

The Lord's Message: Blessed in Suffering

Date: April 21, 2024

Where: Tilghman Methodist Church

Scripture Reference: 1 Peter 3:8-22

Anyone ever heard the song by Lynn Anderson called Rose Garden? Part of the lyrics for this song goes,

"I beg your pardon

I never promised you a rose garden

Along with the sunshine

There's gotta be a little rain sometime

I beg your pardon

I never promised you a rose garden."

In **1 Peter 3:8**, if we remember that Peter is speaking to the churches in the northern part of Asia Minor that are facing persecution, Peter is telling these churches that just because they have received Jesus does not mean that their lives are going to be without problems. No, just the opposite is going to happen. They will have more problems because they have accepted Jesus into their hearts. Satan will try every way to cause them to fall into sin. One of the greatest ways that Satan uses is to use others to insults us and them. Causing us and them to get angry, which leads to hate. By standing up and not falling into this trap, we can receive a blessing in suffering.

Let us pray.

The mark that a Christian leaves on society, should be love. Now, we in the English have one word for love. Greeks have 7 words for love: Eros – sexual love, Philia – friendship love, Ludus – flirty love, Storge – family love, Philautia – self-love, Pragma- committal love, and Agape -community love. The love that Peter is talking about here is Agape love. Peter says in verses 8-9a. That Christians are to love others despite their acts of evil against us or their insults. Now, I know that this takes relying on God's Holy Spirit not to lash out at people who are doing evil acts against us or insulting us. You can understand the reaction of the disciples when the Samaritans were hurling insults at Jesus. In **Luke 9:51-56**, they wanted Jesus to rained down fire and brim stone on the people. When Jesus was nailed to the cross, do you remember what He said to God about the crowd that was mocking and ridiculing Him? "Father, forgive them for they know not what they are doing." We should pity and pray for those who are mocking us.

If we can hold our tongue and our mind from saying or thinking evil thoughts, then we will receive a blessing, **1 Peter 3:9b**. In verses 10-12, Peter supports this action by quoting Psalm 34:12-16.

Peter asks a rhetorical question in verse 13. The answer would be Nobody. Nobody would harm us for doing good. That would be the logical conclusion. Peter goes on to say in verse 14, but if you are harmed for doing good, then be considered that you will be blessed.