

CROSSWINDS
HOPE IN HARD TIMES
 1 PETER 3:8-12



Peter called us to live in community. What in our culture pulls us away from close relationships and makes community difficult?

BRINGING THE BIBLE TO LIFE

> Read 1 Peter 3:8-12

In 2:18—25 Peter spoke to servants and told them how to relate to their masters. In 3:1—6 he spoke to Christian wives and showed them how to honor their husbands. In 3:7 he spoke to husbands about living wisely and considerately with their wives. In 1 Peter 3:8, who is Peter teaching them how to relate to? Does this have any significance in your small group relationships?

In 1 Peter 3:8, Peter lists five traits of living in biblical community rather than isolation. Have each member of the group choose a trait and explain what it looks like in practical life.

In 1 Peter 3:9, Peter talks of not repaying evil for evil. In the past, what evil was done or spoken against you that you struggle to forgive? At work? In your family? On social media?

How should Peter's words in 1 Peter 3:9 which are a paraphrase of Jesus' words in Luke 6:27-28, change the way we handle our anger and desire for revenge?

How was the truth of 1 Peter 3:9 lived out in Stephen's life (Acts 7:54-60)? Who did Stephen learn this from (Luke 23:34)?

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Stephen blessed his enemies in an extreme situation. How does the example of Stephen and Jesus help us find strength to bless our enemies in the more mundane oppositions we face?

Our ability to bless others that hurt us comes from knowing that our life is in God's hands. God promises to fight against those who do evil and to answer the prayers of those who do right. How does confidence in God's sovereignty over life give us the strength to respond with a blessing in the face of evil?

Is it possible to bless those who do evil against us from our own strength? What role does dependence upon the Holy Spirit, Bible reading and prayer play in living this kind of life?

BONUS

> Read Romans 13:1-4 & 1 Peter 2:14

What is the difference between personal revenge and the God ordained role of a nation's police and military punishing those who do evil and protecting the innocent?

NEXT STEPS

This week, what is one way I can living in community, rather than isolation, and do good for someone in my church family?

This week, what is one way I can bless someone that has spoken or acted in an evil way toward me?