

Three Keys to Handling Adversity **7 March 2010**

Background: The Christians to whom this letter was written were facing increasing persecution and difficulty.

Peter gives us three keys for handling adversity:

In your hearts, set Christ apart as Lord (v15)

This is the only real way to battle fears and that is to look to God. Any fear gets small when your focus is on an Almighty God, when you confess that Jesus Christ is Lord of the universe and controls even the worst outcome that you can imagine in the suffering you are going through. This is absolutely the foundation of our faith.

We believe that our sins are forgiven and that we will reign with Him one day, but somehow when the tough times come, it is so hard to believe that He is in control.

In your heart – set Christ apart as Lord. Put Him again on the throne of your life.

Bless and be blessed.

Verse 9 says we were called to be a blessing to others so that we may inherit a blessing. This does not come naturally to us. It needs a conscious decision. Not once, but every time we face adversity. To turn away from what we want to do, and deciding to go against our first reaction.

To inherit 'Blessing' in V9, means to be happy or content. Real blessing, is to experience God's closeness in times of trouble – and to experience the peace that surpasses any logic – in the midst of a storm.

Turn your focus away from yourself (v8-9)

Peter emphasizes in v8 that we should have sympathy, love and compassion with others. How often do we whinge instead. We simmer in our own self pity!

Instead we are to care and have compassion on others in the midst of our difficulties. This compassion can only come from the Lord.

Nothing will change in my life unless I admit that there are things in my life that I need to change. People say the first step to changing bad drinking habits, is to admit that you have a problem. The same is true with any other weakness.