Daily Devotion #218

**Final Words**

**1 Peter 3:8-9 (NASB)** *“To sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit; not returning evil for evil or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing.”*

Most all people who are in some place of authority have final words for their subordinates. Coaches have final words to their team after the championship game. Business leaders have final words for those who have served them when that business either folds or enjoys a victory. Military officers have final words for their men and women just before they are to do something heroic or important. Even presidents offer final words when they are about to do something great or leave office. Final words mark the conclusion of a tenure and forge into history what needs to be remembered.

When Peter was finished with his description of how God’s people are to live this life, he summed up his thoughts with our verses today. Peter wanted the scattered believers to remember what was first and foremost in the mind of God for His people - specifically, that, even in turbulent times, we are to live harmonious lives. The last thing God wants for His people is to be at odds with others when life is in disarray. If anyone is to live life in harmony with one another, it should be believing husbands and wives, those who serve their employers, those who belong to Christ. It is our role in life to be examples of what it means to live in unity and, as Peter says, harmony with God first, then one another.

In addition to that, we are to live by being sympathetic to one another - understanding and feeling the pain and joys of what others experience. We are to be so harmonious it would be as if we had experienced the same thing that our brother or sister has experienced, both good and bad. Paul said it this way, **Romans 12:15 (NASB)** “*Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep*.”

Beyond these things Peter reminds us to be brotherly, kindhearted, humble, never returning evil for evil. We are not to be retaliators, but the mark of our heart is to love - not look for some way to put our agenda or get the upper hand. We are to always look to bless others, both those who are good and those who are evil. Peter makes it clear that this is a result of becoming part of God’s family. He says that we were called for this. Call or called is a term referring to salvation. God chose us to be His children and our salvation was given to us not only so we will live eternally in heaven, but also so that we will be reflectors of Him. Models, if you will, of His Spirit.

There is a huge difference in the way a believer is to live his or her life, no matter what the life situation. Our role is to always look to our God, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ as our Model and the One who shows us how we are to behave in every situation. No doubt, this is very challenging because of our sinful nature that is capable of tempting us, but still we are to constantly be in the attitude and heart of serving and obeying God. There are literally times when we must stop what we are doing and remind ourselves who we are. We are first and foremost children of the King of kings. And His word is to be taken to heart, to meditated on, to be acted upon.

The dear saints in Nero’s day were under great challenges. But the message was the same then as it is now because the circumstances of our lives don’t dictate our responses. We are not people who are driven by our emotions but by truth, the truth that only comes from God. Therefore, we can, and do, live our lives obediently to all the words He left us. And when we do, we will be amazed as He handles the challenging situations and people in our lives.