

## “Prepping for Blessing”

### 1 Peter 3.8-17

- Q: Can you think of a recent occasion when it struck you “I am out of place in this world.” In particular - as a follower of Jesus. Peter calls this being an “Elect Exile”
- Being an “Elect Exile” can simply be a sense of being out of place in this world OR the living terror of full blown persecution which exists throughout the world..
- VOM article: <https://www.persecution.com/stories/fulani-militants-kill-nigerian-mother-of-2/>
- 1 Peter is applicable for those experiencing subtle, potential, and full-blown suffering for faith.
- 1 Peter 3.8-17 [1015] How to live as followers of Jesus when you suffer.
- Tension between Jesus’ statements on ‘life as a follower of Jesus’
  - Jesus offers abundant life and overflowing joy [John 10,10, 15.11] BUT also predicts of suffering and difficulty.[John 15.20; 16.33]

**Big Idea: You can experience a blessed life in the face of opposition.**

- Q: How can I experience a blessed life in the face of opposition to my faith?

### **1. Blessing comes by blessing potential opponents**

- Vs 8-9 the way to experience blessing is to be a blessing! (Not a natural response)

#### **Engage with compassion**

***8 Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind.***

- unity of mind - find common ground. Even diametrically opposed can have common ground.
- sympathy - “suffer together” - often individuals/groups that lash out are lashing out from pain/hurt. \*open eyes to the hurts that others bear
- brotherly love - treat like family. ‘Human family’. Humanize those who oppose you.
- a tender heart - “gut feelings” - develop empathy for potential opponents
- a humble mind - avoid harboring thoughts of superiority. Humble posture

#### **Refrain from retaliation**

***9 Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless,***

- When we feel criticized, wronged > human nature is ‘get nasty’ BUT Peter says : Bless “speak good words” NOT Petty pay back, gossip, social media slander,
  - Stephen (first recorded martyr for Christ) [Acts 7.60] Jesus on the cross [Luke 23.34]
- [9] on the contrary, bless, ...that you may obtain a blessing.***

#### **Pursue good relations**

- [v10-12] Peter applies an [Psalm 34.12-16]. Which is based on narrative in [1Sam 21]
- If you desire good days...seek peace and pursue it!

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- Jesus said “In this world you will have trouble” BUT sometimes we bring the trouble on ourselves because we don’t understand that we have been commissioned to BLESS [9] “bless, for to this you were called” BUT sometimes: when we follow the way of the Master (Bless) we experience the fate of the Master (Suffer anyway)
- Vs 13 shift: preparing for outright/unprovoked opposition.  
Q: Is it possible to experience joy and blessing when we still face opposition in spite of our efforts to bless? YES!

## **2. Blessing comes by preparing for potential opposition**

### ***13 Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good?***

- people are not typ. out to get you when you are all about doing good 14 But even if you should suffer for righteousness’ sake, you will be blessed. HOW?

### **Prepare your heart by making Jesus master**

#### ***15 but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy,...***

- In your heart - center of motivation, executive seat  
honor Christ the Lord as holy - give Jesus the special place as master
- BEFORE you face opposition for your faith > you need to settle in your heart who is truly master in your heart.

### **Prepare a reasoned and respectful response**

#### ***15b ...always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect,***

- The defense is both reasoned (thought through) and respectful
- Q: What’s your reasoned, respectful response?

### **CONCLUSION**

- Final vs [17]

#### ***17 it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God’s will, than for doing evil***

- IF God (in his infinite wisdom) allows you to experience suffering as a Christian  
> It is far better to experience it as result of doing good THAN as result of being a contrary/obnoxious/arrogant Christian
- If you want to experience blessing...

CHALLENGE: Prepare to bless!