

*A PRESCRIPTION FOR THE  
GOOD LIFE*  
I Peter 3:8-12

Woodland Park Church of Christ  
5 December 2021

*Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous; <sup>9</sup> not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing. <sup>10</sup> For “He who would love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips from speaking deceit. <sup>11</sup> Let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it. <sup>12</sup> For the eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their prayers; but the face of the LORD is against those who do evil.”*

**I Peter 3:8-12**

# CONTEXT

- People everywhere claim to want or to be looking for the good life!
- Some may refer to it as the American Dream.
- With many, the “Good Life” is tied to pleasure and fleshly indulgencies.
- If I can eat what I want, live where I desire, eat what I crave, go and come as I am pleased, I have achieved the “Good Life.”
- In the USA many define the “Good Life” as the kind of life that many with a lot of money have.
- However, studies show that having money does not ensure a good life.

In today's scripture, Peter provides what I would call the ultimate in prescriptions for living a good, clean, productive, and relatively trouble-free life while on earth and while staking a claim to eternal life.

“Relatively trouble-free” because we know we will have trials, tribulation, heartaches, and heartburn.

*Man that is born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble. Job 14:1*

**However, Peter's Rx will help us avoid many of the setbacks, disappointment, failure, run-ins with the law, grief, problems, etc. that those who choose to live sinful, reckless, unproductive, rambunctious lives experience.**



## HENRY RUGGS, III

- Former star UA football player (wide receiver)
- 12th pick of 2020 NFL Draft by Las Vegas Raiders
- Contract inked in July 2020: four (4) years, \$16,671,626; signing bonus of \$9,684,820
- \$1.1M home in CA's Bay Area
- Owned a 60,000 2020 custom-designed Corvette, he named "Lizzy"
- Many would assert that Mr. Ruggs was living the "Good Life"
- In early morning hours of November 2, 2021, things took a drastic turn for Henry Ruggs, III
- Now facing multiple criminal charges that could land him in prison for over 50 years.



RJ



# I. CONTROL YOUR TONGUE

*Let him refrain his tongue from evil,  
And his lips from speaking deceit. | Peter 3:10*

James warns about the tongue →

*Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. **See how great a forest a little fire kindles!** <sup>6</sup> And **the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity.** The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, *and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell.*  
James 3:5-6*

- **Speak truth**

There are six things the LORD hates,  
seven that are detestable to him: <sup>17</sup> haughty eyes, a **lying tongue . . . Proverbs 6:16-17 [NIV]**

**If God hates it, we should avoid it like The Plague!!**

**Especially given that Satan is the father of lies.**

**John 8:44**

- **Don't speak in anger**

Whoever guards his mouth and tongue keeps his soul from troubles. **Proverbs 21:23**

*A fool vents all his feelings, but a wise man holds them back. Proverbs 29:11*



## • **Speak less, Listen more**

*When there are many words, transgression and offense are unavoidable, but he who controls his lips and keeps thoughtful silence is wise. Proverbs 10:19 [AMP]*

*Understand this, my beloved brothers and sisters. Let everyone **be quick to hear** [be a careful, thoughtful listener], **slow to speak** [a speaker of carefully chosen words and], **slow to anger** [patient, reflective, forgiving]; James 1:19 [AMP]*

My mother used to tell us that “God gave you two ears and one mouth for a reason!”

Sometimes, we can be so determined to get in our two cents that we fail to consider the thoughts and interests of others.

If truth be told or acknowledged, we probably could have saved bumps and bruises, frustration, inconvenience and loss, if we had just listened to what someone else was saying or had to say.

## **II. AVOID EVIL & PRACTICE WHOLESOME, PRODUCTIVE BEHAVIOR**

*Let him turn away from evil and do good . . .*  
**I Peter 3:11**

*Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin. James 4:17*

**Clear that we do not enjoy God's favor when we engage in unrighteous, sinful conduct.**

- *. . . the face of the Lord is against those who do evil. I Peter 3:12*

# GOD EQUIPS US ALL WITH GIFTS & TALENTS

Spend time perfecting your skills and crafts – this is a part of the system of doing good.

Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God and work as if the Lord is your direct supervisor ---

- Whatever you are capable of doing, do with all your might because there's no work, thought, knowledge, or wisdom in the grave, which is where you are headed.  
**Ecclesiastes 9:10 [CEB]**
- And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, <sup>24</sup> knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ. **Colossians 3:23-24**



Many claim they want to be successful and ascend to the top of the mountain, but they spend inadequate time honing skills and display little interest in making sacrifices (delaying gratification).

Make the most of God's blessings, and

. . . when He blesses you, remember to return thanks (*see Luke 17:15-17*) and use what you have acquired (resources, talents, etc.) to do kingdom work because we are the Lord's instruments, carrying His blessings.  
**See Matthew 25:31-40**

### **III. LIVE PEACEABLY AND AT PEACE**

*. . . Let him seek peace and pursue it. | Peter 3:11*

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

**So many fail to experience real joy and happiness or have a good quality of life because they never seem to be at peace with others. Conflict, disagreements and disturbances are commonplace.**

**Hard to impossible to accomplish anything if there's confusion and chaos. Have to spend far too much time restoring order and dealing with drama (social media)**

**Lives that are filled with too much drama that often leads to trauma because people can't get along with or live peaceably with others –**

- Failed relationships
- Employment instability (always between jobs)
- Poor conflict resolution – instead of working things out in a responsible, calm manner, violence and vitriol (harsh words/criticism) ensue.

*Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. **18 If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.** **19** Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” says the Lord. Romans 12:17-19*

We should actively seek peace and not wait for others to initiate peaceable outcomes.



Understand that peace is not the mere absence of conflict.

Rather, it involves effective management and resolution of conflict.

When we ensue and pursue peace –

- We look to discover issues, conflict and/or drama before it arises. We spring into action to stamp it out.
- We do not ignore signs that there are concerns or problems on the horizon.
- We don't allow problems to fester and grow into something that 's unmanageable or uncontrollable (six-inch lizard morphs into Godzilla).

The Best Life is in the Lord, and this is Peter's focus –

The benefits and perks are simply amazing and unparalleled!!

*For the **eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their prayers; but the face of the LORD is against those who do evil.** | Peter 3:12*

When we exist under the protection and shield of God and have the favor of His ear –

**IT SIMPLY DOES NOT GET ANY BETTER THAN THAT!!!**

## Lord's Invitation Extended to All

- **Be added to the Lord's body**

Hear the gospel (**Acts 15:7; I Corinthians 15:1-4**)

Believe (**Acts 15:7; Rom. 10:17**)

Repent (**Acts 2:38**)

Confess (**Acts 8:37; Rom.10:10**)

Be baptized (**Acts 2:38, 8:38**)



## Lord's Invitation (cont'd)

- **Be reconciled unto the Lord** (1 John 1:8-9); or
- **Desire prayer** (James 5:16).