

## 12. It's not fair!

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If we have siblings in our family, we hear this sentence often. As parents, we cannot please every kid all the time. Someone is bound to say, "It's not fair!" Then, we come up with that infamous answer, "Life ain't fair."

Can any of you tell me why good Christian people suffer? Ask Joni Erickson Tada who is paralyzed neck down and still serving God and encouraging fellow handicapped Christians and their families throughout the world. Joni could have said, "It is not fair."

How about John Bunyan, who wrote a book, "Pilgrim's Progress" in England in 1660? He was thrown into prison for preaching the Word of God for many years. In the prison, he wrote this book. When China's communist government printed Pilgrim's Progress as an example of Western cultural heritage, an initial printing of 200,000 copies was sold out in three days! What did he do wrong against his government? Nothing. John Bunyan could have said, "It is not fair."

Or you can ask yourself: You've been serving the Lord faithfully, but you are facing problems after problems. You are saying to God, "It is not fair."

So should we demand God what we deserve? I don't want what I deserve, because I deserve to be in hell.

Our response to unfairness, as in all other issues, is based on our perspective—the particular vantage point from which we look at life. Basically, we have two perspectives to choose from the human perspective or the divine one.

### **A. THE HUMAN PERSPECTIVE**

Our natural, human perspective contends that since life isn't fair - "We're going to get our share. We're going to look out for number one and not get mad but get even."

Unfortunately, although we may succeed in getting even, peace will still escape us. We're more likely to reach the end of our lives as bitter, cynical, hostile people if our response to unfairness springs only from this perspective.

My wife had a client who is extremely bitter with her life and the people around her due to her own perspective for life. She was a handicapped person and she put all the blames on someone else for everything. In her opinion that she firmly believed as truth, everybody is out to take advantage of her and they are all bad, and she was the only right and perfect person in the world. She went to her grave with that attitude. Some of you are thinking, "Yeah, I know somebody like that, too."

This human perspective comes from our selfish prideful hearts. Always looking out for number one, me.

### **B. THE DIVINE PERSPECTIVE**

*1Pet. 3:12 For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their prayers; But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.*

The principle that Peter is giving us in this: God misses nothing. He's looking out for us, He's listening to our prayers, and He is completely aware of the evil that is happening to us. But we still wonder, "Why doesn't He do something about the evil? Why does He let it go on so long?" Because God's time line is infinite and His time-line is different than ours. He doesn't settle scores at the end of each month. Some may take a lifetime or longer before justice is served.

Contrary to the human perspective that comes from selfish pride, the divine perspective comes from humility and submission to God Almighty, realizing that He is in charge. Oh, how we need this perspective all the time in our lives!

### **C. HOW TO HAVE THE DIVINE PERSPECTIVE**

Let's learn how to get this divine perspective in our lives, so that we may understand God's way better than before.

*1Pet. 3:13 And who is he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good?*

To the early church, Peter says, "If you choose to do good in hard times, who can really harm you? Oh, people might hurt you, but they can't harm you. They might tie you to a tree and ignite you. They might throw you to lions that devour you. But they can't harm you because you'll end up in heaven."

Those who live for heaven have an entirely different perspective on life because they're able to take a lot more things a lot less seriously. If you're living for earth, for an easy life, you'll be miserable. If you seek first the kingdom of God, if you live for heaven, you'll find that, although people may hurt you, no one can harm you.

#### **1) Consider yourself blessed by God**

*1Pet. 3:14a But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you are blessed.*

When we are doing right thing in our workplace or homes, we can still suffer for our good behaviors, we should consider ourselves uniquely blessed by God. This sure sounds ideal and nice as godly people.

It is not natural for a Secret Service Agent Dennis McCarthy to step in the line of fire to take a bullet that was meant for former President Ronald Reagan in March 30th, 1981, while everyone was dodging and ducking. To be exactly, he was trained to just do that. When the time came for him, instantly his training took over his natural instinct to step in. He became a hero.

It is not natural, but it's supernatural and spiritual thing for us to do. How we respond to injustice we receive separates us from ungodly.

*Rom. 12:21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.*

#### **2) Don't be afraid**

*1Pet. 3:14b "And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled."*

The word 'afraid' comes from the Greek 'phobos', from which we get our word 'phobia'. The word 'troubled' in Greek means "to be agitated, uneasy." It signifies inner agitation. This eats one's heart, gives ulcer, and no sleep at night.

#### **3) Acknowledge Christ as Lord of all**

So how can we have peace about it?

*1Pet. 3:15a But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts,*  
That's how. We should depend on Christ, not on the circumstances we are in.  
Otherwise, it will eat us alive.

The word 'sanctify' means 'set apart.' What this verse means is that we need to set apart our God in our hearts for purity and holiness in our lives. It is not about going to church or doing good things for others. They are important, but cultivating our close personal relationship with Jesus is more important.

#### **4) Be ready to give a witness**

*1Pet. 3:15b and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;*  
It must be reasonable. It is the Word of God that the Christian must give, and the Word is a reasonable and intelligent statement of his position.

To do so, we must know what we believe; we must have thought it out; we must be able to state it intelligently and intelligibly.

His defense must be given with gentleness. The case for Christianity must be presented with winsomeness and with love. Men may be wooed into the Christian faith, not be bullied into it.

His defense must be given with reverence. That is to say, any argument in which the Christian is involved must be carried on in a tone which God can hear with joy.

In any presentation of the Christian case and in any argument for the Christian faith, the accent should be the accent of love.

We have to remember the eternal hope in Christ. This world cannot give us any hope. We might find temporary pleasure and fun. But they are not true and eternal hope. The true hope doesn't come from men, but God. Knowing that we can dwell in His presence eternally gives us a great deal of comfort and hope in the midst of this dark world.

As I told you before, there is something better than going to heaven, it is taking somebody with you to heaven. We need to share this hope in Christ with those who do not know Christ.

Apologetics means 'Defense of Christianity.' The people who don't know Jesus as their personal Savior and Lord, might be lost, but they are not stupid. They know when they were treated like idiots by Christians. That won't help them come to Christ.

*2Tim. 4:2 Now concerning things offered to idols: We know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies.*

*Colossians 4:6 Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.*

*2 Timothy 4:2 Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.*

The Bible, the Word of God, gives us real hope—a hope backed by all the authority, truth and power of God. There are many books that can inform us and help us to make a better living and enhance our capabilities, but there is only one book that can transform wicked human to godly person. That is the Bible, the Word of the Living God.

### **5) Have a good conscience**

*1Pet. 3:16* having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed.

Fame is what others think about you, but character is what God knows about you. I'd rather have a godly character than worldly fame.

When everything goes south, we can still look up to Jesus who is the Author and Finisher of our lives and faith, who is ultimately in control of everything and everyone.

*Prov. 16:7* When a man's ways please the Lord, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him.

*Prov. 15:1* A soft answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger.

There is nothing more powerful, nothing more eloquent defense than a life continually lived in integrity in God. It alone has the power to silence our slanders. If we have integrity in God that we don't have to be shame for what we did in God's sight, we don't have worry about anything and anyone.

*1Pet. 3:17* For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.

## **D. APPLICATIONS**

### **1) Are you ready to give the defense of your faith anytime?**

If not, it is your duty to be ready.

### **2) We must treat non-believers with respect and love.**

Non-believers are not less people than us. They are where we were before Christ. We need to win their hearts with the love of Jesus Christ and the truth of Gospel.