

Working for the Best, Preparing for the Worst

1 Peter 3:8-22

Outline

We continue our "Elect Exiles" series from 1 Peter. In today's passage, Peter gives us instructions on how to work towards the best in life, but how also to be prepared for the worst that may come. Both of these have everything to do with the cross of Christ.

(1) Working for the Best (3:8-13)

- Want a blessing (3:9) of life and good days (3:10)? We all do. It might sound surprising, but Peter tells you how to 'work' toward this.
 - Read 3:8-13 carefully to see what Peter commands
 - One example: Be a *peacemaker*, not merely a *peacekeeper*. See this in 3:11.

(2) Prepared for the Worst (3:14-17)

- Clarifying (1) a bit, God has not guaranteed a present utopian life. For instance, persecution is real.
- One thing you should do to prepare: "always being prepared to make a defense... a reason for the hope that is in you..." (3:15)

Christ's life and death was a perfect example of (1) and (2)

- Prepared for the Worst: "For Christ also suffered... being put to death" (3:18)
- Working for the Best: "that he might bring us to God..." (3:18)
- *This is the gospel of the cross!* Christ suffered and died to bring us to God.

How do we receive this? By faith!

- But in this passage, "baptism" is mentioned (3:21).
 - The water of baptism illustrates the cross' result of the gift of a clean conscience (we are forgiven!), which is an aspect of faith.
- How to "improve" your baptism

Questions for Reflection and Application

1. Want a blessing (3:9) of life and good days (3:10)?
 - a. List Peter's specific commands toward this goal in 3:8-13.
 - b. Do you believe these commands are key to the blessing of life and good days? Or in your heart of hearts do you think money is more important? Or luck? Or something else?
2. How does Peter want us to prepare for suffering and persecution (3:14-18)?
 - a. Your suffering is not merely *about you*. How is it also a witness? (See 3:15-16)
3. If you have not been baptized, are you ready for it? Contact a pastor, friend, or elder about this.