

Sunday, March 6, 2022 pm

STUDIES IN 1 PETER (18)

Summarizing Submission

1 Peter 3:8-12

Over the past several lessons of 1 Peter, we have addressed the subject of submission. In these lessons we have noted how learning to submit leads to peace in relationships – governing authorities, our masters and fellow workers, and even as spouses in our homes. Peter began this section by challenging us to have conduct honorable even among the “Gentiles”, or we might say, in a world of unbelievers. While much of the rest of this letter continues to focus, at least indirectly, on proper submission, our text tonight is a summary of how, considering others, we live with honorable conduct in this world.

It will start with the way we treat each other as brethren, but it **MUST** be a disposition that is much deeper than that – it is something that ought to define who you really are. Earlier in this letter, we have addressed how we as brethren need each other (1 Peter 1:22-23, 2:5-10 which describes how we are a royal priesthood, etc.) Let us notice this text.

I. How we conduct ourselves toward one another (8-9)

a. *Be of one mind* – the pursuit of unity.

- i. Peter here describes just how united we need to be – our minds need to be focused in the same direction.
- ii. Ephesians 4:1-3 – we endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; Philippians 2:1-2 – united in every way, Romans 15:5-6, when we are like minded, we with one mouth and mind glorify God together, etc.
- iii. In a world that often stands against us, we need to stand together. If we bite and devour one another we will be consumed – Galatians 5:15.

b. *Have compassion for one another*

- i. The word for compassion (συμπαθής, sympathēs) is a word from which we get our English word, sympathy. Keep this in mind when we think of being compassionate toward each other.
- ii. Christians need to care about each other. We need to be there for each other. Romans 12:15 notes that we rejoice and weep with each other. 1 Corinthians 12:26 in describing the body of Christ, Paul notes that when one member suffers, we all suffer. 2 Corinthians 1:3-4.
- iii. Looking to the example of Jesus we see compassion – it was the motive behind much of His healing and concern for the poor and downtrodden – Matthew 9:36, 14:14, 15:32, AND Matthew 11:28-30
- iv. The world is often unsympathetic when we stand for truth and against ungodliness. We expect it of the world, but when our brethren are not there with us, that is tragic.

c. *Love as brothers*

- i. The word for love here is the word philedelphos, the name sake of Philadelphia (called the “city of brotherly love”). This is word of endearment indicating a genuine relationship – a mutual affection.
- ii. Involving more emotion than agape, this is something that will **NATURALLY** develop if we are truly striving to be the family God would have us to be.
- iii. Romans 12:10 calls for us to be kindly affectionate with brotherly love; Hebrews 13:1 the writer calls for us to “let brotherly love continue”; 1 Peter 1:22, sincere love of the brethren prompts us to obey the truth and love each other with a pure heart.

d. *Be tenderhearted*

- i. In the Greek, the word here has reference to bowels or the gut. Greeks used that expression in the same way we use the word heart to describe our inner compassion. The KJV here is translated “be pitiful”; the NASB – “kindhearted”
- ii. Colossians 3:12 and Philippians 2:1 also describe this quality as to how we need to treat each other.

e. Be courteous

- i. The better reading of this is “be humble”, as that is the root word here. It is also a quality we need in our dealings with each other. We must think properly of ourselves, especially as we deal with others, including our brethren.
- ii. James 4:10- calls for us to humble ourselves in His sight; 1 Peter 5:5-6 we read that God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Romans 12:3 calls for us to not think too highly of ourselves.
- iii. Certainly, when humility rules our lives, we will be courteous in our dealings with each other. No one likes to be around the braggart or prideful person.

f. Bless rather than curse

- i. Vs. 9 gives another quality we need even in dealing with each other as brethren (and much more, the world) – we need to act PROPERLY regardless of how the other party (parties) are acting. You NEVER deescalate an incident by retaliating in kind to rude or reviling (slandorous, or verbally abusive) behavior.
- ii. Recall Romans 12:16-21 again reminds us of this quality.
- iii. Instead, we are to give a blessing so that God can bless you. We have addressed this word, which means, “to speak well of” and is a root for our word eulogy. Just remember what Jesus said in Matthew 5:43-44, even of our enemies; and earlier we are to “turn the other cheek” (Matthew 5:38-39ff). Romans 12:14 repeats that we bless those who persecute us
- iv. When we bless others, God takes note and we can anticipate His blessings – cf. Matthew 25:34.

- g. AGAIN, be reminded that these are the types of attitudes and qualities which keep us together as the family of God, in face of a world that is so often set against us.

II. Why we do this (10-12)

- a. Peter now again quotes from the Old Testament, this time from Psalm 34:12-16

b. We love life and desire to see good days

- i. We need to cherish each other AND develop this type of a disposition toward everyone. IF we desire life – here it could describe eternal life (Romans 2:7-10) and/or the quality of our lives on earth.
- ii. Again be reminded of Romans 12:18, as much as depends on YOU, live peaceably with all men. This is how we began this section of 1 Peter several lessons ago (1 Peter 2:11-12 – we desire honorable conduct among the Gentiles; Coming up in 1 Peter 3:16 we find it again.
- iii. Striving to manifest good and decent qualities is NEVER detrimental to our lives – honesty, patience, gentleness, peaceable, serving, etc. Galatians 5:22-23 notes that qualities like these (peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, self-control, etc.), “Against such there is no law.”

- c. **It is the right way to live.** Peter here describes 3 more qualities that enhance our lives

- i. **Watch your tongue** – just remember James’ warning in James 3:1-12, Matthew 12:34-37, Jesus spoke of what we speak reflects what is in our heart.
- ii. **Avoid evil and do good** – see the previous verse
- iii. **Seek peace and pursue it** - Matthew 5:9, “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.” Romans 14:19, with one another, we are to pursue (go after fervently) those things which make for peace and lead to edification; Hebrews 12:14 calls for us to pursue peace with all, and holiness, “without which no one will see the Lord.”

- d. **God's eyes are on the righteous – He hears their prayers –**
 - i. Simply stated, God is watching – He always does – Hebrews 4:13
 - ii. He listens to the prayers of the godly. IF we want God to hear our prayers, we MUST strive to live godly lives.
 - 1. Recall the conclusion of 1 Peter 3:7 – as spouses, we do NOT want our prayers to be hindered.
 - 2. James 5:16 notes that “*the effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.*”
 - 3. Consider also 1 John 5:14-15 here – we often observe this text in reference to WHAT we are asking for, but what about HOW we ask – are we godly?
- e. **His face is against those who do evil –**
 - i. Just as God is for the godly, He is against the ungodly. And He always Has.
 - ii. Recall Hebrews 10:31, “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”
 - iii. Romans 2:5-11 speaks of God’s righteous judgment against both the godly and the wicked. A similar thought is developed in 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10
 - iv. You CANNOT live as a rebellious sinner and expect God to bless you.

And thus, we see the encouragement of Peter to faithfulness among brethren. Peter has been addressing the importance of submitting and serving, and here he summarizes that thought in our relationships. We know that the types of qualities we have discussed in this lesson are good. They will help us to not only submit in worldly & difficult circumstances, but AS brethren for whom we care and love, these types of qualities make it joyous to consider others over ourselves. So, how are you treating your brethren? Think about it!