

Doing Good

1Peter 2:11-20

What's wrong with the world? You ask people that question and it's no telling what you'll hear. I would guess it depends on who you ask. Ask a politician, and they might say it's those people in the opposing political party. The "Left" would say it's all those on the "Right"; and the people on the "Right" would point to the "Left". Ask an Israeli (Iz-rey-lee) they would say "what's wrong with the world? It's such people like "Hamas" and "Hezbollah". That's what's wrong. Ask an Ukrainian person and they would say what's wrong with the world is those Russians who invaded their land.

I was reading an entry in "Our Daily Bread" concerning that very question. The question was asked by a British paper called *The TIMES*. The question "What's wrong with the world" was put to some writers in 1908, and various responses were suggested. One interesting response came from the writer, G.K. Chesterton. Here's how he responded to the question: "What's wrong with our world?"

Dear Sirs,

I am.

Sincerely yours,

G.K. Chesterton¹

What's the problem? We are. We are sinners. Because of sin there's all these problems you see and hear about. I don't know if *The Times* had a follow up question. This might be a good one. So what's the solution? We are the problem, so what's the solution? Here it is: The Gospel message of Christ. Jesus came for the purpose to save us from our sins, and to give us His righteousness. Our purpose as a church is to go into our world and proclaim the Good News of Salvation in Jesus Christ our Lord. It is the fundamental answer to what's wrong with our world.

What is the best way to communicate the Gospel Message to an Unbelieving World? There are so many ways to get the message out for others to hear. The most powerful instrument to broadcast the Gospel is a person who loves Jesus and his/her life reflects the love of Jesus.

Paul said - Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. 1Cor. 13:1

If the love of Jesus is not flowing in my life, all I'm saying is a bunch of noise.

The most effective witness comes from a Child of God whose life is characterized by godliness. Of course, we are not talking about sinless perfection. That's not what Peter is speaking of in our text either.

LOOK again - v.15 "For this is the will of God....."

¹ [What's Wrong with the World? | Our Daily Bread Ministries](#)

Here's the key - "doing good" The most potent instrument to bring someone to Christ is not a persuasive argument, but rather a persuasive lifestyle. One's life is seen to be what a Christian ought to be.

A German philosopher, Heinrich Heine² once said, "*show me your redeemed life and I might be inclined to believe in your Redeemer.*"

It's not what you say, but how you live that makes the greater impact on people coming to Christ. That's why Jesus said, "let your light shine".

Matthew 5: Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." Letting your light so shine before men is not making speeches. It's doing good works. It's what you do. Doing Good by letting our light shine is how we reflect the ways of Christ. Jesus went about doing good.

Acts 10:38

how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.

So, how can we "do good"? We've heard the Bible verse, there's none good, no not one... that's goodness from our fallen flesh. I know that in me, that is, in my flesh dwelleth no good thing. As a Follower of Christ, we have a new nature....a redeemed life.... the Spirit-filled life and on the basis of what Christ has done...we can do good works for the glory of God.

Paul said, "I can do all things THROUGH CHRIST who strengthens me."

How can we *do good*? 2 main points

1. Abstain from fleshly lusts - the Work on the Inside
2. Keep your conduct honorable - the Work on the Outside

Let's first talk about the WORK ON THE INSIDE.....that is, Abstain from fleshly lusts.

I. Abstain from Fleshly Lusts

A. What? What is "fleshly lusts"?

What is meant by the "Passions of the flesh"? Most Bible versions say "fleshly lusts". When God saved us, He redeemed us, but not entirely. Total redemption will come in the future. We have a redeemed life. Our life is hidden with Christ in God, so says Colossians 3:3.

² [A Case for God: Representing the Redeemer](#)

There's one part of us that's unredeemable- it's the flesh. Not talking about your physical body. Romans 8:23...we eagerly wait for the adoption, the redemption of our bodies. That's future when Christ returns.

What's meant by the flesh is that old man, the natural man we were born with. The sinful flesh that totally depraved and unredeemable.

Pastor Mark Bubek defines the flesh this way:

"The flesh is a built-in law of failure, making it impossible for natural man to please or serve God. It is a compulsive inner force inherited from man's fall, which expresses itself in general and specific rebellion against God and His righteousness. The flesh can never be reformed or improved. The only hope for escape from the law of the flesh is its total execution and replacement by a new life in the Lord Jesus Christ."³

Listen to the Apostle Paul's struggle with trying to do what is right.

Romans 7:15-20

¹⁵ For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. ¹⁶ Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good. ¹⁷ So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. ¹⁸ For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. ¹⁹ For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. ²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me.

Paul said, "the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing". Exactly, what is this evil? We know what it is. It keeps on popping up constantly in our lives. Let's look at a list to help us identify "fleshly lusts".

Galatians 5:19-21

¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, ²¹ envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

In case you don't see a particular "work of the flesh" in this list, it's found in that phrase "and things like these". We all have to deal with these outbreking of that old man, the fallen nature we were born with. In the same passage, we are told how to have victory over the flesh:

Galatians 5:16-17

³ [What is the flesh? | GotQuestions.org](http://www.GotQuestions.org)

16 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. **17** For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.

B. Who?

Who? We should make every effort to abstain from fleshly lusts *because of Who we are*. You can expect the unregenerate to be dominated by the works of the flesh. But, it's different with the Christian. We are the "beloved".

1. **BELOVED** - This is not a title for the person of the world. This is not a description for a lost person. This is strictly for the Believer. We are the object of God's love. Because of Christ we are now THE BELOVED.

1John 3:1-2 Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.² Beloved, now are we the sons of God,

This should be great motivation to abstain from fleshly lusts. God loves us, and He gave His Son to die in our place, and that in itself is strong reasons to flee from sinful desires.

2. **SOJOURNERS and EXILES**- That's who we are. Another word is foreigner, or alien. We don't belong to this world.

KJV - strangers and pilgrims - We are traveling through this world. This is NOT our permanent dwelling. Just like the children of Israel came out of Egypt and traveled through the wilderness for 40 years. The Wilderness was NOT their permanent home. The Promised Land, the land flowing with milk and honey was their FINAL Dwelling place.

Hebrews 11:13-16 ¹³ These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. ¹⁴ For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. ¹⁵ And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. ¹⁶ But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.

Hebrews 13:14 ¹⁴ For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come.

Philippians 3:20 But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,

To give in to fleshly lusts is to step into the muck and mire of this world system. WE are in the world, but we are not OF the world. Why should we entertain fleshly lusts for one second? This is what the world lives in 24/7.

1John 2:15-16 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

Abstain from fleshly lusts because of WHAT it is: Because of WHO we are; and Because of WHAT it does; Here's the WHY...

C. **Why?** Wages war against your soul.

You see the word "war" in the text. War is an awful part of our existence. Today, there is war in the Middle East. That war will continue until the Lord returns. There's warfare in our own country. Think of the mass shootings which is defined when four or more people are injured or killed by a mass shooter. This year alone there have been 630 incidents of mass shootings. We live in a state of war. Just in the United States more than 50 people are killed by a firearm.⁴ There are no signs things are getting better.

There's another war....and it's not getting better. WAR AGAINST YOUR SOUL. The *FLESH* is like a terrorist group sneaking up on you and attacking you from every side. There's no peace treaty with the *FLESH*. There is no improvement with the flesh... it's not getting better. Paul said:

Romans 7:18 For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in *my flesh*.

The only way to experience VICTORY.. over the flesh....is in the Spirit.

(1) It requires walking in the Spirit

Galatians 5:16-17 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷ For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.

(2) It requires Self-Discipline.

Apostle Paul took great pains to keep himself from falling into situations that would hinder His ability to preach the gospel. He had liberties to do certain things as an Apostle. He could have charged for his services, but he managed to work himself and not put that burden on any certain church. Paul could have had a believing wife to travel with him, but he did not venture into that freedom.

1Cor. 9:24-27 ²⁴ Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. ²⁵ Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. ²⁶ So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as

⁴ [How many US mass shootings have there been in 2023? \(yahoo.com\)](https://www.yahoo.com/news/how-many-us-mass-shootings-have-there-been-in-2023-123456789.html)

one beating the air. ²⁷ But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.

There is a great need for God's people to develop more self-discipline. The flesh fights hard to defeat us. The flesh needs to be put in its place. Put out of order.

(3) It requires Separation. Separating from Ungodly associations

We must be careful in our associations with people of the world. We are "in" the world; but we are not "of" the world. Our work associates will not all be Believers. The work force puts us among people of every kind. God will give you a "way to escape" when placed in a tempting situation. There are times when you literally have to separate yourself. No way around it.

2Corinthians 6:17

Therefore go out from their midst,
and be separate from them, says the Lord,
and touch no unclean thing;
then I will welcome you,

This is GOD's PROMISE that he will be a father to us. You shall be sons and daughters to me...

2Cor. 7:1 Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God.

This is the first part - the Battle for the Christian begins on the INSIDE.... The battle that rages against our soul. If we don't win this battle, there's no way to expect victory for Christ will be won out in the public side of our lives. There won't be much of a witness that will bring people to Christ.

II. Keeping Your Conduct Honorable v.12

Keep your conduct (behavior) among the Gentiles honorable (excellent)..... Gentiles is referring to the unbelieving; the pagans; the people who are not saved....

Keep your conduct honorable.... Excellent.... Let it be of the best quality of Christ-likeness; Even the unbelievers know we are not perfect, and they see us when mistakes are made and even that which may be considered a "sinful" action. When we fail to be considerate to one another; When we fail to be thoughtful, or even helpful, the unbelieving world doesn't know how to take us when we say,

I'm sorry, I forgot to tell you... I'm sorry, I overlooked something...

I'm sorry, my patience was a little thin, and I should not have said that to you...

I don't think the unbeliever is looking at one isolated incident unless it was something very seriously sinful. They are looking at your overall conduct, behavior...and they are fault finders. They love to

make accusations, and point out your deficiencies.... It's like the enemy of our soul, the devil. He is called "the Accuser of the Brethren"

A. They Speak Against You as Evildoers - This is what the Unbelieving World does. It seeks to always DISCREDIT Christians.

Why does the Unbelieving World do this?

They hate the light..... they hate the truth... it exposes their sin..

John 3:19-20 ¹⁹ ...the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. ²⁰ For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed

God spoke through the prophet Isaiah...with this warning.....

Isaiah 5:20 Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!

Every time there is a scandal involving a HIGH profile preacher, or TV evangelist... the unbelieving world can't have enough of it. The ungodly comedians have an abundance of jokes for their audience.

We must KEEP our conduct among the Unbelieving World HONORABLE, Excellent.... We don't need to FEED the FIRES of criticism.... The Fires of criticism must be Extinguished by our Excellent behavior.

I think of this when there's a tragedy like some disaster takes place..... Storms come through bringing great destruction and the loss of lives.... This is when Christians band together to DO GOOD.... Give help to their neighbors.

Conducting ourselves in a way that's honorable.... This is what this world needs to see from Christians. They don't need to see another SCANDAL in the church.....they need to see CHRIST in US. SEE kindness, love and compassion as we proclaim the TRUTH of God's Word.

B. SEE YOUR GOOD DEEDS

The Unbelieving don't need to see Christians complaining, bickering, back-biting....they need to see CHRIST in us.

We are the only gospel that some people will ever read..... Most people will never read the Gospel According to Matthew, Mark, Luke John.... People do READ US... as someone once said, "We are living a Gospel" :

We are living a Gospel
A chapter each day,
By deed that we do,
By word that we say;
Men read what we live,
Whether faithless or true,
Say! What is the Gospel
According to you?"

Good deeds don't earn our salvation.

"Good deeds are not the root of salvation, but they are the fruit of genuine salvation.⁵

Ephesians 2:8-10 ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

I pray we will always seek ways as a church ...working together... to "do good deeds".... We can't necessarily duplicate what another church group is doing, but we can do something to show the love of Jesus to our community... we can easily get distracted, discouraged, and weary of ministry... I pray we will not give up on what God has called us to do..

Galatians 6:9-10

⁹ And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. ¹⁰ So then, as we have opportunity, let us **do good to everyone**, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.

Being a Good Example of a Follower of Christ.... is what the LOST World needs today.

They need to hear a sermon..... but what about SEEING a sermon.....

Thomas Brooks said: Example is the most powerful rhetoric.

Benjamin Frankling - Well done is better than well said.

D.L. Moody - More depends on my WALK than TALK

Your walk talks, and your talk talks

But your walk talks louder than your talk talks

⁵ Unknown quote

C. Glorify God on the Day of Visitation

Day of Visitation -

1. Day when the Lord returns....
2. Day when a person is converted to Christ... their salvation.... Heaven comes down...

In the Scriptures:

God sends Moses... children of Israel delivered from Egyptian bondage.... Day of Visitation.

Children of Israel....delivered from Babylonian bondage..... day of visitation

Zechariah, at the birth of John the Baptist....**Luke 1:68** Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for **he has visited** and redeemed his people

Jesus raised a dead man

Luke 7:11-16

¹¹ Soon afterward he went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a great crowd went with him. ¹² As he drew near to the gate of the town, behold, a man who had died was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow, and a considerable crowd from the town was with her. ¹³ And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her and said to her, "Do not weep." ¹⁴ Then he came up and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, "Young man, I say to you, arise." ¹⁵ And the dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother. ¹⁶ Fear seized them all, and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has arisen among us!" and "**God has visited his people!**"

Glory is given to God.... God visits.... Gives Grace...mercy to the sinner.....Extends repentance and faith...

Matthew 5:14-16

¹⁴ "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may **see your good works and give glory** to your Father who is in heaven.

The most powerful instrument to BRING people to Christ.... is an Honorable LIFE....and excellent life that demonstrates the love of God.....