

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION – A LIVING HOPE – STUDY OF I PETER
Week 5 – Duties of All Christians / Conduct of Elders and Young Men

I Pet 3.8-17, 5.1-11

I Pet 3.10-12 - ¹⁰ For, “Whoever would love life and see good days must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from deceitful speech. ¹¹ He must turn from evil and do good; he 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.”¹

1 Peter 3:8-17 (NIV)

⁸ Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble. ⁹ Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but 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 his tongue from evil and his lips from deceitful speech. ¹¹ He must turn from evil and do good; he 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.” ¹³ Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good? ¹⁴ But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. “Do not fear what they fear; do not be frightened.” ¹⁵ But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, ¹⁶ keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. ¹⁷ It is better, if it is God’s will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil

1 Peter 5:1-11 (NIV)

¹ To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ’s sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed. ² Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, serving as overseers—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; ³ not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. ⁴ And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away. ⁵ Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” ⁶ Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. ⁷ Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. ⁸ Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. ⁹ Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings. ¹⁰ And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. ¹¹ To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.¹

Central Bible Truth: We must actively pursue God’s calling in the church and in the world by showing Christ’s love

Purpose: Peter wants us to understand our duties as Christians

Duties of All Christians - “Finally all of you”

1. Live in Harmony with one another

- Literally “like minded” –
- Word in Greek is plural
- unity of spirit and mind – unanimous in the same faith
- cooperation in the midst of diversity
- we should be bound by the same spirit and we should have the same spiritual goals –
- built upon previous lesson of submitting to authority – yielding to the body – word in greek is plural -

2. Be Sympathetic

- Literally “having the same experience” –
- The root is to suffer from outside sources –
- Only occurrence in NT – understanding participation in the lives of others

3. Love as brothers

- Uniquely called out – our relationship to other believers–
- Concept is because we are aliens / strangers –
- Not only is our duty to participate but to actively love one another

4. Be Compassionate and humble

- Literally having strong bowels
- Gut wrenching loyalty – service
- Caring about what happens to each other
- Humble – lowly in mind – yielding to each other giving up my rights

5. Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult instead with blessing

- General world - enemies
- Repay – legal obligation
- Do not plot against one another
- Love of Christ in us is a higher calling
- Allow Christ the responsibility of retribution
- Insult – verbal abuse – root is same as slander and blaspheme – not in religious context
- Blessing – speak well of – praise – start and continue

6. V. 10 - 12

- For – this is the reason for performing duties in v. 9
- Psa 34.12-14
- Must actively love life – I must seek out the best and God's will in all that I do
- Righteousness tied to answered prayer
- God is calling us to progress each day –
- Work to avoid conflict

7. Always be prepared to give an answer

- God will bring opportunities into our lives – fundamental element of witnessing / evangelism
- Do it gently and with respect
- Keeping a clear conscience – be transparent – people will see what you do – represent Christ in all that you do

Duties of All Elders

1. Section draws on Peter's experience w/ Jesus

- V. 1 – mt. of Transfiguration - garden of Gethsemane – Calvary
- V. 2 – Christ's admonition after the resurrection
- V. 3, 5 – teachings of Jesus about humility – upper room where Jesus wiped the feet of the disciples

2. Be Shepherds – serving as overseers

- Feed the flock
- Personal care and vigilance
- Must be examples
- Feeding, caring, leading, guiding, protecting

3. Be driven by your desire to serve

- Focus is on the calling
- God's calling to pastors and elders is a holy calling

4. Not Lording it over those entrusted to you

- Not tyrannical
- Not with compulsion and coercive force
- Not imposing human and scriptural inventions

Duties of Young Men

1. Be Submissive

- Humility / Humble yourself before God and Elders of the church
- Learn from them
- Do not presume that you are deserving of office in the church

2. Be self-controlled and alert

- Actively be on the look out – not seeing evil behind every bush but not being lax
- Roaring lion – to scare people off
- Devouring / destroying souls – family
- Awake and alert

3. Resist the Devil and stand firm in the faith

- Resistance is an act of the will
- Ability stems from previous instructions

Conclusion:

Our love for Christ should define our relationships to believers and the world
We are to focus on doing good things for other people instead of our rights for revenge
Shepherding is a holy calling and that it be done in the right spirit and that the sheep follow the shepherd

ⁱ *The Holy Bible : New International Version*. Grand Rapids : Zondervan, 1996, c1984