

1 Peter 2:16-17 by Arch Van Devender

[Print This Page](#)

Series: 1 Peter

1 Peter

Title: A Strategy For Life

Passage: 1 Peter 2:16-17 (and context)

Date: 21 April 2013 at Severn Run E. P. Church

Introduction

1. We are in that section of 1 Peter that is concerned with ethics:

1. How should we live as aliens and strangers in this world...
2. Peter is giving us some very clear instructions

1. He has said, that we are to be different in the way that fight against evil passions

1. and not give into the fleshly lusts which war against our soul....
2. We've already talked about that
3. We're to be different than the world around us in that we don't live for fleshly pleasure
4. We believe there is something more to life than just dedicating our lives to chasing after ultimately destructive pleasures of the flesh.

1. But Peter says that being known for not doing bad things is not enough

1. to truly make us different than the world around us.
2. We also, on the positive side, are to be known for doing good works...
3. He said, in verse 12 that we are to live in such a manner that the people around us,
 1. Even when they speak evil of us...
 2. Yet, they have to acknowledge, sooner or later, that we did good things...
 3. That even though they hated us, yet, in the end, they will glorify God by acknowledging that the good works that we did were there for every one to see.

Transition To Text

1. Today what I want us to look at is the general strategy Peter gives us

1. where these two things - righteous living and good works -
2. Are the known character of our lives...

1. This I think is where the "stick to it" problem we all face becomes evident.

1. We all know what it's like to have good intentions...
2. We all know what it's like to decide:
 1. I'm going to quit smoking... or get in shape...
 2. or start improving ourselves by reading one good book a month...
3. We all know what it's like to set goals... good goals... Godly goals...
 1. But, as life goes on... we forget about them...
 2. things get in the way and we stop pursuing them.

1. About a year ago I managed, finally to lose quite a bit of weight... Over 30 lbs...

1. I had my annual check up just a couple of weeks ago... guess what?

2. I had put 20 of those pounds back on... why? How did it happen?
3. Diet and exercise was what took off the weight... I had stopped watching my weight and I had stopped exercising...
4. Duh... doesn't take a rocket scientist does it?

1. It's not like one day I said... I don't want to do this anymore...

1. There were always excuses... it's too cold to go walking outside... which is, of course the ONLY way one can get exercise...
2. Or... it was just a lack of attention... not specifically noticing what and how much I was eating...
3. And so... the weight came back on... little bits at a time... But now I've got to do it all over again.
4. I have to repent of being slothful... of not being alert... of not being dedicated to my task...

1. And so... I need a strategy... a strategy for life

1. Not just to lose the weight... but a strategy for keeping it off...
2. for living in such a way that keeping my weight where it ought to be is built into the very fabric of the way I live.

1. And brothers and sisters... if we're going to live a life that truly glorifies Christ

1. Then we have to have that same kind of strategy for accomplishing that goal also...
2. Otherwise the cares and worries and temptations of this world will pull us off the track...
3. And the seed of the gospel in us will wither and die... like the third seed in Jesus' parable...

1. So we need a strategy...

1. something that will help understand our lives in such a way as to accomplish our objectives...
2. actually God's objectives for us.
3. If my objective is to get my weight back down where it ought to be then I need a strategy that will govern the decisions I make each day:
 1. What am I eating and how much of it...
 2. How am I going to spend my time this day... such that I have time to get some exercise?
4. We need to put together a strategy for our lives for godliness that helps us make just those same kind of decisions.

Exegesis:

And the first thing I want us to note about verse 17 today is the main point of what I want us to take away from this sermon:

In this verse Peter gives us a set of guiding principles... a strategy that will absolutely provide a framework for every decision, every day, that we are to make so as to move toward the goal of bearing witness to the glory of God in our daily lives.

1. 1 Peter 2:17 (NKJV) 17 Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.

2. That's It:

1. "Diet and Exercise" - and you will lose weight
2. "Honor all people, love the brotherhood, Fear God, honor the king... - and you will live the life that will bring glory to God.

1. You see the point is that these are very practical... rubber meets the road... kinds of things.

2. The verse is made up of two couplets:

1. Honor all people... but - love the brotherhood.
2. Fear God... but only honor the king...
3. This kind of literary arrangement is called a chiasm...
4. You have two things that are alike in some way... and another two things that are alike in some way
5. And you put them together... and the two in the middle are the most important.

1. So here...

1. honoring all people and loving the brotherhood go together
2. They are both about our horizontal relationships and how we are to govern them
3. And fearing God and honoring the king go together...
4. They are both about our vertical relationships... about submission to those above us.
5. And so they give us a guide for dealing with every kind of moral situation we might face.

1. What ever the day brings to us... whatever circumstance we should encounter

1. We need to think; Ok...
 1. how do I show forth love to people while making allowance
 2. for the difference between those who belong to Christ and those who don't

1. And how do I deal with the moral issues that people in authority may put before me,
2. knowing that my first duty is to fear God

1. As much as time will allow, I want to flesh out this strategy a bit

1. so that when we leave here today, each one of us can be fired up again...
2. rededicated to our goal of living in such a way as to bring glory to Christ in our daily lives.

Honor EVERYONE.... Love the Brotherhood... This strategy will help us in understanding how we are to go about doing good works in the world.

1. Let's face it... most of us... day in and day out... live in a world where we interact with non-Christians far more than we do with Christians.

1. Some of us, people in full time ministry, may have it a bit different

1. In that we spend a lot of time with people who are in fact, professing Christians
2. But even there... what we find is that quite often Christians act more like non-Christians than Christians.

1. So, we are confronted, every day, throughout the day,

1. with people who don't act in a very Christian manner...
 1. either because they are not Christians and make no bones about it...
 2. or because they say they are Christians but don't always really act that way.
2. And therefore this part of the overall strategy Peter gives us will guide us in dealing with them.

1. First - the first thing he says is to "honor" everyone...

1. There's a difference in the way the underlying Greek word that is translated "honor" here is formed than the other three words.
2. This particular word is written in such a way as to present it as an overarching principle... while the other words convey on going, continuous action.
3. We might read it this way: HONOR ALL PEOPLE - but always show love for the brotherhood

1. Peter is making the same kind of distinction here that Paul makes in Galatians

1. Galatians 6:10 (NKJV) - **10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.**

2. Do good to everyone... but especially to those of the household of faith.

1. The first element of our strategy for bringing glory to God is to do good things.

1. For everyone...
 1. even those people we don't like...
 2. and whom we would just as soon avoid if we could.
2. But especially we are to love...
 1. and to show our love by doing good things for those of the brotherhood..
 2. Even those we don't really like very much... and would just as soon avoid if we could.

1. Remember: Our goal is to bring honor to Christ... to glorify Him in our daily life.

1. It's to be different than the world around us...
2. And in our relationships with others, if we only honor people we like... and if we only really love and do good things for those Christians that we like...
3. Then how are we being any different than the world in that?
4. Would not the Pharisees do the same thing? Would not a communist do the same thing?
5. Hanging out with just those people we like...
 1. doing good with just those people that make us laugh and make us feel good...
 2. Doesn't get us where we want to go...
 3. It's like falling off the wagon when it comes to diet and exercise...
 1. We decided to eat the donut instead of pass it up...
 2. Or we sit down on the couch when we could be spending the same time walking a couple of miles.
 4. Honor everyone... love the brotherhood... be different... decide how to do that... at every point where it comes up.

1. It goes right back to Jesus Himself. - what did He say?

1. Matthew 5:44–45 (NKJV) 44 **But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, 45 that you may be sons of your Father in heaven;....**
2. How much more plain can it get?

1. When we encounter people who are hard to be around...

1. Who get under our skin... or even worse... who appear to be out to get us...
2. We are to be different than the world around us...
3. We are to go out of our way... not only to be nice, polite, restrained in our conversation
4. We are to go out of our way to legitimately honor them...
5. To look for those things in them that are positive...
 1. the good that we can see in them...
 2. or the good that they are accomplishing or trying to accomplish
6. And we are to honor them for that... not just with our lips... but with our heart and with our actions.
7. We get on board with what they are doing... we help instead of hinder... we encourage instead of sullenly hang back.

1. Honoring people is not a passive thing... it is a positive, active thing.

1. It is tending the wounds of your enemy...
2. It is returning love for hate...
3. But most of all... it is seeking out ways to do good things for that person
4. As a witness... as a testimony...
5. That God through Jesus Christ has forgiven you of far more than you deserve
6. And that it is only right that you show forth that same forgiveness to others...
7. And that as God through Jesus Christ went out of His way to show love to you by coming into this world to die on a cross so that you won't have to ...

8. So, you are going out of your way to show love for others by picking up your cross, dying to self, and giving yourself in submission to the task that Christ has set for you to do.

1. Now... you might say... that's OK in principle...

1. but there is no way that a person can actually live that way.
2. Really? Really? Do we really believe that?

1. That's like saying that I can't really be expected to lose weight by diet and exercise.

1. That I really can't be expected to make a decision at every meal on what and how much I am to eat.
2. What that really means is that we expect to fail... and so we say that it is too hard for us to do...
3. And then, we go the next step and say that it is unjust for anyone to really expect us to do it.
4. We get angry and justify our failure by saying it is unreasonable it's just too hard.

1. Brothers and sisters... that is our sin... that is our will

1. We ultimately don't do these things because we don't want to do them.
2. We say we are Christians... we say that we have the Holy Spirit...
3. Well, it is because He had the Holy Spirit that Paul said: "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me"
4. If Christ can strengthen us to deal with hardship in this life... He can certainly strengthen us to the task of repenting of our sin of being unloving to people.... to all people.

1. Is it impossible for Christ to change our hearts? No, of course not.

1. He can and He will work in us such that we can do good from the heart.
2. But submission is where we start.
3. We do good things so that we may proclaim Christ....
4. We love Christ and do good things for Him...
5. Our first love is Christ... and by seeing our duty to this other person in terms of doing good things to Christ and for Christ..
6. We are able to do good for others... even those we don't like.

1. All we have to do is remove the idol of self from our heart... and put Christ where He belongs.

[Print This Page](#)