

Living to Display God's Grace by Submission Within the Church Family

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[0 : 00] So as we move into our text for today, the first point that I want to make concerns this. Live the blessing you are blessed with.

Live it. Live it out. What are we talking about? Well, Peter says that our submission to Jesus involves being a blessing to everyone we meet.

No matter how sour or dour or whatever. We are called to be a blessing to everyone we meet.

That blessing that he's talking about now has taken the form of our submission to civil authority. That was earlier in chapter 2 beginning in verse 13.

Civil authority, submission then in the workplace, to workplace authority as we move down through chapter 2. Then at the beginning of chapter 3, in marriage, submission in marriage.

[1 : 04] And now Peter sums up with our submission within our church family. Our church family. Let's read together and see what he's talking about beginning in verse 8.

Chapter 3 of 1 Peter verse 8. Then to sum up. Alright? So right away we see that Peter is taking everything he's been talking about related to this theme of submission in these different areas of our lives.

And now he's summing up and he wants to make a very strong point as he ends that particular theme. To sum up. All of you.

Be harmonious. Be harmonious. Be harmonious. Sympathetic. Sympathetic. Brotherly. Kind-hearted. Kind-hearted. And humble in spirit. 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. For the one who desires life to love and see good days must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit.

[2 : 13] He must turn away from evil and do good. He must seek peace and pursue it. For the eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous and his ears attend to their prayer.

But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil. Now, beloved, most believers probably don't think about submitting to fellow Christians as being a vital and normal part of gathering as a church family.

But it is. It is. Our submission to each other as we gather together is a vital, vital way that we bless and honor each other and enjoy life together.

Without this, there's no way for us to bless each other, honor each other, and enjoy life together. This is the prescription that God gives us through our relationship with Jesus as we have this common bond of love in him.

And this helps us express that common bond to each other. To each other. So what we have in our text as we begin in verse 8 are five imperatives.

- [3 : 27] Now, for those of you who've been here a while and you've heard Peter do this several times, give imperatives. Imperatives mean the musts. You must do's. The commands.
- So these aren't suggestions. I've called them encouragements because they are encouragements. They're encouragements for you to obey. These are critical, vital components of us living together as God's family and demonstrating submission to Jesus by submitting to each other.
- So I want to know. Derek sits on the front row. He gets picked on all the time. It's just hazard. It's the hazard. As I get to know my brother Derek and he gets to know me and we fellowship together and serve Jesus together, I want to be more aware of what it means for Jeff to submit to Derek as he walks with Christ, to his wife, to his family, to his children.
- What does it look like for me to come alongside this brother in friendship and in a common bond of love for Christ and submit so that this brother and his family are built up in the Lord Jesus Christ?
- This is what Peter's concerned with. And these elements help us to do that. In fact, without them, we can't do it. We'll be too worried about me.
- [4 : 43] Look at the first one that he mentions. Now, again, as we go down through these together, let me just say this real quickly. As we go down through this together, I don't want this to become too academic.
- All right? I don't want this to feel all lecture-y and like you're in a seminary class. But we have to take this apart. What will help you as we do this together is for you to think about this.
- As each one of these things in the list are dealt with, ask yourself, to what degree am I seeking this and pursuing this and investing this in the life of other people that are sitting in this room?
- How am I taking these characteristics and investing these in the lives of other people? How am I showing and demonstrating these things to others, beginning with my church family and then moving out into the world?
- Yes, even to people who cut me off in traffic. Even to people who say nasty things to me or treat me rudely when I'm in the line trying to buy my stuff.
- [5 : 45] Or the person who grabs the parking space ahead of me as I sat there with my blinker on waiting to turn in. I'm just not believing that.
- Did that just happen? Yes, even to people like that. All right. So be harmonious. This is the first one we'll look at. Be harmonious. So in the Greek, homophrones.
- Homophrones. The reason it's important is it's just cool to say. That's it. It literally means one-mindedness. One-mindedness.
- Or together-minded. Unity of mind. Some translations have like-minded. Be like-minded. These are all ways that this word is understood and translated.
- Peter begins, interestingly, with this particular characteristic of how we submissively bless each other. We submissively bless each other when we are in one mind together.
- [6 : 49] A harmonious understanding of what it means to be God's people and live as God's people. The question then is this. How do we attain to this unity of mind?
- This one-mindedness. This like-mindedness. Well, it doesn't mean this. It doesn't mean that we never have differing views or opinions about matters of life.
- And I don't mean that you like this sports team and I like the other sports team and their rivals. That's not what we're talking about. Or you like this kind of ice cream and I don't like that one.

I like this one. No, that's not what I'm talking about. We're talking about it doesn't mean that we can't differ in some of our understanding about the issues of life.

But hear carefully as we move through this list so you understand what those differences are and are not as God's people. Here's what it means.

[7 : 50] This word means that we are being united. Hear me now. We are being united together by our shared submission to God's truth as we learn to think like Jesus about life.

Do you hear your opinion fading quickly into the background? Me too. Me too. See, you'd be in a world of hurt if every Sunday I came up here and I spent 99% of my time just giving you my opinion about things.

It'd be much more sparse. What I'd have to do to shore that up and keep a crowd coming is I'd have to become a comedian or a good dancer or something.

I'd have to do something. I know. Just try to get that out of your mind, Marivi. She says, some things can't be unseen, Jeff. All right. Look. So it means that we are being united by this shared submission to God's truth.

What puts us in a like-minded, a unity of mind, a one mind spirit as God's people? There's only one thing. The truth.

[9 : 10] We have to be about coming to the same page and learning and discerning God's truth together. Just to help you with this a little more, this is the most time we'll spend on one of these.

I want to give you several references in scripture just to help you get a good start and a good beginning to what we're talking about. Because while every single one of these are critically important, there is one that seems to be foundationally more important than the others.

I'm going to show you that later. It's not this one. But this is the one he starts with. So we can trip up very easily as we think about submitting to each other if we don't attend to this unity of mind principle together.

That can only happen by God's truth. All right. So let me give you several references in scripture to help you with this. We're going to go first to let's see if I can put that.

Yep. First Corinthians chapter one. Let's go there together. First Corinthians chapter one. Verse 10. Now I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment.

[10 : 36] Now just think about that with me. How in the world, since this is something we're being exhorted in, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, how in the world are we all going to agree so that there's no division among us so that we can be made complete?

That is perfect. That is sanctified, made holy in our behavior and be in the same mind so that we are executing the same kind of judgment together.

What? What a load. That's absolutely impossible if my opinion and your opinion are constantly clashing.

We need something that will pull us together, put our opinions in the background, something that we can hold on. And that something is a person. It's the Lord Jesus. And so we go to him and we go to his truth.

Let me give you another one. Second Corinthians. Second Corinthians chapter 13. Verse 11, I think is what I picked out.

[11 : 41] Finally, brethren, as Paul sums up these letters that he's been writing to the Corinthians. Finally, brethren, rejoice. Be made complete.

See, there's that idea of completion again. Be comforted. Actually, the idea there for comfort would be better understood as be admonished or submit.

Be submitting. And then he says this. Be like-minded. Be like-minded. Live in peace.

And the God of love and peace will be with you. So he's talking about in like-minded. The idea here is have the same kind of convictions and beliefs.

Share in the truth together. Be more about working to agree than to disagree. You've heard Greg and I say this many times.

[12 : 40] We are more here at Grace. We are more about being defined by what we believe than what we don't believe. By what we desire to be in Christ Jesus than what we don't want to be.

The don'ts are important, but they're not more important than what we have been made to be in the Lord Jesus Christ. That's what we want people to see. In other words, we're more about what we stand for than what we stand against.

You've met these people. You meet them and the first thing they want to talk about are the negatives. What they're against. What they don't believe. What they don't stand for.

Well, I've had these guys walk into the church before. Not so much this church in the last few years, but in prior ministries. I've had them walk in and I meet them. Typically, they're pretty young guys.

And the first thing that they want to do is start a debate with me about some aspect of doctrine or theology. And just a red flag goes up immediately if I meet these people. And the first thing out of their mouth is they want to start arguing about what they believe and where I stand.

[13 : 46] We have several other pastors in the room. I'm looking at their faces and they're kind of going, mm-hmm. Yep. All right. How about Romans 15 for the last one?

Romans 15, just trying to give you some scriptural examples of this like-mindedness. And that's 4 through 6.

For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction. So that through perseverance and the encouragement of the scriptures, we might have hope.

Now, what he says next, in light of this encouragement and perseverance that we're receiving from the scriptures that gives us hope, now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus.

That according to Christ Jesus sums it up. We are in one mind together according to Christ. So we're always asking ourselves, is what I'm saying to my brothers and sisters according to Christ?

[14 : 51] Peter will later tell us, speak the oracles of God. I remember the first time I ever heard this idea of speaking the oracles of God to one another. And the exposition was excellent.

And as I listened to that, I thought, how often am I concerned about making sure that what comes out of my mouth honors the Lord Jesus Christ and it builds up the brothers and sisters that are hearing me so that I am speaking according to Jesus?

I don't want to say anything that's just Jeff's opinion. You need to hear from the Lord. You need to hear God's word coming out of my mouth. You need to hear the principles of scripture.

You need to hear the wisdom of God. That's how we need to speak to each other. We can discuss all kinds of different topics. But when we talk about the matters of life and living faithfully under Christ, we need to be careful that we're speaking on behalf or according to Jesus.

We can only do that as we speak scripture to each other. This is where God has revealed his mind. So we cannot have the mind of Christ apart from where he's revealed his mind in scripture.

[16 : 03] Now, we need to be careful about this. I'm not going to ask for a show of hands, but just think about the question rhetorically. How many of you have ever heard of or been involved in some type of church division, church split, church squabble?

Don't raise your hands. Just think about it. I think if I let you, you'd probably all raise your hand. You've at least heard about it or been kind of drug into it secondhand. Some of you have been there firsthand.

Right off the bat, you can say, well, one thing we know about that is there's not a unity of mind there concerning this. There's not a like-mindedness.

There's a lot of opinion going on. All right. So I hope that helps. The second one that Peter deals with, be humble in spirit. It's very similar to harmonious.

Now, I'm not taking these in order. You'll notice that. This isn't actually the next one that Peter mentions. Let me get there. I'm still in Romans here. To sum up, all of you be harmonious.

[17 : 04] Then he says sympathetic, brotherly, kind-hearted. What I'm doing is taking the last one. So we've done the first one. Now I'm jumping to the last one. I'll tell you why in just a moment. So be humble in spirit.

Peter ends with this trait. It's very similar to harmonious. It means meek-minded or humble-minded. If you want to shorten it up, you'd be perfectly fine to do this. Humility.

This is a humble person. This is a meek person. This isn't a person who walks into a room and the first thing is they open their mouth and they start owning the room.

Putting themselves forward. Their opinions forward. Their ideas forward. Whatever. Their interpretations forward. So this is a humble person.

Another way you might think about this, this is a self-forgetful person. And we need to pray for that. We need to ask God to help us become more and more self-forgetful. Because typically when we walk into a room, we become immediately self-conscious about what everybody thinks about us.

[18 : 06] Am I here right? Am I walking right? Do I look like I know what I'm doing? Whatever. We need more self-forgetfulness. So this is humility of spirit.

A couple of passages that we might turn to in this one. Matthew 11, 29. Whenever I give illustrations, I like to, as much as possible, illustrate from scripture itself.

And so that's what we're doing. Matthew 11, 29. Jesus is speaking here about coming to him, knowing him, walking with him.

And in verse 28, he says, Come to me, all who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. What a beautiful thing. Take my yoke upon you.

That's a metaphor for be submissive. Become submissive to me. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me. That's how we become harmonious and humble.

[19 : 07] We learn it from Christ. For I am gentle and humble in heart. There it is. Humble in heart is what you're after. And you will find rest for your souls.

For my yoke is easy and my burden is light. To submit to Jesus is not a great, I tell people this, it is not some great sacrifice. You don't want to live your Christian life trying to convince everybody that your submission to Jesus is just costing you so much.

What a sacrifice. Every time that happens, I want to say, look, let's point to the sacrifice. Now, you think about this sacrifice, and then we'll talk about sacrifice in your life. Pretty, that just kind of kills it.

It does for me in my prayer life. When I start having a pity party and start woe is me kind of stuff, what we need to do is just, we just need to come right here. All right.

One other that I want to give you in light of this humble in spirit is Philippians 2, 3 and 4. This wonderful list that Paul gives here about following the Lord, it's just beautiful.

[20 : 16] He says, do nothing. Now, this is interesting, folks. Do nothing. There's just no release clause there. That pretty much encompasses everything. Do nothing.

Absolutely nothing. From selfishness or empty conceit, which would be the opposite of humility. But with humility of mind. There it is again.

That's our concept. Regard one another as more important than yourself. See, that's how we walk into church every single Sunday. Regarding others to be more important than ourselves.

Do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. Isn't that interesting? Because we have to be told this and learn this and grow in this together.

Because it's not something that intuitively we know how to do or even want to do. We don't even have a want to do that apart from the Lord Jesus. If you look with me to Philippians 2, 5 through 8.

[21 : 16] That provides a wonderful example of this in action. Because this is Jesus submitting to the Father's will. Becoming a man. Going to the cross. And in his humble hearted, godly submission.

Jesus became our blessing. He went to the cross. And died. He was raised again. And in all of that. Jesus himself became our blessing.

Listen to what I'm saying now, please friends. Jesus didn't simply become the example to us of blessing. He became the blessing itself. This is what we're talking about.

When we ask you to be humble hearted. Humble hearted. And that gives you a good illustration of it in 5 down through 8 or 9, 10. All right.

Back to the text in 1 Peter. The next two that we want to look at. Be sympathetic. And be kind hearted. Sympathetic and kind hearted.

[22 : 19] They go together in Peter's list. Sympathetic is just what you'd expect. It means to understand and share in the feelings of another. Particularly in times of suffering. But not limited to that.

Kind hearted means compassionate. Tender hearted. You've heard people say that. Oh, he's so tender hearted. Some of you have children. Right? And you. It just seems like there's always.

If you have multiple kids. You can always just point out one. And say that's the tender hearted one. Yes? In my family of four. It was my brother. Now here's the downside of being tender hearted.

Whenever something came down. We blamed Kevin. And he took it. But my folks figured that out pretty quickly. It was always. We would be lined up.

And my dad was in the military. Crew cut. Big guy. Security police officer. Combat experience in Vietnam. Tough dude. Scared to death of him. So we'd all be lined up.

[23 : 19] And he'd be going down the line. And when he asked the question. We all looked at Kevin. In unison. It's just a standard thing. There is a downside to being tender hearted.

You're going to pay for it. But we're commanded to be that. Compassionate. Together. If you take these two together. They picture you moving into the life.

And circumstances of each other. To offer tender hearted concern. Forgiveness. And acts of compassion. So this isn't just some state of being thing.

This is something that you put into motion. Compassionate acts. You move into each other's lives. In order to demonstrate. This kind of tender heartedness.

To each other. Part of being tender hearted. And being kind hearted. And being sympathetic. Is believing the best about each other. Hard to do. Believe the best about each other.

[24 : 21] It's just one way. We won't go there. But I'll give you Mark 6. 33 through 34. It's a beautiful story. I will go there.

I love this story. So I got to go there. Mark chapter 6. It'll only take me a minute. 33 through 34. The people saw them going.

And many recognized them. And ran there together on foot. From all the cities. And got there ahead of them. What's going on? This is the crowd. That recognized Jesus. As they came off the Sea of Galilee.

And they all started running to meet Jesus. Because they want to be with Jesus. And there's thousands and thousands of them. And so this is the incident. Where Jesus is going to feed the 5,000.

He's going to feed 4,000. And another time. This is the 5,000. So all these people now. Have gathered all over the place. There's just thousands and thousands of them. And then we see verse 34. When Jesus went ashore.

[25 : 19] He saw this large crowd. And he felt compassion for them. Because they were like sheep without a shepherd. That's it. Verse ends there. Does it? He just felt compassion.

He did this. Bless their hearts. No. No. What did he do? Look what he did. And he began to teach them many things.

And then he's going to feed them. Right? So this is you and I moving into each other's life. To meet needs. To tender heartedly and compassionately.

And sympathetically meet needs. Look. Your brother or your sister may just need a shoulder to cry on. They may not need you in that moment to say things like this. Well God is sovereign.

You have to be in the pain. With a halo over your head. No. We all know that. And there's a time to say that. There is a time to say that.

[26 : 18] This might not be the time. Maybe right now what they need from you is for you to put your arm around them. Or just sit there and hold their hand. Or just sit there with them. And just be quiet. And let them cry.

Let them. Let them. Feel and be in the pain for a little while. See. She's shaking her head. You know why? Because she's spent a lifetime ministering to people like that.

You want to know more about what that looks like? Ask Alonza. I think she has the gift of mercy. And she's shown much mercy to many people who've been in very, very hard circumstances.

Dying. That's what we do. Finally we come to this one. Finally we come to this one. Be brotherly.

Be brotherly. This is the focus. This is the main theme. This is the heart of what Peter tells us to be. The word is simply philadelphoi.

[27 : 22] It comes from philos meaning friend and adelphos meaning brother. It means to be characterized by love for fellow believers as brothers and sisters in God's family.

Hence brotherly love. Some of you have that translation. That's great. Brotherly love. It's very straightforward. Now the structure of verse 8.

Here's why we've taken these in the order that we have. The structure of verse 8 is chiasmic. Chiasmic. It's a chiasm. Now some of you who were here for Ecclesiastes.

When we went verse by verse through the entire book of Ecclesiastes. That was right before 1 Peter. Wasn't it Greg? That's the one I did. We encountered chiasms in Ecclesiastes.

Because it's a very popular way that Hebrews would express the theme of something. Or point people to the main idea that they wanted to highlight.

[28 : 22] Alright. So I want to talk to you about what that is. A chiasm is a literary device used to arrange words or phrases so that the main idea or the primary theme is the center of the chiasm.

It comes to the fore. It jumps out. So if you're Hebrew and you're reading through this. If you understand what they're doing. You would have immediately took to this. It looks like this.

Let me give you a diagram of it. Harmonious and humble. Go together. They complement each other. Sympathetic and kind hearted.

Correspond to each other. That leaves one standing alone. And that's the center one. Brotherly. That's the main idea. That's what Peter wanted to use to communicate his main idea.

And you and I can see this. Look. What is the foundation for these other elements that we're looking at? What's the foundation? Love. Love.

[29 : 23] Otherwise it's just works. It's just you showing off. Love. And that's what Peter wants us to see.

In fact. If we were to look back. At chapter 1. Verse 22. We're going to see the emphasis Peter's making here. Since you have an obedience to the truth.

Can you notice that with me friends? Since you have an obedience to the truth. First Peter 1. Verse 22. Purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren.

That's brotherly love. Fervently love one another from the heart. Fervently love one another. He's already. See.

We've already dealt with that. If you look past our text for today. In chapter 4. Verse 8. You'll also see Peter coming back to this emphasis.

[30 : 23] Look at it with me. Above all. Keep fervent in your love for one another. Because love covers a multitude of sins. Isn't that interesting?

Above all the characteristics and traits that he's putting out. Above all the ideas, themes, and concepts that he's putting out. Above all these things. Keep fervent in your love for one another.

Because love covers over a multitude of sins. That's his emphasis. Taking responsibility. Showing the initiative. To move into each other's lives.

To love each other well. Loving each other well. Looks like you're seeking to be harmonious. It looks like you're seeking to be sympathetic. It looks like you're seeking to be kind hearted.

And humble. It's hard to have divisions and church splits. When people are tripping all over themselves. To live like that with each other. And that's what Jesus wants.

[31 : 22] Because as the world looks in. And sees us loving each other like that. They say. Wow. What is that? And we say. It's not a that. It's a who.

It's Jesus. It's Jesus. He is the blessing. And we. Are the blessed. Well.

That's exactly where he goes. Jesus loves you. Sincerely. Brothers and sisters. Jesus loves you fervently. And from his heart. Right. So. Jesus is our blessing.

And we need to live the blessing. We are blessed with. That's what. That's what this means. The first point. To live the blessing. You're blessed with. Means to live Jesus. Live Jesus with each other.

Verse nine. Time brings us right into that. Not returning evil for evil. Or insult for insult. That's Jesus on the cross. That's Jesus throughout his life. But giving a blessing instead.

[32 : 24] For you were called for the very purpose. That you might inherit a blessing. Peter tells us. Bless. Give a blessing. That's our mandate. Now.

It's interesting. In what context. This is very unexpected. This is the unexpected part. Well. As you encounter evil. In people. People who insult you.

By mistreating you. By maligning you. By treating you unjustly. Give. A. Blessing. Don't return evil for evil.

But give a blessing instead. Paul said something. Almost identical to this. Almost identical. Look at this. Bless those who. Persecute you.

Bless and do not curse. Bless and do not curse. So. It's. It's. Look. Back to the. The silly illustration. If someone cuts you off in traffic.

[33 : 23] Right. It's not just that you. Don't curse them. If the thought comes into your mind. And you repress it. And the veins are popping. You're trying not to let it out.

That's not enough. What does he say to do? Not only don't curse them. But do what instead? Dead. So. What might that look like? Sitting in. I might not be the best example of this.

My wife's smirking at me right now. You just stop doing that. What. What would that look like? Okay. Alonzo says pray. Pray. So you might say. Lord.

I don't know what's going on with that individual. I don't know why they're driving like that. I don't know why they did that. But I don't know that any of it matters. Father. All I pray right now. If that person doesn't know you. Will you bring them to a knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Forgive them for them. For their sins. And make a home in eternity for them. What. If they're in a hurry. If something's going on in the car. Lord. Could you just. Could you just give them grace.

[34 : 19] And help them to get to their destination safely. That might not hurt. Is that blessing. You're speaking good. Aren't you. That's blessing. So you don't.

You don't just not curse. Spouses. You don't just walk out of the room going. Biting that tongue. You use it to bless.

You use it to bless. So this is the heart of what I think he's trying to tell us. This is the heart of what Paul said as well. And if we need more reinforcement for this.

Here it comes. Jesus taught Peter and Paul to live like this. This is what Jesus said. But I say to you. Who here.

Love your enemies. Do good to those who hate you. Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who mistreat you. Love.

[35 : 16] Do good. Bless. Pray for. Now I want to help you with this. Let me go pastoral on you a little bit more. And let me help us with this.

Because I recognize. As we say these things. We don't want them to just become. Lists of things that we say.

Yeah we ought to do that. Why is it that we don't do this? What gets in the way? Well there could be all kinds of different things. But I think I can. I can capture it for us. Where most of us will resonate.

With what I'm going to say. All right. When we think about living this way. Particularly when we get into verse 9. And we're thinking about people. Who are just nasty. Or mean. Or rude.

Or inconsiderate. Or even people who've made it. This thing to. To mistreat us. And do injustice toward us. Just not fair.

[36 : 13] We all have that. To one degree or another in life. Let me help you. This is so much. About who. You are focused on.

Isn't it? Pick the circumstance. You may be thinking now. About something in your past. You may not have a fresh example. But you may think. Be thinking about. Man.

I remember when this happened in my past. This is kind of the thing. That has hurt me. This is kind of. This is the thing. That my mind kind of retreats to. Or maybe it's something more fresh.

Maybe you're dealing with it now. It's all about. Who you are focused on. Are you focused on you. Or Christ. Friend. If you're living in the past.

You're focused on you. Just mark it down. Are you focused on circumstances. And what people do. And how painful people can be toward you.

[37 : 08] We're all prone to this folks. Not a person in the room. Is not prone to this. Look. If you choose. If you choose. To focus on you. And the wrong.

Done to you. You will not bless. And love others well. You will return. Evil for evil. And insult for insult. Now here's how that works. Because some of you may sit there.

And go. You know. I just don't know. If I do that. Or if I've done. All right. Here's how it works. As you focus on the insult. You will live the insult. And become insulting yourself.

As you live out of your sense of hurt. You'll be defined. By the hurt. You'll live the hurt. And you'll become hurtful.

To other people. Because you'll adopt. Adopt a victim mentality. As you focus on the pain. And mistreatment. You will see yourself. As a victim. And you'll live out the pain.

[38 : 03] And mistreatment. You'll dream about it. Dwell on it. Rehearse it. And it will sour your heart. You'll become vengeful. Cynical. You'll cause pain.

And you'll mistreat others. You'll train yourself. To live in fear. Bitterness. Resentment. And that kind of stuff.

Is not the kind of stuff. That shows Christ to the world. You're going to rob yourself. Of a true sense of peace. And a true sense of contentment. Because you'll always be waiting.

For it. To happen to you again. For them. To do it to you again. And so you'll insulate your life. And it'll look like that.

You'll be full of suspicion. And so people. Your mission field. Your brothers and sisters in Christ. Will become reasons for you. To live in fear. And withdraw into yourself.

[39 : 01] You'll rationalize. That you're just being. Necessarily cautious and wise. After all. You've been hurt. The hurt you hold on to.

And focus on. Will rule you as an idol. In your heart. And it will be life draining. To you. Not life giving. So folks.

I ask you. Are you defined more. By the failures. Of others. Or by the faithfulness. Of God. You have a choice. You can live your life. Constantly focused.

On the failures. Of other people. To be for you. What they. You think they should be. Or to do for you. What you think. They should do. Or you can. Focus your heart. On the faithfulness.

Of God. And learn to trust. The Lord. Even. Even. When people insult you. Malign you. Hurt you. And show you. Injustice. Isn't that what verse 9 says?

[39 : 59] And then Peter. Adds to it. Give a blessing. Instead. Who do you think. That releases. Especially. If the other person. Doesn't even.

Realize. That you're praying. For them. Who is it releasing? You. You. To be what Jesus. Has saved you. To be. There's a much more. Life giving way. To live with the hurt. And fear. And disappointments. And even with the evil.

Of this world. And that takes us. Right into the next one. Live the love. You're loved with. Live the love. You're loved with. The one who desires.

Life. To love. And see good days. Must keep his tongue. From evil. And his lips. From speaking to see. He must turn away. From the evil.

[40 : 54] And do good. He must seek peace. And pursue it. For the eyes of the Lord. Are toward the righteous. And his ears. Attend to their prayer. But. The face of the Lord. Is against those. Who do evil. You.

Friends. You were spiritually dead. And God loved you. To life. But God. And God. Being rich in mercy. Because of his great love.

With which he loved us. Even when we were dead. In our transgressions. Made us alive. Together with Christ. And then this one.

Did I pass it? See where it is. Hold on. By this. By this. The love of God. Was manifest in us. In that. God sent his only begotten son.

Into the world. So that we might live through him. And this is love. Not that we loved God. But he loved us. And sent his son. To be the propitiation.

[41 : 55] The satisfaction. For our sins. We have come to know. And have believed the love. Which God has for us. God. Is love. And the one who abides in love.

Abides in God. And God abides in him. That's powerful. So for you to desire. Life. Love. And good days. Is a good thing. But realize.

It's all rooted in. And defined by. The life. The love. And the good days. Jesus. Gifted to you. In his love for you. Did you catch that?

Your life. Your love. And your good days. Are all rooted in the Lord Jesus Christ. In other words.

As you live out. Jesus' new life of love. You live that life. To express your love. To him. First and foremost.

[42 : 54] Jesus is receiving the benefit. Of what he is. Building into your heart. In your life. Because you're loving that. Right back to him. What's the highest gift.

You could possibly give. To the king of the universe. Who has everything. He needs nothing from you. He doesn't even need your worship.

He gives you the privilege. Of offering your worship. So what's the highest gift. You as a human being. Could ever give. The God of the universe. Verse. Well.

It's the highest thing. That he's ever given to you. And will ever give you. His son. So live back to him. His son. What does that mean? Love him. Love him.

With all your heart. Mind. Soul and strength. And love your neighbor. As yourself. That's the highest commandment. We can live by. We're seeing that now. And what Peter's giving us.

[43 : 50] In verse 10. Peter uses. Psalm. 34. 12 through 13. To speak of a godly person's desire. To love life. Enjoy God's gift of life.

On this earth. That's a good thing. Folks. Christianity is not some bummed out thing. That we all mope around. Talking about how much we're sacrificing for Jesus. No. It's not living in the past.

It's not living in the past. Heard of injustices. It's rejoicing in the truth. And offering ourselves to each other. So that we can move into each other's lives. And minister in these ways.

That we've been talking about. So this is a person who wants a fulfilling life. Is a way. Of making the most of God's gift of life.

How. Jeff. How can I seize on. Making the most of what God's given me. In the life of the Lord Jesus. Dr. MacArthur brought this out. In the nuance of Peter's use of the word life.

[44 : 49] He. Peter uses a word life here. That's not Zoe. Or Zoe. It's bios. And it means this. It means this. All the experience and richness of living to the fullest.

Not merely living as opposed to dying. In fact the sense Peter is giving here. Is that of happiness. Exuberance. Energy. And vitality. We are being beckoned by Peter.

To live a full and energized life. Why is it significant to note that? Folks. Because this is not a person defined by bitterness.

Or vengeance. Or past hurt. Or self-pity. Due to the sufferings. Hardships. Injustices. And trials of life. No. This is not a pessimist.

Living in the gloom. And doom. Of the reality of a broken world. This place is just so broken. It's so discouraging. This is not a person who's running from life.

[45 : 48] Complaining about life. Trying to control life. Making excuses. About life. No. This is a person. Who can embrace life. Because.

The author of life. Has a firm hold on them. I can. Lay hold of life. Because I've been laid hold of. That's exactly.

What the apostle Paul. Said to the Philippians. Look at this. Not that I have already obtained it. Or have already become perfect. I'm so glad Paul said that.

Thank you Paul. You're a work in progress. Just like me. But. He goes on. I press on in life. So that. Here's his purpose.

So that I may lay hold of that. For which also. I was laid hold of. By Jesus Christ. Brothers. I do not regard myself. As having laid hold of it yet.

[46 : 46] But one thing I do. Forgetting what lies behind. And reaching forward. To what lies ahead. I press on. Toward the goal. For the prize. Of the upward call of God. In Christ Jesus.

Now there's a man. Who knows what life's about. And he is getting after it. Peter borrowed. From a time in King David's life.

Mentioning Psalm 34 here. The prophet Samuel. Had anointed David. As God's choice. To be king over Israel.

Problem. King Saul was. King over Israel. But that was just. For a time. Just a little bit longer. So King Saul. Held the throne.

Even though David. Had been anointed. By the prophet Saul. Or Samuel. To take the throne. Saul held the throne. He was jealous of David. And so he started hunting David. To kill him.

[47 : 41] David wrote this Psalm. Psalm 34. As a testimony. Of God's faithfulness. Not everything was going right. In David's life. In fact. In one situation. He was hemmed in.

And things were looking really bad. And so the only way. That he saw. Out of it. Was to act like he was crazy. Like a madman. Frothing at the mouth. That's what this Psalm.

Refers to. On two occasions. David had opportunity. To kill Saul. Very simply. Could have been quick. And over very quick. And David said.

I am not going to be that man. And take. Those matters into my hands. Humility. God will deal with Saul. In his time. And when it's time.

I'll be king. I'm not going to force the issue. Humility. Trusting the Lord. So circumstances were not great. As David read this Psalm. Everything wasn't peachy fine.

[48 : 34] But he's looking to God's faithfulness. He wants to tell anyone. Who desires life. And love. And to see good days. As they suffer.

And live in this unjust. Sinful. Otherwise wicked world. You will do well. To follow God's prescription. And do these things. Look at them with me. Keep your tongue from evil. Keep your tongue from evil.

Now folks. There's a lot of ways. That we can talk about. What that looks like. But here's one. That I wanted to put forward. Don't rehearse the wrongs of people. To them. Just don't go there.

Don't live there. Who wants that? Who wants. Who wants other people. To constantly remind you. Of your shortcomings. That says something.

About your heart. Not theirs. We could go on and on. Look at this one. Keep your lips. From speaking deceit.

[49 : 29] Tame your tongue. Don't nag. Brag. Slander. Or slice people up. Commit to always speak the truth. In love. If you can't speak the truth.

In love. You need to be quiet. That's the next one. Love will help you be quiet. And measure your words. I tell you. The world would be a better place.

If people would just be quiet. Turn away from evil. And do good. This is a great quote. I came across. The good we enjoy. Follows the good we do.

Peter's concerned. That we understand. The connection. Between a good life. And good behavior. So he's defining. The good for us. In these verses. It is a counter. To what the world.

Sees as good. Because it's not. Tit for tat. So. Good doesn't. Necessarily. Have to mean. That you come out. On top. And that you get your way.

[50 : 28] So friends. As you live for Jesus. As you make pleasing Jesus. Your highest aim in life. You're going to encounter evil. And evil. Will counter. Come against.

You. Sin will slam into your life. Through people. In your life. So you need to be ready for this. Turn away from. It says.

Turn away from. Allowing evil. To distract you. From pleasing. The Lord Jesus. In your relationships. With difficult. Even with evil people. Don't let those people.

Pull you away. From what God's prescribed. For you to live. Don't live like that. Now here are other ways. The Bible speaks to this. At work in your life.

Look at this. Real quickly with me. Never pay back evil. For evil to anyone. Never take your own revenge. Do not be overcome. By evil. But overcome evil.

[51 : 22] How many times. Does the Bible. Have to tell us this. Because we struggle with this. There's the. There's the references. For you. Seek peace. And pursue it.

If possible. So far as it depends on you. Be at peace. With all men. Romans 12. 18. Seek. Pursue. And sacrifice. For peace. Be intentional.

What would the world be like? What a prescription. You all understand. We can't do this. Apart from grace. Right?

This is not going to happen. Apart from you. Walking closely. With Jesus. Not going to happen. And then verse 12.

Provides us with the truth. Of what we receive. From the Lord. As we make. Pleasing him. The focus. And pursuit. Of our lives. We live. In the peace.

[52 : 16] Of God's watchful. Care. And him. Heeding our prayers. The eyes of the Lord. Are toward the righteous. And his ears. Attend to their prayer. That's a wonderful motivation.

God doesn't abandon you. Or. Rob you of your salvation. Or take your salvation. Back. When you and I sin. And we don't bless. And we curse. But we break fellowship.

With the Lord. That sense of closeness. Begins to fade. Because of our sin. So we need to confess it. Return to him. And ask for forgiveness.

And then know that forgiveness. As it washes over our lives. And then go and minister that forgiveness. To other people. That's what they need. They don't need to be told.

About how bad they are. And how wrong they are. There's a place for us to say. Look. You're lost in your sin. And you're headed to a devil's hell. Friend. And I don't want that for you.

[53 : 15] Let me tell you. What God has done. In such a miraculous way. To rescue you from yourself. And from an eternal. Hell. His name is Jesus.

And here's what he's done. You got to tell him the bad news. But you get to that good news. As quickly as you can. Right. Folks.

All I'm saying is. When we turn away. From treating others selfishly. So that we aim to bless. Instead of curse. To pray for God's grace. And mercy on them.

To treat them with grace. And mercy. God sees us. God sees all that we're doing. But he sees us in those times. Here's what he's saying. Don't. Don't think.

That God doesn't see. What counts. Other people may not see. Other people may not pat you on the back. For the good things that you're doing. To bless in your life.

[54 : 11] But God sees. And it matters to God. He's keeping score. He sees. And it matters to him. Is that good?

Oh it's so good. It's so freeing. You're not alone. You're not alone in doing good. God. The one who counts most.

Sees. And then he takes heed of your prayers. We're back to kind of how it was with the guys. Husbands. God's not going to heed your prayers. If you're at odds with your wife.

That was verse 7. Here. God's not going to heed your prayers. If you're constantly walking around. With this dismal attitude. Of cursing. Instead of blessing. He's going to discipline you.

Bring you around. Because he wants you to be that instrument. Right. Just two more things. And I'll finish. What is it. What is it then. To be a blessing to others.

[55 : 08] To be a blessing. Is to speak. And do God's good. In someone's life. There you go. That's it. That's how we could sum up. The biblical understanding. Of what blessing. So when you hear somebody say.

Have a blessed day. You might want to say. Ah. We just studied about that. Do you know what that means? What do you mean when you tell me that? Well I just hope you have a good day. Oh but it's so much more than that.

To have a blessed day. Is to live and to serve God. And to do good to others. On behalf of God. How about that? Right? And they're going to go.

Okay. Good for you. Or they may say. That's beautiful. I don't know. But there's your moment. There's your moment.

And then one other thing. Let's do this one. The bottom line. Our submission to each other. Is about each of us living out our submission. And pleasing the Lord Jesus. That's the motivation.

[56 : 06] That's the foundation. So that keeps it from being works. We're not trying to impress God. We're not trying to work our way into heaven. And convince him that we're worthy of it.

We're just living out what God's putting in us. We're living the blessing he's blessed us with. We're living the love he's loved us with. This is Peter's point. You read me?

Praise the Lord. You've been sitting for a long time. Why don't we stand up and sing some more? Can we do that? We got all kinds of reasons to sing. Let's stand together.

Let's get here. And then from this point, let's go to the IVA Already ■ consig to sing for your needs and understand what the advice you can make.

What's the advice you can manage?