

Text: 1 Pt 3.8-9

We are now at the end of the “submission section,” beginning in 1 Pt 2.13. Our message tonight and the one next week will finish this section off.

We’ve covered these specific topics:

- Christian submission to government [by all Christians]
- Christian submission to masters (employers) [by Christian slaves]
- Christian submission to husbands [by Christian wives]

We included the pattern (school lesson) to follow, Jesus Christ.

We also showed that there is a two-way street, in that Christian authorities must have a spirit of humility and care in their leadership, with Christian husbands as the example.

All these categories have general application to every relationship in life. The main thing is the inner man, the spirit of man in his daily walk among other people, serving the Lord.

In a sense, then, when Peter comes to the end of this, he will offer a summary statement. Our translation starts the last bit of the passage that way:

To sum up, all of you be ...

The word translated “to sum up” has the same root as the Lord’s cry on the cross, “It is finished.”

We could say, “to conclude” or “finally.”

And in the final point, he begins with “all of you.”

The general theme of the preceding section continues, but with broad application — all of you. That’s one of the reasons I say we all can derive principles to apply personally from instructions specifically given to someone else.

Example: “You wives” gives us principles for everyone, including men.

Example: “You husbands” gives us principles for everyone, including women.

Clearly, this last bit of the section addresses everyone, and it applies to everyone.

I. Five ways you all ought to be (8)

A. A translational note

1. No verb form *at all* in this verse
2. Lit. “[at] the end you all same-minded, like-passioned, loving-as-brothers, good-hearted, lowly-minded”
3. I am giving a somewhat literal translation of the five nouns in that as well
4. Our translation supplies the imperative “be” in English, understood from the context

The result is a terse staccato of ways you ought to “be,” *i.e.* you ought to adjust your inner man to these attitudes.

B. Harmonious (“same-minded”)

1. Same-minded doesn’t mean “one-minded”
2. In other words, we don’t all have to think in lock-step
3. Nevertheless, we must think *in harmony*

Harmony: implies differences that enhance and beautify the whole, rather than a simple monotone unison

4. We must be harmonious, seek to find ways to harmonize our differences

Obviously, we need unity (one mindedness) on core doctrines, but here we are talking about harmony (complementing one another) in personalities, opinions, methods, manners, etc.

C. Sympathetic (like-passioned)

1. Roots:
 - a. Compassion (Latin: with feeling)
 - b. Sympathy (Greek: with feeling)

2. “sharing fellow feelings”

“...that readiness to enter into and share in the feelings of others that enables one to ‘rejoice with them that rejoice’ as well as ‘weep with them that weep’ (Rom. 12:15).”¹

One failing of modern life seems to be many people demanding you sympathize with them, while they refuse to sympathize with you.

D. Brotherly (loving-as-brothers)

“In secular Greek the term was used of the love of physical brothers and sisters, but in Christian literature the usage is always figurative.”²

1. Brotherly love shows you have passed from death to life (1 Jn 3.14)
2. Brotherly love demonstrates real discipleship (Jn 13.35) [after Jesus washed their feet]

E. Kindhearted (good-hearted)

1. One of the NT words the KJV sometimes trans. with “bowels”
 - a. Seat of the emotions
 - b. “I feel it in my gut” (we have a similar idea)
 - c. When overwhelmed by a strong feeling we feel a physical welling up from deep inside (source of this idea)
2. The prefix “good” defines the kind of feelings
3. These feelings aren’t simply feeling-with someone else (sympathy) but feeling good towards someone else
 - a. Desiring their good, their blessing
 - b. Wanting the best for them

A very deep emotional term, with very broad general application: we are all to be this to everyone, really.

¹ Hiebert, *1 Peter*, 212.

² Hiebert, *1 Peter*, 212.

F. Humble in spirit (lowly-minded)

1. Variant here (κΙΥ has “courteous” — “loving-minded”)
2. The opening root has the idea of lowliness, combined with mind
3. The flesh desires to be high-minded, seek its own glory
4. The man in Christ seeks to be lowly-minded, seek the best for others, without thought for self

Phil 2.3-4 Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves;⁴ do not *merely* look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.

All these qualities speak to that inner man Peter was after in each of the subordinate relationships he mentioned (king/people, master/slave, husband/wife), as well as the mind of the Christian husband.

These principles govern the way all Christians ought always to *be*. This finds expression in a consistent kind of acting (and convicting!).

II. One consistent way you all ought to act (9)

A. Contrasting habitual actions

1. Not: the way we shouldn't act — giving evil for evil
 - a. Intentionally hurting others who hurt us
 - b. Creates a repeating cycle of evil

“By returning ‘evil for evil’—anything that we regard as injurious to our own welfare and interests—evil is only increased and not restrained. And the extent of the evil returned is measured by the size of the evil received. The natural tendency is to return the evil in full measure or more. Thus evil is only multiplied. To break the vicious chain, someone must voluntarily endure evil without retaliation.”³

³ Hiebert, *1 Peter*, 214.

- c. Insult for insult: the fire of the tongue employed in retribution
 - 1) Clam up
 - 2) Blow up
 - 3) Both can produce bitterness or isolation
- 2. But: giving a blessing
 - a. Jesus: “bless them that curse you” (Lk 6.28)
 - b. Springs from an attitude of forgiveness
 - c. Focuses on God and His Word

“What kind of relationship will you seek to develop and maintain with your mate? The insult for insult type results in isolation, but the blessing for insult type results in oneness in marriage.”⁴

This is very convicting, as I am sure we are all aware — we need God’s grace to live this way

B. Grounded on our calling

- 1. This doesn’t say, “if you live this way, you will get a blessing”
- 2. Rather, you were called for this purpose, to inherit a blessing
- 3. In other words, your salvation is meant to inherit this spirit in your lives
 - a. So cultivate it
 - b. Pray for it
 - c. Desire it
 - d. Live it

Conclusion:

A profound passage, which we will see reinforced by Peter quoting Psalm 34 in the following verses.

That will be our passage next week.

⁴ Constable, *Expository Notes*, 1 Pt 3.9.