

How do you tend to react to those who treat you poorly? Have you been able to consistently bless them? If not, what does your reaction reveal about your motivations?

Based on your past experiences, what practically could you do in future situations to bless those who treat you poorly?

Blessing those who mean to hurt us is no easy task. It runs contrary to our natural sense of justice, which is why it is only something we can do through faith. Our example is none other than Christ himself, as Peter makes clear in verse 18. In particular, Kyle focused on Christ’s compassion, which he displayed consistently throughout his earthly ministry.

Who in your life would you consider an example of a compassionate Christian? What impact has that person’s compassion had on you? What impact has it had on others?

Kyle said, “When people begin to witness our compassion they will begin to care about our convictions.” **How have you seen this to be true? What could you do to better demonstrate compassion in the way you interact with those around you?**

So, Peter calls his readers to a distinct Christian lifestyle—one that pursues unity and extends blessing to its enemies all for the sake of modeling Christ to the world. We might expect to receive kindness from the world as a result. After all, who would disapprove of being treated with blessing, right? Beginning in verse 13, Peter affirms that this could be the treatment we receive, but we could also become the targets of unjustified suffering, which is why our motivations for doing good are crucial.

What is the common motivation listed in verses 9 and 14? (Blessing from God)

Whether the world thanks us or blames us for our faithfulness to Christ, Peter says that we are blessed. **How have you experienced suffering or opposition for your faith?**

Ultimately, what Peter is arguing in this passage is that when we oppose unity in the Church or seek to avoid suffering at any cost, we reveal that our hope lies in our personal comfort more than the sufficiency of Christ. And

LIVE IT OUT

Pray: Ask God to continue transforming your heart so that you are able to respond with genuine joy in times of suffering, as you recognize the opportunity it provides.

Write: On a piece of paper, write out 1 Peter 3:15 and place it where you'll see it each day this week. Every time you read it, ask the Lord to prepare you to give an answer for your faith when he prompts those around you to ask.

Resolve: Whether or not you are currently experiencing suffering, resolve to face it with joy acknowledging that God allows it for the purpose of refining your faith and confirming the presence of the Holy Spirit within you.
