

# Keep Doing Good

## 1 Peter 3:8-17

### Intro

As you know, it's common courtesy to ask people *how they are doing...*

- And when people ask me how I'm doing, I often say, "*I'm doing **good.***"

Technically, that is grammatically incorrect — I should respond, "*I'm doing **well.***"

***However, there is another way to look at this...***

I believe that God wants us to be able to respond "*I'm doing **good***" — not when people ask how we are doing but when they ask what we are doing...

- *As Christians, we should be people who **keep doing good...***

*Let me give you a few NT examples that show the vital importance of doing good...*

**Acts 10:38 (NKJV) Peter speaking to Cornelius**

**...[Jesus] went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.**

## **Galatians 6:9 (NKJV)**

**And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.**

*And as we have already seen in...*

## **1 Peter 2:15 (NKJV)**

**For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men...**

It is this subject of ***doing good*** that we will address as we continue our verse by verse study of 1 Peter...

*So would you please follow along as I read the passage that we will be working through...*

## **1 Peter 3:8-17 (NKJV)**

**8 Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous;**

**9 not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing.**

**10 For**

**"He who would love life**

**And see good days,**

**Let him refrain 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 prayers;**

**But the face of the LORD is against those who do evil."**

**13 And who is he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good?**

**14 But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you are blessed. "And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled."**

**15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;**

**16 having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed.**

**17 For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.**

*No outline for today — we will just take the verses as they come in a message I have entitled **Keep Doing Good...***

***Now, to put our text back into its context, Peter has just written about submission in a variety of contexts...***

He wrote that all believers are to *submit to the governing authorities...*

- Servants are to *submit to their masters...*

Wives are to *submit to the leadership of their own husbands...*

- And husbands are to *submit to the Lord and treat their wives with understanding...*

*Now Peter shifts his focus back to all Christians...*

**8 Finally, all of you be of one mind,**

**Finally, all of you** — *Peter is addressing all believers...*

**be of one mind** — *like-minded, to think the same thing...*

In order for us to take this seriously — in order for us to **be of one mind** as believers, we must be ***focused on the same objective...***

- And that one objective should be ***pleasing the Lord...***

*This was the Lord Jesus' one objective during His earthly ministry...*

**John 8:29 (NKJV)**

**“...He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him.”**

So to **be of one mind** as Christians is not about *you thinking like me* or *me thinking like you...*

- It's about finding out ***what the Lord thinks*** and then ***thinking like Him...***

*For more on this subject, please turn to...*

**Philippians 2:1-8 (NKJV)**

**1 Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy,**

**2 fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.**

**3 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.**

**4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.**

**5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,  
6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God,**

**7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.**

**8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.**

- [expand — *humility is key to having the mind of Christ...*]

*Please turn back to 1 Peter 3 as we continue in vs 8...*

**having compassion for one another** — *Gr. sympathois* — *to suffer with another, to have compassion for one who is suffering...*

**Having compassion for one another** requires us to turn *outward...*

It requires us to care about what is going on in the lives of fellow believers — looking our not only for our own interests but also for the interests of others...

*Paul put it this way in...*

## **Galatians 6:2 (NKJV)**

**Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.**

*Continuing on in 1 Peter 3:8...*

**love as brothers,**

*As believers, we are to love our fellow Christians as brothers and sisters...*

- [expand — loving your sibling no matter what — even though they irritate you...]

**be tenderhearted,**

This speaks of having tender feelings for someone — of being compassionate toward them...

*Being tenderhearted is what we see from the Lord Jesus in...*

## **Matthew 9:36 (NKJV)**

**But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd.**

*The final exhortation of 1 Peter 3:8 is...*

**be courteous** — *be kind, be friendly, have a friendly mindset...*

*Now, I believe there are three necessities for living out these (and all other) scriptural exhortations...*

**1) Pray for an others-centered approach to life...**

**2) Pray for the leading and empowering of the Holy Spirit...**

**3) Practice doing good no matter how you feel...**

*Let's move on to vs 9...*

**9 not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing.**

*To see what Peter has already said on this subject, please look back to...*

**1 Peter 2:20-23 (NKJV)**

**20 For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God.**

**21 For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps:**

**22 "Who committed no sin,  
Nor was deceit found in His mouth";**

**23 who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return;  
when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously;**

*Let's turn back to 1 Peter 3:9...*

**not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling,**

**returning** — *to meet a contractual obligation [ex. debt to be paid]...*

- [ex. “I owe you!” “I’ll pay you back!” “I’ll pay you out!”...]

**evil** — *something that is socially or morally reprehensible...*

**reviling** — *speech that is highly insulting...*

- [expand — expansive category — we are *not* to seek revenge — we are *not* to return like for like — we are *not* to pay people back for the evil that they do to us...]

**but on the contrary blessing,**

**blessing** — *to speak well of...*

*For more on the subject of returning blessing for reviling, please turn to...*

**Matthew 5:43-48 (NKJV)**

**43 “You have heard that it was said, You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’**

**44 But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,**

**45 that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.**



**46 For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?**

**47 And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so?**

**48 Therefore you shall be perfect [*teleios*], just as your Father in heaven is perfect [*teleios*].”**

Now, let's be honest — this is the exact opposite of what we want to do...

- In our flesh we don't want to obey this command from the Lord Jesus — we want to take our revenge...

We don't trust that things will work out if we leave it to Him...

*And this is choice that it always comes down to...*

Will we choose to humble ourselves and do things **God's way** or will we keep doing things **our way**?

- And let's face the facts — the world that we live in is **a big mess** and **it did not get this way by people obeying the Lord**...

It got this way because people **continually chose to do what was right in their own eyes**...

- Please understand that the Bible teaches that there is wisdom from above and wisdom from below and we must actively choose to obey the wisdom from above if we are to **keep doing good**...

*To see this please turn to...*

### **James 3:13-18 (NKJV)**

**13 Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom.**

**14 But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth.**

**15 This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic.**

**16 For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there.**

**17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.**

**18 Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.**

- [expand — it is our choice — will we live by the wisdom from above or by the wisdom from below?...]

*Please turn back to 1 Peter 3:9...*

**not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing.**

I believe that Peter is saying that believers are **called** to return **blessing for evil and reviling** that we may **inherit a blessing...**

*The Lord Jesus spoke of this in...*

## Luke 6:35 (NKJV)

**“But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil.”**

*And Paul wrote in...*

## 2 Corinthians 4:17 (NKJV)

**For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory...**

- The challenging truth is that the Lord ***leads us into difficult situations*** that we might have the opportunity to ***keep doing good and receive a reward from Him...***[expand]

*Continuing on in 1 Peter 3, let's look at vs 10-12 where Peter quotes from **Psalm 34**...*

### **10 For**

**"He who would love life  
And see good days,  
Let him refrain his tongue from evil,  
And his lips from speaking deceit.**

If we would **love life and see good days** — then we must **keep doing good** by ***refusing to speak words of evil and deceit...***

*For more on this subject, would you please turn to...*

## **Ephesians 4:29-32 (NKJV)**

**29 Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.**

**30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.**

**31 Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice.**

**32 And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.**

*Please turn back to 1 Peter 3...*

**11 Let him turn away from evil and do good;  
Let him seek peace and pursue it.**

This is very important — if we are to ***keep doing good*** then we must ***both turn away from evil and turn toward the good...***

- Doing good is ***active*** — ***it is a going toward something***— and we see here that we are to ***actively seek peace and pursue it...***  
[expand]

## **Matthew 5:9 (NKJV)**

**Blessed are the peacemakers,  
For they shall be called sons of God.**

*Continuing on to vs...*

**12 For the eyes of the LORD are on the righteous,  
And His ears are open to their prayers;**

*If we are to **keep doing good** we must believe this...*

- We must believe that **the eyes of the LORD are on the righteous and that His ears are open to their prayers...**

*But who are the righteous?...*

## **2 Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV)**

**For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.**

- [expand — believers are **the righteous** — we have been made righteous through Christ — He is our righteousness...]

This is significant — because if you have placed your faith in the Lord Jesus then ***you have been made righteous — and the Lord sees and hears you...***[expand]

*Unfortunately, the same is not true for the unbeliever...*

**But the face of the LORD is against those who do evil.”**

For those who refuse to trust in the Lord Jesus — for those who continue in their evil ways — the LORD’s face is against them...

- [expand on God being actively opposed to them...]

[\*\*believers walking in unrepentant sin are damaging their relationship with the Lord\*\*]

*As we move into vs 13, Peter ends his quotation and writes...*

**13 And who is he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good?**

Now, in general, being a follower of what is good — doing good things — will benefit you in this life...

*With that said, we understand that though this is **generally true** it is not true in **every circumstance**...*

- History is filled with stories of men and women who dedicated their life to *doing good* and suffered because of it...

*The greatest of these is, of course, the Lord Jesus...*

He is the only person who ever lived who **only did good** — **He kept doing good every moment of His life** — and He was murdered because of it...

- So please understand, doing good *does not* exempt us from trouble...

*Peter makes this clear as we move into vs...*

**14 But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you are blessed.**

Please notice that we *may* **suffer for righteousness' sake** — we may suffer for *doing good*...

- But Peter says that even if we do **suffer for righteousness' sake, we are blessed...**

***In other words, suffering cannot remove our blessing...***

*The Lord Jesus made this truth clear in...*

**Matthew 5:11-12 (NKJV)**

**11 “Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake.**

**12 Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”**

Please understand, faithfulness to God may lead to ***temporary suffering*** — but God will bless us with an ***eternal reward***...

*Paul picks up this theme in Romans 8 — so let's turn there...*

**Romans 8:18 (NKJV)**

**For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.**

*We see here that present suffering does not remove the blessing of future glory — instead, it actually contributes to our future glory...*

**Romans 8:28 (NKJV)**

**And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.**

Here we see that God is able to turn our *present suffering* into *future good*...

**Romans 8:35-39 (NKJV)**

**35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?**

**36 As it is written:**

**"For Your sake we are killed all day long;  
We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter."**

**37 Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.**

**38 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come,**

**39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

Here we are assured that no suffering can separate us from the blessing of the love of God...

*Please turn back now to 1 Peter 3:14...*

**"And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled."**

Here Peter quotes from **Isaiah 8:12**...

- This was something that the Lord God spoke to Isaiah so that Isaiah would not walk in the sinful ways of the people of Judah...



*And this is a word that we should take to heart...*

We should not be afraid of the **threats** of those around us, we should not be **troubled** by them...

- As the people of God we will face opposition — but opposition is no reason to quit...

**Proverbs 24:10 (NKJV)**

**If you faint in the day of adversity,  
Your strength is small.**

*And I love the strong exhortation that God gave to Jeremiah in...*

**Jeremiah 12:5 (NKJV)**

**"If you have run with the footmen, and they have wearied you,  
Then how can you contend with horses?..."**

When it comes to serving the Lord by *doing good*, **it is always too soon to quit...**

*So, instead of quitting in the face of opposition, Peter gives us a different directive in 1 Peter 3:15...*

**15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts,**

**sanctify** — *set apart, treat as holy, as special...*

**the Lord God** — *or Christ as Lord (NU)...*

**in your hearts** — *in the center of your physical and spiritual life...*

In other words, the God of the Bible is to have a place of ***unrivaled preeminence*** in the life of a believer...

*The Lord Jesus made this clear when He was asked what the greatest commandment was in...*

**Matthew 22:37 (NKJV)**

**...“You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.”**

*Now, sanctifying the Lord God in your heart is the foundation for what follows...*

*Continuing on in 1 Peter 3:15...*

**But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;**

**always be ready — this means *always be ready* 😊...**

**to give a defense**

**defense — Gr. *apologia* — to give an answer or speech in defense of oneself...**

**to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you,**

So, we are to give the reasons why we believe — why we have hope that our sins are forgiven and that we are on your way to see the Lord...

- [expand — we can continually grow in this area — we will never have all the answers — and even when we do have solid answers people may still refuse to believe...]

*At the end of vs 15 we see the **attitude** that we are to have as we share...*

### **with meekness and fear**

**meekness** — *gentleness of spirit, the quality of not being overly impressed by a sense of one's self-importance...*

**fear** — *reverential awe of God...*

So, the **meekness** and **fear** are **directed toward God** — they are the attitudes of the heart that the believer **has toward God in the midst of opposition...**[expand]

*Peter's exhortation continues in vs 16...*

### **16 having a good conscience,**

This is a **good conscience** before God...

**that when they defame you as evildoers,**

This is another reminder that those who are enemies of Christ *will accuse us of evil...*

*The Lord Jesus warned of this reality in...*

## John 15:18-19 (NKJV)

18 "If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you.

19 If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you."

*Now to the last part of 1 Peter 3:16...*

that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed.

**ashamed** — *dishonored, disgraced...*

- [expand — these people will be revealed to be liars and will be ashamed — (ashamed at the GWTJ?)...]

17 For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.

- Suffering is a part of this fallen world — and since we can't avoid suffering completely, we might as well **suffer for doing good** instead of suffering **for doing evil...**

Because we know that if we **suffer for doing good**, that suffering has been allowed by **the will of God...**

- And that suffering will bring ***a great reward...***

*I remind you once again of what Paul wrote in...*

## Romans 8:18 (NKJV)

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

## Conclusion

This brings us to the end of our passage and I'd like to close our time together with the true story of a man who ***kept doing good*** even though it cost him his life...

- The man was named ***Polycarp*** and he was the last known disciple of the Apostle John...

In the year 155 AD, Polycarp was arrested in Smyrna by the Roman authorities...

*The Believer's Bible Commentary* recounts the story of what happened next...

***When Polycarp was promised release if he would blaspheme Christ, he said, "Eighty six years I have served Christ and He has never done me wrong. How can I blaspheme my King and my Savior?"***

***When the proconsul threatened to expose him to the wild beasts, he replied, "It is well for me to be speedily released from this life of misery."***

***Finally the ruler threatened to burn him alive. Polycarp said, “I fear not the fire that burns for a moment: You do not know that which burns forever and ever.”***

Wonderfully, Polycarp ***kept doing good*** until he died that day and upon death he entered into the presence of His King...

- May the Lord God empower us to ***keep doing good*** until the day comes when we too depart from this life and we too enter into the presence of our Glorious King...