



Old Testament: Psalm 34:1-22
New Testament: 1 Peter 3:1-12

A Living Hope

“Living The Good Life”

(even while being persecuted)

1 Peter 3:8-12

Wayne J. Edwards, Pastor

Peter’s formula for the “good life” gives us the real reason we are to “love life” and, therefore, see many “good days” of life, even while we are enduring persecution.

- The “good life” God wants to give us is not based on what we have, achieve, or accumulate, but on what we do with what we have, how we use our lives for His glory and not our selfish gain.
- Those who “love life” in this way will see many “good days” – meaningful days, purposeful days, even very productive days because **they will invest those days in the pursuit of the eternal**, rather than wasting their lives chasing the rainbows of the temporal.

“He is no fool to give up that which he cannot keep, to gain that which he cannot lose!”
Jim Elliott

In the previous chapters, Peter said he was well aware of the severe persecution these first-century believers endured because of their expressed faith in Jesus Christ. Peter reminded them:

- Christ called them to suffer because of their faith.
- They should not be surprised by their suffering.
- They should not be terrified because of the persecution.
- They should prepare to give a reason for their willingness to suffer persecution, for Christ’s sake!
- The God of all grace would know when their suffering was enough and deliver them from it or through it.

In 1 Peter 3:1-12, Peter said if they wanted to experience the “good life,” even while being persecuted, they must:

1. Have the Right Attitude – Verse 8 – *“Be of one mind, having compassion one for one another; love as brothers be tenderhearted, be courteous.”*

Peter lists five attitudes that must “possess us” if we are to enjoy the “good life” while being persecuted.

- ***“Be of one mind”*** – strive to agree with others – avoid confrontation without compromise.
 - ***“Having compassion”*** – being willing to suffer with all who suffer, including those outside the church.
 - ***“Love as brothers”*** – be willing to express God’s love to those the world considers unlovable.
 - ***“Be tenderhearted”*** – pity those in bondage to sin and those who are bound in their religion.
 - ***“Be courteous”*** – be humble-minded toward those who are persecuting you.
-

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God...made himself of no reputation, and humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”

Philippians 2:5-8

2. Have the Right Response – Verse 9 – “Not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing!”

Peter said no matter how badly we are mistreated, if we want to have the “good life”:

- We must not retaliate!
 - ***“Evil for evil”*** – actions or attitude
 - ***“Reviling for reviling”*** – verbal insults or abuse
- Instead, we are to:
 - ***“Bless them”*** – forgiving them as we have been forgiven by God, loving them as God loves us, and praying for their salvation.

“Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow his steps: Who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth: Who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him Who judges righteously.” 1 Peter

2:21-23

3. Have the right standard – Verse 10 -11 – “He who would love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips from speaking deceit. Let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it!”

Peter listed three essential principles:

- ***“Refrain from speaking evil”*** – do not try to cover up the truth by lying or being deceitful.
- ***“Turn from evil and do good”*** – the “good life” is not the freedom to do as we please, but the responsibility to live as we should.
- ***“Seek peace and pursue it”*** – we are to seek ways we to live in peace with those who are persecuting us.

4. Have the right motive – Verse 12 – “For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers; but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil!”

Peter said it is essential for Christians to have the right motive for life because:

- **God is watching us** – not just to discipline us when we are disobedient but also to hear our prayers when we cry out unto Him.

- **God is against those who persecute us** – we don't have to retaliate or try to get even, for God is the One who will avenge our suffering, in His way, and in His time, and for His glory!

Principles of the “good life” even amidst persecution:

- The hostility will make us “bitter” or “better.”
 - We must live “humbly” – not demanding our rights, or to be understood by those who don't know God.
 - We must be quick to “forgive” – as evidence to the unbeliever of what it is like to be “forgiven.”
 - We must not retaliate or respond “in kind” to those who mistreat us – God has called us to suffer for Jesus' sake!
 - We must obey God's authority over our lives, trusting that, as long as we are “under His authority,” nothing can come into our lives without His permission!
 - We are to “cry out” only to Him – not to any human authority, but unto God alone, for He is using our witness to accomplish His will in the world
-



***“There are no ‘ifs’ in God's world.
and no places that are safer than other places.
The center of His will is our only safety!
Let us pray that we may always know it!”
Corrie ten Boom, The Hiding Place***
