

1 Peter

Lesson 5 Chapter 3:8-22

Participant Guide

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Lesson 5

1 Peter 3:8-22

Life in Christ

But in your hearts, set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. 1 Peter 3:15

“Always seek to do good for others; it will impress some and amaze the rest!” Mark Twain

Prayers

Read 1 Peter 3:8-22

^{1Pe 3:8} Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble.

^{1Pe 3:9} Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.

^{1Pe 3:10} For, “Whoever would love life and see good days must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from deceitful speech.

^{1Pe 3:11} He must turn from evil and do good; he must seek peace and pursue it.

^{1Pe 3:12} For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.”

^{1Pe 3:13} Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good?

^{1Pe 3:14} But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. “Do not fear what they fear; do not be frightened.”

^{1Pe 3:15} But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, ^{1Pe 3:16} keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.

^{1Pe 3:17} It is better, if it is God’s will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.

^{1Pe 3:18} For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit,

^{1Pe 3:19} through whom also he went and preached to the spirits in prison

^{1Pe 3:20} who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water,

^{1Pe 3:21} and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

^{1Pe 3:22} who has gone into heaven and is at God’s right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.

Discuss

1. What qualities should characterize our life in Christ, verses 3:8-9?

2. Why should Christians repay insults with blessings? See verse 3:9, Luke 6:35-36, and Romans 12:20.

^{1Pe 3:9} Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing. (1 Peter 3:9)

But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. Luke 6:35-36)

“If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.” (Romans 12:20)

3. Why is it important to live in harmony – like-minded, with fellow believers? Also, refer to the following verses:
 - a. Matthew 18:19-20 “Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.”
 - b. John 17:20-21 “My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.
 - c. Romans 12:4-5 Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.
4. How does verse 11 suggest that living at peace with others may not be easy? How have you experienced this?
5. Peter quotes Psalm 34:12-16 in verses 10-12, relating righteous behavior with God’s blessing of a long and good life. Peter immediately contrasts the desire for a good life with suffering and courage.

^{Ps 34:12} Whoever of you loves life and desires to see many good days,
^{Ps 34:13} keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking lies.
^{Ps 34:14} Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it.
^{Ps 34:15} The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their cry;

Ps 34:16 the face of the LORD is against those who do evil, to cut off the memory of them from the earth.

Isa 8:12b “do not fear what they fear, and do not dread it.”

To be sure, every good and perfect is from above (James 1:17), but we are not exempt from suffering. What is a pitfall if we only focus on receiving blessing and ignore suffering and sacrifice?

6. Peter encouraged believers who were suffering for their faith to look on their suffering as a blessing (verse 14) and encouraged them to respond to maliciousness with gentleness, respect and the reason for their hope and faith in Christ. Can you think of a time when you didn't respond this way? What was the result?

7. Read the following verses and discuss why it is so important to be able to praise God in all circumstances.

Phil 1:29 For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for him, Phil 1:30 since you are going through the same struggle you saw I had, and now hear that I still have.

1Th 5:16 Be joyful always;

1Th 5:17 pray continually;

1Th 5:18 give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

Phil 4:10 I rejoice greatly in the Lord that at last you have renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you have been concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it.

Phil 4:11 I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances.

Phil 4:12 I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want.

Phil 4:13 I can do everything through him who gives me strength.

8. Let's hear it, give your "15-second elevator pitch" for the hope you have in Christ – with gentleness and respect to someone hostile to Christ.

9. Verse 3:18 is one of the great truths in the Bible. Verse 18 and the verses that follow may be Peter's answer to anyone who asks for the reason for his hope in Christ, ^{1Pe 3:18} For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. What great truth does this verse hold for you?
10. Verse 19 is difficult. As Martin Luther put it in his Commentary on Peter & Jude, "A wonderful text is this, and a more obscure passage perhaps than any other in the New Testament, so that I do not know for a certainty just what Peter means." Luther cites 1 Peter 3:19 as a proof text of the Apostles Creed that Christ descended into hell after his death to proclaim victory over his enemies. This interpretation is consistent with a similar statement of Peter in verse 4:6, "For this is the reason the gospel was preached even to those who are now dead, so that they might be judged according to men in regard to the body, but live according to God in regard to the spirit."
11. How does the account of Noah and the flood symbolize baptism, Verse 20-21?
12. What are some issues confronting your group, church, and the world your group can pray for?

Closing Prayer