

Hope When Life is Hard

Sunday, August 31st 2014

1 Peter 3:8-12

I. Introduction

Focus Point: The gospel empowers us to follow God's principles for healthy relationships in speech and action bringing blessing to our lives even in the midst of suffering.

II. The Gospel Empowers Us to Bless

"...bless, for to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing."

Called - The called are those who have been summoned by God. Called is in the passive voice which indicates the call clearly presupposes God as the One initiating the action of calling us.

Were called - The aorist tense defines this calling as a historical event, an action that has been completed. God called us. (1 Peter 2:9)

III. Bless in Our Actions

"...let him turn away from evil and do good, let him seek peace and pursue it."

A. Community (v.8)

1) Unity or Harmony

literally of one and the same mind, like-minded, having a common mindset but not necessarily all the same tastes or gifts or habits. (Philippians 2:2-4)

2) Sympathetic

Sympathy...is made up of two Greek words, one word meaning "to be affected" by something, hence "to feel," that is, to have feelings stirred up within one by some circumstance, the other word meaning "with." The word means therefore, "to have a fellow-feeling." It refers here to the interchange of fellow-feeling in either joy or sorrow. It is "rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep" (Ro12:15). The English word "sympathy" refers to the fellow-feeling we should have with those that suffer, and that is the secondary meaning of our Greek word. The primary meaning refers to a fellow-feeling with a brother Christian either in his joys or in his sorrows."

3) Brotherly Love

Philadelphos is an adjective which conveys the idea "Be loving brethren," or "Be brethren who are loving." The word here does not refer to the love that God produces in our hearts as one of the fruits of the Spirit. It is that human affection and fondness for one another as brother Christians.

4) Tender Heart or Compassionate

Tenderhearted - That carries one a step further than compassion. Tenderhearted is more than correspondence; it is gentle ministry. (Ephesians 4:32)

5) Humble Mind

means thinking lowly, esteeming ourselves small. Inasmuch as we are small compared to God, this is the correct estimate of ourselves.

B. The World (v.9,11)

1) Don't repay evil for evil

5x the word 'evil' is used in this paragraph and it refers to living for ourselves in disregard of God and others, except as they can serve us.

Implicit in this truth is that we all have a natural bent toward evil. Being born again doesn't eradicate that evil bent toward self, but the gospel gives us the power to overcome the temptation to live this way.

2) Reviling for Reviling

Insult or reviling, railing, one who reviles describes verbal abuse, reproach and/or vilification. Reviling implies an abusive attack prompted by anger or hatred.

IV. Bless in Our Speech

"...let him keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit..."

Proverbs 13:3 – *"Whoever guards his mouth preserves his life; he who opens wide his lips comes to ruin."*

1) Speaking Evil

Evil speaks of lack of goodness, of a bad nature, not such as it ought to be and defines one who is evil in himself, wicked, vicious, bad in heart, conduct, and character and, as such, gets others in trouble.

2) Speaking Deceit

Dolos is a deliberate attempt to mislead, trick, snare or "bait" (baiting the trap in attempt to "catch" the unwary victim) other people by telling lies. It is a desire to gain advantage or preserve position by deceiving others.

V. Blessing from God Our Father

"Peter cites the psalm to describe the blessing of the life to which Christians are called. Those who practice the love of compassion, refrain from speaking evil, and pursue peace are blessed by the Lord...The blessing that they inherit reaches to eternal life, but it also fills this life with 'good days.' Peter affirms this, although he knows that days of suffering will come. Yet the blessing of the Lord will make days of suffering 'good days' in his favor." E. Clowney