

Sermon or Lesson: 1 Peter 3:9-11 (NIV based)

TITLE: Speak No Evil, Do No Evil, And Instead Do Good

BACKGROUND:

- In the previous verses of 1 Peter 3:1-7, the focuses have been on how wives are to conduct themselves in their marriage, how husbands are to treat their wife, and how all true believers are to conduct themselves in relation to each other.
 - In the next verses for this study, the focus pertains to true believers are not to be doing any evil.
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READ: 1 Peter 3:9-11, with v.8 for background and context

[Lesson Question: Discuss, identify, and describe various characteristics of the mandate in verse 9, and include characteristics of successfully implementing it.]

SECTION POINT: In order to earn blessing from God, true believers are called and mandated by God to return blessing when they are abused with evil, insult, or sinfulness.

v.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."

- Another mandate is issued from God for "all of [us]" (v.8) true believers - to not respond sinfully when we are treated sinfully.
 - When we "repay evil with evil", we are equally guilty of sinning as the person who initiated the evil against us.
 - God has mandated that we are not to respond sinfully when we are "insulted", or "reviled, slandered, rebuked, berated, criticized, or verbally abused". (Strong's #3059)
 - Instead or "on the contrary", we true believers are to return "blessing" to the person who has perpetrated 'evil' or 'insult' upon us. (Strong's #5121)
 - Indeed, this kind of response certainly sounds and appears quite bizarre and perhaps even ridiculous, but that is clearly what God is commanding us to do.
 - And this kind of response is not unusual, because elsewhere in the Scriptures God commands us to "love your enemies", and "if your enemy is hungry, feed him". (Matthew 5:44; Romans 12:20)
 - God has "called" us true believers to respond in this manner of endure suffering, without responding with any kind of counter-strike, retaliation, revenge, retribution, "repaying with evil", "speaking evil or deceit", or any other sinful manner, and instead responding with extending 'blessing' upon our attacker. (1 Peter 3:9,10)
 - We have the responsibility before God to possess a right attitude about the unjust suffering that we are experiencing - characterized by sympathy, love, compassion, and humility. (v.8)
 - And, unjust suffering can involve exerting all the work and efforts to maintain harmony. (v.8)
- An incentive for us true believers is cited here, "that [we] may inherit a blessing".

- - God wants us to inherit a blessing for enduring suffering in this manner, and this is the criterion that He will use to award us that blessing.
 - - Judging from the various characteristics of this mandate, this phrase "inherit a blessing" seems to imply that this blessing will remain eternally.
 - - This blessing from God may perpetually exert throughout all of eternity some kind of noticeable and honored and valued benefit for us personally.
 - - So if this 'blessing' will indeed be regarded so highly throughout eternity, then the challenge is for us true believers to precisely implement this mandated response in verse 9.
 - - A formidable difficulty in implementing this mandate is that to respond to evil and abuse by returning genuine blessing and love is totally contrary to our nature as a human being.
 - - Therefore, in order to successfully respond with returning genuine blessing and love, we will need to personally develop and utilize significant situational awareness, willpower, fortitude, self-control, and spiritual maturity.
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[Lesson Question: Discuss, identify, and describe various characteristics of the mandates in verses 10-11, and include characteristics of the blessings in verse 10.]

SECTION POINT: True believers are mandated by God to speak no evil, do no evil, and instead do good, including pursue peace.

v.10 "For, "Whoever would love life and see good days must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from deceitful speech."

- - Following the concept in previous verse 9 about "not repaying evil with evil", here starting in verse 10 expands on this concept by incorporating a quote of Psalm 34:12-16a.
- - Because it is not acceptable to God for us, His true believers, to 'repay evil for evil', it is likewise and furthermore not acceptable for us to speak "evil" and "deceit".
- - And like in verse 9 that we must fulfill the cited mandate in order to inherit the corresponding blessing from God, in verse 10 we must fulfill the cited mandate 'not to speak evil and deceit' in order to receive the blessings of "loving life and seeing good days".
- - Obviously, we true believers are not to speak anything that is 'evil', which would include anything that is sinful, inappropriate, indecent, hurtful, injurious, disparaging, mocking, corrupt, depraved, immoral, deviant, perverted, and etcetera. (cf. Ephesians 4:29)
- - Likewise, we are not to speak anything that is 'deceitful', which would include lies, half-truths, exaggerations, misleading, projecting a false front, false or intentionally-erroneous stories or accounts, and etcetera.
- - Presumably, the contrast or opposite of receiving the blessings of "loving life and seeing good days" would be to live a miserable life and go through many terrible days, probably to some degree due to that person 'speaking evil and deceit'.

v.11a "He must turn from evil and do good;"

- - Adding to the mandate in verse 10, now in verse 11 is the next mandate from God for each of us true believers - "Let him turn away from, deviate from, and shun" "evil". (from Strong's #1578, with #0575)
- - In the Greek, this mandate is connected to the next cited mandate - "and" "let him do" "good". (Strong's #4160, #0018)
- - So, in this combining of these two mandates, there is present a making of a 180 degree turn, in essence saying - "Stop your doing of evil, turn around, head in the opposite direction, and start doing what is good."
- - There is no approval for zigzagging or flip-flopping back and forth between doing evil and doing good.
- - God intends that this is a complete about-face, like in the military - a command to immediately turn around and proceed in the exact opposite direction, in which there is the doing of only good, and not any doing of evil.

v.11b "he must seek peace and pursue it."

- - In this second half of verse 11 is another mandate - "Let him seek" "peace and pursue it". (Strong's #2212)
- - There are two separate verbs in this mandate, with the first verb being "seek" - "to intensely search for; to try to locate or discover; to inquire for; to explore for". (AHD - 'seek')
- - In the context, the phrase 'seek peace' may be described as - actively and diligently watching for and looking for situations that need peace.
- - The second verb is "pursue" - "to follow in an effort to gain or accomplish; to engage in, work at, go after, in order to carry further and advance". (AHD - 'pursue')
- - In the context, this phrase "and pursue it" may be described as - when a situation is found that needs peace, then as much as suitable, efforts are exerted to nurture and/or facilitate and/or establish peace in that situation.
- - From these descriptions, obviously God is mandating that He wants every true believer to continuously be active in seeking and pursuing peace, especially among fellow believers.
- - 'Seeking and pursuing peace' is one aspect of 'doing good' that God wants His true believers doing.
- - And an implication here is that God does not approve of a true believer, who could be and should be pursuing peace in a conflict situation, is instead passively sitting silent and making no effort to properly deescalate the conflict situation that is occurring among fellow true believers.
- - Conflict situations can and do easily and readily lead to disharmony, disunity, dissension, division, and etcetera, which are blatantly oppositional to the good virtues that are cited and mandated in verse 8.
- - So God wants true believers to get involved in pursuing peace, especially among fellow true believers.
- For those of us who take the risk and do get involved in properly pursuing peace in a conflict situation, be assured from the next verses that:
 - - - - "the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous" "as they do good" "and his ears are attentive to their prayer", while "the face of the Lord is against those who do evil"; (vv.12,11)
 - - - - reasonably, "Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good?"; (v.13)

- - - "But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed." (v.14)
 - - - So, "Do not fear...; do not be frightened." (v.14)
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BIG IDEA: True believers are **not** to engage in any evil, and instead are to be fully-engaged in doing good, such as pursuing peace, and returning blessing when evil is perpetrated upon them.

APPLICATIONS:

- - How do you react when evil, insult, or sinfulness are perpetrated upon you?
- - Do you think God approves of how you react in those situations?
- - Is there anything you could change in how you react in those situations, so that you 'may inherit a blessing' from God?
- - Do you think you can train yourself to react by only returning a blessing on persons when they perpetrate evil, insult, or sinfulness upon you?
- - Are you now committed to personally develop and utilize significant situational awareness, willpower, fortitude, self-control, and spiritual maturity that are needed in order to react in this godly manner?
- - What do you suppose those perpetrator persons will think when they experience you returning blessing and love to them after they inflicted evil upon you?

- - Do you "keep [your] tongue from evil and [your] lips from deceitful speech"? Consistently? If not, what are you going to do about that?
- - Are you now committed to henceforth refrain from speaking anything that is 'evil', sinful, inappropriate, indecent, hurtful, injurious, disparaging, mocking, corrupt, depraved, immoral, deviant, perverted, and etcetera?
- - Furthermore, are you now committed to henceforth refrain from speaking anything that is 'deceitful', which would include lies, half-truths, exaggerations, misleading, projecting a false front, false or intentionally-erroneous stories or accounts, and etcetera? If not, why not?

- - Do you have an aspect or area of sinfulness or 'evil' in your life, which God wants you to terminate?
- - Are you now willing and committed to completely and permanently 'stop your doing of that sinfulness or evil, turn around, head in the opposite direction, and start doing what is good'?
- - Or instead, are you going to make a half-hearted effort to get rid of that sinfulness or evil, which of course will result in zigzagging or flip-flopping back and forth between doing evil and doing good?

- - By your nature, historically have you been a person who 'seeks and pursues peace'? Consistently? If not, what are you going to do about that?

- - For those of you who are not a true believer, have you ever seriously evaluated what positive outcomes are produced when you do 'evil'?
 - - Think about it - is anything good coming out of your doing of evil?
 - - Are you 'blessed' when you do evil?
 - - Do you love yourself and 'love life' when you do evil?
 - - Are you truly blessed with 'good days' when you do evil?
 - - Is anything good accomplished when you speak evil?
 - - In reality, do you indeed truly gain anything good when you 'speak deceitfully'?
 - - In reality, is anything good produced when you disrupt or destroy 'peace'?
 - - Aren't you getting tired of living a miserable life and going through many terrible days because of your doing of evil?
 - - Aren't you getting tired of doing 'evil'?
 - - Perhaps you maintain your unbelief in Jesus Christ so that you can continue indulging yourself in doing of evil. Is your indulging in evil so beneficial, and good, and a blessing to you, that it is worth the risk of your current technical status becoming permanent of being separated from God eternally?
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