

The Study of 1 Peter & 2 Peter
Lesson 12 Notes
1 Peter 3:12-22
Be Prepared to Suffer for Christ's Sake

Peter gives us renewed hope in the third chapter of 1 Peter as he helps us to be prepared for suffering: grace means suffering. God has a sovereign plan for our suffering and it ultimately will lead to our eternal blessings. He will work all of our suffering for good (Romans 8:28). Our greatest blessing is in finding our refuge in Him alone, as He becomes our Sanctuary. He ultimately will glorify us and give us eternal life in His presence: the grace He has given to us at salvation will be fully realized. We will finally and completely understand that when we are under God's sovereign watch nothing can bring us harm, but only blessing, because HE IS OUR HOPE...

- **Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good?** The Answer is no one. If the objective of our lives is to love, reverence, honor, and be obedient to Christ, no one can ultimately harm us. Peter is saying that because the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and because we are under His sovereign watch, those who try to harm us will not bring us harm, but ultimately bless us. He is distinguishing between temporary (3:14) harm and ultimate harm.
- **Have no fear of them, nor be troubled (3:14) The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous.** We need not fear nor be troubles because God means to ultimately bless us in our suffering. We should not fear because Peter believes that this hurt is not ultimate hurt. It is ultimate blessing. "If you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed" (3:14). We will not cower in fear before men while we are bowing in reverence before the Lord of Glory!
- **Peter is giving a loose quotation from Isaiah 8:13-14:**
"Do not fear what they fear, nor be in dread. But the Lord of hosts, Him you shall honor as holy. Let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread. And He will become a sanctuary." We are only safe from harm when He becomes our sanctuary – our place of safety, security, and worship. No matter what happens Christ the Lord (Yahweh) will surround you so that no ultimate harm will befall you.
- **"Always be prepared to make a defense to anyone who calls you to account for the hope that is in you, yet do it with gentleness and reverence" (3:15).** Our hope is not in our circumstances (free from harm and suffering) but our hope is that ultimately our suffering leads to blessing. Our faithful creator is FAITHFUL. The trust we have in Christ's promises and his substitutionary death is the foundation of our hope. The hope for life now and the eternal. "Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven" (Matthew 5:12). We are able to share our hope in gentleness and reverence because we have sanctified Christ (given him our priority) in our

hearts. We have made Him the object of our love, reverence, loyalty, and obedience. We will treat others as He would treat them because we love Him and we want to honor and obey Him.

- **A conscience at rest (3:16): The goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart, clear conscience, and a sincere faith” (1 Tim. 1:5).** “The conscience is the divinely – placed internal mechanism that either accuses or excuses a person, acting as a means of conviction or affirmation.” The conscience holds people to their highest perceived standard. A clear conscience allows believers to be free from any burden of guilt as they face hostility. Believers who maintain good behavior in Christ will have their consciences at rest.
- **Christ’s unjust suffering achieved God’s triumphant purpose.** The gospel is: “He that knew no sin became sin on our behalf that we might know the righteousness of God” (1 Cor. 5:21). We know Him because He brought us to God through His death – the just for the unjust. God substituted His son for us and now our hope does not lie in not being a sinner. It lies in the substitution for the just or the unjust.
- **Peter reminds us that Christ, in the Spirit, went to preach to the people in Noah’s day, who were in prison awaiting judgment.** Peter makes it clear that he is not talking about Baptism as a Savior, but as a symbolic expression of the heart’s appeal to God for a good conscience through the resurrection of Jesus Christ (Hebrews 10:22). “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved” (Romans 10:13). Paul doesn’t mean that faith alone isn’t able to SAVE, but that faith calls on God. We make our appeal to God by faith and it is either in the form of repentance or commitment.

Baptism is a calling on God. It is a way of saying to God with our whole body, “I trust you to take me into Christ like Noah was taken into the ark, and to make Jesus the substitute for my sins and to bring me through these waters of death and judgment into new and everlasting life through the resurrection of Jesus my Lord.” This is what God is calling you to do. You do not save yourself. God saves you through the work of Christ. But you receive that Salvation through calling on the name of the Lord, by trusting Him. And it is God’s will all over the world and in every culture – no matter how simple or how sophisticated – that this appeal to God be expressed baptism. “Lord, I am entering the ark of Christ! Save me as I pass through the waters of death!” Amen.

- 1 Peter MacArthur New Testament Commentary
- Matthew Henry’s commentary on the whole Bible
- John Piper, desiringGod.org

