

1 Peter 3:9-17
Nov 19, 2007

Life in the Church and in the Community

Peter has been addressing the relationship of the believers to the government, to masters of slaves, and to husbands and wives in the family. He now deals with the relationship of believers in the church and in the community. This is a transitional section between the household duty code and the rest of the epistle,

: 8-9 Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind. 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.

Paul uses this same teaching in Romans 12:9-18. This was probably a common catechetical tradition used in teaching new believers the practical consequences of becoming Christians.

Rom. 12:6-18 Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; he one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor.

Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord.

Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.

Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.

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

Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.

Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be conceited. Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

: 10-12 Peter then supports his argument with a quotation from Psalm 34:12-16.

What man is there who desires life and loves many days, that he may see good?

Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking deceit.

Turn away from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it.

The eyes of the LORD are toward the righteous and his ears toward their cry.

The face of the LORD is against those who do evil, to cut off the memory of them from the earth.

Note that Peter left off the last phrase of the quote. It was probably too controversial in the local pagan societies to speak of divine retribution. It is no different today.

Peter has no difficulty using Old Testament quotations in his letters, because he viewed the faith of the Old Testament saints to be Christians before the coming of the Christ. They anticipated his coming. We now look back to his coming, and forward to his coming again.

This brings up an interesting question. Do believers "do good" because they are justified in God's sight, or are they justified because they "do good"? Are we justified by faith or justified by works?

See Romans 14:10 Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God...so then each of us will give an account of himself to God.

and

2Cor. 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.

1 Peter 3:13-17 Righteousness will be Vindicated

: 13-14 To suffer for righteousness sake is to be expected. Peter refers to Christ's suffering throughout this epistle, and that is the comfort of the believer. Peter was well aware of the extent of Jesus suffering. He saw it first hand. He shrank from suffering alongside of him that night in Jerusalem. The torture and crucifixion was burned into his heart and mind.

1Pet. 1:11 inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories.

1Pet. 1:18-19 knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

1Pet. 2:21-23 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.

He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. 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. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.

1Pet. 4:1-2 Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same way of thinking, for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, so as to live for the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for human passions but for the will of God.

1Pet. 4:12-13 Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed.

: 15-17 These verses are self-explanatory, and the Patriots are playing. We will discuss them in the morning.