

First Peter Chapter 3 Part 2

TO REMIND OURSELVES OF JESUS' 'KINGDOM WAY'

- COUNTER-CULTURAL: Forces will be trying to tug you in the OPPOSITE DIRECTION.
 - Requires you to be SPIRITUALLY-MINDED rather than EARTHLY-MINDED.
 - At the core will be LED by LOVE rather than DEFINED by LAW.
- *How is the Kingdom way different to the world's way? Or the Pharisees' religious way? If you were honest, which of these 3 ways does 'your way' most closely resemble?*

1 PETER 3:8-12

→ *What jumps out to you in this passage? Why was it particularly poignant to the original C1st target audience? How does it follow on from the previous few verses?*

1. WALK in LOVE (v8a)

⁸*Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble.*

- * In a world that's constantly PULLING people DOWN, we need a LOVE that BUILDS people UP (1 Corinthians 13:7).

→ *"Jesus set the bar really high here." Discuss!*

→ *"We live in world of hot opinions, political polarisation, online ranting and raving. 'Tolerance' has made people even more judgmental." Do we have a problem of epidemic proportions? How can we, as Christians, buck that trend and turn the tide?*

2. CLOTHED in HUMILITY (v8b)

- * True humility is me HIDING so Jesus can SHINE (Philippians 2:5-11).

* TPT: *Let humility DESCRIBE WHO YOU ARE.*

→ *What does it look like to be 'clothed with humility' (Col 3:12)? What does true humility look like and how do you get there?*

→ *"Do people want your opinion or your love? Do they want you to be right or encouraging? Do they want to be humbled by your greatness or enriched by your humility? Do they want impressive or authentic? Do they want masks or genuineness? Do they want you or do they want Jesus?" Discuss!*

3. BLESS rather than RETALIATE (v9).

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.*

Why do we repay evil with blessing?

- Because God wants us to TRUST Him with the OUTCOMES rather than TRYING TO FIX IT ourselves (Proverbs 3:5-6).
- Because if we SOW seeds of MERCY we will REAP a blessing of MERCY (Matt 5:7).
- Because God wants us to DEMONSTRATE the power of His MERCY to people who DESPERATELY need it (Ephesians 2:4, Micah 7:18,6:8)

→ *Would you add any other reasons to that list?*

→ *What would it look like to be a 'lavish blesser'?*

→ *How is the 'fruit' of blessing different to the 'fruit' of cursing, insult or retaliation?*

4. GUARD your TONGUE (v10)

Whoever would love life and see good days must keep their tongue from evil and their lips from deceitful speech.

- * Every time we open our mouths there are CONSEQUENCES (Proverbs 18:21, 12:18, 13:3).
- * Every word is a CONTAINER, and if it's not OBVIOUS to people what your words CONTAIN, they'll draw their own CONCLUSIONS.

→ *What are the dangers inherent in 140 character / sound-bite communication? What are the limitations of email? How can you add the kindness, empathy and humour to such communications?*

→ *How do you personally 'measure your words'? What filters do your emails go through before you press send?*

5. PURSUE PEACE (v11)

¹⁰*Whoever would love life and see good days ... ¹¹must turn from evil and do good; they must seek peace and pursue it.*

- * Peace is not a PASSIVE thing → We're exhorted to PURSUE it, RUN after it, WORK for it, at great cost if necessary.
- * Here's a great OPPORTUNITY for us: We're supposed to be CONDUITS of it, as ambassadors for Jesus, the Prince of Peace.

→ *Are you instinctively a peacemaker or an antagoniser? Do Christians have to be diplomatic by default?*

→ *"Peace is not a passive thing." Discuss!*

→ *What are the opportunities out there for us as Christians in a world where peace is often elusive?*

BIG CHALLENGE QUESTIONS?

1. How would your LIFE be DIFFERENT if you held to these five behavioural VALUES?

- * Think of them as GUARDRAILS for your SAFETY

→ *Are all these 1 Peter 3:8-12 imperatives rules or guardrails? Is there a difference? What do they guard you from?*

2. How would our CHURCH ENVIRONMENT be better if we held tightly to these five behavioural values?

- * How ATTRACTIVE and POWERFUL would that culture be?

→ *Is our church like that? Have you been in churches that were or perhaps were not? Why is it important for us to do our best to get there?*

HOW DO WE GET THERE?

1. RECOGNISE the VALUE

2. INVITE God in

3. RENEW your THINKING

4. START to LIVE OUT the behaviour

→ *Why are each of those steps important and how do they work?*