

1 Peter 3:13-22

Giving a Reason for the Hope that is in You

13 And who is he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good? 14 But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you are blessed. "And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled."

15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; 16 having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed. 17 For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.

Intro: There was a pastor who was working on a building project in the front of his house, he was hammering nails.

A)As he was working he noticed a neighbor boy watching from his yard. The little boy looked on intently at the Pastor for a long time.

B)Finally, the Pastor put his hammer down and he said to the boy – you trying to get some tips on building?

And the little boy said, "Nope. I'm waiting to hear what a preacher says when he hits his thumb with a hammer."

C)Good question what does a preacher say when he hits his thumb with a hammer?

For the last several weeks we have been talking about how, the world is always watching us.

A)The mic is always on. The camera is always rolling.

B)People are trying to find out what we're really all about.

C)Peter has admonished us of our need to live in a way that is Honorable among unbelievers.

1)Our good conduct can influence them for Jesus

We Wrapped up that section last week – looking at Peter's exhortation-

A)because you are being watched, be tenderhearted, be loving, be compassionate, be nonretaliatory---

B)We talked about all those attributes last week-
1)that is good an honorable behavior amongst unbelievers.

C)Notice how Peter follows up that thought in V.13 **Who is going to harm you for being good?**

1)Most people are not going to harm you for doing good, for being a blessing.

C)However if someone does –14 **But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, there is always the exception**

D)Jesus said that those in darkness hate the light – why? exposes them.

1)Ever been in a dark room – movie theater – walk out into the sunlight – hurts your eyes

E)That is the affect that those walking in the light sometimes have on those who are walking in the darkness

Remember what they tried to do to Jesus' light – they tried to extinguish it by Killing him – For three days the light was out

A)Then Sunday came – BOOM! He ROSE!
Shinning even brighter!

B)Jesus said these words in John 15, "If the world hates you, know that it hated me before it hated you. And they hated me without a cause. 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you."

C)Why is that? See even when Christians are kind, and helpful and magnanimous,

1) We still represent the gospel that is "narrow" and "exclusive."

D)Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, the life. Nobody comes to the Father except through me."

1)That is Narrow

Because our gospel says that only those who trust in Jesus Christ will enjoy Eternity with God forever,

A)and those who reject Jesus Christ will be forever lost.

B) That is not a popular message especially in a culture that says – No absolute truth

C) We just need to accept what everyone else believes as being right for them.

D) And when a Christian stands up and says – there is only ONE WAY – JESUS – THE BIBLE

1) The world doesn't like that

E) We are seeing more and more – they will persecute us for holding that stance.

So How should we respond to persecution?

A) 1st Fear not - “**And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled.**”

B) The word afraid in this text means – don't be intimidated by their threats.

C) **We have not be given a spirit of fear but of power of love and a sound mind.**

D) Don't be intimidated by them!

Don't be intimidated – but instead press into Jesus even more

15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;

Sanctify the Lord in Your heart

A) Here's a better translation, I believe the most accurate: **Set apart Jesus Christ as Lord in your heart.**

B) How do we do that?

Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

B) **Here is what this looks like:** Before you go out and face the world every day,

1) you make sure that you are inwardly in the right spot with Jesus.

C) **Make sure You are surrendered to Him**

D) Jesus I desire your will above my will, your way above my way.

1) you're loyal to him, that you love him, you affirm our commitment to him,

For the Christians living in the first century hearing this from Peter would understand this:

A) Peter wasn't simply saying don't be intimidated – **HE WAS SAYING: BE BOLD**

B) 2,000 years ago in the early church if a Christian were to stand up in a public arena **and cry out in public, "Jesus Christ is God!"**

C) He would have had no problem at all. No one would have batted an eye,

1) because the Greeks and the Romans were polytheistic.

D) They believed in many gods. "Okay, you believe Jesus is God.

1) He's one of many gods. Cool, whatever."

But if a Christian would have stood up in public and said,

A) "Jesus Christ is Lord above all and there is no other," he would endanger his life.

B) Because now he's saying Caesar is not my Lord, there's somebody higher than him.

Caesar took the title "Lord,"

A) If you didn't confess Caesar as Lord – put your Life in Danger

B) So when Peter said to Sanctify the Lord God in your heart – Declaring Jesus is LORD

C) **The only way you can stand publicly is because you kneel privately.**

D) Daniel stood before Nebuchadnezzar with great boldness.

A) You know why he could do that? Because in chapter 1 it says, "Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself."

E) It all must begin there. You sanctify Jesus Christ as Lord in your heart.

What Peter is implying is when you do that and you live like that – unbelievers will take notice.

A) Singing in line to go into the coliseum to be martyred – unbelievers joined in

B) Unbelievers were Drawn to their boldness and Blessed by the way Christians lived

1) And cared for others

C) What is your deal ? Peter says we need to

"Always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you with meekness and fear."

A) The word "defense" here, is the Greek word apologia.

B) We get our word apology from it. So doesn't that sound weird?

This doesn't mean that when you meet a non-Christian – you are apologizing for being a Jesus follower

A) Or you are apologizing that your faith has offended them in some way.

B) That is not what he is saying at all

C) We get the term apologetics also from that same word – Apologia

D) Apologetics means to have a defense or offer explanations or give good reasons for.

Apologia, was what lawyers Would to do in giving a formal proclamation in defense of one of their clients.

A) It means to stand in a courtroom and give good and compelling reasons on behalf of your client.

B) Knowing what you believe and why? – Fundamentals of the Faith

1) Class in the fall

C) A lot of unbelievers ask good questions – we need to have good answers

But here is what I want us to ponder for a moment:

A) What would an unbeliever see in us that would cause them to say to you:

B) You seem Hopeful – and I want to know why?

C) The world is getting harder to live in.

1) The world is getting more and more crazy believers and unbelievers realize that.

D) Think for a moment what would cause an unbelieving person in your sphere of influence to ask

1) The world is nuts but you see hopeful why?

E) I can think of a couple of things that might motivate them to ask that?

1st Our responses

A) When the world is freaking out over things – and our response is to remain calm – they notice -

B) Why should we stay calm - Because we know that Jesus has a plan?

1) We know how the story ends

C) We are not surprised when we see the world getting more wicked –

1) The Bible says that will be the case in the last days

But we remain calm – because We know who is on the throne.

A) Calm but not indifferent – not complacent

B) We know the Plan – Jesus died to redeem the world back to himself –

1) Man was given dominion garden- fall forfeited

C) Why the Bible refers to Satan as the god of this world – he is living on borrowed time

D) Jesus died to redeem mankind back to himself

1) But also the world – He just hasn't laid claim to it yet.

That Scene is Revelation 5 – God is hold a Scroll – that represents the title deed to planet earth

A) Who is worthy – NO ONE FOUND – John begins to cry – all is lost

B) Angel says – don't Cry – Jesus the lion of the tribe of Judah has been found to be worthy

1) Looked saw a lamb been slain

C) Jesus Died to redeem planet earth – He is coming back one day to LAY CLAIM

But in the meantime – His heart is focused on Souls

A) People who are lost – that is what he wants us to be focused on the most as well

B) So when the world is getting crazy – and we as followers of Jesus remain calm

1) Unbelievers take notice

C) They also take notice when we act differently toward others.

Christianity and the gospel of Jesus has been the major source of changing the injustice seen in society from its inception.

A) Example: The whole concept of the value of life,

B) the whole concept of human rights is a biblical concept. A gospel concept

1) Those are values that emerge from those with a Christian worldview,

C) Because we believe all men and women were created in the image of God.

Women's rights, where did it come from?

A) Not Gloria Steinem, not the women's liberation movement,

B) it came from the Bible.

C) Jesus validated women in a culture that treated them at best like 2nd class citizens

1) At worst like possessions

Peter and Paul in their writings challenged the social norm concerning how Husbands should treat their wives

A) In a Culture that didn't respect women – the Gospel declared **"That men and women were all one in Christ."**

B) That's a Christian worldview.

Compassion for the sick, compassion for the poor?

A) That came from Christians. The first hospitals were erected by Christians.

B) The Red Cross was originally a Christian organization.

C) Research has shown that Cultures where missionaries have impacted with the gospel

1) literacy goes up, they're more educated

D) The culture becomes more advanced and less primitive as well as way more compassionate

The Christian belief that all men are created in the image of God

A) Was the force behind eradicating slavery in England years ago was by William Wilberforce

B) and Abe Lincoln in the USA

C) Those are all ways that the gospel has impacted culture through the centuries –

1) challenging the social norms of a society.

What about now? What should be different about us – that would make the world stop and take notice?

A) Insights for Our CV Staff What we do and what we don't do

B) Start with what we do

➤ We inconvenience ourselves for the sake of others (sacrifice without hoping to gain anything personally).

➤ We offer tangible help to those who are in need (money, sustenance, shelter, clothing, transportation, etc) expecting nothing in return

➤ We offer everyday kindness in word and deed. Just plain "being nice."

➤ We go the extra mile with someone who you just know will not make it to where they need to be without someone to push them along.

➤ We pray for those who treat us like enemies and bless them.

➤ Make other people's problems our problems - getting involved and invested in their lives.

- **We humble ourselves in front of others and build them up.** 100% opposite of the world (and our flesh) which tells us to use other people as stepping stones.
- **We have integrity.** Standing for what is right, popular or not, without regard for politics, popular culture, social shaming, etc.
- **We Pay our bills and don't look for ways out of it, even when it is difficult.**

What we don't do:

- We don't kick people who are down
- We don't label people and never let them shake that label.
- **We don't participate in gossip / tearing someone down behind their back.**
- **We don't retaliate when wronged.**
- **We don't carry grudges.** We are peacemakers instead.
- **We don't Blame the world and everyone else for our own faults.**
- **We don't expect others to carry our burdens. We carry theirs.**

Those are some good insights and when unbelievers see us living in that way –

A)They are drawn to us – Ask – what is the deal – Your hope

B)We need to respond to that with meekness – (Power under control – and fear = respect

C)In other words - When we are talking to people about Jesus we do it respectfully –
1)even when they push back

D)See It is possible to win the argument and lose the soul.

1)Know what the goal is!

You want to be a blessing to those in your sphere of influence? Acronym for BLESS

B. Begin with prayer – ask the Lord to give you his eyes and heart toward the people who are around you.

L. Listen to others – be willing to hear their opinions their heart, their struggles and concerns. Don't be quick to dismiss those things.

E. Engage – Eat – get together in a neutral space and engage in life with them. Look for common ground. Sports, music, hobbies etc

S. Serve – look for tangible ways to serve others

S. Share – look for opportunities to Share your faith in Jesus with them.

So the goal is live in a way that you are making a good impact on society –

A)Being a blessing – not a pain or a burden

B)The result will be this: even if they persecute you for being good and doing good –

1)your conscience will be clear

16 having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed. 17 For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.

C)Some Christians get persecuted because they are just mean – other because they are weird.

1)Or they are obnoxious or lousy workers

D)That is not suffering with a good conscience

But when you approach a situation in a way that honors Jesus and unbelievers treat you bad for it –

A)Still hard – but it is also a badge of honor for you

B)So Peter uses conscience sake as his first motivation for enduring persecution

C)His 2nd reason is even greater – It brings you into a deeper union with Jesus

18 For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit

Jesus also suffered for doing good!

A) Our suffering puts us in close communion with Jesus –

B) Paul talked in Philippians about the blessing of partaking in the fellowship of Christ suffering

1) Connection with Jesus – the strength of Jesus

C) Those who seek to live godly in Christ – WILL suffer persecution –

1) Part of the deal –

Now Peter also gives us in these verses a beautiful picture of what the Suffering of Jesus accomplished for Human kind

A) We will finish up our time today looking at this before we receive communion

B) V.18 He suffered Once for sins – CSB he suffered once for all

1) The death of Jesus covered the sin of the world – past present and future.

C) Another place Once and for all – final sacrifice

1) No need for any others sacrificed

Some people are still trying to pay their debt – through religious practice – good living

A) Trying to pay a debt that has already been paid

B) Believe it and receive it!

C) Notice how Peter puts it – the Just (JESUS) for the unjust (US)

21 For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. 2 Corinthians 5:21

The Purpose:

A) #1 That he might bring us to God

B) Veil torn – come boldly – Welcome

1) We go from enemies to friends – to family

2nd Purpose To set us free from Sin and Satan's power

A) Cross – Tetelesti – It is Finished – Paid in full
End of a car payment – Mortgage – debt

B) What was finished? Paid in full?

1) The Price for our redemption

C) The work that was needed to create a pathway to God – I AM THE WAY!!!!!!!

D) THE DEVIL'S POWER WAS BROKEN

Peter explains this in an unusual way as he closes out this chapter

18 For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, (Physically Jesus died – his body was dead his heart had ruptured – His body died – but his Spirit was alive –

(and He was active in the spirit those three days) by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, 20 who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water.

The reformer Martin Luther called this text a wonderful but obscure passage

A) Maybe the most obscure passage in the NT – he said I don't know for certain what Peter means

B) I am so glad he said that because – I don't know for certain either

C) But there are a lot of Biblical scholars who think it means this: (I agree with this line of thinking)

During the time between Jesus death and Resurrection he went the underworld

A) To proclaim a message to the forces of darkness

B) Note – He **was NOT** preaching to wicked men and women there – giving a 2nd chance

C) His message was directed at these spirits that were there from the time of Noah

1) Spirits here is used in reference to Demons

D) We read in Genesis 6 prior to Noah and the flood

1) There were these demons that committed great wickedness –

E)It resulted in an unusual species of people – giants

Jesus came to give a proclamation to these demons

A)A Proclamation of his Victory over the powers of hell and darkness

B)When Jesus died on the cross, there must have been a party of sorts, a victory party in hell.

1)We KILLED THE SON OF GOD!

C)Jesus shows up – not so fast – message for you all

It went something like this:

"I just want all you demons who tried to stop this from happening to know that I just won the war against evil by dying for the sins of the world and will conquer death by my physical resurrection. I just wanted to bring you that announcement, because the party is over."

Paul put it this way in Colossians – Jesus disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it. Colossians 2:15

B)We fight not for Victory but from a position of Victory.

C)That Victory means we don't have to struggle any longer in living in habitual sin

1)The power of Jesus sets us free!

I heard about a man who he always went to a weekly prayer meeting at his church.

A)He prayed the same prayer ever week – you see this man didn't walk in the victory he had in Jesus

B)All week long he would live in compromise – struggle in sin and habitual habits

C)So every week at the prayer meeting he would pray this prayer

1)Lord, please remove the cobwebs from my life,"

D)It was his way of saying Lord you know I blew it again

1)so please forgive me and clean out all the junk the cobwebs from my life

E)Every week – prayed the same – Lord please clean out the cobwebs

Well this guy had a friend who also went to these prayer meetings –

A)He knew how his friend lived THE compromise

B)One night – the guy was praying ...cobwebs

1)His friend said – no Lord don't do that – Instead kill the SPIDER

What Jesus basically announced is: "I've killed the spider.

A)Satan does not have the kind of a power and grip he once had on the world,

B)I made sure of it by what I did on cross.

C)THE DEATH AND REZ OF JESUS -means that we can now walk in Victory

D)Peter says we have a great picture of this Victory in baptism. V. 21

There is also an antitype which now saves us— baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), **through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,** 22 who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him.

Jesus said to believe and Be Baptized – it is a sign of our commitment to Jesus – Salvation

A)It is the mark of being a disciple

B)But it is symbolic of what happened to us

C)Old man – sinful Nature buried with Jesus in his death

D)He rose – and lives in us to now empower us to walk in a newness of life

1)His power over the forces of darkness is now available to us

That is the power of the Gospel

A)I will close with this true story

B)Rickey Wagner lives in Dayton Ohio – he is Christian and a Bus driver

C)Ricky keeps his Bible in his Jacket pocket when at work – reads it on breaks

Well one night – he was fixing a mechanical issue on his bus – three teens came up to him

A)One of them pulled out a gun and shot Rickey twice in the chest – gang initiation shooting

B)The Bullets hit Rickey’s Bible and saved his life

C)I don’t think an iPhone or iPad would have stopped the bullets – just saying.

1)The Bible stopped the Bullets

The Power of the gospel quenches the fiery darts of the wicked one

A)Satan shoots his arrows – bullets – You are not enough

B)The gospel says **we are more than conquerors through him who loves us**

1)The enemies says – gone too far – the Gospel declares – **the blood of Jesus cleanses from all sin**

Satan says – you are still in bondage to sin and to me

A)The gospel says – he who the son of man sets free is free indeed!

B)Satan says you are damned and doomed

1)The gospel says in Jesus you have a glorious destiny – the best is yet to come

C)Satan says – You are lost – Gospel says – You can be found – **If you want to be!!!!**