

1ST PETER

Peter seems to be wrapping this discussion up. Yet, I think we'll see that he is actually setting things up for a deeper understanding of our suffering for Christ.



CHAPTER 3:8-12

⁸ Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble. ⁹ Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing. ¹⁰ For, "Whoever would love life and see good days must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from deceitful speech. ¹¹ He must turn from evil and do good; he must seek peace and pursue it. ¹² For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil."

According to verse 8, living in harmony requires some fundamental attitudes. What are they?

How are we to respond to ill treatment and why?

How does deceit and evil speech rob us of a better life?

Who's is watching and why does it matter?

The next section makes it clear that God's children may not only suffer, but it is also God's will that they sometimes do.

CHAPTER 3:13-17

¹³ Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good? ¹⁴ But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. "Do not fear what they fear; do not be frightened." ¹⁵ But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, ¹⁶ keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. ¹⁷ It is better, if it is God's will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.

Can you think of specific times when God's people have suffered consequences for their choices?

How can Peter say we are blessed when we suffer unjustly?

What would prompt someone to ask us about our hope when we're suffering?

How should we respond?

Points to Ponder

What does it mean to set aside Christ in our hearts as Lord?

How do Peter's words contradict the so-called "prosperity gospel?"

