

### ***3:8 Unity of Spirit, a Tender Heart and a Humble Mind***

#### **The Call to Spiritual Unity.**

Hilary of Arles: Peter, as the head of the church, calls everyone to unite in harmony, whether they are secular rulers and peasants, princes of the church and monks, or husbands and wives. The same basic principles apply to them all. Introductory Commentary on 1 Peter.<sup>1</sup>

#### **The Law of Love.**

Andreas: Here Peter moves on from husband and wife and sets out the law of love for everyone. Every virtue is based on it—compassion, mercy, humility, and so on. Catena.<sup>2</sup>

#### **This Advice Applies to All.**

Oecumenius: Peter now moves on to give general advice to everyone. There was no need for him to target specific groups, since what he says here applies equally to all. This is the law of love, from which every virtue derives. Commentary on 1 Peter.<sup>4</sup>

### ***3:9 Do Not Return Reviling for Reviling***

#### **Do Good in Return for Evil.**

Hilary of Arles: Of course you should not return evil for good or cursing for blessing either, though some people do. A Christian is called to the exact opposite behavior! Introductory Commentary on 1 Peter.<sup>5</sup>

#### **Bear Insults.**

Andreas: What is humility? It is to bear the insults of others, to accept sins against oneself, to bear punishments. Indeed this is not just humility, but prudence as well. Catena.<sup>6</sup>

### ***3:10 Guard the Tongue***

#### **To See Good Days.**

Clement of Alexandria: Peter is referring here to those who want to be eternal and incorruptible. Adumbrations.<sup>8</sup>

### **Keep Your Lips from Speaking Guile.**

Chrysostom: Guile elicits falsehood, deception, hypocrisy, and slanders which are untrue. It is the friend of the enemy of truth, that is, Satan, the father of lies. Believers are advised to avoid his influence and to prefer the things of God, who is truth. Catena.<sup>9</sup>

### **Keep Your Tongue from Evil.**

Cyril of Alexandria: James also said: "If anyone is never at fault in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to keep his whole body in check." <sup>10</sup> It is a great thing to be able to control the tongue, for failure to do so is the greatest of evils. Catena.<sup>11</sup>

### **View the Present in Relation to the Future.**

Hilary of Arles: The present is evil, but the future is bright. We should always remember that. Introductory Commentary on 1 Peter.<sup>12</sup>

## ***3:11 Turn Away from Evil***

### **Choose Profitable Thoughts.**

Chrysostom: These things do not come naturally to us, for bad thoughts are always entering our minds. But if a man is wise, he will put them aside and in their place choose thoughts which will be advantageous and profitable for him. This, I believe, is what it means to turn away from evil. Catena.<sup>14</sup>

## ***3:12 God's Favor***

### **The Eyes of the Lord.**

Clement of Alexandria: Here Peter is referring to the many different ways in which the Holy Spirit observes us. Adumbrations.<sup>15</sup>

### **The Lord Is Turned Against Evil.**

Hesychius: The Lord will accept those who repent but will punish those who remain in their sins. Catena.<sup>16</sup>

### **God Sees and Hears Everything.**

Andreas: It is not those who are still in their sins who are worthy of such divine oversight, but those who have been cleansed from them. The phrase “the eyes of God” is a metaphor for those divine powers which see everything. It is they who watch over the righteous, but his ears are also ready to hear their prayers. If you want to enjoy this experience, however, you must first turn your eyes away from evil. God never distances himself from the righteous. Whenever the hand of a righteous man does mercy, it has the eye of God watching over it. And whenever his tongue prays, it inclines the divine ear to hear, as for example the prayer of Cornelius was rewarded.<sup>17</sup> Catena.<sup>18</sup>

### **3:13 Zealous for What Is Right**

#### **You Will Never Lose God.**

Augustine: If you love the good, you will suffer no loss, because whatever you may be deprived of in this world, you will never lose God, who is the true Good. Sermons 335c.5.<sup>19</sup>

#### **Who Is There to Harm You?**

Hilary of Arles: Who can prevent you from being blessed, for the Scriptures say that no one can take our joy from us. <sup>20</sup> Introductory Commentary on 1 Peter.<sup>21</sup>

### **3:14 Suffer for Righteousness' Sake**

#### **Blessing Out of Suffering.**

Chrysostom: No one can harm a person who does not do evil himself. Peter shows that trials which come from the Gentiles cannot harm those who live according to virtue. On the contrary, they turn those who endure them into blessed people. Catena.<sup>23</sup>

### **3:15 Account for the Hope That Is in You**

#### **Reverence Christ as Lord.**

Clement of Alexandria: This is just what the Lord's Prayer says: “Hallowed be your name.” <sup>26</sup> Adumbrations.<sup>27</sup>

### **With Gentleness and Reverence.**

Didymus the Blind: We must be so well instructed in the knowledge of our faith that whenever anyone asks us about it we may be able to give them a proper answer and to do so with meekness and in the fear of God. For whoever says anything about God must do so as if God himself were present to hear him. Catena.<sup>28</sup>

### **Be Prepared to Make a Defense.**

Augustine: The apostle tells us to be ready to give an answer to anyone who asks us for an explanation of our faith, because if an unbeliever asks me a reason for my faith and hope and I perceive that he cannot accept it unless he believes, I give him that very reason, so that he may see how absurd it is for him to ask a reason for things which he cannot grasp until he believes. Letters 120.<sup>29</sup>

### **Making Clear One's Faith.**

Cyril of Alexandria: The one who decides to do this is not doing anything new, nor is he making up some new explanation. Rather he is making clear to those who ask him what his faith in Christ is all about. Letters 40.8.<sup>30</sup>

### **Sanctify the Lord in Your Hearts.**

Andreas: Just as magnifying God cannot add anything to his greatness and glorifying him does not make him any more glorious, so sanctifying the Lord does not mean that there is any addition to his existing holiness. Rather we are called to sanctify him in our hearts, and if we form a clear understanding of his holiness, then we do not sanctify him on one occasion only, but rather by doing this we have a better understanding of what his holiness is and something of it is implanted in our hearts. Likewise someone who magnifies God receives a share of his greatness, and someone who glorifies him is glorified in turn. It is a prophetic voice which says that there should be no fear in you which might prevent you from confessing Christ in your hearts. You should sanctify him there also. For this confession is sanctification both for the soul and for the body. Some people wonder why the Savior said: "Do not worry about what you will say,"<sup>31</sup> but here the apostle writes: "Be ready to give an explanation." However, there is no contradiction. Jesus was speaking about bearing witness, whereas Peter is talking about teaching others the faith. Catena.<sup>32</sup>