



1 Peter

The Journey Home

Loving the Journey

1 Peter 3:8-12

Message #8 of 13 – S685

Sermon given on April 17, 2016



Sunday Morning Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster

Loving the Journey

1 Peter 3:8-12

Opening Comments

- Turn to **1 Peter 3**
- Today, we continue our series through the first letter from Peter – **The Journey Home**
- If you have ever had a “bad day”, then you know just how difficult, frustrating, painful, and infuriating they can be
- Everyone has, at some point or another, a bad day or two
- Some would say that their bad days can’t be measured in days, but weeks, months, and for some, even years
- If you string enough bad days together you might even begin to hate your life
- You are not happy with the way your life is turning out
- You don’t like, or even hate the circumstances of your life
- What if there was something you could do about that?
- What if it was possible to love your life and have good days?
- That would be good to know
- Well, good news, according to Peter, you can love your life on this journey on the way to heaven and you can enjoy good days
- If you are able and willing to do so, please stand as we read today’s text as a sign of reverence for God’s Word
- Read **1 Peter 3:8-12**
- **Pray**

Teaching

- **Loving the Journey**
- As Christians, we are all going to the same place – God saved us through His Son Jesus and sent the Holy Spirit to get us all the way to heaven
- Peter wrote this letter to teach people how to act as they are making the journey
- In the last three messages, taught us about submission

- That is a tough topic, especially in our fiercely independent Western culture
- In 2:15 Peter said ‘this is the will of God’
- As Christians, submission to God-ordained authorities, blesses God
- It brings glory to Him
- One of the words we commonly use in the church ‘Bless/blessing’
- If you hear the phrase ‘God bless you’ – the meaning of that statement is that speaker is requesting God’s special favor to fall on whoever it is directed to
- Blessings are God’s grace being poured out into the world
- Blessings are God doing something in the world that He doesn’t have to do – He does it because He is good and loves His creation
- Interestingly, the Bible tells us to bless God **Psalm 103:2**
Bless the LORD, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name! Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits...
- That psalm goes on to list many of the reasons we have to bless God
- But how do we do it, how do we bless the Lord?
- Ultimately, we bless God with how we respond to His blessings
- Jesus summed all that entailed into two simple statements **Matthew 22:37-40**
Jesus said to him, ‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”
- And Jesus said we prove that we love God by doing what he says
- Peter is going to give us three things that we should do to bless God with our lives
- First thing – **Love One Another**
- **1 Peter 3:8**
- Jesus said that we prove that we are Christians by our love for other Christians
- Peter gives us 5 quick characteristics of Christian love
- First characteristic – **Unity**
- ‘all of you be of one mind’ – this is a call to harmony in the church
- It is not a call to uniformity – we are diverse and that is okay
- But we are not to allow our differences to divide us

- On the fundamentals of the doctrines of our faith we are to be in agreement, but in everything else, we celebrate our differences without dividing
- Second characteristic of Christian love – **Compassion for one another**
- We are to share each other's burdens
- The word compassion means, 'to feel for and with' **Romans 12:15**
Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.
- Third characteristic – **Love as Brothers**
- You know you are in a good Christian church when there are people of diverse experiences and backgrounds showing true brotherly love for one another
- Not just a surface level of love
- But the kind of love that does something when something is needed to be done
- Fourth characteristic – **Be Tenderhearted**
- This is the opposite of being hard-hearted
- This characteristic shows up as kindness
- It can't look away from someone who is in need – it feels compelled to respond
- Fifth and final characteristic – **Be Courteous**
- This is more than just being polite – it is about friendliness
- An unfriendly Christian is an oxymoron – it is a contradiction
- This is how every Christian church should be: united, compassionate, loving, tenderhearted, and friendly
- The world is watching how we treat each other
- These are some of the good works that Jesus said the world would see
Matthew 5:16
Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.
- It blesses God when we do these things – when we love one another
- The way we respond to those who come against us can also bless God
- The second thing we do to bless God – **Love Our Enemies**
- **1 Peter 3:9**
- Turn to **Matthew 5**

- This is the section of Scripture we call the Sermon on the Mount
- It is a collection of things Jesus said in a sermon on a hillside in Galilee
- When someone does something evil toward us or reviles us (verbal abuse) we naturally want to retaliate
- Peter says that retaliation is okay, just not in the way we might do naturally
- Jesus taught about that
- **Matthew 5:38-44**
- Instead of retaliating with what was done to you
- Retaliate with blessings and love
- Turn back to **1 Peter 3**
- Peter is calling Christians to live a life radically different than what the world says is normal
- And Peter says here that by doing this ‘you may inherit a blessing’
- We can’t know for certain what Peter is referring to
- The Bible teaches clearly that God blesses His people for faith and obedience
- We shouldn’t do it for the blessing or the reward, but it is God’s way of encouraging us to carry on
- God is blessed when we love one another, and He is blessed when we love our enemies
- The third thing we do to bless God, for some, may be the hardest thing of all – **Love Your Life**
- **1 Peter 3:10-11**
- For some of you, you haven’t had anything that you would describe as a ‘good day’ for a while **Warren Wiersbe**
It is an attitude of faith that sees the best in every situation.
- The problem is not that you don’t have good days, it is that you cannot see the good in you ‘bad days’
- Peter gives us four keys loving this life
- First key – **Choose to Love Your Life**
- ‘He who would love this life and see good days’

- It is not about changing your circumstances – it is about changing your attitude regarding your circumstances
- For example: your husband does something and proves once again that he can't be trusted
- You can choose to focus on that and have a bad day, or you can choose to focus on God's faithfulness, and trust that He will never let you down
- Every circumstance in our life gives us the opportunity to choose to bless God with our attitude or to choose to deny Him with a wrong attitude
- Many of the things in our life do not come by our choice, but in them we have the choice, because of Christ to choose to bless God
- The second key to loving this life – **Restrain your Tongue**
- If you were here for the study through James, you know our tongue can get us into trouble
- Some of the trouble we get into in this life is because of our tongue
James 3:5

Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles!

- One of the keys to loving your life is by restraining your tongue
- Third key – **Turn from Evil**
- It is not possible to live a life that you can love and live a life choosing to allow sin
- This is speaking to people who are doing things they know are wrong
- If you want to love your life, you need to turn away from those wrong things, and instead do good
- Fourth key – **Pursue Peace**

To live a life that you can love, you need to be doing what you can to make peace with others

Jesus promised a blessing if we would do that **Matthew 5:9**

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

- There are some people who will refuse to live at peace with us, but Paul exhorts us to do everything we can do
- Then we trust God to take care of the rest

- If you want to love this life – starts with your choices – choose the right attitude toward God and the things He allows in your life
- Restrain your tongue, turn from any kind of evil or sin in your life, and pursue peace with everyone around you
- If you do those things, you will have more ‘good days’ than ‘bad days.’
- Even if your circumstances don’t change
- Though I am convinced that many of people’s circumstances are because they are not doing these things
- Peter closes this section with a promise and a warning
- First the promise
- **1 Peter 3:12a**
- The ‘righteous’ are those who are in a right relationship with God
- They have accepted Jesus as their Savior and have repented of all the sins in their life that they are aware of
- Promise is that He is watching over them and is listening for their prayers
- And then the warning
- **1 Peter 3:12b**
- God does not listen to the prayers of the godless or unrepentant
- In fact, the Bible teaches that God is opposed to the wicked – they are His enemy
- Their future includes no ‘good days’
- But as Christians we are promised God’s loving care and His loving attention to our prayers
- We bless God when we love one another, love our enemies, love this life, even when it is hard, and trust Him to care for us and respond to our prayers
- There are no bad days with God
- And as we grow to realize just how much God loves us, we can honestly bless Him and tell Him that we love journeying with Him in this life
- We don’t have to love the bumps and turns and valleys of this life, but we can love the journey because of who we are walking with
- Walk with Jesus and there are no bad days

- Amen–Pray