

THE BLESSING GOD OFFERS

Don't repay evil for evil. Don't retaliate with insults when people insult you. **Instead, pay them back with a blessing. That is what God has called you to do**, and he will grant you his blessing.

(1 Peter 3:9 NLT)



No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

(Romans 8:37 ESV)

WE ARE MORE THAN CONQUERORS

WE, THE PEOPLE OF GOD, BY FAITH IN GOD COMMIT OURSELVES TO BRINGING TO OUR WORLD ... THE UNASSAILABLE, UNCONQUERABLE, INVINCIBLE, IMPREGNABLE, INDOMITABLE, INSUPERABLE, INSURMOUNTABLE, INSUSCEPTIBLE, INVULNERABLE, UNBEATABLE, UNSTOPPABLE, INEXTINGUISHABLE, IMPERISHABLE, INDESTRUCTIBLE, NEVER-ENDING, UNDYING, LASTING, IRREPRESSIBLE, IMMORTAL, ETERNAL BLESSING WHICH GOD OFFERS AND TO WHICH WE ARE CALLED ...

(1) **We answer the call to live in the blessing God offers when we live according to the purpose for which we were saved.**

- (1 Peter 3:8 ESV) Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind.
- (1 Peter 2:24a ESV) He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness.

(A) **"Finally" summarizes the previous instructions to us as sojourners and exiles in regard to dying to sin and living to righteousness in the specific areas of our lives ...**

- i. We die to sin and live to righteousness when we obey God and live honorably as sojourners and exiles in the world at large.
- ii. Wives die to sin and live to righteousness when you submit to and are respectful of your own husbands.
- iii. Husbands die to sin and live to righteousness when we live in an understanding and God-honoring way with our wives and share as fellow heirs the grace of life.

(B) **And "finally" also provides a transition to the fruit described in 3:8.**

- i. Dying to sin and living to righteousness continues to work the good soil of our hearts.
- ii. Dying to sin and living to righteousness is obedience to God's word.
- iii. Dying to sin and living to righteousness is living by the Spirit, and the Spirit will continue to faithfully break up the hard soil in our lives and produce his fruit in abundance: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness and self-control.

(2) **We answer the call to live in the blessing God offers when we pursue the mind of Christ.**

- (1 Peter 3:8 ESV) Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love,

a tender heart, and a humble mind.

How is it possible for us to have unity of mind? Where do we find these things?

(A) **THE PROCESS: The biblical pattern and process must direct our pursuit of the mind of Christ.**

From what I can understand of the Greek, it seems that the NLT has the most literal rendering here: **"be of one mind."**

- (1 Peter 3:8a NLT) Finally, all of you should be of one mind.

Is it really possible for us to "be of one mind"? We know people, don't we? And knowing people this seems impossible. I believe there is only one way that can happen and the key is staying with the literal translation: **"be of one mind."**

The one mind is the mind of Christ. It has to be. It certainly isn't a blending and compiling of our thoughts and opinions ... even though that seems to be where our minds generally go ... The problem with our ideas of harmony and unity is that they are our ideas and not God's.

The literal rendering here does not allow wiggle room. We are called to **"be of one mind."** And there is really no other option here. The only way even redeemed humans can be of one mind is if we are each sincerely seeking the mind of Christ.

To be of one mind we have to be seeking one mind, **and the only mind worthy of our seeking would be the mind of Christ.**

- (1 Corinthians 2:14-16 NIV) The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit. 15 The person with the Spirit makes judgments about all things, but such a person is not subject to merely human judgments, 16 for, "Who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?" **But we have the mind of Christ.**

This fits with verses such as Ephesians 4:3.

- (Ephesians 4:3 NIV) Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

This is the same thing. The unity of the Spirit is the unity of the Spirit. We have the unity of the Spirit when we accept the teaching

of the Spirit of God which is the word of God which gives us the mind of Christ.

(B) **THE FRUIT: We must acknowledge and be able to recognize genuine, authentic fruit produced by the mind of Christ.**

- (1 Peter 3:8 ESV) Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind.
- Matthew 11:29 ESV) Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.
- (Philippians 2:5–8 ESV) Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, 6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

(3) **We answer the call to live in the blessing God offers when we live the blessed life to which we have been called.**

- (1 Peter 3:9–12 ESV) Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing. 10 For “Whoever desires to love life and see good days, let him keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit; 11 let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it. 12 For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayer. But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.”

(A) **To live in the blessing God offers we obey our calling to repay evil and insults with blessing.**

We need to understand that the blessing of God on our lives is directly connected to our willingness to die to the sins of our tongue and live to the righteousness of

blessing.

(B) **To enjoy the blessing of a godly life we must turn away from evil and do good.**

In this context turning from evil means keeping ourselves from speaking evil and deceit. And doing good means speaking blessing.

What we need to understand also is that being directed to “turn away from evil and do good” reveals our natural, sinful, straying inclination to turn to evil and not do good.

(C) **To keep ourselves from evil, deceitful speak we must submit our tongue to be trained in righteousness by the word of God.**

- (1 Peter 2:25 NLT) Once you were like sheep who wandered away. But now you have turned to your Shepherd, the Guardian of your souls.
- (Romans 3:10–14 NLT) As the Scriptures say, “No one is righteous— not even one. 11 No one is truly wise; no one is seeking God. 12 All have turned away; all have become useless. No one does good, not a single one. 13 Their talk is foul, like the stench from an open grave. Their tongues are filled with lies. Snake venom drips from their lips. 14 Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness.”

(D) **When we do not keep our tongue from evil, we deceive ourselves in the innermost depths of our mind, soul and spirit.**

- (James 1:26 ESV) If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person’s religion is worthless.
- (James 3:6–8 ESV) And the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life, and set on fire by hell. 7 For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea

creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by mankind, 8 but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.

(E) The Lord blesses the one who lives to righteousness by watching over her and hearing her prayers, but he opposes those who do evil.

- (1 Peter 3:12 ESV) For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayer. But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.”

CONCLUSION: So ... have you considered that this may be the end?

I mean like the end the end ... as in the end of the world ... not just as we know it ... but period ...

- (1 Thessalonians 5:1–6 ESV) Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need to have anything written to you. 2 For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. 3 While people are saying, “There is peace and security,” then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. 4 But you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief. 5 For you are all children of light, children of the day. **We are not of the night or of the darkness. 6 So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober.**

FOLLOWING “THE SCIENCE” AND A SLEEPY CHURCH ...

What I observe right now is a sleepy Church ... a church seeks that far too many of the answers to life’s questions from human sources ... too many in the church who are tempted to “follow the science” at the expense of following our God ...

For example ... How many times recently have you heard that “we need to follow the science”? You need look no further than the

conflict over Genesis one to find a very sharp dividing line between “following the science” and following God ...

- (Genesis 1:1 ESV) In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

To “follow the science” without bringing “the science” under the authority of God’s word is dishonoring to our God and foolishness ...

- (Romans 1:20–22 ESV) For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. 21 For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, **but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Claiming to be wise, they became fools.**

If we “follow the science” ... and understand I am speaking of the majority, secular voice of science ... that we would follow the science to a denial of the existence of God let alone his role as Creator ...

And yet some would say that this is different ... but how is it different ... is “the science” not influenced as is everything else in this world by politics and power and greed and philosophical beliefs ... surely we aren’t that naive ... that gullible ... to believe that this is different ... that unbelieving scientists are immune to the blindness and darkness which defines who they are before God and eternity ...

Why or how could we have any trust in the word of God and believe such a thing? Don’t we realize that “the science” is only as good as the belief system of the scientists?

The sleepy saints of God need to wake up and make the connection. We cannot allow this world to answer our two questions ... that being ... what is our part? And ... are we doing our part?

It is time for the Church to wake up and be the Church. Our world needs us to be the Church ... and bring the hope and blessing of God as the only answer ...