

Love Motivated by Hope

1 Peter 3:8-12

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Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind. ⁹ 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.

¹⁰ For

“Whoever desires to love life
and see good days,
let him keep his tongue from evil
and his lips from speaking deceit;
¹¹ let him turn away from evil and do good;
let him seek peace and pursue it.
¹² 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.”

Introduction

Ever heard the saying: Don't be so heavenly-minded that you are no earthly good? I contend that you can do no earthly good if you are not heavenly minded!

Exposition

- I. **Life in the Body of Christ** (Vs. 8)
 - a. “Unity of Mind” & “A Humble Mind” – How We Think
 - b. “Sympathetic” and “Tender-Hearted” – How We Feel
 - c. “Brotherly Love” – The Central Mark of a Disciple of Christ
- II. **Life in the World** (Vs. 9a)
 - a. “Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling” - No Retaliation
 - b. “Bless (others)” – Genuinely Desire for the Lord to Bless your Enemies
- III. **The Motivation** (Vss. 9b-12)
 - a. Peter motivates his readers to this type of Christ-like life in the church and in the world by pointing them to the hope of the gospel of Jesus Christ.
 - b. By reminding them of their inheritance, Peter pushes his reader to see that the hope that they have received in Christ must continue to govern the way that they

live.

- c. In order to motivate his readers, Peter quotes **Psalm 34:12-16**, which reminds us that God looks upon those who suffer for righteousness' sake. Jesus even alludes to this reality in **Matthew 24** when he says, "9 Then they will hand you over for persecution, and they will kill you. You will be hated by all nations because of My name. 10 Then many will take offense, betray one another and hate one another. 11 Many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. 12 Because lawlessness will multiply, the love of many will grow cold. 13 But the one who endures to the end will be saved. 14 This good news of the kingdom will be proclaimed in all the world as a testimony to all nations. And then the end will come."

Conclusion

Peter's point is that while suffering might not seem good by others in the world, when we suffer for the sake of doing good, when we suffer for the sake of righteousness, we may be certain that God is watching over us. He intends to do us good. Therefore, we must not grow weary. We must not lose faith. We must keep pressing on in faithfulness to Christ.

For Peter, the life of faithfulness to Christ was a life of love for others in the church and in the world. It was a love that was motivated by the hope of the gospel of Christ, which is the hope of the gospel is eternal life. Peter wants us to evaluate our lives and look for evidence in our life that we possess "love for others." If it is absent in our life, then we should repent of our unbelief and return to the hope of the gospel.

For Peter, deep reflection on our eternal inheritance will result in the pursuit of holiness, not presumption. Peter's intention is not to shake the confidence of the struggling Christian, but to shock the self-deception of the complacent Christian. To do so, Peter essentially says: You will inherit the blessing of eternal life that was secured for us in Jesus Christ if you love one another. If you do not do this, then you will not inherit this blessing because you will have demonstrated through your lovelessness that we had never truly hoped in Christ.

Where there is no pursuit of holiness, there will be no inheritance.

So, I conclude with a few questions to you this morning for all of us:

Do you love your fellow brothers and sisters in Christ?

Is your life marked by obedience to the example of Christ, who did not return insult with curse, but blessed His persecutor?

If this fruit is missing in your life, your need is to consider anew the hope that you have in Jesus Christ. You need to contemplate what has been promised to all who hope in Christ and "obey" the message of the gospel. According to Peter, the more you hope in the promises of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the more your life will reflect that hope in obedience to Christ's commands.