

# Loving Life

So Peter after sharing with his reader their new identity in Christ (1-2:10) Peter enters into this section (2:11-4:11) on suffering well for Christ sake. Peter is preparing them/us for the fiery trails that are ahead and the persecution that will come. His message was that there is a blessing in it.

## Prayer

### **1 Peter 3:8-17 (ESV)**

Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind. <sup>9</sup> Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing. <sup>10</sup> For “Whoever desires to love life and see good days, let him keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit; <sup>11</sup> let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it. <sup>12</sup> For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayer. But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.” <sup>13</sup> Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good? <sup>14</sup> But even if you should suffer for righteousness’ sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, <sup>15</sup> but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, <sup>16</sup> having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. <sup>17</sup> For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God’s will, than for doing evil.

So we should love one another, but we are also called to love our enemies: Often we subscribe to one of 3 approaches in life 1. Return evil for good – the demonic approach 2. Return good for good and evil for evil – the human approach, or 3. Or return good for evil – the Christ-like approach.

### **1 Peter 2:21-23 (ESV)**

For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. <sup>22</sup> He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. <sup>23</sup> When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.

### **1 Peter 3:9 (ESV)**

Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing.

### **Matthew 5:43-46 (ESV)**

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ <sup>44</sup> But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, <sup>45</sup> so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. <sup>46</sup> For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?

### **Romans 12:14 (ESV)**

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them.

**Luke 6:28 (ESV)**

bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you.

**1 Peter 3:9 (ESV)**

Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing

How do we do this? We don't, it is a work of Christ's Spirit – we get on our knees and we declare not my will but yours Father! We submit ourselves to the Lord's will and Word, we die to ourselves, we believe that His way is so much better – perfect, and we with the power and wisdom of the Holy Spirit follow Jesus!

We simply say like Peter did in Luke 5:5 – “because you said so Lord.” Let remember you were called to this, that you may receive a blessing. Let us remember the scene in Luke 5 – Peter had fished all night and caught nothing, didn't want to do what Jesus asked of him – ever been there? But he submitted and yielded to the Lord's Word. This is the moment of truth; this is where we declare Lordship and who is really calling the shots. Listen to what happens with Peter that day...

**Luke 5:6-10 (ESV)**

And when they had done this, they enclosed a large number of fish, and their nets were breaking. <sup>7</sup> They signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. <sup>8</sup> But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, “Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.” <sup>9</sup> For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish that they had taken, <sup>10</sup> and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, “Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men.”

This wasn't doctrine for Peter this was his personal experience, his witness. But often we lack the overcoming testimony and the blessing because we fail to declare not my will but yours be done or because you said so Lord! Don't you think that Peter was glad he rejected his personal preferences and logic and surrendered to Jesus' command?

The difficult thing is when its relational vs. directional. When we are not simple being asked to go fishing but to forgive, love and bless the very ones who have harmed, hated and hurt us. But isn't that exactly what Jesus did for us and isn't that exactly what we are called to.

**1 Peter 2:19-21 (ESV)**

For this is a gracious thing, when, mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly.

<sup>20</sup> For what credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure? But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God. <sup>21</sup> For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps.

We are called to love each other, love our enemies and love our life in Christ...

**1 Peter 3:10-12 (ESV)**

For “Whoever desires to love life and see good days, let him keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit; <sup>11</sup> let him turn away from evil and do good; let him

seek peace and pursue it. <sup>12</sup> For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayer. But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.”

I believe that we have got to change our perspective and disposition towards persecution and trials and believe that the Lord has great intentions and blessings in them. If our genuine posture is that of joy and thanksgiving despite our circumstances this raises questions about the authenticity of Jesus!

Sincerely answering the question “How are you doing?” with “Blessed” or “the best day of my life”. This is truly a supernatural response that is not ignorant of it’s context but chooses to trust the Lord and obey His Word! So we are intentional about LOVING LIFE, it is our disposition!

### **1 Peter 3:10-11 (ESV)**

For “Whoever desires to love life and see good days, let him keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit; <sup>11</sup>let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it.

Loving Life is an attitude of faith that see God’s best in every circumstance. We must fight a cynical spirit!

We can choose to endure life and make it a burden, escape life as if we were running from a battle or enjoy life because we know that God is in control.

### *Which is a better witness?*

This is not an avoidance of reality, it is a conscious choose to see things and others from God’s perspective!

So if we want to love life and see good days we must learn to control our tongues!

So many of our problems find their origin in wrong words spoken in the wrong way. Peter knew what he was talking about, he had many experiences to point back to.

And the other obvious point is that lying leads to pain and problems.

### **1 Peter 3:10-11 (ESV)**

For “Whoever desires to love life and see good days, let him keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit; <sup>11</sup>let him turn away from evil and do good; let him **seek** peace and **pursue** it.

Don’t be a trouble maker, but a peace maker – sons of God!

### **Romans 12:18 (ESV)**

If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

### **Romans 14:19 (ESV)**

So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding.

### **1 Peter 3:13-15 (ESV)**

Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good? <sup>14</sup> But even if you should suffer for righteousness’ sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, <sup>15</sup> but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy

As followers of Christ we will face significant challenges and we will be tempted to give into our fears and make wrong decisions. But if we honor Christ the Lord as holy in our hearts, we have no need to fear man or circumstances.

If Jesus is Lord of our lives each of these moments provide an opportunity to be a witness for Christ!

...always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect

God's is with you and if He permits suffering He has glorious intentions in them. That is to be our confidence!

Witness and Holiness is His aim.

**1 Peter 3:16 (ESV)**

having a good conscience, so that, **when** you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame.

**John 18:29-30 (ESV)**

So Pilate went outside to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?"<sup>30</sup> They answered him, "If this man were not doing evil, we would not have delivered him over to you."

**1 Peter 3:17 (ESV)**

For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil.

**2 Timothy 3:12 (ESV)**

Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted

**Closing Prayer**