



Sunday, October 26, 2014

Always be Ready!

Speaker: David Robinson

Scripture: 1 Peter 3:8-17

Sermon Notes:

1. Peter was writing to suffering Christians in the early church, providing pastoral guidance from his experience.
2. Jesus had commissioned Peter as a pastor, and transformed him from timidity to boldness.
3. Peter declares who God is: merciful and holy, He has redeemed us by the blood of Christ and adopted us into His family.
4. In chapter 3 Peter instructs the church on marriage and how are we to live in a hostile world: honour Christ as holy; don't be afraid; fear the Lord.
5. Peter lays out five characteristics of God's church:
 - I. **Unity of mind (likemindedness):** we are to share a common conviction and vision, based on God's Word.
 - II. **Lowly mind (humility):** a person of lowly mind will be patient with Christians who differ on minor issues. Humility and harmony go together.
 - III. **Sympathy** means to suffer with others: another person's need should be our need; another person's joy should be our joy (cf. Rom. 12:15).
 - IV. **Tenderheartedness:** the family of God should be connected at an emotional level, feeling for one another's needs and burdens.
 - V. **Brotherly love:** God implants a deep loyal love among believers as children of God in the family of God. The origin of this love is God Himself, who in love adopts us into His family.

6. Verses 10-12 are a quote from Psalm 34:10-12 written after David pretended insanity to escape (1 Sam. 22).
7. In the face of hostility from the world, we do not need to fear, for the Lord counts us as precious (Matt. 10:28-30).
8. To honour Christ the Lord as holy in your heart, we must:
 - 1) **desire to love life** and to see good days; despite persecution we're to stand firm (1Pet. 5:8-11).
 - 2) **keep your tongue from evil and deceit;** do not respond in kind when insulted; answer gently, be lowly of heart, and ensure it's the word of Christ, not your manner, that causes the offense.
 - 3) **turn from evil and seek good:** God's face is against those who do evil, and so we too must oppose evil; our focus and energy should be turned to doing good and pursuing peace.
 - 4) **pray:** if we're to remain faithful in the midst of opposition, we need to pray. If we're not in prayer, we'll lose sight of God in our conflict. Christ is our commander leading and defending us into the hostility we face.
9. The peace we're to pursue is the fullness of God's salvation in the world.
10. Honour Christ as holy in our heart. Don't be afraid. Don't give in to the temptation to compromise God's word.

Application Questions:

1. Describe the context of Peter's pastoral letter.
2. This week how might we put into practice the characteristics that Peter mandates for the church of God.
3. How are humility and harmony related?
4. Is fear appropriate for the believer? Why?
5. Discuss what is entailed if we are to honour Christ as Lord in our hearts. What areas of our lives need to change based on Peter's exhortation here?
6. In our conflict serving the Lord why is prayer essential?
7. How can we seek the welfare of our city (Jeremiah 29:7)?