

CLARITY: How to Live and Why
Got Hope? Messages from 1 Peter
April 10 & 11, 2010
1 Peter 3:8-22

3:⁸ 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."

•Get rid of _____ and _____ because God _____ what we do and _____ what we say and there are rewards for living right.

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.

•Get ready to _____ what makes you different, because even the people who mock you will _____.

¹⁸ For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit, ¹⁹ through whom also he went and preached to the spirits in prison ²⁰ who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, ²¹ and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²² who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.

•Get right with God, because Jesus _____ as a sacrifice, he _____ to give us life, and he _____ as Lord of all.

**Questions for Personal Reflection
And Group Discussion**

1. Think of a time when the light turned on and you really grasped what to do and why. Clarity cut through the confusion and it all became very plain. If you're in a group, tell the others about your best "Ah, ha" moment.

2. This section opens with a list of five virtues to pursue (1 Peter 3:8). Name them. Now, look up Matt. 11:29; Luke 14:8-11; 22:24-27; and John 13:3-5, 12-17. Note the ways in which Jesus embodied these same positive character qualities. Is there one in particular in which you miss the boat? Admit your weaknesses and commit yourself to personal growth.

3. The harmony mentioned here means "to be of one mind." The same idea is found in Rom. 12:16; Phil. 1:27; 2:2. Think of this: if we are to be of one mind, whose mind should that be? 1 Cor. 2:16 refers to "the mind of Christ." Picture what life would be like in your family and in the church if Christ's followers were of one mind, united by his values and purpose.

4. The challenging topic of forgiveness is connected to the issue of non-retaliation mentioned in verse 9. Look up Matt. 5:21-24, 43-57; 6:14,15; 7:1-5; 18:21-35; 1 Cor. 6:1-7. Think of three practical reminders that will help you to respond to conflict correctly. Jot down the phrase, "forgive as you have been forgiven," and hang it on your refrigerator.

5. List ten ways you could pursue peace in your daily life. Think of your home, workplace, and any other setting that involves interaction. Read Rom. 14:19 and pray about your role in your relationships.

6. Have you come to God through Jesus? Contact any church leader to learn more.

This section of 1 Peter contains both the most practical instructions in the letter and the most confusing verses as well. Don't get stuck in what is not clear and miss out on the obvious. To engage in further study on the difficult concluding verses, you can get a copy of Larry's notes in the Welcome Center or at our website.

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•Get ready to gently explain what makes you different, because even the people who mock you will want to know.

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