

Healthy Church Family
Essential for *The Good Life*
1 Peter 3:8-12

INTRODUCTION

How can I have the "good life"?

A strong church is foundational for
a life that can be loved and a life of good days. (1 Peter 3:10)

Summarizing the letter's second part: 2:11-3:12:

2:11-17 instruction about how to relate to the structures of society.

Keep your behavior excellent among your unbelieving neighbors.

Submit to the civil authorities ruling your community.

2:18-20 Christian Household slaves submit to your masters.

2:21-24 Christians Slaves as well as free, when you suffer, remember

Christ's refusal to revile against the injustices inflicted on Him.

3:1-7 Directives for wives and husband within their households.

1. Five Qualities Essential for a Church to Thrive—Especially in Hard Times, verses 8-9.

If the Church is going to be a place of support and refuge away from the insults and hostility of the unbelieving community—certain qualities must characterize its members.

Quality #1 be like-minded -- a commitment to two principles Christians must adopt in their thinking:

Principle #1: there are key doctrines that define orthodoxy in the Christian faith. These doctrines are non-negotiables for true spiritual harmony in a congregation.

- A. The inspiration and inerrancy of the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments of Scripture.
- B. The triunity of God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- C. The material universe deriving from God's almighty creative wisdom.
- D. The full deity and humanity of Jesus Christ.
- E. The sinful condition of all human beings at conception and their alienation from God by nature and choice.
- F. The sufficiency and exclusivity of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ for the atonement of sin.
- G. The necessity of a heart conversion and personal response of faith to the gospel for salvation and reconciliation with God.
- H. The true Church of Jesus Christ consists only in persons who have *been born again*.

I. The authenticity of saving faith is evidenced in fruits of the Holy Spirit.

K. The reality of Heaven as a destiny for those who believe the gospel and Hell as a destiny for those who reject it.

Principle #2 The practice of deference in aspects of Christian belief and practice that will not corrupt the gospel.

Deference means willingness to restrain yourself from criticizing other believers about beliefs that differ from your own. *Philippians 2:2-4*
Deference blunts the misunderstandings and hostilities that can divide the Church.

Quality #2 sympathetic --to be affected in a similar way to others that you see suffering (1 Cor 12:25-26).

Sympathy sees the joys that others have. It enjoys celebrating the successes of others. It is the absence of jealousy.

Quality #3 having brotherly love Loving like a brother

Love in the Church gives us the freedom to be open and genuine.

Openness with one another is what allows us to receive the correction and encouragement we need for growing.

Quality #4 compassionate --refers to one's inner organs--one's feelings.

The NT links the affections with mercy and concern.

Jesus had compassion on the crowds and the sick (Mt 9:36; 14:14; 15:32)

The 'good Samaritan' had compassion on the Jew he found robbed.

Quality #5 humble --literally, "lowly minded".

A self-description of Jesus, Matthew 11:28-29.

Like so much of Christian ethics, humility is contrary to the attitudes of the world. Humility does not try to project moral superiority.

It is the opposite of arrogance.

2. How these Qualities Should Affect Our Christian Behavior, verse 9.

A. *The charge to avoid vengeance.*

Evil and insult generally attack us from outside the church. How we respond determines the penetration of our witness among unbelievers.

B. *The call to be people who extend blessings to our enemies.*

This is the chief purpose of our ambassadorial service in this world.

Blessing here means to speak well of someone. (1 Corinthians 4:12).

Blessing means to pray for someone's wellbeing and success (Matt 5:44).

Blessing means an inner attitude so concerned about the spiritual condition of your adversaries that it compels you to pray sincerely for them.

Blessing someone--an exciting pro-active way of witnessing in almost any type of circumstance you encounter.

Replacing hidden disgust with public blessing—a method.

3. The Promise of being blessed, verses 9c-11.

Called to what? To turn away from vindictiveness and give out blessings.
Promised what? You will inherit (obtain) a blessing.

A. The Blessing of the Five Essential Qualities, verses 10-12.

love of life and good days

Encouragement from Psalm 34.

The theme of Psalm 34: the Lord's deliverance of the righteous.

The Historical background

The lesson of Psalm 34: those who fear the Lord lack nothing and those who seek the Lord are always cared for (v. 10)

B. David and Peter's prescription for a love of life and seeing good days.

1) Guard your mouth (1 Peter 3:10)

2) Guard against doing evil (1 Peter 3:11).

3. Promote peace (1 Peter 3:11).

4. A Word of Encouragement and Warning, verse 12.

The attention of the Lord is on the righteous (verse 12a)
And it is for our good.

The attention of the Lord is on the unrighteous (verse 12b)
And it is not good for those who will not repent.

Summary: