

# 1 Peter Chapter 3 v 8

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Date: 22 May 2016

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] 217, 217, thou who was rich beyond all splendor, all for love's sake, becameest poor. 217, we'll stand as we sing.

217, even ■am.

214, 119, 149, 149, 159, 159, 159, 159, 169, 159, 169, 179, 169, 171, 179, 179, 179. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

[ 2 : 3 2 ] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. take just one verse in a message, but as I began to prepare this section, I felt that one verse was quite enough, more than enough, really, because it's jam-packed with all sorts of good things. So 1 Peter chapter 3 and verse 8, finally, all of you be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble. Now the major theme of this letter of the Apostle Peter, written to suffering Christians in the first century in what was known as Asia Minor, that part which we would now look at being northern Turkey, was something which is a constant concern for every Christian from that day up to this day and including our own. The big concern and the big theme of Peter's letter is this, why and how should God's people live holy lives in an unholy world? And firstly, Peter points out to them that they are to think of themselves as immigrants and refugees, temporary residents in the world. And so he begins his letter, Peter, an apostle of

Jesus Christ, to God's elect exiles. Later on in chapter 1 and verse 17, he calls them to live out your time as foreigners here in reverent fear. And then over in chapter 2 and verse 11, I urge you as foreigners and exiles. But why should the Christians of the first century, why should we today think of ourselves in that way? Why should we have that attitude of mind that we are temporary residents in the world, aliens, strangers, refugees, exiles? Well, because we are God's children. And to be God's children means that we have been set apart as holy to God. We belong to him. Chapter 2 and verse 9, where we are told, but you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession. And as God's special possession, we are moving forward to our eternal home. Not this world, but that home in which our inheritance awaits us. Chapter 1 and verse 4. We have been born into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade, which is kept in heaven for you. So how are we to live as God's people in a godless society? That's the major portion of this letter of Peter. It is the practical outworking of a doctrinal reality. Who we are directly impacts how we live. That's a principle that goes all the way through nature in every sphere and area. So when you go for a walk this evening, you won't find a cow making a cow making a cow making a nest in a tree. Why? Because she's a cow. And when you're walking down the road, you won't see a fish walking down the street next to you because it's a fish. And when you see a mouse crawling through your house, he's not hunting a cat because he's a mouse. And so anyone who is in Christ, says Paul, is a new creation, the old has gone, behold, everything is new. We are God's people.

We are set apart for him. Therefore, we live in a very particular way. And so when we get to chapter 3 and verse 8, Peter is drawing to a conclusion his application about how we live as God's people in particular spheres of our lives. And so we looked, chapter 2, verses 12 and following, that we are those who are to live in a particular way in relation to the civil authority under whom we are governed.

[ 8 : 0 2 ] Our attitude is to recognize that they are there by God's authority, firstly. Then we saw in verses 18 to 21 how we are to live in the area of employment, where we work, and how we are to follow the example of the Lord Jesus Christ who came to serve, to work, to minister for our

salvation. And then thirdly, the week before last, we looked at chapter 3 and verses 1 to 7. We saw there that in the vital area of marriage, God has set an order which promotes a loving partnership. So in all these areas, God has something to say and our lives are to be lived differently to the world. They are in sharp opposition to the society and the general attitude of the majority of people. And so when we get to verse 8 and Peter begins with these words, finally, he's not misleading his readers nor us into thinking we're nearly at the end of his letter. No, what he's really saying is in one sense in conclusion, finally in this particular aspect of what I've been talking about, living the Christian life in God's way in the world. Wrapping up that section from verse 11 of chapter 2. And what he's saying is this, those things that I've been speaking about, you may be able to almost pick and mix and say, well, you know, I'm not an employee, I'm retired, so that part doesn't really refer so much to me.

Or we might say, I'm single or I'm widowed, and so that part doesn't have so much to say to me. But now, he says in verse 8, finally, all of you. All of you. So you can't pick and mix anymore. You can't say, well, this is more to do with them than it is with me. This is to do with all of you. Every single member of the Christian church. Whatever our circumstances, whatever our personal difficulties, whatever our background, whoever we are, this is for all of us. The whole church family. Just as Peter's instructions have been about how we should live lives which please God, and peaceful lives, blessed lives in society, in workplace, in our marriage. So what Peter has to say here in verse 8 is the key to a happy church, a blessed church, a peaceful church. And the first thing he says, be like-minded. And he's not saying be a clone of one another. [10:55] He's not saying be uniform in everything that you do, just like one another. He's not replacing individuality. But he says be of one mind. Like-minded. One-minded. Big question, of course, is whose mind?

Yeah? Whose mind are we all to be like? Are we to all to be like the pastor's mind? No. Are we to all be like the elders' minds? No. Aren't we all to be of the same mind as the most vocal church member? No. We are to have the mind of Christ. That's why I read, as I did, from Philippians 2. If you turn back there, just for a moment, again keep your fingers in these two, because this is really what I believe we should understand from what Peter is saying.

He's reflecting the fact that we are to have a one-mindedness, which is the mind of Christ. And very helpfully, in the New International Version, we have that here. So he says in verse 2 of Philippians 2, make my joy complete by being like-minded. The end of verse 2, of one mind. And then he goes on to speak about verse 5, in your relationship with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus.

It's helpful because actually the word that is used, though it's translated in other translations differently to attitude and so on, is using the same root, mind, as the same word here. One mind, a united mind. And so the key to happiness in the church, the key to being a blessed church, a peaceful church, is to have the mind of Christ. One mind shared amongst every one of us as believers.

Paul tells us in Romans that those who have the Spirit of God do have the mind of Christ. So we're already starting on the winning side. We already have this great advantage that by the Spirit of God, we have the mind of Christ. But how are we to accomplish that oneness of mind, which is the mind of Christ? How are we at least to work towards it as our goal?

[13:21] Well, if we agree with Christ as individuals, then we shall agree with everybody else who agrees with Christ, shall we? We shall have that one mindset. And so the goal, the purpose, the aim is that we will know Christ better and the mind of Christ better. That's the very heart of Paul's letter in Philippians chapter 3, isn't it? Where he speaks about everything that was past is lost.

Everything that I once knew as a Pharisee, everything I knew of the tribe of Benjamin, everything I knew that I learned about the law, that was rubbish to me. What, he says?

I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ. What does he say later on? I want to know, verse 10, Christ.

So the way that we become a happy church, the way that we become a united church, the way that we become a peaceful and blessed church is that every individual believer makes it their goal to know the mind of Christ.

But what do we know already about the mindset, as the Apostle Paul puts it, of Christ? We're to be like-minded. So I suggest that means we are to be Christ-minded.

[14:51] And therefore I would say that what Peter goes on to talk about reveals to us something of what we already know about the mind, the attitude, the thought, the character of the Lord Jesus.

For we read, be sympathetic. Roger, when he's preaching this morning, very helpfully talked about God is love, and he spoke about the very first evidence of the love of God is the incarnation.

God becoming man. But what's the most astonishing thing about the incarnation? What's the most astounding thing about the Son of God taking on our humanity?

I would put to you, it is this, that our Lord Jesus Christ was made human in every way like ourselves. Here's Hebrews chapter 2 verse 17, speaking of Christ.

Made like them, fully human in every way. Now when we think of that, we often rightly think about the physicality of the Lord Jesus.

[15:58] In other words, that he had a body. That was a body like ours, given to tiredness. He fell asleep in the boat. Given to hunger, given to thirst. I thirst, he spoke from the cross. We think of him in every way, sharing in our physical humanity.

Pain, suffering. But the reality is, that our Lord Jesus Christ shared not only in our physical nature, but much more than that.

For we read in Hebrews chapter 4 verse 15, we do not have a high priest who is unable to feel sympathy for our weaknesses. So the most astonishing thing for me, is that the Lord Jesus Christ entered into the full remit, the full experience of our humanity, not only physically, but psychologically as well.

That he took upon himself the mind of a human being, so that he was distressed, we read. So that he wept. So that he was broken hearted.

So that he was troubled in his spirit. So that he says, my heart is overwhelmed almost to the point of death. We have one who feels sympathy.

[17:11] One of Graham Kendrick's songs, we aren't going to sing it this evening, but this is how he explains it in his song. And I think it's very much in keeping with what scripture also says.

Speaking of Jesus. He walked where I walk. He stood where I stand. He felt what I feel. He understands.

He knows my frailty. Shared my humanity. Tempted in every way. Yet without sin. So having the mindset of Christ means that we are seeking to understand what another person is going through. Because that's exactly what the Lord Jesus did in his incarnation. Paul calls us in his letter to the Romans to show sympathy to one another in this way.

He says in verse 15, Rejoice with those who rejoice. Mourn with those who mourn. Our Lord Jesus had the mindset of sympathizing with us.

[18:15] Thinking, feeling what we feel. Now we do not and cannot feel exactly what somebody else feels.

Again, we are individuals. We are different. We have different experiences. We have different responses to the trials that we go through. I've said this before and I'll say it again.

It is not necessarily helpful to say I know exactly how you feel. That can actually be more of a slap in the face than just simply being quiet and putting your arm around somebody.

We don't know how the other person feels. But we can sympathize with them. Our heart can go out to them. We can mourn with them. And rejoice with them.

But then the question is, how can we do that? How can we truly sympathize when we are so different?

[19:11] Well then Peter tells us, and this is again I believe the next step, Love one another. Now unfortunately this is one place where the NIV lets us down.

It lets us down because, as in other translations, there is a very important aspect of the love that's being spoken about here. It actually says, love as brothers.

Or have brotherly love. The Greek word there is the word philadelphoi. Phila, as in francophile, anglophile.

We know that means love. Phila, adelphoi, brothers. Love as brothers. He's speaking about brotherly love.

And again, the book of Hebrews gives us very helpful insight into the love of Christ that motivated him to take on our human nature. Hebrews chapter 2 verse 11.

[20:13] Both the one who makes men holy, that's Christ, and those who are being made holy, that's us, are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers.

Elsewhere, we think, spoken of Christ as being our elder brother. He associates himself with us. He declares himself one with us.

In coming into the incarnation, he says, I am a brother with you in the human race. We often say, don't we, that blood is thicker than water. We mean by that, of course, that family relationships are stronger than all other relationships and friendships.

So the love that Christ has for us, his brothers and sisters, the members of his family, is to be mirrored in our love for one another as well.

We have a stronger tie with our brothers and sisters in Christ than we have with any other person in the whole world, even our own immediate family.

[ 21 : 22 ] Why? Because we have a relationship which is a bond of blood. Not human blood only, but divine blood. That's why in 1 Peter chapter 1, we read there, we have been redeemed, not with silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defects.

We are one family. Chapter 1 verse 17, you call on a father. We belong together, those who are his children.

Chapter 1 verse 14, as obedient children. Our purpose is to do our father's will, as it was our Lord Jesus as well.

So we are to love as brothers. We are to recognise that we are one. We are to recognise that we are united. We are recognised that we have been brought together.

We are not disparate people. We are not unrelated in that sense. We are absolutely, completely united in Christ.

[ 22 : 35 ] And our love is to reflect the love of Christ. And in loving one another, means that we will sympathise. Because we know that what one feels, all feel.

But that's not all. To have the mind of Christ, to have that one-mindedness, that mind like his, means not only that we are sympathetic, which is born out of that love as brothers, united by Christ to one another, which supersedes all other separations, all other differences, all other reasons for division.

There is no room in the church of Jesus Christ for division over race, division over age, division over intellect, division over class, division over tastes.

We are individually different, but we are absolutely, completely one. I am the vine, said Jesus, and you are the branches. One shepherd, one flock.

But the love of Jesus, the mindedness of Christ, is to be much more than sympathy, isn't it? Love one another. How? Be compassionate.

[ 23 : 52 ] That means to be moved to act for the sake of another. Not really a feeling, but a feeling which motivates, moves, and activates us.

It's exactly the attitude, the mind of the Lord Jesus Christ. We read it again and again through the Gospels. When he stands before a large crowd, Matthew 14, when Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and got back in the boat and went away.

No, of course he didn't. He had compassion on them and healed those who were ill. Compassion, action. They can't be separated. But he also had compassion, not just on the great hordes, the crowds, but upon individuals too.

Two blind men. Matthew chapter 20, verse 34. Jesus asked them, what do you want me to do for you? They said, give us our sight. Jesus had compassion on them and touched their eyes.

Immediately they received their sight. Compassion is sympathy with hands. Compassion is pity with legs.

[ 25 : 02 ] Compassion is love with actions. Compassion is love with actions. And the amazing thing is this.

We actually increase in love for one another when we do acts of kindness for one another. See, inactivity makes our love shrivel up.

Love is like a muscle in the body. It has to be exercised or it loses its power. It loses its strength. It withers. And so when we're faced with this challenge, love one another, be compassionate, immediately in our minds and hearts we recognize this is a hard thing to do.

This is not simple. This is not easy. This is not just a matter of child's play. If it was the case, then it wouldn't be needed to be written about, would it? We wouldn't have Philippians 2.

We wouldn't have half of the letters to the 1 Corinthians or to other Christians there which speak about love one another as brothers, love one another, care for one another, support one another

and so on.

[ 26 : 10 ] It's not easy. So how do I grow in love? How do I exercise compassion? How do I keep that love muscle from withering up?

Give. Do. Give of your time to those in the church. Give of your gifts to others. Give of your love for the more you give away, the more you will have.

That's again a principle throughout the Scriptures, a principle of Christ. when we think of the parable of the talents. It's not just talking about giving your money and offering on a Sunday. It's talking about giving of yourself. The more that Christ has given us and the more that we give it, the more that he gives again. If you want to love the person in your church who is the most difficult that you get on with, then do things for them.

Show them kindness. Show them love. Give them of your time. You'll find that that love will increase and grow. But the reality is this.

[ 27 : 16 ] No matter how much God's Word says, now how much I seek to encourage you and encourage myself to be like-minded, to have sympathy, to have brotherly love and compassion, it is still so hard to find these things in the life of the church and so hard for us to practice and to do them.

We'll leave this place a seeding, all of us, with the mindset, I'm going to be more loving. I'm going to think of ways that I can care for. I'm going to, and then we'll find that tomorrow when there's an opportunity, it will be hard for us.

It will be forgotten. These things are unnatural for us. Even believers born of the Spirit of God. And I think that reason is why Peter puts at the end of this list what is the instruction which hits the nail on the head.

It is the chief link to every single one of the others. And without it, all the rest fall like a pack of carts. Humble.

Humble. All these things are hard because we are naturally selfish. selfish. I am naturally selfish. Our sinful nature, that flesh, still clings on to life.

[ 28 : 44 ] In spite of the Holy Spirit's work, in spite of being raised from the dead, there it is, like a limpet stuck to us, unwilling to move, unwilling to be budged.

and every day, that selfishness within our lives pops up its ugly head in pride. Pride is the problem. Pride was the problem in the Garden of Eden. Pride was the problem for Peter. Pride was the problem for every single one of God's people.

Think about it. I can't be like-minded with her because I know better than she does. I don't have any sympathy for them because they've only brought that trouble on themselves.

I don't love him as my brother because, well, he's beneath me. I have no compassion for them because I have to look after number one.

[ 29 : 49 ] pride knocks down every single one of these Christ-like characteristics and tells us that actually there is no place for them in our hearts and minds.

Now, of course, none of you or I would ever say those things about somebody else, would we? not even behind their backs. We may not even think those things in so many words of our pride and superiority to others, but subconsciously our attitude is there.

It's lurking in the dark recesses of our hearts. And so, humility is the vital power to all the others.

But where do I go to get humility? Where do I go to have pride put in its place, beaten back down so that these things, these Christ-like attitudes might bear fruit in my life?

Well, we go back to where we start, didn't we? We go back to our like-mindedness, the like-mindedness of Christ. There it is in chapter 2 of Philippians verses 6 to 8.

[ 31 : 08 ] Have the same mindset as Christ Jesus, who being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be taken to his own advantage.

Rather, he made himself nothing. There it is in verse 8. He humbled himself. We go back to Christ. Since Christ humbled himself and made himself a servant, though he was in very nature God, can I really think highly of myself and take pride in whatever gifts I have?

Can I, who am a sinful creature, exalt myself above another sinful creature when Christ, the holy and eternal Son of God, stooped so low to become like me in every way except for sin?

When Christ moved with compassion, stooped so low to come to my aid, can I stand so tall in my own eyes that I will not reach out of hand to the one who needs my help?

[ 32 : 22 ] And didn't Christ cross over no man's land to rescue me, his enemy, so that I can love one who is my brother?

God, it's no wonder that Hebrews in chapter 12 urges us to fix our eyes, keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, keep our eyes locked on Jesus, keep our eyes securely fastened to the person of Jesus, to make it our daily exercise to gaze upon him and meditate upon him, for in this is the only way to live the life of love.

Finally, all of you be of one mind, be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate in action and humble knowing who you are before God.

Let's pray together. We don't like it, Lord, when your word sticks its finger right on the sore spot of our lives our sin.

We don't like it, Lord, because we wriggle and squirm knowing that your word is so very, very good at holding a mirror up to our minds and hearts and lives.

[ 34 : 12 ] But, Lord, we're so thankful that you do. We know that you do this because, oh, Lord, it is your will and purpose to change us, transform us, that we might bear more of the likeness of your son in this world, both in this church and in our community.

And so we ask, oh, Lord, that as your word has pinpointed these attitudes, these things that are missing, these wrong mindsets which prevail, we ask, oh, Lord, that you would pour out your Holy Spirit upon us now, and that, oh, Lord, you would not only show us our sin, that, Lord, you would grant us the grace to bring it to you, that you would change us, transform us, and mold us, that you would make us to be the people you would have us to be in this church and in whatever church we belong to.

Give us a oneness of mind because we seek the mind of Christ. Give us sympathetic hearts because, Lord Jesus, we are those who are troubled and suffering, every one of us.

Give us love which is brotherly because we belong together and you have put us together for this very reason that we might show love.

Make us compassionate. May our arms not be limp in the aid of one another. May our desire always be to lift up those that are downcast and grant us humility to see ourselves as you see us, sinners saved by grace and saved to serve.

[ 36 : 06 ] We ask these things now in Jesus' precious name. Amen. Han days of r coups Satsang with Mooji Satsang with Mooji

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