

The Harmony of the Gospel

1 Peter 3:8-12

Definition of Harmony – “The combination of simultaneously sounded musical notes to produce chords and chord progressions having a pleasing effect.”

The context of 1 Peter summarized

1 Peter 1:3-6 - According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials...

1. Harmony – How are believers to relate to one another? v. 8

Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind.

Guard the unity you already have... I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Eph. 4:1-3

These five qualities are vital to effective interpersonal relationships within the church.

1. Harmony
2. Sympathy
3. Brotherly love
4. A tender heart
5. Humble mind

So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Phil. 2:1-3

“In Essentials Unity, In Non-Essentials Liberty, In All Things Charity” – Ruperus Meldenius

Truth is not sacrificed on the altar of harmony. What needs to be sacrificed on the altar is pride.

2. Dissonance – How are believers to relate to a hostile world? v. 9a

Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling,

Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. 1 Tim. 2:12-13

Remember the word that I said to you: ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. John 15:20

3. Resolution – What is God’s intent for the church and the world? v. 9b - 11

but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing.

10 For “Whoever desires to love life and see good days, let him keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit; let him turn away from evil and do good; 11 let him seek peace and pursue it.”

A. Watch your words

If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person’s religion is worthless. James 1:26

B. Actively resist wrong and actively do right

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

C. Pursue Peace

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God. Matthew 5:9

CONCLUSION

12 For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayer. But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil...”

For the eyes of the Lord roam throughout the earth, so that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His. 2 Chron. 16:9

When the righteous cry for help, the Lord hears and delivers them out of all their troubles. The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit. Psalm 34:17,18

Discussion Questions

- Tell about something you practiced when you were growing up. If not music, then a skill of a different kind.
- Read 1 Peter 3:8-12 and Psalm 34:15-18. What observations and applications do you see?
- Which one of the five practices in point #1 do you need to grow in the most?
- What relationship or situation do you feel dissonance with?
- What can you do to “bless” that person in the Name of Jesus?
- What do you think about the statement, “Truth is not sacrificed on the altar of harmony. What needs to be sacrificed on the altar is pride.”?
- Kurt talked about sharks (attack) and turtles (protect) to describe how we react to conflict. What is your default? What difference does the presence of Jesus in your life make?