

1 Peter 3:11-12

Verse 11

This verse is a continuation of verse 10 regarding practical application on how a Christian is to live. Peter is still quoting from Psalm 34. Peter has already stated that the Christian is to desire life, to love and see good days. As a result, he must keep his tongue from evil, and refrain from speaking evil. Peter will continue that thought of guarding our tongue which he correlates with turning from evil. Instead of bring the poison of evil with slanderous and deceitful words, the Christian is to pursue peace. Pursuing peace and keeping the tongue from evil are linked together.

Turn away from evil

Peter will now link turning from evil and doing good to the previous verses concerning keeping the tongue from evil and the lips from speaking deceit. What is being used here is a parallelism. The turning from evil is to refrain from the poison of the tongue and the doing good is paralleled to blessing those who curse. This will lead and connect with the last part of this verse which discusses seeking and pursuing peace. In all aspects of the believers life, we are instructed and commanded to turn from all evil. We are continuously fighting against the flesh as there is a war raging in our members (Romans 7:22-23). We must not think that we should stand and stare our temptations in the face, thinking we are strong enough on our own to resist and not fall. The Bible instructs us to turn away from evil. There is also instruction to not stand and try to fight evil or temptations, but rather to flee. We as Christians are to abstain from every form of evil or set no worthless thing before our eyes.

- Job 1:1 There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job; and that man was blameless, upright, fearing God and turning away from evil.
- 1 Thessalonians 5:22 abstain from every ^[a]form of evil.
- Psalm 101:3 I will set no worthless thing before my eyes; I hate the ^[a]work of those who fall away; It shall not fasten its grip on me.
- 1 Corinthians 6:18 Flee immorality. Every *other* sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body.
- 1 Corinthians 10:14 Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry.
- 1 Timothy 6:10-11 For the love of money is a root of all ^[a]sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.¹¹ But flee from these things, you man of God, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, ^[b]perseverance *and* gentleness.
- 2 Timothy 2:22 Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love *and* peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.

Do good

It's not enough just to turn away from evil or just keep evil, deceit, and slander out of our mouths. The Bible instructs us that we are to take it a step farther and do good. In respect to our tongues, this speaks to going beyond refraining from poisonous speech and extends to blessing and praying for those who are in opposition to you. In a more overall aspect of our Christian lives, we are to do good works unto the Lord so that God will be Gloried even to those who are enemies to us. We are to do good to them, feed them if hungry, give them drink if thirsty, etc.. However, there is nothing good in anyone except Christ (Romans 7:18) as Christ is the only one who is good (Luke 18:19). No one has ever done anything good according to God's standard (Romans 3:12) unless they are born again. For an action to be good in God's eyes it must be in obedience to His commands and be done with the right motives which is done to God and for the glory of God. This can only be done by and through God. Doing good so often in scripture is linked to our actions toward others which is what this section of verse is talking about.

- Galatians 6:9-10 Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. ¹⁰ So then, ^[b]while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.
- Proverbs 3:27 Do not withhold good from ^[c]those to whom it is due, When it is in your power to do *it*.
- Psalm 37:27 Depart from evil and do good, ^[a]So you will abide forever.
- Luke 6:27 But I say to you who hear, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you

- **Romans 2:6-8** who will render to each person according to his deeds: ⁷ to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life; ⁸ but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation.
- **Hebrews 13:16** And do not neglect doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.
- **3 John 1:11** Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. The one who does good is of God; the one who does evil has not seen God.
- **Amos 5:14-15** Seek good and not evil, that you may live; And thus may the Lord God of hosts be with you, Just as you have said! ¹⁵ Hate evil, love good, And establish justice in the ^[a]gate! Perhaps the Lord God of hosts May be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.
- **Romans 12:9** *Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good.*

Seek peace and pursue it

As Christians we are to do everything we can on our end to live peaceably with all people. In this section of scripture, the link is made between our refraining from evil speaking and guarding our tongue to seeking and pursuing peace. Children of God are called peacemakers and we are to display that characteristic. Not only are we to seek it, but we are to pursue it with great zeal.

- **Matthew 5:9** “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.
- **Romans 12: 18** If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.
- **Hebrews 12:14** Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord.

There is a difference between real peace and pretend peace as mentioned in Jeremiah 6:14.

- **Jeremiah 6:14** “They have healed the brokenness of My people superficially, saying, ‘Peace, peace,’ But there is no peace.

Verse 12

The Lord’s ears are open to the prayers of His people but are closed to the unbelievers. However, He will hear the prayer of a sinner who calls on the name of the Lord. When a non-believer prays to God they are praying to Him as if He is a genie in a bottle. They pray to Him when times are difficult, or they need something in their lives. They have no affection for God but are coming to Him selfishly and arrogantly for their own desire. His ears are closed to them but are open to His children and their prayers. He not only gives us the privilege of praying to Him and Him hearing us, but He has given us the privilege of calling Him Father. However, our prayers can be hindered when sin is present in our lives (**1 Peter 3:7**).

The Lord is against those who do evil

- **John 9:31** We know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is God-fearing and does His will, He hears him.
- **Proverbs 28:9** He who turns away his ear from listening to the law, Even his prayer is an abomination.
- **Isaiah 1:12-15** “When you come to appear before Me, Who requires ^[e]of you this trampling of My courts? ¹³ “Bring your worthless offerings no longer, Incense is an abomination to Me. New moon and sabbath, the calling of assemblies—I cannot endure iniquity and the solemn assembly. ¹⁴ “I hate your new moon *festivals* and your appointed feasts, They have become a burden to Me; I am weary of bearing *them*. ¹⁵ “So when you spread out your hands *in prayer*, I will hide My eyes from you; Yes, even though you multiply prayers, I will not listen. Your hands are ^[f]covered with blood.
- **Micah 3:1-4** And I said, “Hear now, heads of Jacob And rulers of the house of Israel. Is it not for you to know justice? ² “You who hate good and love evil, Who tear off their skin from them And their flesh from their bones, ³ Who eat the flesh of my people, Strip off their skin from them, Break their bones And chop *them* up as for the pot And as meat in a kettle.” ⁴ Then they will cry out to the Lord, But He will not answer them Instead, He will hide His face from them at that time Because they have practiced evil deeds.

His ears are open to the prayers of His people

- **Romans 8:14-15** For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. ¹⁵ For you have not received a spirit of slavery ^[a] leading to fear again, but you have received ^[b] a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!"
- **Matthew 6:9** "Pray, then, in this way: 'Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name.
- **James 5:16** Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective ^[a] prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.
- **Proverbs 15:8** The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, But the prayer of the upright is His delight.

Prayers of His people are sweet incense to God

- **Psalm 141:2** May my prayer be ^[a] counted as incense before You; The lifting up of my hands as the evening offering.
- **Luke 1:10-13** And the whole multitude of the people were in prayer outside at the hour of the incense offering. ¹¹ And an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing to the right of the altar of incense. ¹² Zacharias was troubled when he saw *the angel*, and fear ^[a] gripped him. ¹³ But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your petition has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will ^[b] give him the name John.
- **Revelation 5:8** When He had taken the ^[a] book, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each one holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the ^[b] saints.
- **Revelation 8:3-4** Another angel came and stood at the altar, holding a golden censer; and much incense was given to him, so that he might ^[a] add it to the prayers of all the ^[b] saints on the golden altar which was before the throne. ⁴ And the smoke of the incense, ^[c] with the prayers of the ^[d] saints, went up before God out of the angel's hand.

God welcomes the prayers of His children. Our prayers do not change God's mind. God has ordained all things that will come to pass by His sovereign decree before the foundation of the world and our prayers do not change His plan A. However, God has ordained our prayers and He uses them as instrumental causes to bring about His sovereign plan. Our prayers are included in the providential plan of God's sovereign decree. Prayer does not change the will of God, but as we grow in sanctification, it will change us to submit to the will of God.

The #1 rule of prayer: Remember to whom you are speaking and then remember who you are!