Be of One Mind

1Peter 3:8-17

Verse 8 opens with the word *finally*. This indicates to the reader that Peter has been addressing a series of related topics. We know that Peter is writing to believers who have been dispersed from their homes by growing persecution over their acceptance of Jesus Christ as the Messiah. As we work through these verses, we will also look back to refresh our memories of what Peter has already shared, so we can see the context as a whole.

1. 1 Peter is packed with instructions for Christian living. What is the ultimate goal of living by these instructions? (1 Peter 1:7)

_____

_____

Peter begins his discussion of how to live our lives with Christ-glorifying faith in 1 Peter 1:13 when he says, “Therefore...” and moves to the conclusion of this discussion in 1 Peter 3 when he says, “Finally...”.

Read 1 Peter 3:8-12.

2. Record the five additional instructions given to believers in verse 8.
    1. _____
    2. _____
    3. _____
    4. _____
    5. _____

One Mind - in agreement or harmony with, cooperation in the midst of diversity

Compassionate - suffering or feeling the like with another, sympathetic

Courteous - humble-minded, putting others first

3. **THINK:** What do you think it looks like for all believers to be of one mind?

_____

_____

4. What was at the heart of Jesus' prayer in John 17:22-23, and what was the ultimate goal?

_____

_____

5. Read the following verses and record what you learn about one-mindedness and the purpose behind it.

Romans 15:5-6

_____

1 Corinthians 12:12-27

_____

_____

_____

2 Corinthians 5:18-20

_____

6. In the book of Philippians, Paul outlined the importance of unity and addressed both what promotes and hinders it. Skimming through the book of Philippians, list the following.

Things that Promote Unity

1:9 _____

1:11 _____

2:2 _____

2:3-4 _____

2:14 _____

2:16 _____

2:29 _____

3:2-4 _____

_____

3:10 _____

3:14 _____

3:15 _____

3:16 _____

4:8 _____

_____

4:11 _____

Things that Hinder Unity

2:21 _____

3:4 _____

3:19 _____

The Purpose of Unity

1:27 _____

7. Describe how we can emulate the mind of Christ, as detailed in Philippians 2:5-8.

_____

_____

_____

8. **THINK:** How can disunity among believers thwart the Gospel?

_____

_____

_____

9. **THINK HARDER:** How could disunity among believers in times of religious persecution be especially harmful?

_____

_____

The one-mindedness of believers was a source of joy for Paul while he suffered in prison for his own faith. When individuals seek to love God and grow in their knowledge of Him through the study of His Word, they are transformed into the image of Christ. This directly affects our love and unity with one another and helps us accomplish our mission of bringing God glory and sharing the Gospel and the good news of Jesus Christ with the world around us, no matter the circumstances we face.

Go back and reread 1 Peter 3:8.

10. Now, read the following verses and record what you learn about showing and not showing compassion and courtesy to other believers.

1 John 3:17-18

_____

_____

1 John 4:20-21

_____

_____

11. **THINK:** What role do you think compassion and courtesy play in times of persecution and various trials among believers?

_____

_____

_____

12. Use 1 Peter 3:9 to complete the following chart.

DO NOT	**BUT ON THE CONTRARY**	**INSTEAD**
REASON WHY		

Evil - wrongs inflicted

Reviling - harsh, bitter, abusive language

Blessing/eulogia (9b) - fine speaking, fair speech

Blessing/eulogeo (9d) - to invoke blessings upon

13. Choosing to bless those who curse you comes with a promise. According to Matthew 5:43-48, what is that promise?

_____

14. **THINK:** How can choosing to bless those who curse you result in additional earth-bound blessings?

_____

_____

15. A rise in religious persecution can be distressing, but Peter indicates in 1 Peter 3:10 that believers can continue to love life and have good days! What three things does Peter encourage believers to do in times of persecution (or any time, for that matter)?

_____

_____

16. Skim over 1 Peter 1:13–3:9; use the chart below to sort Peter's instructions for holy living while suffering into the three categories outlined in verse 10. NOTE: Some instructions may fit into multiple categories.

Refraining your Tongue	Turning from Evil Doing Good	Seeking and Pursuing Peace

17. If being able to love life and see good days in the midst of suffering isn't enough incentive to refrain your tongue, to choose good over evil, and to seek peace, what other incentives do we have? (v. 12)

_____

_____

_____

In verses 10-12, Peter references Psalm 34. David wrote this psalm after he was forced to leave his home because King Saul wanted to kill him. In his despair, he fled to the land of the Philistines (the home of Goliath, the great Philistine warrior, whom David had killed), where he was arrested and thrown into prison.

18. Use Psalm 34 to answer the following questions.

    a. What circumstances/emotions had David been facing?

v. 4 _____

v. 6, 17 _____

v. 18 _____

v. 19 _____

    b. What had he learned and experienced about God as a result of his circumstances?

v. 4 _____

v. 6 _____

v. 7 _____

v. 8 _____

v. 9 _____

v. 10 _____

v. 17 _____

v. 18 _____

v. 19 _____

v. 20 _____

v. 22 _____

c. What did David's suffering and God's faithfulness in those times cause him to do? (v. 1-3)

_____

_____

Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him!
Psalm 34:8

19. What are the various trials that you are currently facing?

_____

_____

In what ways do you need to refrain your tongue?

_____

_____

In what areas do you need to turn from evil and do good?

_____

_____

In what areas do you need to seek and pursue peace?

_____

_____

Cry out to the Lord and thank Him for His goodness.

_____

_____

_____

So far, Peter has addressed our conduct in times of suffering among unbelievers, in our homes, and within the church, and he has given us the recipe for living life to the fullest despite our earthly circumstances.

Read 1 Peter 3:13-17.

20. **THINK:** What point was Peter trying to make with his question in verse 13?

_____

21. Record the two statements of truth Peter makes regarding the unusual circumstance of being harmed for doing good.

v. 14 _____

v. 17 _____

The word "blessed" in verse 14 means "happy," meaning that when we suffer for righteousness, we should be happy.

22. Read Acts 5:40-42, record what happened to the apostles, and how they responded.

_____

_____

May we all know Him and love Him in a way that allows us to be counted worthy to suffer for His sake.

23. Peter tells believers to not be afraid or troubled in these circumstances. How should we respond instead? (1 Peter 3:15-16)

_____

_____

Afraid - fear, dread, terror

Troubled - to strike one's spirit with fear or dread

Sanctify - to render or acknowledge to be venerable, to hallow since the stamp of sacredness passes over from the holiness of God to whatever has any connection with God

24. Read 1 Peter 3:15 in several different versions and record what it means to "sanctify the Lord God in your hearts."

_____

25. Record the final instructions given and the reasons why. (v. 15-18)

_____

_____

_____

A Closer Look at Always Being Ready to Give a Defense

1 Peter 3:14-15

Reread 1 Peter 3:14-15. These verses teach us not to fear suffering for our faith. As followers of Christ, our reactions to hardship and persecution should serve as a testimony that points others toward Jesus. Therefore, we are called to be ready to explain why we have hope, even in times of difficulty.

The word *defense* in the original Greek is *apologia*. This is where we get the word apologetics. Apologetics is the branch of theology concerned with defending or proving Christianity through rational argument. Simply put, it's the **defending of our faith.**

We all must know why we believe what we believe. Scripture is the most reliable source for our defense. As you read the following verses and consider your answers, ponder how they can be your argument for faith.

26. Read John 16:33, James 1:2-4, and 1 Peter 1:3-7. What is the reason we can endure tribulation? What should our attitude be in times of testing? What are the results of enduring?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

27. Therefore, when someone asks why you have hope in difficulties, how will you answer?

_____

_____

28. Read John 1:1-3 and 14, John 14:6, and Colossians 1:13-18. If asked, "How do you know that Jesus is the Son of God?", how will you answer?

_____

_____

_____

29. Read the following verses. How can these verses be used to show that the Bible is not only inspired by God, but also true and reliable?

Numbers 23:19

_____

_____

Psalm 119:160

_____

_____

2 Timothy 3:16

_____

_____

2 Peter 1:20-21

_____

_____

The evidence for the authenticity of the Bible is overwhelming. The manuscript evidence, archeological findings, and the fulfillment of prophecy all give credibility to the Bible. It is our responsibility to know how to defend the truth of God's Word.

30. Read the following verses. How do these verses encourage you to be a student of God's Word?

Proverbs 3:5-6

_____

_____

Acts 17:11

_____

_____

2 Timothy 2:15

_____

_____

God's Word is true. We can trust it. Commit to know the truth of God's Word and to discover how to defend why you have hope!

> This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil…
>
> - Hebrews 6:19