

Game Plan

1 Peter 3:8-12

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A. When Under Pressure Trust God (vs. 8-9):

1. Finally – This is a summary of everything that is being said and now a fresh point is going to be made. This is the goal of what Peter has been talking about to this point in this letter.

a) To sum it up – It does not indicate the intention to end the Epistle, but rather to sum up and complete the preceding exhortations to different classes by brief practical exhortations applicable to all, and simply demanding love in action.

b) Peter now indicates how Christians should act towards the unfriendly, towards those who maliciously do them harm or run them down.

2. Harmonious, like minded – We must seek to be of the same mind, especially when relationships become difficult even if things seem to be going very wrong like it was for Christ when He suffered (2:21-24). Even though it looks like Christ is experiencing neglect from God causing Him to be abused, He and God were on the same page.

3. Harmonious, like minded – The focus of the teaching in the church is to get us to all be of one mind committed to one purpose (Philippians 2:1-2; Ephesians 4:12-13); this process is what guides us to have the attitude that belongs to Christ (Philippians 2:5).

4. Sympathetic – When a person experiences difficult circumstances in their lives, we must seek to share those feelings by igniting the same feeling we would have if we were faced with the same situation (1 Thessalonians 5:13-15).

5. Brotherly - Our focus should be to create a community of believers that would be committed to loving one another so that when there are difficult times people would have a group of believers who are committed to stand by them through their pain.

6. Tender-hearted - Within the circle of brothers and sisters we need to be compassionate, refusing to turn a cold shoulder on one another.

a) True love does not necessarily originate in the emotions, but in the will; it consists not only in feelings, but also in doing; not in sentiment, but in action; not in soft words, but in noble and unselfish deeds.

b) The first century was cold and hard-hearted. Christianity, with its tenderizing influence upon the heart, had not had time nor opportunity, yet to make much of an impact upon the callous heart of man.

7. Repays – As a result, we must not pay people back for anything they may have done against us on a continual basis.

8. Evil for evil – Since we are encouraged to demonstrate the Christ-like attitude, Peter outlined above that we must not seek to willfully create harm towards one another or seek to corrupt people to be against the person we have ill feelings towards.

9. Or insult for insult – We do not seek to possess an attitude whereby we condemn a person or scorn them just like they condemn or scorn us.

10. But give a blessing – We must do the opposite, seek to speak well of the person and provide to them the attitude listed in this verse.

11. We are called - We are called to a life of holiness, a life to be Christ-like, different from how the world would react when placed in the same situation. We must therefore be more committed to the divine call on our lives than to be corrupted by the attitude of the world.

12. Inherit – What God has in store for us, through Christ death (Ephesians 1:13-14), we experience because we choose to suffer righteously. The growth and empowerment of the Holy Spirit become evident in our lives.

13. Inherit a blessing – The free spontaneous gift that the Lord would bountifully, generously desire to bestow upon us becomes a reality through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. The manner of how this becomes a reality is listed in verse 10-12, 16-17.

B. Cause God To Be Your Offense (vs. 10-11):

1. Desires the crown of life – The goal - Because we choose to make it our focus to steadfastly keep the faith and not repay evil for evil or insult for insult, but choose rather to seek harmony, be sympathetic, be brotherly with a kindhearted spirit, our reward is not just a blessed life on earth, but at the beamer seat judgment we gain the Crown of Life (Revelation 2:10). We will also share the crown of Christ in heaven (Revelation 2:21-22).
 - a) Peter introduces this quotation from Psalms 34 with the explanatory conjunction "For," showing that he views the quotation as giving reason for obeying the exhortation of v.9.
2. Love – A person that will be blessed is a person who makes it a pattern in their life, as directed by the Holy Spirit, to demonstrate sympathy, brotherly kindness and live with a humble spirit. They do this in a self-sacrificial manner as directed by God's word.
3. See good days - The goal - The believer that functions in this manner is going to come to a full understanding of how the Lord would cause their life to be profitable for themselves and those around them. This is because they live their lives to please Him.
4. Keep his tongue from evil – With all the very difficult issues these believers were experiencing daily Peter knew that to keep their tongue from evil was extremely difficult (modeled on the cross; 2:21-25) and therefore if done, it deserves a reward (James 1:26).
5. Keep his tongue from evil – We must discipline ourselves, since the tongue never got saved (James 3:2-12), to make every effort to stop it from violating everything that is listed in this passage. If we don't, our tongue will corrupt us and those around us.
6. Speak deceit – Under the pressure of suffering a believer must purposefully not make an effort to be crafty or deceitful in their conversations.
7. Evil – We must decisively decide to live in the power of our inheritance, the Holy Spirit (Matthew 19:16-17 – good can only come from God), and willfully turn away from being malicious and destructive towards others, creating harm for them.

8. Good – To experience God’s rewards, as we saw with Christ on the cross, we must seek to do what benefits others so that relationships become blessed by God and therefore profitable for everyone.
9. Seek peace – We are commanded to make a point to strive after peace and not create strife.
10. Seek peace – The Holy Spirit is our peace so we must make a point to strive to not live in the flesh (Galatians 5:20), but in the Spirit because peace is not a feeling, it is not something we can create; it is empowered by the Spirit and therefore only established by the Spirit.
11. Seek peace – The context of this passage indicates that seeking peace has to do with relationships with others, but the verse leaves this seeking somewhat open. It seems like it can also make seeking, like chasing after the influence of the Holy Spirit, so that we experience His powerful movement in our lives especially when the circumstances around us are creating affliction towards us. So, no matter how stressful the issues on the outside may be, the fruit of the Spirit on the inside keeps us strong.
12. Pursue peace – We are commanded with intense energy, to be hasty to seek to live out our heritage, the work of the Holy Spirit within us, so that this is all we do when people are attacking us or when our lives are very stressful. Peter is speaking from experience. When Christ’s trial and crucifixion became intense for Peter he responded to his anxiety and fear rather than pursue the work of the Holy Spirit in his life.

“The force of the first verse is this: The one who wishes to enjoy life to the hilt, and experience days of true happiness should refrain from speaking evil or deceit. In this section, of course, the thought is that he should not repay insults and lies except with kindness.”

C. God Fights for Those Who Trust Him (vs. 12):

1. Eyes of the Lord – The eyes of the One (eyes – anthropomorphism) who has all power and authority and sincerely desires to sustain a covenant relationship with us, has “penetrating sharpness” and has a full knowledge of all that is taking place in us and around us. He has a full complete knowledge of everything and has the power to address it all.

2. Towards the righteous – Every movement the Lord takes is specifically directed to those who willfully commit to live up to the standards that He has put in place for us. These individuals live humbly before God committed to demonstrate the attitude outlined in this passage even when the forces against them are abusive.
3. His ears attend to their prayers - When we go before the Lord who controls everything, for specific blessings, He provides His complete attention to all those who humbly submit to His standards.
4. The face of the Lord is against – The face of the Lord means the totality of all that He is (His presence) and is set to oppose those who purposefully go against His standards. Evil here is not said to be of only those who are opposing the believers; it seems to imply to anyone who willfully violates the Word of God.
5. Practice evil – The person who makes it a habit to continuously be malicious by the manner in which they act towards creating harm towards others; the Lord God would commit Himself to oppose everything they are doing. So even though the Lord is slow to anger and abounding in love, there comes a time when He will stand for those who practice righteousness.
6. In quoting Ps. 34:16, Peter left out the closing words "to cut off the memory of them from the earth." This omission was not an oversight. We are living in the dispensation of the grace of God; it is the acceptable year of the Lord. The day of vengeance of our God has not come yet. When the Lord Jesus returns as King of kings and Lord of lords, He will punish evildoers and cut off the memory of them from the earth.