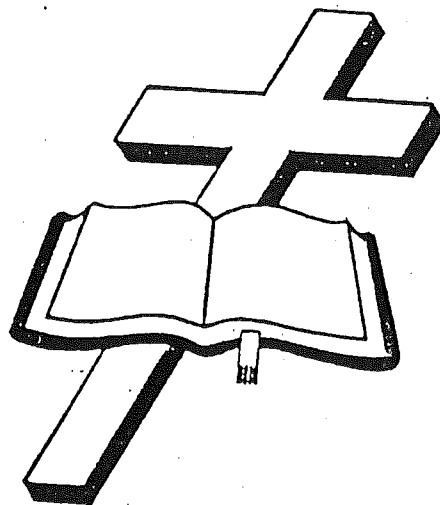


# SUFFERING WITH FORGIVENESS

(How To Love Life And See Good Days)

I Peter 3:10-18



## 3 Choices For All

- ◆ A Forgiving Spirit
- ◆ An Undivided Heart
- ◆ A Clear Conscience

*“Having a good conscience, that, whereas they speak evil of you as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ” (I Peter 3:16)*

Bill Kirk

# “SUFFERING WITH FORGIVENESS”

**Text:** I Peter 3:10-18 (Verse 10 Read)  
**Subject:** “How To Love Life And See Good Days”

## Introduction

On a Saturday afternoon in May, 13-year old Michael Hirschbeck quickly donned his Cleveland batboy uniform and then went looking for his friend. That friend was Roberto Alomar, second baseman for the Cleveland Indians. When he found him, the teenager gave Roberto a big hug. This hug was incredible when you remember that, four years before, Roberto Alomar in a fit of rage spat in the face of Michael's father, John Hirschbeck. That ugly moment has been put behind them, and now Roberto and John work together to raise money for ALD (a rare degenerative genetic brain disease) that took the life of John Hirschbeck's eight-year old son in 1993. John said, “Maybe God put us in this world to help somebody beat this disease.” The essence of this story is the essence of our text.

◆ And forgiveness is a major part of loving life and seeing good days.

**Question:** How many of you have ever needed to forgive someone else of something?

**Question:** How many of you have ever needed to be forgiven by God (or someone else) for something you did?

◆ In verse 9 – The Lord says, “Don't retaliate when offended”

◆ In verse 14 – The Lord says, “If you suffer for doing what is right, happy are you”

**Question:** How can you enjoy life, see good days, not retaliate when offended and be happy when you suffer for doing right? The answer is in the chapter.

**Question:** Who wrote I Peter?

**Answer:** Peter the apostle around 64 A.D.

**Question:** Who did Peter write to?

**Answer:** Believers who were in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, (now living in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, now modern Turkey).

**Question:** Why did Peter write his letter?

**Answer:** To encourage believers who go through sufferings, afflictions and disappointments.

◆ Peter mentions suffering 16 times by using 8 different Greek terms.

◆ Peter writes just before the first of nine persecutions that took place under the Roman empire during the next 250 years.

◆ Peter has a pastor's heart as God speaks an edifying word to us all:

**Question:** What's the word of the Lord?

**Answer:** How to go through, what you go through.

◆ In chapter 1 – How to suffer (with *Joy*)

◆ In chapter 2 – How to suffer (with *Patience*)

◆ In chapter 3 – How to suffer (with *Forgiveness* and *Humility*, and enjoy life and see good days)

**Fact:** You can be alive (yet not enjoy life)

**Fact:** You can live on the earth (yet not inherit the blessing of God on the earth)

**Fact:** You can exercise bodily functions (yet not see good days in the process)

**Question:** How many of you will agree with God; that if you're going to live (you might as well enjoy the life you live)?

## I. The Mandate To Love Life:

**Question:** What is Peter saying in Verse 10?

**Answer:** He is in effect asking, “Who would like to live a happy life that's blessed by God?”

**Question:** Why is Peter asking us this?

**Answer:** Because God knows there is no such thing as a trouble free existence in this world, (Peter's audience would be hurt and experience pain). (Pg. 1 of 4)

**(In Other Words)**

- ◆ ...In v. 9, you may experience evil and railing (which is slander, criticism or mistreatment)
- ◆ But notice your choice and mine:
- ◆ Verse 9, "Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing"

**Question:** What's the mandate from God (our responsibility when hurt)?

**Answer:** Instead of retaliate – repay with blessing.

**Question:** Why respond God's Way?

**Answer:** (V. 9), "That you should inherit a blessing". **(Which Means:)**

- ◆ God favors the believer who humbles themselves.
- ◆ God blesses the believer who responds God's way. **(In Other Words)**
  - #1. God knows it's a hostile world to live in.
  - #2. God knows you will hurt at some time,
  - #3. Yet, God still has a way for you to love life and enjoy good days and be blessed by God in the process.

**(God Understands)**

- ◆ In verse 10, you'll be tempted to lash out.
- ◆ In verse 11, you'll be tempted by evil passions.
- ◆ In verse 12, you'll be tempted to not pray, but take matters into your own hands, (and all of these will sap the joy out of life)

**Question:** How many of you want to experience (v. 10) - #1. Love life? #2. See good days?

**Question:** Why is this so important today?

**Answer:** Because the average person, when they suffer pain from someone else, allows life to become drudgery (instead of enjoyment).

**(It's No Secret:)**

- ◆ Every body hurts!
- ◆ Everybody has disappointments!
- ◆ Everybody faces rejection or disapproval!
- ◆ Everybody has to choose how they will respond!

**(The Question Is:)**

- ◆ If God wants me to be spiritually and emotionally healthy (and love life),
- ◆ How can I do it when people can hurt you, plans can disappoint you, and suffering comes to everybody?

**II. The Method To Love Life:**

**Question:** Pastor, what's the key to "loving life and seeing good days"?

**Question:** Pastor, what will enable me to love life after I've been hurt?

**Question:** Pastor, what's the answer when I'm being tempted to slide backwards?

**Question:** Pastor, what's the Word of the Lord to enjoying this life (even with its pain and predicaments)?

- ◆ In verse 14, you will suffer for righteousness sake.
- ◆ In verse 17, you will suffer for well doing.

**(Yet God Has The Answer)**

To loving life no matter what takes place as you walk with God

**Question:** What is it that produces spiritual health and vitality inside of every believer?

**(3 Incredible Choices We All Have To Make) To Enjoy Life And See Good Days**

#1. (In verse 14) "**A Forgiving Spirit**" (V. 14), "But and if you suffer for righteousness sake, happy are you"

**Question:** How can you be happy or blessed if you suffer abuse from a spouse, or employer, or relative, or neighbor, or enemy, or anybody?

**Question:** What enables you to still enjoy life when you suffer wrongfully for doing what's right?

**Answer:** A forgiving spirit!

- ◆ Forgiveness is the cancellation of a debt as if it never existed.
- ◆ Unforgiveness is the poison we drink while we wait for the other person to die.
- ◆ Resentment is allowing someone you despise to live rent free in the house of your mind.

**(But Forgiveness)**

- #1. Chooses to relinquish to God what someone or some event has done to you.
- #2. Forgiveness is a gift from God that allows you to live free from internal pain.
- #3. Forgiveness liberates you to love, and trust and rise above past events.

**Question:** Why so important?

**Answer:** Because an enemy in the heart is worse than 10,000 in the field.

**(Bill Gothard Writes:)**

“If you are suffering from a bad man’s injustice, forgive him lest there be two bad men.

**(A Great Way To Pray When You Hurt Is:)**

“Lord callous my knees and not my heart”

**Question:** Is there anyone who has hurt you that you need to forgive?

**Want To Enjoy Life And See Good Days?**

**#1. A Forgiving Spirit**

#2. (In verse 15), “**An Undivided Heart**” (V. 15), “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts”

**Question:** What does it mean to “Sanctify the Lord God in your heart”?

**Answer:** The word “Sanctify” means:

- #1. To adore and honor,
- #2. To exalt and reverence,
- #3. To give the primary place of.

**“To Sanctify The Lord In My Heart” Means:**

- ◆ To commit to the Lordship of Jesus in every area of my life,
- ◆ To totally surrender in obedience to His righteous ways,
- ◆ To submit myself to do what He’s called me to do,
- ◆ To refuse to hold back and not serve God with a divided heart.
- ◆ Even if I suffer, I keep my confidence in God’s sovereign control.
- ◆ Regardless of any pain, Jesus is still worthy of my allegiance.
- ◆ No matter what others do, I have Jesus on the throne of my heart.

**Question:** #1 – Is there someone you need to forgive?

**Question:** #2 – Is there any area of your life, where Jesus is not Lord?

**#1. A Forgiving Spirit**

**#2. An Undivided Heart**

#3. (In verse 16), “**A Clear Conscience**” (V. 16), “Having a good conscience”

**Question:** What is your conscience?

**Answer:** It is a gift from God that either...

#1...Accuses you of sin (or) #2...Affirms your choice of obedience.

**(In Other Words)**

- ◆ A good conscience is one that doesn’t accuse you of sin because you live a godly life (with integrity).
- ◆ An accusing conscience is one that points out sin in our lives (and you cover them up)

**(Peter Says In Verse 16)**

- ◆ A clear conscience has power to enable you to endure anything – and power to silence those who speak evil of you.

**(In Other Words)**

- ◆ A defiled conscience will be uneasy and can't withstand in your hour of trial (internal weakness).
- ◆ But a pure conscience provides tranquility and power against every lie and accusations of evil.

**(In Other Words)**

- ◆ Your greatest defense against every discouragement, disappointment, dent, detour and delay is the power of a clear conscience.

**Illustration**

When Senator Alan Simpson introduced Gerald Ford at Harvard university, he said, **"If you have integrity, nothing else matters"; If you don't have integrity, nothing else matters"**

**Question:** Is there any sin whatsoever that is weakening your conscience?

**Question:** Is there any sin of any kind that is pulling down your wall of defense?

**III. The Motive To Love Life:**

**Question:** What's the motive for our willingness to suffer with forgiveness; live with Jesus as Lord and have a clear conscience?

**Answer:** Our motivation comes from the wonder of Jesus (willing to suffer death for our sake).

(Verse 18), "Christ also suffered when He died for our sins. He never sinned, but he died for sinners that He might bring us safely home to God"

**Question:** What motivates us to forgive and repent of every sin?

**Answer:** The example of Jesus.

**Question:** What did Jesus do?

**Answer:** He suffered and died to satisfy God's righteous demand for sin.

**Question:** Why did Jesus do this?

**Answer:** (V. 18), "He died for sinners that He might bring us safely home to God"

- ◆ The word "Bring" comes from the Greek word (PROSAGAGE) which means 2 things:
  - #1. It means, **"To open the way back to God"**
  - #2. It means, **"To give admission into the audience of the King"**.

**(In Other Words)**

- ◆ Its easy to forgive another when we comprehend that God has forgiven us.
- ◆ Its easy to cancel the debt of another, when we realize that God had cancelled our debts completely.
- ◆ Its easy to move beyond what someone has done to you, when you grasp what you have done to Jesus.
- ◆ It's a glorious experience to be forgiven by Jesus (and then forgive those who might trespass against us).

**Question:** Why is it a glorious thing for you to forgive another?

**Answer:** Because you're just passing on what you've received from God.

**How Can You Enjoy Life And See Good Days? (Humility – Expressed In 3 Ways)...**

#1...A Forgiving Spirit, #2...A Undivided Heart, #3...A Clear Conscience.

#1. Is there anyone you need to forgive?

#2. Is there any divided loyalty in your heart? (disobedience)

#3. Is their any sin that weakens your conscience (you need to turn from today?)

**Amen:**

Bill Kirk, Pastor

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