

Always Be Prepared

1 Peter 3 v 13-16

Context:

In our previous study we saw the biblical model of sharing the Gospel both in word and deed, because often people need to *see* it before they can *hear* it. However, for a person to become a Christian they *do* need to hear about Jesus, and that means *we* need to be ready to speak up when the opportunity arises. Today's study focuses on the theme of always being prepared, a bit like evangelistic boy scouts! Let's see what Peter has to teach us.

Observation:

1. What question does Peter ask in v 13?
2. How does he respond to his own question in v 14?
3. What command does he give at the beginning of v 15?
4. What instruction does he give in the rest of v 15?
5. How should they obey this instruction and why according to v 16?

Meaning:

NOTE: Peter was writing this letter to Christians living in the Roman empire who were experiencing suffering and persecution because of their faith.

1. How does Peter get the balance between hope and realism in v 13-14?
2. In what sense are Christians 'blessed' when they suffer for their faith (v 14)?
3. How can Christians obey the command not to be afraid when they are being persecuted (v 14)?
4. What do you think Peter means by his command at the beginning of v 15? What does it mean to set apart or revere Christ as Lord in your heart and how might this help you in the context of suffering and persecution?
5. Why might someone ask you to give a reason for your hope (v 15b), especially in the context of suffering? What is the reason for your hope and how would you explain it to someone who isn't a Christian?
6. Why is gentleness and respect so important in how we share the Gospel (v 15c)? How might we be guilty of sharing our faith in ways that lack gentleness and respect?
7. Why do you think Peter also mentions the importance of keeping a clear conscience here too (v 16a)? Why is this important if we are to share our hope and faith effectively?

Application:

1. Why do you think so many Christians find it difficult to share their faith or give a reason for their hope? How might we overcome this fear?

2. What might it mean for you practically to set apart/revere Christ as Lord in your heart?
3. How can you be better prepared to speak about Jesus so that when the opportunity arises you can seize it?

Pray:

- Pray for grace to do good even in the face of suffering and persecution.
- Pray for grace to be ready to share your faith at any moment.
- Pray for those you know who are not yet Christians and for opportunities to share your faith and hope with them.