

## 1 Peter Introduction – Part D

### [1 Peter 1](#) – What Salvation is All About

### [1 Peter 2](#) – Living Out the Christian Life

### [1 Peter 3](#) - How to Be a Blessing to Others

One of the major objectives of the Christian life is to live in such a way that our life becomes a godly blessing to other people. For some people, they may never like Christians at all. There is an almost kind of built in cultural and political antagonism to Christianity, but even within that framework people still have the opportunity of seeing someone genuinely live out the Christian life. As was mentioned in the overview of [1 Peter 2](#), everyone is watching, and for some of those people, what they see in a believer's life will often have a very meaningful impact on them. It may not always be apparent and it may not always be immediate, but that does not negate the reality of how God may be using a fully committed believer in someone else's life completely unknown to the believer himself.

However, what cannot be lost in this overview of [1 Peter](#) is that all of these truths are against the backdrop of living in a world that is very hostile to Christianity. I read this past week that Christianity was the number one persecuted religion in the world in 2016 with more Christians martyred for their faith in Christ than any other religion. In 2016 there were over 90,000 Christians killed for their faith. That averages out to be over 250 Christians martyred every day simply because they have entrusted their life to Christ. The hostility is growing and does not appear that it will be getting any better.

Now, one thing that needs to be clearly emphasized is that what will be addressed in this part of the study is that we are not talking about being good. We should do good things, right things. We should be honest, kind, gracious, caring, loving, and anything else that Scripture encourages us to do. However, the issue of [1 Peter](#) is not about being good, but simply about being godly. The difference between the two is generally the difference between spiritual life and spiritual death. So, whatever exhortations that Peter is going to address to us are not designed to make us nice people, but to help us become incredibly Christ-like in everything that we do. Now, without sounding overly pessimistic, gloomy, or even cynical about God's work in a believer's life, the will of God for our life may not always fit with what we are looking for in our Christian life. The will of God, just because it is good, right, perfect, and holy, does not guarantee that it will be pleasant and enjoyable. To the contrary, it may create high levels of conflict, tension, and struggles for the believer. Just ask Job or Jeremiah. Just ask Paul. Just ask Christ. Just ask any Christian that is facing constant persecution. I have to say at this point that the charismatic movement has done great violence and harm to this reality with their health and wealth gospel and with their confess it and possess it mentality. They have made Christianity to be a "spiritual cash cow" and they offer people a deluding and demoralizing perspective on what it means to be a godly person. Here is what [1 Peter 3](#) is going to say to us. It is simply going to provide a vignette of how a believer can become a blessing to other people. It will not be cheap. If what an individual is looking for is a kind of easy Christianity that fits neatly into all of their personal, monetary, and cultural preferences, then [1 Peter](#) will not have much appeal to them simply because it will not offer that kind of Christianity to anyone – no matter who they are. To the contrary, it is going to make some fairly strong demands on their life that may not easily fit into their easy Christianity mentality.

Now, Peter begins in [1 Peter 3:1-7](#) talking to wives and husbands. Maybe the most important word in these verses is “**likewise**” in v1 and v7 simply because for both the wife and the husband, Christ is the example that we are to follow. If someone thinks that the word “**submissive**” is a bad idea, then what are they going to do with Christ who fully submitted and committed Himself to the Father? It must be appreciated that since the New Testament was written that Paul has been considered by unbelievers, as well as liberal theologians, as a male chauvinist. There have already been gender neutral Bibles developed, promoted, and then dispersed to the liberal cultural wing of religion so that not even God is considered to have a gender. Some of them promote “**God the Father**” as being “God the Mother”. They refer to God as “She”. That is blasphemous. Listen very carefully. Peter did not write this portion of Scripture on wives and how they were to relate to their husbands, especially those who are lost. God is the author of inspiration, not Peter, not Paul, not Luke – God is. It is all about their “**chaste conduct**” and “**reverence**”. I love the way that the ESV and NASB translate this:

ESV – “**when they see your respectful and pure conduct**”.

NASB – “**as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior**”.

It brings out the idea of being respectful in the same way that v7 brings out the idea for the husband of honoring and being understanding of his wife. It is very much a joint effort. My part is to do my part as defined by God. Peter defines the godly quality of a wife as someone who has and maintains a “**gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God**”. The AMP calls it a “**peaceful spirit**” that simply is not “**anxious**” about everything. It is very difficult to place a value on godly conduct and how God is ultimately going to use that in a person’s life and through a person’s life. That which is godly is very important to God (v4).

This is one of those passages of Scripture that will certainly test the reality of a person’s commitment to God’s Word. The overall demands on the husband are even greater in my mind. The word that many women do not like is the word “**submissive**” – Greek “*hypotasso*”. We studied this word in [1 Peter 2](#) and found that it relates to having a particular order so that something can more properly function in the way that it was intended to function, and especially in a family. Once a family loses its God-ordained order, it will disintegrate quickly and become completely dysfunctional. It applies to every member of the family. The husband (v7) is to honor his wife. The word for “**honor**” means to place great value on his wife and to esteem her in the highest manner possible.<sup>1</sup> In a practical way he is not to talk down to her, not to disrespect her opinions and insight, and not to devalue or denigrate her in front of other people. She is his treasure and he is to protect every part of her being with great honor and esteem.

Think of it this way. This is the same word that is used for the “**honor**” that all Christians are to give to God and Christ. This is a “special” honor that is given to certain individuals, and for the husband his wife is to be given the greatest place of honor in his life outside of Christ. He is to love her as Christ loved the church ([Ephesians 5](#)). A man’s wife deserves great honor and he needs to live with her with great understanding. She is God’s gift to him. [Ephesians 6](#) says that parents are not to provoke their children to anger and that children are to “**honor their father and mother**”. It does not say that they are to honor only the good parents. Why? It is because that is God’s order and He knows that the family has to have a spiritual order in order to properly function. Also, please notice that if a man does not treat his wife with “**honor**” and “**understanding**” that his prayers will be “**hindered**”. This word is in the

present tense which means that they will constantly be “**hindered**”. If God does not seem to be responsive to a man’s prayers, it very well may be because of how he is treating his wife. The word “**hindered**” means to cut into something, to impede it. It was used of impeding people by placing an object in a pathway or on a road.<sup>2</sup> It is the idea that when a man does not treat his wife properly that God renders his prayers as fruitless.<sup>3</sup> Much of this chapter is on the believer’s conduct, and the message here is that we have no witness if we do not love, honor, and respect our marriage partner.

The next section, [1 Peter 3:8-12](#), deals with not repaying evil for evil. In some ways this is a further amplification of [1 Peter 2:23](#) which spoke of what Christ did not do when He was reviled and threatened. He simply “**committed Himself**” to His Father. It appears that v9 is contextually linked to v8, and v8 is specifically talking about the believer’s relationship to other believers. [1 Peter 3:8](#) says,

<sup>1Pe 3:8</sup> **Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous;**

So, when we get to v9, it is contextually speaking about the same – about believers in their relationship to one another. V8 says that we are to be of the same mind, we are to be compassionate to one another, we are to be loving towards one another, and we are to be “**tenderhearted**” and “**courteous**” or “**humble**” (NIV, AMP, ESV, NASB) to each other. So, v9 is just a normal continuation of how one believer is to respond to another believer who may actually mistreat them. We do not “**return evil for evil**” and we do not return “**reviling for reviling**”. The word “**evil**” is the Greek word “*kakos*” and refers to actively doing something hurtful or harmful to another person.<sup>4</sup> This is a very strong word, and in its context it is referring specifically to when one Christian does something to harm another Christian. This is not good. It could be anything really, but very often is seen when one Christian slanders another Christian’s character or integrity. It may be well-deserved, but it is not biblical to do so. The next word for “**reviling**” is actually translated as “**abuse**” in the Greek Interlinear. The NIV, AMP, and NASB call it “**insult for insult**”. It is the Greek word “*loidoria*” and means to revile, to reproach, and to heap abuse on someone.

So, what does God say to do here? Well, God says to return a “**blessing**” for an insult or return a “**blessing**” for someone who has tried to harm you or your character. How about that for a test! This is the rubber meeting the road. The word “**blessing**” is “*eulogeo*” and is comprised of the word “*eu*” which means “well” and “*logos*” which means “word”.<sup>5</sup> We get our English word “eulogy” from this Greek word and it simply means to speak well of the person who has insulted and reviled you. Now, I know that may be very difficult to do, but Peter says that we are “**called to this**”. So, at this point we have to make a decision. The decision is really a very simple one. Are we going to react and respond back with an insult on the person who slandered us, or are we going to do what God called us to do and speak well of the person? Believe it or not, this is called real Christianity. Look at what Paul said to do in v10-12 – refrain our tongues from speaking evil, refrain from speaking deceitfully (slanderosly), turn away from evil and do good, seek peace and pursue it. Then he says that if you will do those things that God will be open to your prayers.

Next, in [1 Peter 3:13-17](#) he returns again to the idea of suffering for doing what is right. It is almost like Peter is obsessed in a good way with this idea of being willing to suffer for the sake of righteousness. Here is how he says that happen, here is the process that will help us to actually live in a way that is

unafraid to suffer for Christ. The first thing that he says in v14 is that you will be “**blessed**”. Now, this is a different word than the word “**blessing**” that we just mentioned. This is the word “*makarios*” and it means to have God’s favor on your life.<sup>6</sup> It is the same word that is used in the Beatitudes in [Matthew 5](#) where Jesus kept repeating “**Blessed are the poor in spirit, blessed are those who mourn, blessed are the meek...**” As a believer follows Christ and genuinely seeks after Him, they will literally be “**blessed**” by God and fall into His favor on their life.

The primary part of the process of having God’s blessing on our life is found in the three words in [1 Peter 3:15-16](#) – “**sanctify, be ready, have**”. The first word is to “**sanctify the Lord God in our hearts**”. The word for “**sanctify**” is the Greek word “*hagiazō*”. In the Greek Interlinear it is translated as “**reverence**”. It means to set yourself apart for God. It involves the believer separating himself from the world in his behavior by turning away from those things that he knows would be dishonoring to Christ and to the Father.<sup>7</sup> It is the idea that the believer regards God as being holy, and because of that belief he is willing to completely separate himself from everything that he knows would not be honoring to Christ.<sup>8</sup> If a believer is not willing to separate themselves from those things that they know would be dishonoring to Christ, then they have no right to expect God’s blessing on their life. God simply does not reward someone for doing what they know is wrong. Now, this verb is in the imperative mood, the aorist tense, and the active voice. What all of that means is that the believer is commanded to make this decision, and because it is in the aorist tense, it is something that they are to do just one time. It is like making a wedding vow to be faithful to your spouse. It is only intended to be done once because of the sincerity of the vow. Then the active voice means that it is something that you have to do. Every believer has to come to a place in their life where they determine that they will follow Christ and separate themselves from everything that would be dishonoring to Him. This is a very strong verb with what we might call deep pocket implications.

The second word is to “**always be ready to give a defense...**” It simply means to be prepared to defend the faith that you confess. You will never be ready if you have not first sanctified the Lord in your heart. If He does not have first place in your life, you will not be prepared to defend what it is that you say that you believe. The third word is “**having a good conscience**”. The verb is in the present tense signifying a continued possession. It means that we continually maintain a good conscience before God and before others. We are not involved in anything that would dishonor Christ. Everyone fails, everyone sins at times, but this word is primarily referring to those things that are blatantly sinful and immoral. It is so difficult to be effective in the Christian life when we are consciously, repeatedly, and continuously living in such a way that Christ is being dishonored. These three words of sanctifying, being ready, and having a good conscience will supernaturally strengthen every believer who comes face to face with suffering.

Then lastly, [1 Peter 3:18-22](#) speaks once again of the suffering that Christ experienced. What we want to recognize in this portion of [1 Peter 3](#) is that Peter is providing us with doctrine. He talks about how after His death and resurrection that Jesus went and preached to these particular “**spirits in prison**”, and he relates what they did to the time of Noah. The term for “**prison**” represents what is called the “**bottomless pit**” or the “**pit of the abyss**” (*abusso*) in [Revelation 9](#). [2 Peter 2:4](#) says,

<sup>2Pe 2:4</sup> **For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast *them* down to hell and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment;**

[Revelation 9:1-2](#) speaks of this pit,

**Rev 9:1 Then the fifth angel sounded: And I saw a star fallen from heaven to the earth. To him was given the key to the bottomless pit.<sup>2</sup> And he opened the bottomless pit, and smoke arose out of the pit like the smoke of a great furnace. So the sun and the air were darkened because of the smoke of the pit.**

This particular term is only used in [Revelation](#) and is used seven (7) times. It is the same place that Satan will be cast into and left for 1000 years before he is loosed for a short season. [Revelation 20:3](#) says,

**Rev 20:3 and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.**

This is a very interesting passage of Scripture that we will address later, and what is provided in [1 Peter 3](#) describes the most wicked and perverted angels possible. [Jude](#) tells us that they left their proper domain, and so God cast them into the abyss chained in darkness. They are the angels in [Genesis 6:1-4](#) who cohabited with women of the earth in order to corrupt the human race with a being that was part human and part demon. That was one of the primary reasons for God having to send the flood. Some of these demonic beings will be released during the Tribulation.

The point of what Peter is teaching is that Christ went to them and proclaimed His complete victory over sin, over death, and over Satan. Then Peter closes the passage with the following in [1 Peter 3:22](#),

**1Pe 3:22 who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him.**

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Strong, 1413.

<sup>2</sup> Strong, 1057.

<sup>3</sup> Zodhiates, 499.

<sup>4</sup> Zodhiates, 809-810.

<sup>5</sup> Strong, 1119.

<sup>6</sup> Zodhiates, 937.

<sup>7</sup> Vine, 990.

<sup>8</sup> Zodhiates, 69.

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