

# **Studies in I Peter**

## **Chapter 3:8-9**

### **General Summary of Relationships in the Church & the World**

#### **I. The Attitudes & Actions of Verse Eight**

A. The same mind, harmonious (ὁμόφρων from ὁμοῦ [homo] the same, and φρήν [phren] thought, mind, heart. It means to have the same mind, to be harmonious in thought—world view, philosophy of life, essential doctrine. It does NOT mean to agree on every point, but to maintain an atmosphere of harmony, conciliation; to be agreeable and not argumentative. (See 2 Tim 2:14)

B. Sympathetic—to have a “fellow-feeling.” Literally in Gk: “together in pathos” to feel the same as. It means to weep with those who weep and rejoice with those who rejoice; to connect emotionally to one’s brother or sister in the circumstance they are going through. This is not merely and external action, but a heartfelt action that identifies with another.

C. Brotherly or loving one another. It is the Gk word *philadelphoi*. Interestingly it is not agape. This is not merely doing whatever the other person needs regardless of personal sacrifice . . . you can do that without even liking the person, it is having genuine affection for the fellow believers in the assembly, the faith community.

D. Kindhearted or Tenderhearted—essentially this word means easily to be moved in one’s heart. Love covers a multitude of sin, and for the fellow believers in the faith community we are enjoined to be kind and tender: quick to forgive, quick to overlook a fault, and sensitive in our care of (and for) one another.

E. Humble-minded—so many passages corroborate this quality. Jesus said if you want to be great become the servant of all. Paul writes, “Have this attitude in yourselves that was in Christ Jesus [when He left His heavenly glory and came to earth as a human being];” and again he says, “Put others ahead of yourselves and consider their needs more important” (paraphrase). We all have equal value before God, but we are not all equal in mind, body, gifts, and aptitudes—however, where you might excel over another in one area, they might outshine you in a different area. That’s why we need each other, and it take humility to acknowledge that we do need others.

#### **II. The Prohibitions of Verse Nine**

A. Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. It is so easy to get miffed and want to retaliate in kind, but it runs contrary to everything Peter has just written about our attitudes and actions in the fellowship. It always takes two to fight; do you want to be the one who pours gas on the fire, or healing oil on the troubled waters? You cannot control your fellow in Christ, or in the world, but you can control your response to them by the power of the Holy Spirit.

B. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, that we might receive a blessing. Paul reminds us in Romans 14 that “vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” says the Lord. By blessing those who are cruel to us, we obtain a blessing from God and leave the judgment to Him.