

Inheriting a Blessing **1 Peter 3:8-9 (NKJV)**

8 Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous; 9 not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing.

Never before have these verses been more needed in our world and in Christianity.

Just this past week we see the divisions and the tension and even hatred aroused by these divisions.

Vaxxers and anti-vaxxers.

Maskers and anti-maskers.

Sciencers and anti-sciencers.

The more and more we are divided the weaker and weaker we become as a nation.

Division is the devil's plan, not Gods.

We have multiple distinct groups in this nation and that is not bad. What is bad is that we have another group that uses our differences to divide us where no division was there in the first place.

Peter understood this 2,000 years ago. And thus he writes to Christians.

I. *Finally*

A. This is not the final finally but just a summation of all this about responsibilities.

1. What does the whole Old Testament law hang.

a. Matthew 22:35-40 (NKJV)

(1) ³⁵ Then one of them, a lawyer, asked *Him a question*, testing Him, and saying, ³⁶“Teacher, which *is* the great commandment in the law?” ³⁷ Jesus said to him, “*You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.*” ³⁸ This is *the* first and great commandment. ³⁹ And *the* second *is* like it: *‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’* ⁴⁰ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.” ”

2. Paul understands this as well.

a. Romans 13:9 (NKJV)

(1) ⁹ For the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery,” “You shall not murder,” “You shall not steal,” “You shall not bear false witness,” “You shall not covet,” and if there *is* any other commandment, are *all* summed up in this

saying, namely, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

b. Galatians 5:14 (NKJV)

(1) ¹⁴ For all the law is fulfilled in one word, *even* in this: “*You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*”

3. Even James alludes to this.

a. James 2:8 (NKJV)

(1) ⁸ If you really fulfill *the* royal law according to the Scripture, “*You shall love your neighbor as yourself,*” you do well;

B. All this talk about submission to the government, to our masters, to husbands etc can be solved right here in these following verses.

II. Like minded; *all of you be of one mind*

A. In one central way we should all have the same mind, the mind of Christ.

1. Philippians 2:5 (NKJV)

a. ⁵ Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,

B. This does not mean we do not have differences.

1. Some differences are of little or no consequence and we should grant liberty.

a. I can here someone say, as I have before, “If it is in the Bible it is of consequence.” to which I reply congratulations you have just graduated to Pharisee.

b. There are many views concerning the return of Jesus Christ.

c. Paul specifically said we should not argue about holy days, food and drink.

d. Colossians 2:16 (NKJV) 16 So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths,

C. In the essentials we need to be of the same mind.

1. What would be best, one church where half argued for infant baptism and the other half against it.

2. Or to have two churches with each one holding the principle that they hold dear without argument in the church.

3. If you want the best example of a church that was divided, just read 1 Corinthians.

- III. Compassionate; *having compassion for one another*
- A. Have you ever heard someone say, “Well that’s how I see it and I don’t care how they feel about it.”
 - 1. This is exactly what he is talking about.
 - 2. If we love people and care for people then we care how they feel.
 - 3. To be uncaring is to be uncompassionate.
 - B. In our interactions we are going to offend people.
 - 1. What do we do when we realize this is what we have done?
 - 2. We seek reconciliation.
 - 3. And we learn to hold our tongue and our temper.
- IV. Brotherly love; *love as brothers*
- A. This is the word that Peter used when Jesus asked him if he loved Him.
 - 1. It might be called the second greatest word in the New Testament for love, agape being the greatest.
 - B. What does that look like.
 - 1. Do to others what you would have them do to you.
- V. Easily touched by others; *be tenderhearted*
- A. Are you tender hearted.
 - 1. What touches the heart of God and Jesus should touch yours.
 - 2. But we have become suspicious and expecting the next scam.
 - B. We have become battle hardened.
 - 1. The TV is filled with pictures and stories that just want \$19 per month.
 - 2. Remember some non-profits and hardly non-profits.
 - 3. But there are probably other groups who do the same work with less overhead.
 - 4. I saw a program about digging wells for people who had not water.’
 - a. They told us that each well was so many thousand dollars.
 - b. So I was touched by the needs of the people.
 - c. So I went to their website and found out that according to the annual budget of 60 million dollars very few wells were getting dug.

- d. So I looked up another organization with an annual budget of 6 million and they were doing as much or more as the other one.
- e. That is where I send my money.

VI. *Be courteous;*

- A. If you can't do anything else you can be courteous.
- B. It doesn't cost any more.
- C. It will be much better received.

VII. *Forgiving; not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this*

A. The greatest human example of this is in the story of Naaman who Elisha healed.

- 1. The miracle is thought of as when his leprosy was cleansed.
- 2. But I think the miracle was that it was his captured servant girl who gave him the idea.
- 3. She had been captured by Naaman's soldiers and made to be a servant.
- 4. When she saw that Naaman had leprosy why would she have anything but contempt for him.
- 5. "He's getting just what he deserves," she might have said.

B. Peter understood the desire to harm those who harmed him

- 1. He took his sword and struck one of the men who came to arrest Jesus.

C. It is so natural for us to render evil for evil.

1. Matthew 5:38–48 (NKJV)

- a. 38 "You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' 39 But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. 40 If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also. 41 And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two. 42 Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away. 43 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' 44 But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, 45 that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. 46 For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the

tax collectors do the same? 47 And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? 48 Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

D. So many people live bitter and repressive lives because of some injustice they have received.

1. But not Naaman's servant girl, whereas she might have dreamed of putting poison the family's food instead she thought how she might relieve her master's suffering.

VIII. Our purpose; *that you may inherit a blessing.*

Matthew 5:10–12 (NKJV)

10 Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 "Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. 12 Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.