

1 Peter 3:8-12

1Pe 3:8 (NKJV) **Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous; ⁹ not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing. ¹⁰ For "He who would love life And see good days, Let him refrain his tongue from evil, And his lips from speaking deceit. ¹¹ Let him turn away from evil and do good; Let him seek peace and pursue it. ¹² For the eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their prayers; But the face of the LORD is against those who do evil."**

This morning we begin a new section – [1 Peter 3:8-12](#). I am intrigued with the fact that Peter begins this section with the word “**Finally**”. The actual Greek Interlinear reads “*The now summary*” and it specifically refers to the conclusion, the point aimed at achieving, and the purpose of what has been previously stated.¹ What Peter is saying is that everything that has preceded this, not just [1 Peter 3](#), but the entire epistle up to this point, is drawing our attention to his conclusion here in v8-12. From v8 forward to the end of this book, it seems to be a constant stream of encouragement as to how the Christian life is to be lived. Just follow along as I read or paraphrase the majority of the exhortations that follow from this point forward: “**be of one mind, have compassion, be tenderhearted, do not return evil for evil or reviling for reviling, refrain your tongue from evil, refrain your lips from speaking deceit, turn away from evil, do good, seek peace and pursue it, do not be afraid, sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, be ready to give a defense, maintain a good conscience, arm yourselves with the mind of Christ, be serious and watchful in your prayers, have fervent love for one another, be hospitable to one another without grumbling, minister to one another, speak as the oracles of God, rejoice when you suffer for Christ, do not suffer for the wrong reasons, do not be ashamed of Christ, commit yourself to God, submit yourselves to your elders, be submissive to one another, be clothed with humility, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, cast all your care on God, be sober, be vigilant, and resist the enemy**”. That is an incredibly long list of “**Finally**”. So from the 2 ½ chapters of doctrine, we have 2 ½ chapters of exhortation. Theologically, it is very important that exhortation must always follow doctrine. Exhortation must have a foundation, and that foundation is doctrine. In my mind personally, it is generally unwarranted and unsuccessful to exhort someone without first providing a basis for why your exhortation is even needed. Just telling people what they should do without providing them with a foundation for why they should be doing something will not be effective, and is generally resented to some degree. Biblical explanation must always precede biblical encouragement. That is one reason why it is so important to spend a great deal of time and energy in trying to understand doctrine. If doctrine and understanding does not precede exhortation, the exhortation will generally have been wasted.

There is a minimum of 34 exhortations in the 48 verses that follow in the remainder of [1 Peter 3:8-5:14](#). Peter is going to explicitly define that God wants to bless our lives, that it is okay to suffer for doing what is right, that Christ is our example of suffering, that we are to serve God in such a way that it brings glory to His person, that we are to be willing to suffer for God’s glory, that the elders that lead a church are to do so with great integrity, that God resists the proud, and that we are to resist the enemy by

¹ Strong’s, #5056 - *telos*, ep.

remaining steadfast in our faith. Right or wrong, I believe that the two key verses that serve as the theological foundation for this kind of strong exhortation and teaching are [1 Peter 2:23](#) and [1 Peter 3:15](#) which state the following,

1Pe 2:23 (NKJV) who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously;

1Pe 3:15 (NKJV) But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always *be* ready to *give* a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;

I.e., I have to be willing commit myself to God's will for my life in the same exact way that Christ committed Himself to His Father's will. I must set the Lord apart in my heart and in my mind and in such a way that I will always be willing to do what I know He wants me to do, no matter the cost to me personally. It may be an inconvenience to my life, it may absorb some of my resources, it may be time consuming, it may be uncomfortable at times, and it may challenge the very core of my Christian life, but it is what reveals that I have committed myself to my Father and set Him apart in my heart and in my life as my Lord. All of those things simply reveal that God and Christ are, in reality, the ultimate priority of our life.

So, beginning in [1 Peter 3:8](#) after much teaching on the idea of godly submission to one another and the development of mutual love within the husband / wife relationship, Peter shifts gears to the idea of why living the way that he has taught so far is able to bring great "blessing" into our lives. In v9, he says it this way – "...**knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing**." He even states in v14 that "**But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you are blessed**." In [1 Peter 4:14](#) it reads,

1Pe 4:14 (NKJV) If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified.

If there is anything that you should desire for your life, it should be that you have God's blessing on what you are doing. After reading a couple of these verses, it should be obvious, however, that God's blessing often come at a cost to us personally.

This may be a little over the top, but it seems that if what I am doing in my life does not have God's blessing on it, that in reality it is most likely futile and ultimately will be vain and ineffective. It is as if that activity of my life is actually being wasted. The truth of the matter is that we should not want God's blessing on our life just so that we personally can be blessed, but rather that God may be honored in our life. It seems that what God honors with His blessing in our life is what we are willing to do that actually honors Him. It should have been obvious in [1 Peter 3:1-7](#) that if we do not humbly honor one another in our marriages in the way that God has commanded us to do so, that in reality our marriages cannot really honor God. In essence, to not seek to integrate God's principles of marriage into our lives is to simply be living for ourselves, and is something that actually removes God's blessing from our lives. The goal is to always be giving our life away, to always be losing our life so that His life can be manifested in us. The goal is to always be giving our life away to our mate so that they can sense the incredible love that God has for them through us personally. I am convinced that the more I love my wife like Christ loved the church, that the more she will sense the love of God for her. In a sense, because

I am loving her the way that Christ would love her, at those moments I am becoming Christ for her. He is literally living His life through me for her blessing and for His honor.

The point in all of this is to simply say that I cannot expect God's blessing on my personal life if I am not willing to love, honor, and respect my marriage partner in the way that He desires for me to do so. It would be foolish to even think or surmise that I can have any of God's blessings on my life if we as a husband or a wife think that we can ignore our marital responsibilities, yet think that God will add His great blessings on our life. At best, that is simply a kind of blind and selfish arrogance on our part. If you as a husband or a wife truly want God's deepest and richest blessings on your life, then you must embrace [1 Peter 3:1-7](#) into your life, and do so without blaming your marriage partner for everything that you do not like about your marriage. Your focus is never to be on yourself, but rather the benefit and blessing that your life is designed to bring on your marriage partner. In fact in v9 in the first use of the word "**blessing**", it says this in relation to those who may be mistreating us – "...**but on the contrary blessing...**" That first use of the word "**blessing**" is not a noun, but is actually a participle in the present tense, active voice, imperative mood and can be translated as "**be constantly blessing**". The NASB is probably the best translation of this phrase when it says,

1Pe 3:9 (NASB) not returning evil for evil or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing.

It is the idea that if you genuinely want God's blessings on your life, then He wants you to be always be a blessing for others. You receive the most by giving the most. You inherit the most by giving away the most. So often, we become the very opposite of a blessing by always wanting to get something from the other person, of always having to have our way, and of always contending for what it is that we want. In essence, when that happens it is as if the blessing that God really wants us to have simply evaporates, and rather than receiving what God really wants us to have, we lose it.

I am always amazed at how often our lives seem to be wrapped up in ourselves and to be utterly consumed with what we are getting or not getting rather than what we are giving or not giving. If I truly want to enjoy God's blessing on my life, then I MUST learn how to literally give my life away and to become a servant to everyone that I meet, and especially to my marriage partner. They are our first priority. Jesus said it this way in [Matthew 20:26](#) and [Matthew 23:11](#),

Mt 20:26 (NKJV) Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant.

Mt 23:11 (NKJV) But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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