

Lesson 6
1 Peter 3:8 – 22
Good Days in Bad Times

Memory verse: “Consider Him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.” (Hebrews 12:3 NIV)

A devoted pastor was facing serious surgery, and a friend visited him in the hospital to pray with him. “An interesting thing happened today,” the pastor told him. “One of the nurses looked at my chart and said, ‘Well, I guess you’re preparing for the worst!’ I smiled at her and said, ‘No, I’m preparing for the best. I’m a Christian, and God has promised to work all things together for good.’ Boy, did she drop that chart and leave this room in a hurry!”

Peter wrote this letter to prepare Christians for a “fiery trial” of persecution, yet his approach was optimistic and positive. Interestingly, in this section of the passage, he gave instructions to his readers on how to “to love life and see good days”!

You remember the man in the Old Testament who pursued the good life in all the wrong places? His name was Solomon. Solomon had incredible wealth. He had houses. He had chariots. He had horses. He had women. He had land. He had power. He had fame. He had everything that people today would say the good life must contain. Even the Queen of Sheba, who was no commoner herself, came to visit him and she was so staggered at his wealth and so staggered at his immense power, so staggered at his person and his possessions that in Scripture it says in 2 Chronicles 9:4 that she was breathless. It literally took her breath away to see what he had.

But was he content? Did he love life? Did he really see good days? Did he really experience living to the fullest? Listen to his words, Solomon, Ecclesiastes 2:17, “So I hated life.” That’s tragic. “I hated life because everything is futility and striving after wind.”

Somebody in our society ought to listen to Solomon. He had it all. If he had been living in our day he would have had houses, villas, ranches, a fleet of luxury cars, a huge bank account, a lot of investments, women and all of the things that people pursue today. And he said I hated life.

Peter used the suffering of Christ as an encouragement and to strengthen his afflicted readers, yet, we must remember that Peter also set Jesus completely apart from all others in His suffering. And he wants to encourage them by reminding them that the time of our Lord’s unjust treatment, when He was crucified, was also the time of His great triumph.

He then gave his readers the salvation of Noah as a picture of baptism. At the same time Peter was careful to point out that it isn’t the actual water washing of baptism that saves us, but the spiritual reality behind the immersion in water.

When Peter wrote this section of his letter, he had no idea that it would be classified as one of the most difficult portions of the New Testament. Good and godly interpreters have wrestled with these verses, debated and disagreed, and have not always left behind a great deal of spiritual help. We may not be able to solve all the problems found in this section, but we do want to get the practical help that Peter gave to encourage Christians in difficult days.

Lessons to learn: 1) Best Blessings in Worst Times 2) Overcoming Fears of Opposition 3) Motivations for Christian in Ministry.

Discussion Questions:

1). Explain Peter’s instructions to readers to cultivate Christian love in verses 8 to 12 so that they can experience the best blessings in the worst times.

2) What should Christians practice to overcome fears in times of trials and opposition as instructed by Peter in verses 13 to 17?

3) What will Christians in ministry learn from their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and the story of Noah presented in verses 18 to 22?