 Peter 4:1-6

1. According to verse 1, who is our example to following when suffering?
2. How are you supposed to live (verse 2)?
3. To whom will we all "give account to" for the way we have lived?

#### What Do You Think

Every day we have a choice. We can either live for God or choose to sin. What do you do when you're tempted to sin? How can remembering how Jesus suffered help us when we are made fun of for choosing to do right?

#### What R U Going To Do

With your parent's permission and help, go to [www.kidsofcourage.com](http://www.kidsofcourage.com). This is a great website about kids who live in parts of the world where the gospel is restricted. Find stories, recipes and games and remember to pray for them!

#### Core Comp

Eternity - I believe in heaven and hell and that one day Jesus will come again.

#### Memory Verse

John 1:3 - *Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.*

### KIDPIX COUPON

I memorized my verse \_\_\_\_\_, completed *Scrolls* \_\_\_\_\_, brought Bible \_\_\_\_\_, brought a friend \_\_\_\_\_.

Series Discipleship Challenge located in KidPix Store.

Child's name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_ Parent's signature \_\_\_\_\_

Earn 1 token by completing the PantegoKids Bible study and another token by reciting the memory verse.

Questions: [Kids@pantego.org](mailto:Kids@pantego.org)

# 30 CORE COMPETENCIES

## 10 CORE BELIEFS

### **Trinity** *2 Corinthians 13:14*

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

### **Salvation By Grace** *Ephesians 2:8-9*

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

### **Authority of the Bible** *2 Timothy 3:16-17*

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

### **Personal God** *Psalms 121:1-2*

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

### **Identity in Christ** *John 1:12*

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

### **Church** *Ephesians 4:15-16*

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

### **Humanity** *John 3:16*

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

### **Compassion** *Psalms 82:3-4*

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

### **Eternity** *John 14:1-4*

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

### **Stewardship** *1 Timothy 6:17-19*

I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God.

## 10 CORE PRACTICES

### **Worship** *Psalms 95:1-7*

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

### **Prayer** *Psalms 66:16-20*

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

### **Bible Study** *Hebrews 4:12*

I read the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

### **Single-mindedness** *Matthew 6:33*

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

### **Spiritual Gifts** *Romans 12:4-6*

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

### **Biblical Community** *Acts 2:44-47*

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

### **Giving Away My Time** *Colossians 3:17*

I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

### **Giving Away My Money**

#### *2 Corinthians 8:7*

I give away my money to fulfill God's purposes.

### **Giving Away My Faith** *Ephesians*

#### *6:19-20*

I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

### **Giving Away My Life** *Romans 12:1*

I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

## 10 CORE VIRTUES

### **Joy** *John 15:11*

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

### **Peace** *Philippians 4:6-7*

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself, and others.

### **Faithfulness** *Proverbs 3:3-4*

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

### **Self-Control** *Titus 2:11-13*

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

### **Humility** *Philippians 2:3, 4*

I choose to esteem others above myself.

### **Love** *1 John 4:10-12*

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

### **Patience** *Proverbs 14:29*

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

### **Kindness/Goodness** *1 Thess. 5:15*

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

### **Gentleness** *Philippians 4:5*

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

### **Hope** *Hebrews 6:19-20*

I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ.

## About the Authors

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**Wendy Hollabaugh** (B.S.W. University of Texas at Arlington) is the Children's Minister at Pantego Bible Church. Wendy has over ten years of experience in Children's Ministry. She has a passion for leading families to connect with God and each other. She enjoys creating compelling environments where kids fall in love with God and His Truth. Wendy and her husband, Greg, are also involved in their own personal youth ministry as they are training their three teenagers, Hannah, Aaron and Noah.



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