



The Scrolls

Helping **CENTRAL BIBLE CHURCH** Families Belong, Become and Go Beyond

V26 N15

April 14, 2024

HIGHER UP

“The Recipe for Happy Soup”

1 Peter 3:8-12

THIS WEEK'S CORE COMPETENCY

Kindness/Goodness

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

“Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always strive to do what is good for each other and for everyone else.”

1 Thessalonians 5:15



What good is doing good?

Doing good – what good is it? It goes without saying that doing good is better than doing evil. No one in his right mind would argue with that. It turns out that doing good is good for the one doing it as well as the one receiving it. In the first place, it makes for a life worth living, and in the second, it benefits others.

Christians are encouraged to do good in scores of New Testament passages. Here are just a few of the more relevant ones:

“Therefore, as we have opportunity, *let us do good to all people*, especially to those who belong to the family of believers” (Gal 6:10); “For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus *to do good works*, which God prepared in advance for us to do” (Eph 2:10); “And as for you, brothers and sisters, never tire of *doing what is good* (2Th 3:13); “Our people must learn to *devote themselves to doing what is good*, in order to provide for urgent needs and not live unproductive lives” (Tit 3:14); “And do not forget to *do good* and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased” (Heb 13:16); and finally, “If anyone, then, knows the *good they ought to do* and doesn’t do it, it is sin for them (Jas 4:17).

The apostle Peter, in particular, makes *doing good* a major theme of his first epistle. Eight times in his short epistle he alludes to the need for believers to do good to those either inside or outside of the Christian community (2:12, 15, 20; 3:11, 13, 17; 4:19). Consider what he writes in 2:12 and 2:15. “*Live such good lives* among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may *see your good deeds* and glorify God on the day he visits us,” and “For it is God’s will that *by doing good* you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish people.”

In 1 Peter 3:10, the apostle quotes Psalm 34:12-16 to explain why his readers should do the kind of good he commends in verses 8-9. In a nutshell, he demonstrates from scripture that God’s people receive a blessing by being a

blessing. Put more specifically, doing good in this life leads to a life worth living, a life filled with good days (v. 10; cf. Ps 34:12). That’s what the Psalmist says – a thought echoed in the book of Proverbs. In fact, verse 11, “Come, my children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the LORD” makes the psalm’s connection to biblical wisdom obvious (cf. Pr 1:7). One commentator explains: “Almost every word in the opening verse is in the style of the wisdom instructor, as in Proverbs 1-9, with his fatherly tone and his stress on the fear of the Lord as the beginning of wisdom. This continues with the teaching that *the good you enjoy* (12) goes hand in hand with *the good you do* (14)” (Derek Kidner, *Psalms 1-72*, TOTC, 158).

Doing what is wise and good is *personified* throughout the first nine chapters of Proverbs. Wisdom is portrayed as a virtuous woman, who offers blessings to those who obey her. Solomon writes: “Long life is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honor. Her ways are pleasant ways, and all her paths are peace. She is a *tree of life* to those who take hold of her; those who hold her fast will be blessed” (Pr 3:16-18). The “tree of life” metaphor implies that wisdom offers its pupil longevity. Peter is linking the blessings of wisdom, namely, a long life filled with good days, with doing good. The good he has in mind is itemized in verses 8-9, that is, being “likeminded,” being “sympathetic,” loving one another, being “compassionate” and “humble,” and repaying “evil with blessing.” Note the close parallel between 1 Peter 3:8-9 and Romans 12:9-17. “Live in harmony with one another” (v. 16); “Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn” (v. 15); “Love must be sincere . . . Be devoted to one another in love” (vv. 9-10); “Do not be proud” (v. 16); “Do not repay anyone evil for evil” (v. 17). “Bless those who persecute you” (v. 14).

Read 1 Peter 3:8-12

8 Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble. 9 Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil 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 their tongue from evil
and their lips from deceitful speech.*

11 They must turn from evil and do good;
they 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.”

Read in another translation

8 Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind. 9 Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing. 10 For

*“Whoever desires to love life
and see good days,
let him keep his tongue from evil
and his lips from speaking deceit;*

11 let him turn away from evil and do good;
let him seek peace and pursue it.

12 For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous,
and his ears are open to their prayer.

But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.” (ESV)

After reading the text, practice your Observation skills by noting the following:

- Circle “Finally” in v. 8.
- Bracket “all of you” in v. 8.
- Asterisk the “insider” virtues listed in v. 8.
- Box “on the contrary” indicating *contrast* in v. 9.
- Box “because” indicating *reason* in v. 9.
- Circle “this” in v. 9.
- Box “so that” indicating *purpose* in v. 9.
- Circle “blessing” (2x) in v. 9.
- Box “For” indicating *reason* in v. 10.
- Underline “life” and “good days” in v. 10.
- Double underline “eyes,” “ears,” and “face” in v. 12.

What one word would you use to describe the **TONE** of this passage? (i.e., stern, joyful, cautious, etc.)

What word or idea stands out to you in this passage?

What one thing do you not understand in this passage?

Try to summarize the **THEME** of this passage in one word. If you were going to describe these verses, you might say, “This text is about _____.”



DIG DEEPER

Answer the questions to help you apply the passage and prepare for discussion

1. Peter's letter doesn't end in 3:12, so explain why he begins verse 8, "Finally."
2. Define "like-minded" in your own words, and explain why it matters.
3. Explain the difference between being "sympathetic" and being "compassionate."
4. What has being "sympathetic" and "compassionate" got to do with *humility*?
5. Explain the *contrast* in verse 9.
6. "Repay evil with *blessing*" (v. 9). What does that mean?
7. To what does "this" in "to *this* you were called" (v. 9) refer?
8. *Who* stands to "inherit a blessing," and what "blessing" do they stand to inherit?
9. Paraphrase verse 10a, "Whoever would love life and see good days."
10. **Discussion:** The "*eyes of the Lord*" aren't on the righteous simply to see what they're up to — are they? Talk about the point of Peter's *anthropomorphic* references to God's eyes, ears, and face.

Commentary On The Text

In 1 Peter 3:8-12, the apostle wraps up his instructions to Christian households (i.e., household codes), commencing in 2:11 (cf. Eph 5:22-6:9; Col 3:18-4:1), in much the same way he began them, namely, with instructions for all. In 2:11-12 he writes: “Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul. Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.” One commentator observes: “Peter brings his treatment of the duties of Christians, considered in various groupings, to a close with general practical advice for the whole community [cf. 2:11-12]. His use of ‘Finally’ (*to telos*) and his citation of Psalm 34:12-16 show the concluding character of this passage” (Edwin A. Blum, “1 Peter,” in *The Bible Expositor’s Commentary*, vol. 12, 238).

The passage opens (v. 8) with a treatment of “insider ethics,” dealing with how members of the believing community are to treat one another, it continues with a treatment of “outsider ethics,” dealing with how members of the believing community are to treat hostile members of the unbelieving community, and concludes with a quotation from Psalm 34 intended to bolster his commands.

In verse 8, Peter calls for unity within the Christian community, “be like-minded” (cf. Eph 4:3), and then lists four kinds of virtuous behavior conducive to “being of one mind” (NKJV): sympathetic, loving, compassionate, and humble (see notes on v. 8). The relationship of the four to unity in community isn’t difficult to discern. What’s more, they are virtues encouraged elsewhere in the New Testament. One commentator notes: “The five virtues in v. 8 have many illustrations in the life of Jesus and parallels in the other epistles. They are normative qualities every person united to Christ should manifest. (On ‘harmony,’ see Rom 12:16; Phil 1:27; 2:2; on ‘be sympathetic,’ Rom 12:15; 1 Cor 12:26; on ‘love as brothers,’ 1 Thess 4:9-10; for ‘be compassionate,’ see Christ’s example in Matt 11:29; and concerning ‘humble,’ see Christ’s example as set forth in Phil 2:6ff.)” (Blum, 238).

In verse 9, the apostle prohibits believers from retaliating against their unbelieving persecutors. They are not to “repay evil with evil or insult with insult” even though the natural response to *hostility* is *retaliation*. Put differently, they are not to “get even” by responding in kind. Quite the opposite, they are to “get even” by “blessing” those who persecute them (see

Ro 12:14; 1Co 4:12). While the word translated “bless” basically means “to speak well” of someone, here it implies more than simply not cursing those who curse you. According to one commentator: “The word occurs over four hundred times in the LXX [the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament], often in opposition to cursing. H. G. Link suggests that ‘blessing here [1 Peter 3:9] means simply a friendly disposition towards enemies’ (DNNT, 1:215).

But the instruction and practice of Jesus and the apostles goes beyond a ‘friendly disposition’ to active prayer and intercession (cf. Acts 7:60; 1 Cor 4:12)” (Blum, 238). But why “repay evil with blessing?” you ask. And Peter answers, “because to *this* [referring to the righteous conduct he expects of all Christians mentioned in vv. 8-9a] you were called” (v. 9b). What’s more, doing this kind of good will result in the good life promised in the wisdom literature to those who behave wisely (Pr 3:16-18). As another commentator writes: “In light of Peter’s citation of Psalm 34, where the beginning emphasis is on ‘see [ing] good days’ (3:10), he likely has in mind a *prolonged life on this earth* because of Christian goodness, in spite of persecution” (Scot McKnight, *The NIV Application Commentary: 1 Peter*, 201, italics added).

In verses 10-12, Peter quotes Psalm 34:12-16a to bolster his commands. Verses 10-11 quote Psalm 34:12-14; they link behaving wisely, that is, doing good in wisdom’s terms, to being blessed with a long happy life. To love one’s life, wisdom says, control your tongue and do what is right. Follow the example of Jesus: “He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth” (2:22). Verse 12 quotes Psalm 34:15-16a; it links the blessing to the Lord. His eyes are “on the righteous” to look after them, and ears are “attentive to their prayer” to meet their needs. But the same is not true regarding those who do evil. His “face is against those who do evil,” in judgment, as 34:16b indicates: “to blot out their name from the earth.”

The following paraphrase of verses 8-12 is helpful: “Finally, all of you, be like-minded, loving toward one another, compassionate, and humble (v. 8), not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling; but on the contrary blessing, for you have been called to such a righteous life, in order that by this righteous living you may obtain God’s blessing on your life (v. 9). For in the Psalms God promises blessings to those who live righteously” (see Wayne Grudem, *1 Peter*, TNTC, 148).

Word Studies/Notes

v. 8 *Finally* Cf. “to sum up” (NASB 1995). “‘To sum up’ concludes the section on respect for others (2:13–3:12)” (Thomas L. Constable, “Notes on 1 Peter,” 2024 ed., 75, planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/1peter.pdf). “Household duty codes do not normally end with general admonitions of this kind. Yet the distinctly Petrine adaptation of the code began with advice directed to all believers regardless of their station in life (2:13-17), and it is by no means surprising that it should end with the same audience in view” (J. Ramsey Michaels, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 49, *1 Peter*, 173).

v. 8 *all of you* I.e., his readers, namely, the “Dear friends” (2:11), “Slaves” (v. 18), “Wives” (3:1), and “Husbands” (v. 7) that he has previously addressed.

v. 8 *be like-minded . . .* Cf. “have unity of mind” (ESV); “be of one mind” (NKJV); “have the same attitude” (GNT). “There is no main verb in this verse (*Grk* ‘Finally, all [] harmonious’), but it continues the sense of command from the previous paragraphs” (*The NET Bible*, 13^{tn} on 1 Pe 3:8); cf. “Finally, all of you be harmonious” (NET).

v. 8 *be sympathetic* “(*sympatheis*; the only occurrence in the NT): lit. ‘suffer with,’ i.e., share feelings; happier experiences are not excluded for we are to rejoice with the joyful as well as to weep with the mournful (Rom. 12:15; 1 Cor. 12:26; Heb. 10:34)” (Norman Hillyer, *1 and 2 Peter, Jude*, NIBC, 104).

v. 8 *love one another* Lit. “love as brothers” (NIV©1984); cf. “love each other like brothers and sisters” (ERV); “love each other fraternally” (JUB). “(*philadelphoi*); only here in the NT, although the similar term *philadelphia* occurs in 1:22” (Hillyer, 104).

v. 8 *be compassionate* “The Greek *eusplanchnoi* (only elsewhere in the nt at Eph. 4:32) is derived from *eu*, well, and *splanchna*, the internal organs that were viewed as the seat of the emotions . . . The corresponding verb refers in the NT to the actions of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:33) and the Prodigal’s father (Luke 15:20). Usually it describes Jesus himself being moved with compassion (as in Mark 1:41, when he touches and heals the leper)” (Hillyer, 104-105).

v. 8 *humble* “The person who is ‘humble’ (*Gr. tapeinophrones*) in spirit is willing to put someone else’s interests and needs before his or her own (cf. Phil. 2:3-4). This would apply to God’s purposes as well, not just the needs of other people” (Constable, 75-76).

v. 9 *this* “Grammatically, *this* may refer either backward (to the idea of returning blessing for cursing, or to all of the righteous behaviour in vv. 8-9a) [cf. NLT, NKJV], or forward (to the clause ‘that you may obtain a blessing’) [cf. NASB, NET]” – The NIV leaves the translation ambiguous. – “However, the sense of the passage requires that *this* refers backward to the righteous conduct Peter commands them to manifest in vv. 8-9a.” (Wayne Grudem, *1 Peter*, TNTC, 147). This conclusion is supported by the fact that Psalm 34:12-16 promises God’s blessing in response to righteous behavior. “The whole verse echoes the words of Jesus (Matt. 5:43-44; Luke 6:27-28; cf. Rom. 12:17; 1 Cor. 4:12; 1 Thess. 5:15)” (Hillyer, 105; contra. J. N. D. Kelly, *A Commentary on the Epistles of Peter and Jude*, 137).

v. 9 *with blessing, a blessing* The blessing Christians are to give those who do them evil involves “seeking their highest spiritual good, defined by Jesus in terms of intercession, lifting them up to God to bring to pass in their lives what he sees is required (Matt. 5:44; Luke 6:28), a marked advance on the usual classical Greek sense of *eulogein* as merely ‘speaking well of’” (Hillyer, 105). The blessing Christians are to receive from God in light of Psalm 34 with its emphasis on *seeing good days* (3:10) likely refers to “a prolonged life on this earth because of Christian goodness, in spite of persecution” (Scot McKnight, *The NIV Application Commentary: 1 Peter*, 201).

v. 12 *eyes, ears, face* Anthropomorphisms describing God’s dealings with people. “The ‘eye’ of the Lord over the righteous reminds us of his providential care for his people (cf. Exod 2:25), and his ‘ear’ is open to our cries for help in prayer (cf. Exod 3:7). The ‘face’ of the Lord is a Hebrew expression for ‘God’s countenance, i.e., the side he turns to man’ (TDNT, 6:772). Here it relates to his anger against evil doers” (Edwin A. Blum, “1 Peter,” in *The Bible Expositor’s Commentary*, vol. 12, 239).

4

APPLY THE TEXT

CENTRAL MESSAGE OF THE TEXT

Believers who *do good* by treating *insiders* virtuously and *outsiders* with blessing will inherit *a good life* and *enjoy* God's presence.

CENTRAL MESSAGE FOR YOUR LIFE

(Rewrite the Central Message above to personally apply to your own life)



3 LIVING QUESTIONS

The "Living Questions" are simple questions we may ask of any text in order to apply the Bible to our life. Answer the questions below as personally as you can.

1. What does this passage teach me about God?

2. What does this passage teach me about myself?

3. What does this passage lead me to do?



FAMILY TALK

When all my kids were in elementary school and I was a stay-at-home mom, I used to count down the minutes until they came home. (I know. I'm that mom.) I couldn't wait to hear about their day—who they sat with at lunch; how they did on that hard test they were so worried about; what good things happened to make them laugh. Most of the time re-entry into the family went fairly well and the only fight was who got first dibs to share about their day. But some days a simple question from me would unleash the beast within one of my kids. They would let loose all their pent-up feelings and frustrations and leave a path of destruction as wide as a Texas tornado, leaving me wondering what just happened. But learning to live in a family is practice for learning to live in the community at large. In our passage this week, Peter reminds believers the proper way to treat one another. Imagine if all families, especially those professing faith in Christ, worked toward a common goal of being like-minded, sympathetic, loving, compassionate and humble. Imagine we all worked toward taming our tongue, turning from evil and repaying insult with blessing. What would your house look and feel like if that were a family goal? This week, put some action steps in place to change your family dynamic with this goal in mind. Help your kids understand the blessing they can be to each other and the ripple effect they can have in the community as a result. We're praying for you!

What Does The Bible Say?

Read 1 Peter 3:8-12

1. What are the five different things Peter tells believers to be in verse 8?
2. How should believers repay evil and insult?
3. If someone loves life, how should they speak and act?

What Do You Think?

What is the blessing a believer will inherit for blessing others?

What Do You Do?

Make a logbook of put ups and put downs. At the end of the week look and see how you're doing. Based on what you noted, do you need to work on how you talk to others?

CORE COMPETENCY: Kindness/Goodness

I treat others better than myself.

MEMORY VERSE: Psalm 139:23-24

"Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

KidPIX COUPON

Earn 1 KidPIX Token by completing the CENTRALKids Bible Study on this page and another token by memorizing and reciting the memory verse for this week.

Questions: kids@wearecentral.org

- I completed my Bible Study
- I memorized this week's verse
- I brought my Bible to church
- I brought a friend



CHILD'S NAME

GRADE

PARENT SIGNATURE

OUR CORE COMPETENCIES

CENTRAL BELIEFS

Authority of the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Church (Ephesians 4:15-16)

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Eternity (John 14:1-4)

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

The Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9)

I believe the Holy Spirit convicts, calls, converts and changes me as a child of God.

Humanity (John 3:16)

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Identity in Christ (John 1:12)

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:1-4)

I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who became man, died for sinners and rose from the dead.

Life Purpose (Acts 20:24)

I believe I am a steward of God's resources and have been redeemed to participate in His Kingdom purposes for His glory.

Personal God (Psalm 121:1-2)

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Salvation by Grace (Ephesians 2:8-9)

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.



CENTRAL VIRTUES

Love (1 John 4:10-12)

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Joy (John 15:11)

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace (Philippians 4:6-7)

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself and others.

Patience (Proverbs 14:29)

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness (1 Thessalonians 5:15)

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others

Faithfulness (Proverbs 3:3-4)

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Gentleness (Philippians 4:5)

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Self-Control (Titus 2:11-13)

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Grace (Colossians 3:13)

I demonstrate forgiveness, mercy and generosity to others, even when they have offended me.

Hope (1 Peter 1:3-5)

I have a growing anticipation of God's promises and my secure eternity with Him.

Humility (Philippians 2:3-4)

I choose to esteem others above myself.



CENTRAL PRACTICES

Bible Study (Hebrews 4:12)

I study the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Biblical Community (Acts 2:44-47)

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Compassion (Psalm 82:3-4)

I seek to serve the last, the least and the lost in my community.

Disciple-Making (2 Timothy 2:2)

I multiply godly beliefs, virtues and practices in others to encourage their spiritual growth in Christ.

Evangelism (Acts 1:8)

I share Jesus with others through personal proclamation and demonstration of the gospel.

Generosity (2 Corinthians 9:6-11)

I gladly give my resources to fulfill God's purposes.

Prayer (Psalm 66:16-20)

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-Mindedness (Matthew 6:33)

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts (Romans 12:4-6)

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Worship (Psalm 95:1-7)

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

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Stephanie Thomas (B.B.A University of Texas at Arlington). Stephanie is married to James and they have five children: Elijah, Levi, Bo, Ella and Simon. Stephanie has attended Central Bible Church for more than 20 years, has been on staff since 2014, and now serves as Children's Minister.

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