

LOVE AND ENJOY LIFE

1 PETER 03:10–12

Introduction

We live in a world that is full of sickness and desperate needs. Many are hungry, homeless, dressed in rags, diseased and physically and emotionally ill. And to top it off, millions are lonely, empty and unfulfilled. They feel they have no significant purpose in life. They do not love or enjoy life: life is more routine and drudgery than enjoyment. This is the subject of this great passage: how to love and enjoy life. There are four steps to loving and enjoying life. (Note that these verses are a quotation of Psa. 34:12-16.)

- I. Step 1: stop your tongue (v. 10).
- II. Step 2: turn away from evil and do good (v. 11).
- III. Step 3: seek peace and pursue it (v. 11).
- IV. Step 4: remember the source of life, the Lord Himself (v. 12).

I. *1 Peter 03:10 Disciplined Tongue*

First, stop your tongue. If you wish to love and enjoy life, the very first thing you must do is stop your tongue. Few tongues are disciplined and controlled. By far most tongues run, wag and blaze ever so loosely.

The tongue is easily stirred to run loose. It is easily ignited and just as easily set ablaze. The tongues of so many people are ever so ready...

- to react
- to poison
- to attack
- to cut
- to defend
- to hurt
- to rail

A tongue that runs loose and is not controlled and disciplined knows little love and little enjoyment of life. What can be done? How can a person control and discipline his tongue? By doing two things:

1. A person must stop his tongue from speaking evil. Note: the honest and thinking person knows that no person can control and discipline his tongue perfectly. But Scripture is clear: God does not excuse us, and He expects us to stop our tongue from speaking evil. What we must remember — every couple and every believer — is that there is a vast difference between the *occasional offender* and the *constant offender*. An evil tongue is a tongue that constantly...
 - cuts in and takes the floor
 - refuses instructions
 - interrupts and disrupts others
 - defends oneself
 - reacts
 - curses
 - argues
 - retaliates
 - backbites
 - criticizes
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The list could go on and on until every act of behaviour is covered. It is very difficult to live with a constant offender of the tongue. A person whose tongue constantly does evil is destroying his or her life. And we must always remember that an evil tongue is a tongue that is constantly doing evil, evil that ranges all the way from constantly interrupting and disrupting others over to cursing and blaspheming the name of God. An evil tongue shows disrespect for others regardless of what a person claims. It shows disrespect and displeasure.

Note what the antidote is: “[he] must keep his tongue from evil.” This is an imperative, a command. The believer is personally responsible. He is to stop his tongue — hush, be quiet, quit allowing his tongue to do evil.

2. A person is to keep his lips from speaking deceitfully (dolon). A deceitful tongue is...
- a false tongue
 - a mistreating tongue
 - a cheating tongue
 - a beguiling tongue
 - a treacherous tongue
 - a flattering tongue
 - a lying tongue

We deceive and smooth talk others in order to get what we are after or to protect ourselves. But note what Scripture says: the very first step to loving and enjoying life is to keep our tongues from deceiving others. Deception leads to sin and sin destroys. Just think about the deceptive tongues that have...

- destroyed marriages
- disturbed children
- damaged friendships
- ruined reputations
- caused wars
- aroused fights
- caused injuries
- maimed bodies
- prevented promotions

If we wish to love and enjoy life, we must stop our tongues from doing evil and from deceiving others. We must control and discipline our tongues.

Thought 1. This is the duty of the believer. It is not something that God is going to do for the believer. Of course, God will help us and give us strength. Our tongues are controlled by us; they are under our power. We either do good or evil with our tongues.

Eph 4:31 *Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice.*

Titus 3:1-2 *Remind the people to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready to do whatever is good, to slander no one, to be peaceable and considerate, and to show true humility toward all men.*

James 3:6 *The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole person, sets the whole course of his life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell.*

James 4:11 *Brothers, do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against his brother or judges him speaks against the law and judges it. When you judge the law, you are not keeping it, but sitting in judgment on it.*

1 Pet 2:1 *Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy and slander of every kind.*

Psa 31:13 *For I hear the slander of many; there is terror on every side; they conspire against me and plot to take my life.*

Psa 101:5 *Whoever slanders his neighbour in secret, him will I put to silence; whoever has haughty eyes and a proud heart, him will I not endure.*

Prov 10:18 *He who conceals his hatred has lying lips, and whoever spreads slander is a fool.*

Prov 11:9 *With his mouth the godless destroys his neighbour, but through knowledge the righteous escape.*

Jer 9:4 *“Beware of your friends; do not trust your brothers. For every brother is a deceiver, and every friend a slanderer.”*

Isa 59:3 *For your hands are stained with blood, your fingers with guilt. Your lips have spoken lies, and your tongue mutters wicked things.*

Heb 12:14-15 *Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord. See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many.*

II. **1 Peter 03:11 Turn Away from Evil and Do Good**

Second, turn away from evil and do good.

1. A person is to *turn from* evil. By turn from is meant to avoid and shun evil; to turn aside and away from evil. What evil is being talked about? Scripture clearly tells us what it is that we are to turn away from and flee. There are some things that we are to stop doing, some things that we are to turn away from and flee.

=> We must flee sexual immorality.

1 Cor 6:18 *Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body.*

=> We must flee idolatry.

1 Cor 10:14 *Therefore, my dear friends, flee from idolatry. (cp. Acts 14:15)*

=> We are to flee foolish and harmful desires and the love of money.

1 Tim 6:9-11 *People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness.*

=> We are to flee the evil desires of youth.

2 Tim 2:22 *Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.*

=> We are to turn away from all forms of evil.

2 Tim 3:1-5 *But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God – having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them.*

=> We are to stop and turn our tongue and lips away from evil.

1 Pet 3:10 *For, “Whoever would love life and see good days must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from deceitful speech.*

The charge is direct and forceful: we are to stop doing evil. The idea is that we are to stop dead in our tracks, snatch our hands back, snap our eyes away, shut our ears from the evil. We are to turn away and flee evil lest it consume and destroy us.

Note a crucial fact: evil is being pictured as a deliberate choice. We choose to do evil. The command of God is to turn away and flee evil. Turning away and fleeing is also a deliberate choice. Turning away and fleeing evil is up to us. We are the ones who have to repent; we are the ones who have to turn away from wrongdoing and turn to God. This is the second step to loving and enjoying life.

2. A person must do good. Note: it is not enough to turn away from evil. When a person turns away from evil, he is like a vacuum. All the things that had been filling his life are set aside and his life is left with empty spaces. Whereas he had been spending time in the pleasures of the world, he now has blocks of time that must be filled. What is it that is to fill these blocks of time? What is it that is to fill the life of the person who turns away from evil and turns to God? Good works. A person who truly turns to God is a person who gives all he is and has to God. He commits his life...
 - to live a holy and righteous life.
 - to make Christ known throughout his community and all over the world.
 - to minister and meet the needs of the desperate in the world.

Psa 34:14 Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it.

Luke 6:35 But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked.

Heb 13:16 And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

James 4:17 Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins.

III. 1 Peter 03:11 Pursue Peace

Third, seek peace and pursue it. Believers are not only to desire peace, but they are to actively pursue and go after it. The word “pursue” (*dioxato*) means to run after, chase after, press after and to pursue. It has the idea of swiftness and endurance — of hotly pursuing and staying after peace. We live in a world that is full of corruptible and evil people who could care less about peace and holiness just so they get what they are after. However, the believer must not give up, for peace is the very reason he is on earth.

The believer is to follow after peace (*eirenen*) with all men. The fact that he has to follow after peace means that peace is not always possible.

- => Some persons within the church are troublemakers: grumblers, complainers, gossipers, criticizers; some are self-centred leaders full of pride; some people within the church are just selfish and self-centred and care more about pushing themselves forward and getting their own way than they do about peace. Self is put before Christ and the church and its mission.
- => Some persons within the world are troublemakers and they cause great trouble for the believer. They oppose the believer: ridicule, mock, poke fun at, curse, abuse, persecute, ignore and isolate him.
- => Some persons within the world are troublemakers for the world at large: dissenters, dividers, fighters, egotists, power-builders, and warmongers. Some people have no interest in peace whatever unless they can have their own way.

The point is this: the believer is to follow after peace with *all men* — no matter who they are. The very purpose for the believer being on earth is to bring peace between men and God and between men and all other men. Therefore, the believer is to do all he can to live at peace with everyone and to lead others to live in peace.

The believer is to live at peace with all men. The believer is to work for as much peace as possible. Some level of harmony and concord can be achieved at least some of the time. The believer is never to give up, not as long as there is hope for some degree of peace. He is to achieve as much peace as possible. However remember, peace is not always possible — not with everyone.

IV. 1 Peter 03:12 Source of Life

Fourth, remember the source of life, the Lord Himself. No person has life apart from God, and God sees exactly who it is that is to receive life.

1. God sees the righteous, the very person who has been described in the first three points of the outline.

=> God sees the person who controls his tongue, who does not speak evil nor deceive people.

=> God sees the person who turns away and flees from evil.

=> God sees the person who seeks peace and pursues it.

This is the righteous person, the person to whom God gives life and good days. Note also that it is the righteous person whose prayers are answered. God's ears are open to their prayers. The idea is that He hears their cries in times of need and He meets their need. God cares and looks after the righteous day by day, never letting them suffer more than they can bear. This is a most wonderful thing: it means that the inner cry for life is met. God gives life, both abundant and eternal life, to the righteous, and He looks after them by answering their prayers while they journey throughout life.

John 15:7 *"If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you."*

Heb 4:16 *Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.*

1 John 5:14-15 *This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us — whatever we ask — we know that we have what we asked of him.*

Psa 34:15 *The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their cry.*

Psa 91:15 *He will call upon me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honour him.*

Isa 65:24 *Before they call I will answer; while they are still speaking I will hear.*

2. God sees those who do evil. Who are the evil? Being very specific, they are those who do not do what is covered in the first three points.

=> The evil are people who do not control their tongues and who speak evil and who deceive others with enticing and smooth talking words.

=> The evil are people who do not turn away from evil, who do not turn away from sexual immorality, idolatry, foolish and harmful desires, the love of money, the evil desires of youth, and all forms of evil.

=> The evil are people who do not seek and pursue peace, who are divisive, who grumble, complain, criticize, backbite, plot, fight and war.

Note that the very face of God stands against those who do evil. The picture is that God does not only see the evil person, God stands *face to face against him*. He stands face to face to judge them.

Mat 22:13 *“Then the king told the attendants, ‘Tie him hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’”*

Mat 25:41 *“Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.’”*

Mat 7:23 *“Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’”*

Mat 25:46 *“Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.”*

John 3:36 *“Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God’s wrath remains on him.”*

2 Pet 2:9 *If this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment, while continuing their punishment. ■*