

1 Peter – Week 17

Trusting God for the Best

1 Peter 3:8 Finally, all [of you] should be of one and the same mind (united in spirit), sympathizing [with one another], loving [each other] as brethren [of one household], compassionate and courteous (tenderhearted and humble). 9 Never return evil for evil or insult for insult (scolding, tongue-lashing, berating), but on the contrary blessing [praying for their welfare, happiness, and protection, and truly pitying and loving them]. For know that to this you have been called, that you may yourselves inherit a blessing [from God--that you may obtain a blessing as heirs, bringing welfare and happiness and protection]. 10 For let him who wants to enjoy life and see good days [good--whether apparent or not] keep his tongue free from evil and his lips from guile (treachery, deceit). 11 Let him turn away from wickedness and shun it, and let him do right. Let him search for peace (harmony; undisturbed-ness from fears, agitating passions, and moral conflicts) and seek it eagerly. [Do not merely desire peaceful relations with God, with your fellowmen, and with yourself, but pursue, go after them!] 12 For the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous (those who are upright and in right standing with God), and His ears are attentive to their prayer. But the face of the Lord is against those who practice evil [to oppose them, to frustrate, and defeat them]. [Ps 34:12-16.] 13 Now who is there to hurt you if you are zealous followers of that which is good? 14 But even in case you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, [you are] blessed (happy, to be envied). Do not dread or be afraid of their threats, nor be disturbed [by their opposition]. 15 But in your hearts set Christ apart as holy [and acknowledge Him] as Lord. Always be ready to give a logical defense to anyone who asks you to account for the hope that is in you, but do it courteously and respectfully.

- When trials come, Peter is going to tell us to PREPARE for the best, instead of waiting for the worst.
- Sometimes we get bad news from a doctor, or something else like that and our NATURE is to prepare for the worst and hope for the best.
- So far Peter has talked about the fiery trials that the new church would experience, and then he moves into one of the greatest trials of life----MARRIAGE.
- Notice this about Peter: he has remained optimistic and POSITIVE in what he is teaching us.

How to Experience the Best in the Worst of Times

- Cultivate and work at Christian LOVE
 - Peter really understood UNCONDITIONAL love because there was a time that was just what he needed and received from Christ.
 - Is it not remarkable that in Peter we see how PATIENT Jesus was with him?
 - Love for God's PEOPLE
Loving is not just a command, it's paying a DEBT.
 - Love through UNITY in mind

It is cooperation in the midst of DIVERSITY.

- The evidence of Christian love is COMPASSION. The English word for compassion really means SYMPATHY.
- Love shows itself in biblical PITY. Pity: “a TENDERNESS of heart towards the afflicted”
- Being courteous to others will always require a HUMBLE spirit.
- Love shows itself by how you react and pray for your ENEMIES.

Three levels of response to people who hate us:

1. We can return evil for good which is a SATANIC level
 2. We can return good for good or evil for evil, and that is a HUMAN level
 3. We can return good for evil which is a DIVINE level
- The world screams for JUSTICE when life is hard, but the Christian responds with MERCY.

Peter's Directives to Us Today

- ❖ We are called to love God, love our enemies, love one another, and love LIFE.

Loving others and loving life is clearly a CHOICE of man's will.

We have three choices:

1. We can ENDURE life and make it a burden and play the victim.
2. We can ESCAPE life as if we are afraid and on the run from a battle.
3. Or we can ENJOY life because we know God is in control.

- ❖ We should learn to control our TONGUE.
Wrong words in the hands of a wrong SPIRIT will always bring a wrong result.

- ❖ We must do good and HATE evil.

- ❖ We must seek and pursue PEACE.

Final Thoughts

- Christians should ENDEAVOR to be of one mind in the great points of faith, in real affection, and in Christian practice.
- Though Christians cannot be exactly of the same mind, yet they should have COMPASSION and love for one another.
- Christianity requires pity to the distressed, and RESPECT to all that God has made.