

1Peter 3
Using Social Media For Good
J.D. Farag

So this morning, *1 Peter Chapter 3*. We're making our way, verse-by-verse, through this epistle of the Apostle Peter, and our text is going to be *verses 8-12*. And if you're able, I'll ask you to stand, you can follow along as I read. If not, where you're seated is fine.

The Apostle Peter, this is an interesting passage of Scripture because it's kind of a staccato exhortation, just rapid-fire exhortation. Starting in *verse 8*, he says, **“Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble. Do not [Verse 9] repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.**

For, [Verse 10] “Whoever would love life and see good days must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from deceitful speech. He must turn from evil and do good; he must seek peace and pursue it. For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and His ears are attentive to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.””

Let's pray. If you would please join with me, we'll ask God's blessing on our understanding. Loving Heavenly Father, we're so grateful to You for Your Word and this portion that we have before us today here in Your Word.

But we're also keenly aware that unless the Holy Spirit is our teacher and our guide, we're not going to get it. We're not going to have ears to hear and eyes to see what it is that You desire to speak into our lives and show us that's here in Your Word today. Lord, particularly this particular passage is of profound significance, and it speaks to right where we're at in this day in which we live.

So Lord, I pray that there wouldn't be any distractions that would cause our minds to wander. That we would give You our undivided attention to take and tackle this delicate and tough and touchy topic. So Lord, thank You as only You can and always do, we ask You to grant us this grace. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen and amen.

Thank you. You can be seated.

Okay. We need to talk about social media again. For those of you who weren't here for the Prophecy Update. If you stayed for this service, you have treasures in heaven. You're a glutton for punishment, but you have treasures in heaven.

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Actually, the Prophecy Update, for the benefit of those of you who weren't with us, was about the prophetic role of social media in the last days. Well, such is the case with the text that we have before us today.

It's really quite interesting because the Apostle Peter is in a sense echoing what the Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy in his second letter, similarly, in the sense that it was a staccato-like rapid fire exhortation. And we're going to see that here now in *2 Timothy Chapter 3:1-5*.

The Apostle Paul writing to this pastor, Timothy, to the church, says, this is what is going to be the marker, this is what will mark the last days: perilous, terrible, fierce times will come. And then he proceeds to list 19 characteristics of the last days. And again, Peter does something similar here. He's listing these characteristics. And if you really look at it, he is almost to a tee addressing what we know today as social media.

Okay. I'm so glad you chuckled with that.

Now I hope and I pray, this is my hope and my prayer, that all of us, myself included, would take this to heart and take heed to the heart of God and the Word of God. Because social media, as we saw in the Prophecy Update was meant for evil. The algorithms are meant for evil. It is unspeakable evil. But God means it for good, as only He can. And as such, social media can be used for good.

See, we use social media, but what we don't realize is that social media uses us. We have social media, but sadly, social media in many cases has us. And what Peter is going to address here are the problems and really the solutions to all of the striving, all of the vitriol, all of the vile and viciousness that we see on social media.

If Peter was our guest speaker today, first of all, wouldn't that be cool? Wow. Can you imagine the announcements the week before? We have a special guest speaker: the Apostle Peter.

No way!

Yeah, I know. Well, in a way he is, because he's going to speak now by the Holy Spirit into our lives concerning this problem that we have in our lives.

What's the problem?

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Social media is the problem. Social media is the problem. And wouldn't you agree that social media has been responsible for much in the way of destruction and damage, especially to the family relationship?

And if this weren't bad enough, I mean, and I don't want to go through the update again, but this needs to be said. It's so sad because you really – Christians are doing this on social media. And I think we need to give the microphone to Peter and allow him by the Holy Spirit to speak into our lives concerning using social media for good. And the first one is in the first part of *verse 8*, and it's: Be harmonious.

First and foremost, we're to be of one mind with others. We are to be pleasant and be in harmony or unison with each other. That's not to say that we compromise under the banner of harmony or unity. Rather, we're not to be argumentative and combative. So what does that look like? Well, we can agree to disagree agreeably instead of falling into the social media trap of winning the argument but losing the opportunity.

By losing the opportunity I mean, and I, again, I bear with me, this is a biggie. And I might as well get it out of the way. It's kind of that proverbial elephant in the room. I know I've asked this question. It is sincere, and the Lord knows my heart. But I want to ask this question:

How is it possible that you're going to share Jesus with somebody online on social media after you've just posted what you just posted? How are you going to – you just called them names.

You just posted that, and then you're going to post a scripture? I'm sorry. That's a problem. You realize you've blown it, especially with that person that you've posted and tagged or replied to.

Well, I'm getting ahead of myself. Let me just, one more thing and we'll move on to the second one. I've got nine of these, by the way, so we'll have you out of here by 2:00. But this is very important. You know what being in harmony or unison is, right?

So like, Kapono is leading us in worship... Oh I love that song. 'I have decided to follow Jesus.' I was harmonizing. I don't know if you heard me. I was in the back there. Maybe it's a good thing that you didn't.

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You know, I was harmonizing. I was pretty impressed with myself, actually, you know because Kapono went up, you know.

(Singing)

♪ I have decided to follow – No holding back. ♪

♪ No turning back. No turning back.

I went high.

♪ No turning back. No turning back. ♪

[Laughter]

Yeah, not bad. Maybe Kapono will let me be on the worship team now. No, don't. That would be horrible.

But here's my point. I'm harmonizing with him. Be in harmony or unison.

Don't, don't... (Frustrating sounds)

It's okay.

Number two: be sympathetic. Second part of *verse 8*. Now the word for sympathetic in the original language carries with it the idea of understanding and empathizing with others suffering. And we're going to see this more in a moment.

But the exhortation here is to be more sympathetic towards what others may be going through. Have you ever heard it said that hurt people, hurt people? Oftentimes when someone lashes out, it's because they're really hurting. And I think it's the mature Christian who has spiritual discernment that will discern that and be sympathetic towards that person.

True story. Many years ago, Pastor goes in for breakfast at this diner and the server is just, I mean, not having a good day. And she's not having it, actually. And she throws the menus at him and, you know, says, you guys ready to order?

They're like, No, no (Mumbling) Don't you hate it when they pressure you like that? You just gave me the menu. Give me a minute here.

So she comes back. You ready to order?

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Yeah, well, I'll take this.

And so she says, Okay, rips the menus out of their hands, and leaves and comes back, throws the plates in front of them. Never comes back once to check on their coffee or their water.

So it comes time to pay and leave. And so the pastor leaves her a \$20 tip. Probably more than the actual ticket. She follows him out to the parking lot to his car, with tears streaming down her face and says, Sir, you dropped this \$20 bill.

And he looks at her and he says, No, I didn't. I knew you were having a really hard time. I know you're really struggling and you're really hurting, and I just wanted to bless you and encourage you.

Wow!

Well, let's take that into our discussion of social media. Somebody posts something and it's pretty vile. It might be that they're really hurting. What if you were more sympathetic and replied in that way. Maybe do a direct message. So it's not public.

Say, Hey, I saw that post. Are you okay?

No, actually, I'm not.

You know how we are, right? Oh, we're so good at it as Christians. You know, How are you doing?

Fine. How are you doing?

Fine.

Off you go. Really? Ask this question. How are you really doing?

Oh, I'm so glad you asked. Do you have a moment?

Oh, I wasn't expecting that. We'll do lunch.

No, you won't. Why don't you just take the time and listen to what they're going through. I think it was Oswald Chambers who once said that if we really knew what people were actually going through, we would be so much kinder. We'd be so much kinder to them.

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Well, this really ties in, they all do, to the third part of *verse 8* and number three, and it's: Be loving.

The word that Peter uses here is the Greek word for brotherly love, which in the Greek is *philia*, where we get the English word for Philadelphia, the city of Brotherly Love. See, our problem is in English we only have one word for love, whereas in Greek there are four.

So in English I'll say, I love my wife. God loves me. I love cheesecake. Don't send me cheesecake. I don't need it. I want it; I don't need it. Anyway, that's another thing.

But I love my children. I love my church. I really love my church, by the way. If I wasn't the pastor of this church, this is where I would go to church. It's a loving church. But we only have one word. Love. Love.

But in Greek, we have four words. We have *philia*, *eros*, *agape* and *storge*.

So *agape* is unconditional love, the love that God has for us, *agape*. *Storge* is natural affection. We saw this in the Prophecy Update. It's a parental love. The love that a parent has for their children or their children, the children have for their parents. That's *storge*.

Eros is a physical, sensual love where we get the English word *erotic*. And then *philia* is the brotherly love, the friendship love.

So if I'm in Greek saying 'I love' in Greek, I would say, God *agapes* me. I *philia* you. I *storge* my children. And I hope this isn't too graphic, I *eros* my wife. But anyway, that might be too much. But no, it's a sensual, *erotic*, you know, love. So that really changes the complexion of that word, doesn't it?

So in English we kind of lose – it's that textbook case of it gets lost in the translation. But the love that he's speaking of here is brotherly love. And I want to ask another question if you don't mind.

Is this not the litmus test that Jesus said that people will know that we're His disciples? I mean, you can post as much scripture as you want. But ask the Apostle Paul about that. If there's no love, it's just clanging cymbals. It's just noise. It's just another post.

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Doubtless you've heard this saying. So true. People don't care how much you know until and unless they know how much you care. So how do you demonstrate that you truly love someone? You care. You listen. You're loving.

And by the way, is not love the fruit of the Holy Spirit? So, you know, fruit grows. Gifts are given, they're instant. The gifts of the Holy Spirit, different. The fruit of the Holy Spirit, it grows over time.

And so the question I think we need to ask ourselves is, as I mature in Christ and grow in the Lord, what's the fruit of my life? Is it, love? Am I being loving to this person?

You know, many years ago. I would – I'm going to be careful here because I don't want to... Well, I've already repented, so it's good. But man, I was really good at it. I could compose, I mean, an email response with fire. Oh, yeah, man. Caps. Lots of caps. And then I would push "send." And then I would look for the "unsubscribe" button. There was no "unsubscribe" button.

So the Lord got a hold of me. And He said, Just put it in the drafts folder and you go to bed. That's an order. It was like a little kid when you're sent to your room and go to bed and go to sleep. And then I wake up in the morning and He'd say, Okay, now read that again. And I mean, I'm mortified. Oh, my goodness. I'm so glad I didn't send that in the heat of the moment. That is so unloving, that is so unloving.

Well, number 4, the last part of *verse 8*: Be compassionate.

Now this speaks to being kind-hearted and compassionate, along with being sympathetic towards others. This is a tough one, and sometimes you have to learn this the hard way. But one of the lessons I'm learning in my walk with the Lord is that suffering makes you more compassionate towards others who are suffering.

And the Apostle Paul, actually, in his second letter to the Corinthians, Chapter 1:3-7 goes into great detail about this.

He says, You know, you can comfort others and encourage others with the same comfort that you yourself were on the receiving end of from the Lord when you were going through a really difficult time.

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And yeah, it's painful, but you learn to be more compassionate towards other people. You know when we become hard, unbroken, there's no compassion for other people. And so God will take us into those trials. And we'll learn to be more compassionate towards other people so that we mourn with those who mourn, weep with those who weep, we rejoice with those who rejoice. We really feel a compassion towards other people.

What would happen if on social media someone posts something and your post is just filled with compassion and empathy and kindness and love? Do you think that would change? It would change you, by the way. I think it'll change the whole complexion of everything.

Number five. And this, of course, is a biggie, too. They're all biggies but: Be humble.

Again, Peter, he's listing all of these things. And I know they didn't have social media in that day, but every single one of them to a tee describes everything we do every day on social media.

And again in the Update we looked at that list in *2 Timothy Chapter 3*. And at the core of everything is that 'P' word. P-P-Pride. Pride, boasting, lovers of self, conceded.

What's the antithesis of that? Humility.

If you were to ask me what I thought was one of the most important of all when it comes to social media, humility would be it. And here's why. And I want you to think about this.

Isn't it impossible to continue fueling an argument back and forth when one of the people involved is humble? (Stuttering)

When someone's humble, it's kind of like pouring water on a fire raging and burning and spreading out of control. Someone replies very humbly with such humility and meekness.

And never make meekness synonymous with weakness. It's not. Meekness is strength under control. Jesus was meek. And oh, by the way, the Fruit of the Spirit again, *Galatians Chapter 5*: love, joy, peace, gentleness, kindness, meekness, patience, self-control, that's coming up. Be a blessing.

Number 6 and verse 9. Now, if we're really honest with ourselves, I think we would all have to confess that this is one of the hardest things to do when you're insulted. So Peter is saying don't insult someone when they insult you.

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I can't? Wait. I'm really good at it, though. I mean, they just blasted me. In fact, they made a YouTube video about me.

I can do a video, too, you know? Oh, come on. I mean, the flesh is right there. Rears its ugly head.

Oh, yeah? And then you just come back. (Explosion sounds)

But Peter, by the Holy Spirit is speaking now. He says, Don't reply with an insult.

Yeah, but did you see what they posted against me, about me?

One of the things on Paul's list in *2 Timothy Chapter 3* is slanderous. This would be a Last Day's sign. A marker, a characteristic of the last days is that people will be lovers of themselves boastful, proud, abusive, slanderous.

You know what that word is in the original language? Diablo's. Diabolical. It's where we get the word devil. That's what slander is. Gossip.

And oh, by the way, the lists in the epistles from the Apostle Paul, where you've got things like murder, sexual immorality, you know what else is on that list? Gossiping.

Oh, that doesn't belong there.

Yes, it does.

You mean that rises to the level of being on the same list as murder and sexual immorality?

Yes. It's diabolical. It's devilish, slanderous. And we do it all the time. Insults, slander, gossip, tear down. Curse. We're cursing.

Boy, it's really getting quiet in here. Well, I'm convicted, too. So, listen, conviction loves company. I know that's not how it goes, but it needs to be.

Don't you want to be a blessing? Don't you want to bless those who curse you?

Wait, who said that?

Jesus said that in *Matthew Chapter 5:11-12* He even takes it further. He says, pray for those who post ugly, vile things on social media. That's in the original, by the way. Pray for those who post those things on social media.

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Do you know why? Because when somebody does that and you pray for them, it might be hard at first, but it changes your heart towards them. Because now you're praying for them. I know we've talked about this. I've confessed this.

You know, it's kind of like, okay, I'll pray for them. God, you know, (Chuckling) you can fill in the blank, because I know you prayed that way, too, for your enemies.

I'm not going to pray for my enemies. They're my enemy. Why would I pray for my enemy? I'll pray for my friend; they're my friend. That's easy. That's an easy do.

No, pray for your enemy.

I'm not going to pray for my enemies! I don't want them to be blessed.

Well, watch what happens. You pray for them that God will bless them. Again, it's really hard at first. In fact, just praying it, Lord, blah...blah... it's so hard! Just bless them, just bless them! (Frustrating sounds)

No hurry though, just, you know. But here's what happens: It changes you from the inside out. It changes your whole attitude towards them because now you've got a vested interest in them. You've just prayed that God would bless them.

So now you're waiting for God to bless them. And then guess what? When God, and God will bless them, by the way. He answers prayers like that, just so you know. But when God blesses them, you are blessed. You're blessed.

You think maybe Jesus knew that when He said that?

Yeah, I think. Be a blessing. Be the kind of person on social media that people wait for you to post. In fact, when you don't post, they're like, Hey, where's your post? Instead of being that person that, Oh they posted again! What did they post this time? Oh, man!

No. Be the kind of person that, man, every time they post or reply, man, it just blesses me. I look forward to it. It's such a blessing. So edifying. So encouraging.

This guy that just blasted them, and their response is: I'm praying that God will kill them.

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No, it's not that. It's the Lord bless you. Sorry you feel that way. I'll pray for you. The Lord bless you. I hope everything's okay. You know, maybe there's something going on in your life. I'll pray for you. The Lord knows what it is.

It'll melt them. It'll bless them. You never know. You could turn an enemy into a friend. No. For real. You know what I'm talking about, right? That person. You know who I'm talking about. In fact, you already blocked him. It's to – or they blocked you. Worse yet, right?

But what happens if you win them over? Even better yet, what happens if you win them to Christ?

Well, number 7. We're almost there. Hang in there. *Verse 10*: Be honest.

Now here, Peter begins quoting *Psalms 34:12-16*. It's a Psalm of David, when he feigned madness before Abimelech, when he was running for his life from Saul, who wanted to kill him.

And in so doing he's emphasizing – by the way, this is an amazing psalm. I would really encourage you – it's a favorite psalm of many over the ages. Many a saint has found so much comfort and encouragement from *Psalms 34*. I'll just say, it is one of my favorite Psalms. I know I say that about every psalm, but *Psalms 34* in particular. But in *verses 12-16*, which is a verbatim quote on the part of the Apostle Peter in the remainder of our text today, he's emphasizing the paramount importance of one who desires a blessed life.

Do you desire your life to be blessed? Actually, don't you pray that, God bless me? Bless this, bless that, bless my life. You want a blessed life?

Okay. Keep your tongue from deceit. Your lips from speaking evil.

Well, how does this tie into social media?

Well, would you agree that the deceitful dishonesty on social media today is off the charts? And I might be repeating myself when I say this, but maybe it needs to be repeated. Would you also agree that it's getting increasingly more difficult to distinguish between the Christians and the world on social media?

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I mean, you wouldn't know they were a Christian unless they told you that they were professing Christians. But if you're gauging that based on what they post on social media, I don't know. I don't know about that.

We want our lives to be blessed, right? Well, this is how. I mean, God wants to bless us. It's not that God doesn't want to bless us, but oftentimes God can't bless us. He wants to, but we tie the hands of God's blessing on our lives with the ropes of our deceit and dishonesty. I'm so convicted right now.

Number 8. Verse 11: Be peaceful.

This is one of those places in God's word that serves as a much-needed reminder of – and this is one of those principles that you don't break. It breaks you if you go against it. Here's the principle. Please listen.

What you pursue, pursues you. There's actually a proverb that says that that's the gist of that. You pursue righteousness; righteousness pursues you. You pursue evil; evil will pursue you.

So here's Peter quoting *Psalm 34* about pursuing peace. When you pursue peace, peace pursues you. You want peace? Pursue it. It'll pursue you. What you pursue, pursues you. It works both ways, whether it's good or evil. And again, this holds true when it comes to being a peacemaker.

By the way, you can superimpose the template of our passage today here in *1 Peter Chapter 3*, you can superimpose it over *Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 5* with the Beatitudes. Notice they're not called, 'Do attitudes.'

No, Beatitudes. Be a peacemaker. Because if you're a peacemaker, you'll be called sons of God. Be loving. Be humble. Be. These are the attitudes that we need to be.

That's as good as it gets. I hope you got it. Be. You can't do it. I'm going to do peaceful.

Well, let me know how that works out for you.

Wait. So why the delineation? Why the distinction? Why is this important to understand? Because how am I going to be this?

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By way of the power of the Holy Spirit living in me. There's no way I can be Holy absent the Holy Spirit. Did you connect those dots?

Holy Spirit, holy life. Fruit of the Holy Spirit: Love, joy, peace...

How am I going to be loving and joyful and peaceful and humble and all of the above?

The Holy Spirit.

The worst thing I could do to you, there's a lot of bad things I could do, but the worst thing I can do to you is have you leave this service today, walk out those doors and think to yourself, Man, I need to do better. You're not going to make it to Kam Highway.

No, seriously. You know exactly what I'm talking about, right?

Because oh, we – okay Lord, I'm going to, I'm going to do better. I'm going to try harder.

Okay. I'll be here when you're done. It won't be long. I'll be right here. Because you can't.

You can't. It's impossible in and of your own strength, in your own power.

And we use the willpower. Oh, if I just had more willpower. Well, it's not by power or by might or your willpower. It's by My Spirit, says the Lord. That's the only way. It's the Holy Spirit indwelling you, empowering you, enabling you. It's the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

When the Holy Spirit is indwelling you, how do I say this? You and me can be, be. Loving, peaceful, humble, gentle, gentle, gentle.

That's not on the list. It should be. I mean, it kind of is indirectly. But just gentleness.

We're so harsh and inconsiderate. A soft answer turns away wrath.

A while back, I was on Uluniu Street in Kailua. Got my family with me in the car, which is not a good thing, you know. Because I've confessed about my sin in driving in traffic. But, you know, anyway, God's forgiven me and you too, by the way, so you know who you are.

But so there was this one parking spot, and I mean, my goodness, you find a parking spot, it's like, that's mine. That's my parking spot. It's really close. I can't believe I got this parking spot.

So I pull in and it actually was a very good parking job if I don't say so myself and you know, parallel park, parked in there. And then all of a sudden, this car pulls up next to me, rolls

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down the window, and he's got the most angry look on his face. And I looked at him, I had no idea. And I mean, he was ready to read me the riot act because I stole his parking spot.

I hate it when people do that to me. I just did that to him. I didn't see him. I was innocent. That's my story and I'm sticking with it. But he rolls his window and I thought, whoa!

And I just said, Oh, sir, I am so sorry. I didn't know you were going to park here. Do you want me to? And his whole countenance changed.

I was like, Wow, that worked. I mean, he went, Oh, that's okay.

I was like, Wow, it worked! Don't you love it when God's Word is true, and it works and it's applicable? "A soft answer turns away wrath."

This guy was going to kill me. I just said, I am sorry. Hey, wow! How does this apply to social media? Can you imagine you humble yourself and you reply, and you post, and you say something like, I am so sorry. Will you please forgive me?

This is spam. Someone hacked their account. That's not them.

Oh, that's sad if that's what they think. You're going to diffuse the whole thing. That's what a peacemaker does.

See, the problem with social media is you're starting a war. Hey, we're doing this, man. This is war. And you go back and forth and you're dropping bombs on people.

What if you came in there and said, hey, (Waving his hand out) you know, the dove with the olive branch. Peace. Peace. Peace. I don't want to fight.

You don't want to fight?

No. Truce. Peace. I'm sorry. I didn't – Let's make peace. I want to be peaceful.

Well, that's new.

Hey, that's going to get somebody's attention, isn't it?

You know, on Thursday night we're in Jeremiah. Man, I tell you, the Jeremiah study has just been (explosion sound). Oh, man. So Jeremiah is, you know, this godly prophet, the weeping prophet, affectionately referred to by many. And just a really gracious man, soft, tender heart.

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And God called him to be this prophet and prophesied in Judah about the coming Babylonian captivity. And it was a message of doom and gloom, and nobody wanted to hear it, and they wanted to kill him for it. Talk about making YouTube videos against Jeremiah. I mean, they were doing everything against him.

And so God calls him to do this visual prophecy. And it's not the first time. The first time was a sash that he wore, took to Babylon, came back and got their attention. Second time was these clay pots that he broke. And this is what's going to happen to you, Judah. And then the third time was this yoke.

So God commands him, *Chapter 26*, oh, pardon me, *Chapter 27 and 28*, to take this yoke made of wood, strap it around his neck with leather straps, and –

(Chuckling)

So if I show up at a Prophecy Update and I'm wearing one of these things, you're going to know why.

But that would have got their attention.

Jeremiah, what are you doing? Why are you wearing a yolk that's put on animals that are in bondage and captivity and slavery?

That's the point. You see this yoke that I'm wearing around my neck? This is the yolk that you're going to be under with Babylon.

It was a visual prophecy. So when you get to *Chapter 28*, we're introduced to this false prophet with chutzpah. You know what chutzpah is? Make sure to spit on the person when you say chutzpah, but he comes – His name is Hananiah, and he walks up to Jeremiah, and he takes that yoke that's on Jeremiah and he breaks it.

He says, "I," and he prophesies. Says, I have broken the yoke of Babylon. I will bring back the vessels for the temple. I will bring back the people that have been taken captive to Babylon.

Jeremiah's going, Okay, and he walks away.

Oh, I need that example, because that's the hardest thing to do, is just kind of walk away, right? He just walks away.

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And then God sends him back and says, No, you got to go back.

Do I?

Yeah. You need to speak to Hananiah, and you need to say to Hananiah, You're not of God. You're a false prophet. The Lord did not send you. And by the way, Hananiah, you're going to die. How's that? Have a nice afternoon, right? That was the prophecy. And sure enough, two months later, he dies exactly as God said.

What's your point, Pastor?

I have a point. Just give me a second. I'll figure it out. Here's my point. The whole visual prophecy was to get their attention in ways that you would not otherwise be able to get their attention. It would stand out, right? I mean, they're looking and going, Jeremiah, what are you doing? Well, I've got your attention now.

Yeah.

Oh, I'm so glad you asked, Judah. Listen to what the Word of the Lord is. Thus says the Lord of hosts. This yoke around my neck will be the yoke that the Babylonians have around your neck. How about that?

Oh, I'm sorry I asked. What's the point?

The point is, how about when we post on social media? Are we going to post in such a way that it stands out and it gets people's attention so that they ask? That's next week, by the way. *1 Peter, Chapter 3*, give to every man an answer of the hope. Who? Every man who asks.

Well, nobody's asked.

Hmm. I wonder why they're not asking you. Maybe that's the problem. Nobody's asking you about the hope that you have because you have no hope. Well, what are they going to ask you? I'm not going to ask you. I already know the answer. You're just like me. You're as bad as me.

No, I give to everyone an answer of that hope that lies within you. So now you've got their attention. This is this is very unusual. This is very unique. This post is – you don't see this

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every day – somebody posting like that when they've been blasted like that. What do you have? Because I want that. Because there's something different about you.

What's that difference about you? Because most people would just, I mean, they would go to town. But not you. So they're going to ask you. Why are you wearing that yoke around your neck, Jeremiah? Well, I'm glad you asked. Let me explain.

Well, the last one is: Be prayerful in *verse 12*.

Now there are two anthropomorphisms which are attributing human traits to God that are woven into this quote from the aforementioned *Psalms 34:15*. Namely the eyes of the Lord and the ears of the Lord.

So Peter's still quoting *Psalms 34*. He says, **“The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and the ears of the Lord are attentive to their prayers.”** There's actually a third anthropomorphism and it's the face of the Lord, and it's not pretty. **“The face of the Lord [Conversely] is against all those who do evil.”**

Have you ever thought of it like that? Let me see if I can dovetail into last week's teaching concerning husbands whose prayers are hindered because they're not understanding, dwelling in understanding and considerate of their wives. I wonder. There certainly has to be a connection here.

Think of the Aaronic blessing in *Numbers Chapter 6*. **“The Lord bless you; the Lord keep you; the Lord make His face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you and give you peace.”**

Well, this is the opposite of that. The face of the Lord is not shining on me. It's against me. And is it any wonder then that my prayers just bounce off the ceiling? Because the ears of the Lord are attentive to the prayer of the righteous, not our own righteousness, but Christ's imputed righteousness.

So let's make the connection here in closing. Could it be that my prayer life has been hindered because of what I post on social media? Have you ever asked yourself the question of: Do you think God is in favor or against a post like this? If it's not righteous, it's not right.

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It's wrong. Then His face is against me. It's not shining upon me. His eyes are not on me, and His ears are not attentive to my prayer.

I think about, I want to say it's *Matthew 5*, again, when Jesus says, don't even think about leaving your gift of service at the altar. You've got ought with your brother. You go make that right and you come back, and we'll talk. You've got a problem with your brother and you're coming to Me with your offering? You know, praise the Lord.

Hey, go make that right. Go make that right. Then come back and pray, and I'll hear your prayer. But you're praying to Me, and you got this? You better go back and make that right. Then come, and we'll talk. That's what this is saying.

One last thing. I know this is tough, right? How about pray for that person before posting to that person? Have you ever had anybody when you've asked them, Can I pray for you? Have you ever had them say to you, No?

I haven't. I've never had anybody say to me, Hey, can I pray for you? I've never had anybody say, No, I don't want you praying for me.

Man, if that were – Can you imagine it? It's like, Why not? What's the matter with you, man? I've got connections in high places, and you don't want me to? Okay, whatever.

But no, can I pray for you?

Oh, yeah.

You would be shocked sometimes to know, when you ask somebody, Hey, can I pray for you? Or how can I pray for you? Leave it open ended. So it's not yes or no. How can I pray for you?

Oh!

And then they pull out the scroll. Here, I need...

Oh, what a privilege. What a privilege. And what have you done for that person?

When people tell me that they pray for me, I don't take that lightly. That means so much to me.

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You know how it is sometimes when you're going about your day and you're in the thick of it, in the heat of the battle, and I mean, it's just one of those days? You know what I'm talking about?

And all of a sudden, there's this supernatural peace that comes over you and it's kind of like, wow, I think somebody's praying for me right now. They are. They are. God put you on their heart at this time because He knew that you needed somebody praying for you. And a supernatural peace comes upon you. That peace surpasses human understanding. That's the power of prayer. It changes everything.

Again, you can't stay mad at somebody you're praying for, for very long. You might start out that way, but you can't. It changes your heart towards them. Prayer.

That's why, again, Jesus said, pray for them, pray for your enemies. They won't stay enemies very long. You'll have more friends on social media than you could have ever wanted.

Well, why don't you stand? Kaponi come on up.

(Deep sigh)

So I guess the takeaway is just delete all social media. You don't have to worry about anything.

(Chuckling)

No. Have social media; don't let it have you.

Father in Heaven, thank You. Oh, tough stuff, but so good and so needed and so timely and convicting in a good way. We needed this, Lord. We needed Peter, by the Holy Spirit to speak this into our lives, in this world in which we're living.

Lord, I pray that we would be numbered among those of whom it can be said, Oh, they're just different. They're not like all the rest. Lord, we want to be good advertisement for You. I know it's kind of a crass way to say it and pray it, but I fear often times too many of us are bad advertisement for You. We're representatives of You, Lord. We're Christians, right? And what kind of message are we sending to the world when we act like that as Christians on social media?

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Lord, help us. We know You will. You always do as only You can by the Holy Spirit. We need the Holy Spirit, Lord. Fill us anew. Fill us afresh and baptize us anew. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.