

Ready to Give an Answer

How to Live in a Hostile World

1 Peter 3:13-22

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- Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good? ¹⁴ But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, ¹⁵ but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, ¹⁶ having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. ¹⁷ For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil. ¹⁸ For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, ¹⁹ in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison, ²⁰ because they formerly did not obey, when God's patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water. ²¹ Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²² who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.

How to Live in a Hostile World

- Peter gives five principles we need to embrace to equip and defend ourselves against the threats of an unbelieving, hostile world:
 - A passion for goodness
 - A willingness to suffer
 - A devotion to Christ
 - A readiness to defend the faith
 - A pure conscience

Who is There to Harm You?

- 1 Peter 3:9–13; Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing. ¹⁰ For “Whoever desires to love life and see good days, let him keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit; ¹¹ let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it. ¹² For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayer. But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.” ¹³ Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good?
- Verse 9 tells us not to repay hurtful behavior in kind that we may obtain a blessing.
- Verse 10 urges us to cease speaking evil and deceit
- Verse 11 calls them to turn from evildoing, and on the positive side to do “the good,” to actively work for and seek
- 1 Peter 3:12 we are told why: God’s eyes and ears are on believers and listening to their prayers; but his face is set against evildoers.
- With the Lord seeing you and hearing your prayers and his face is against those who do evil, who can harm you?

If You Should Suffer....

- 1 Peter 3:14; But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled,
 - This is the same point made in verse 13 -- You will be blessed, not harmed.
- Doing good may lead, in certain circumstances, to hostile attacks.
- Matthew 5:10; Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- John 15:20; Remember the word that I said to you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours.
- Revelation 2:10; Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life.

Have No Fear

- 1 Peter 3:14; ... Have no fear of them, nor be troubled,
- Peter alludes to Isaiah 8:12–13; “Do not call conspiracy all that this people calls conspiracy, and do not fear what they fear, nor be in dread. ¹³ But the LORD of hosts, him you shall honor as holy. Let him be your fear, and let him be your dread.
- The context of Isaiah 7–8 is important.
 - The Southern Kingdom of Judah was threatened by the Northern Kingdoms of Israel and Aram (approximately modern day Syria).
 - These two countries were threatening to remove Ahaz as king of Judah.
 - The threat filled Ahaz and Judah with terror (Isa 7:2), but Isaiah promised that the Lord would preserve Judah.
 - Judah and Ahaz were to respond by trusting in the Lord’s promise.
 - In Isa 8:11–15 the Lord commands his people not to fear the plot hatched by Israel and Aram.
 - They should only fear Yahweh, the God of Israel, and put their trust in him alone.

Honor Christ

- 1 Peter 3:15; but in your hearts **honor** Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect,
- The ESV's word **honor**, means “to set apart,” or “consecrate.”
 - But in this context, it also connotes giving the primary place of adoration, exaltation, and worship to Christ.
 - Believers who sanctify Christ set Him apart from all others as the sole object of their love, reverence, loyalty, and obedience.
 - This honoring of Christ as Lord is not external, but in the hearts of true worshipers—even when they must face unjust suffering.

Always Make a Defense

- 1 Peter 3:15; ... **always** being prepared to make a **defense** to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; ...
- The Greek term for **defense** (*apologia*) is the word from which the English terms apology and apologetics derive.
- It often means a formal defense in a judicial courtroom (cf. Acts 25:16; 2 Tim. 4:16), but Paul also used the word informally to denote his ability to answer those who questioned him (Phil. 1:16).
- **Always** indicates believers' need for constant preparedness and readiness to respond to everyone who asks them to give a reason for why they live and believe the way they do – with hope!

What is Our Hope?

- 1 Peter 1:3–5; Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, ⁵ who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.
- Paul writes of waiting in hope for the adoption as sons of God through redemption of the body (Rom 8:23–25); waiting for the hope of righteousness (Gal 5:5); and, above all, “the blessed hope and the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ” (Titus 2:13).
- Paul hopes to honor Christ always in his life (Phil 1:20); but, with even greater anticipation, his death will usher him into the presence of Christ where he knows existence “is very much better” (Phil 1:23).

A Defense of Hope

- Biblical hope rests on the trustworthiness of God to keep His promises.
- The biblical view of hope is thus significantly different from hope in those who do not believe in God.
 - Everyone understands that human beings express hope.
 - But a hope that is not based on God is simply a reflection of both good and bad experiences.
 - A worldly hope is simply a projection of what one believes is possible and desirable.
- Biblical hope is founded on God and His creative and redemptive acts as they culminate in the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
- We believe in God's promises because of what we read in his word.
 - Romans 15:4; For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.
 - Hebrews 10:23; Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.

Defend Gently and Respectfully

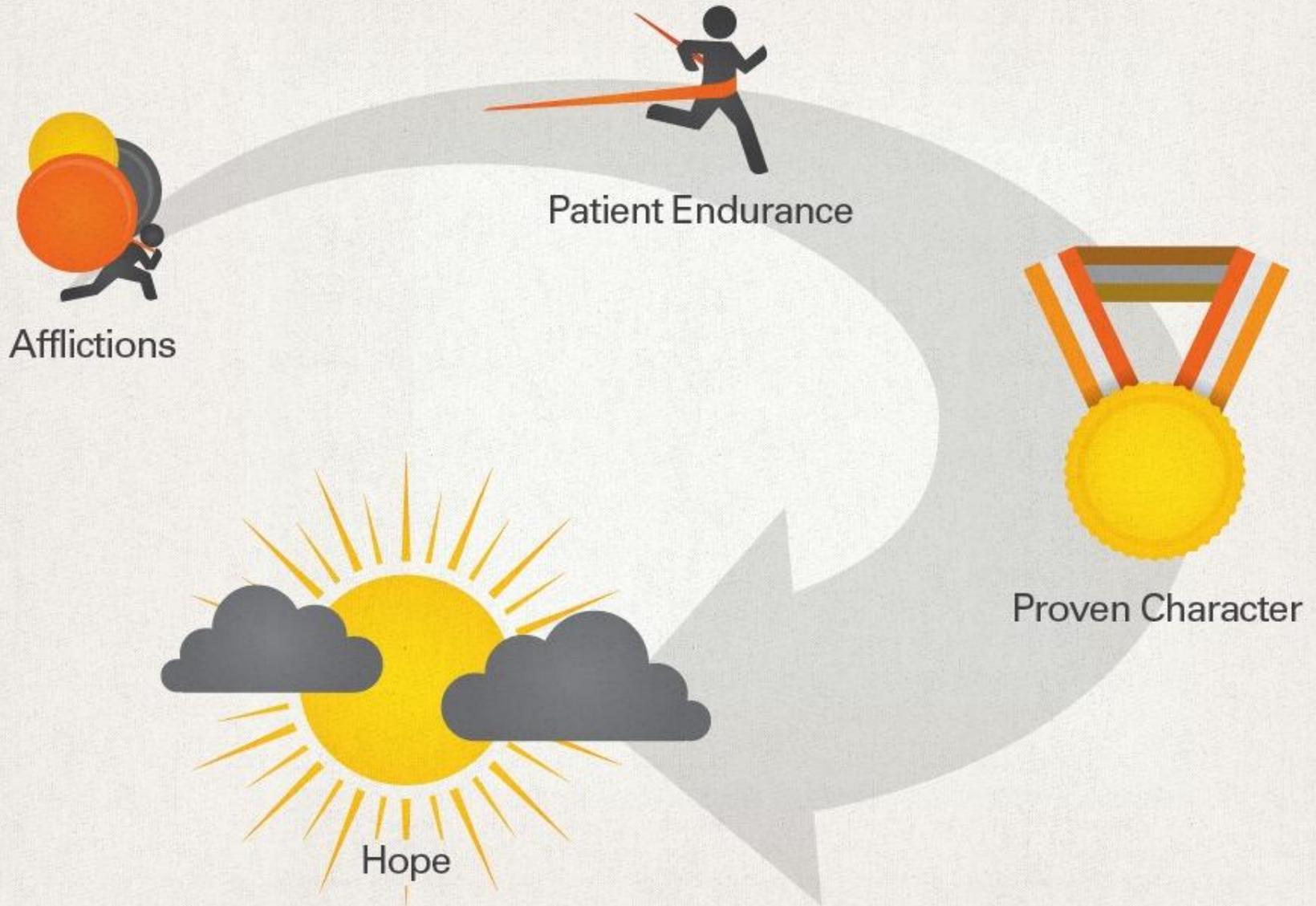
- 1 Peter 3:15; ... yet do it with **gentleness** and **respect**,
- **Gentleness** refers to meekness or humility, not in the sense of weakness but in the sense of not being dominant or overbearing (Eph. 4:15, “speaking the truth in love”).
- **Respect** is from a word frequently translate fear.
- We are not to be afraid of the person or opportunity to defend our hope, but we need to respect both.

Defend Gently and Respectfully

- 2 Timothy 2:24–26; And the Lord’s servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil,²⁵ correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth,²⁶ and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will.
- Colossians 4:6; Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.

Boasting In Afflictions

Romans 5:3–5



Having a Good Conscience

- 1 Peter 3:16; having a **good conscience**, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame.
- 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 cannot always be trusted.
 - It is possible that the conscience may excuse one for that which God will not excuse, and conversely it is equally possible that conscience may condemn a person for that which God allows.
- In this verse, Peter speaks of a **good conscience**.
- As Paul wrote in 1 Timothy 1:5; The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.

Good Behavior

- 1 Peter 3:16 ... when you are **slandered**, those who **revile** your **good behavior** in Christ may be put to shame.
- **Slandered** believers who maintain **good behavior** in Christ will have their consciences at rest, untroubled by guilt, and their godly lives will prove any criticisms from unbelievers to be false.
- **Slandered** describes “evil speaking” or “verbal abuse.”
- **Revile** means “to threaten,” “to insult,” or “to mistreat.”
- Those who slander and revile a Christian’s good behavior try to bring shame upon the Christian – but instead, they bring shame upon themselves.

Better Suffering

- 1 Peter 3:17; For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil.
- Some scholars understand this verse in this way: "It is better to suffer for doing good (in this life), if that is God's will, than suffer for doing evil in the judgement day."
- The idea of God's will and suffering should be understood in this sense:
 - It was God's will that Jesus live in such a way that he would suffer at the hand of evil doers.
 - It may be that it is God's will that you live in such a way that you suffer at the hands of evil doers.

Christ's Unjust Suffering Achieved God's Purpose

- 1 Peter 3:18–22; For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit,¹⁹ in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison,²⁰ because they formerly did not obey, when God's patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water.²¹ Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,²² who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.

Triumph through Suffering

- 1 Peter 3:18; **For Christ also suffered** once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, **that he might bring us to God**, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit,
- The conjunctions “**for**” and “**also**” point Peter’s readers back to the previous passage (3:13–17) and remind them that they ought not to be surprised or discouraged by **suffering**, since Christ triumphed in His suffering.
- The triumph made possible by his **suffering** is “**that he might bring us to God.**”
- The degree of Jesus suffering is being put to death.
- Three days later he was made alive in the Spirit.

Spirits in Prison

- 1 Peter 3:19; in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison,
- Who are the spirits and where is this prison?
- Four opinions:
 1. Augustine, and since him many others, understood the text to refer to Christ's preaching through Noah to those who lived while Noah was building the ark.
 2. Some have understood Peter as referring to Old Testament saints who died and were liberated by Christ between his death and resurrection.
 3. Others understand the imprisoned spirits to refer, as in 4:6, to the sinful human beings who perished during Noah's flood. Christ in the interval between his death and resurrection descended to hell and preached to them, offering them the opportunity to repent and be saved.
 4. The majority view among scholars today is that the text describes Christ's proclamation of victory and judgment over the evil angels. This is his victory over evil angelic powers.

Jesus Preached Victory over Evil Spirits

- The normal use of the plural “spirits” indicates angels, not human beings.
- The only place in which the term clearly refers to human beings is Heb 12:23, and in that instance the addition of the word “righteous” removes any doubt that human beings are in view.
- Though, the word “prison” is often used to denote the place where human beings are held on earth (e.g., Acts 5:19; 8:3; 2 Cor 6:5; 11:23), it is never used to denote the place of punishment for human beings after death.
- The term is used in Rev 20:7, however, for Satan’s confinement for one thousand years.
- That the evil angels are imprisoned is clearly taught in Jewish tradition (1 Enoch 10:4; 15:8, 10; 18:12–14; 21:1–10; 67:7; 2 Enoch 7:1–3; 18:3; Jub. 5:6).

No Second Chance

- It makes no sense for Peter to be teaching that the wicked have a second chance in a letter in which he exhorted the righteous to persevere and to endure suffering.
- Indeed, we have seen in many places throughout the commentary that eternal life is conditioned upon such perseverance.
- All motivation to endure would vanish if Peter now offered a second opportunity after death.
- The benefit of braving suffering is difficult to grasp if another opportunity to respond will be offered at death.

Sin in the Time of Noah

- 1 Peter 3:19–20; in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison, ²⁰ because they formerly did not obey, when God's patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water.
- The disobedience during God's time of patience may refer to Gen. 6:1-4

Gen 6:1-4

¹ When man began to multiply on the face of the land and daughters were born to them, ² the sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any they chose. ³ Then the LORD said, “My Spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years.” ⁴ The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of man and they bore children to them. These were the mighty men who were of old, the men of renown.

Gen 6:1-4, 2 Peter, and Jude

- Could these verses refer to Gen 6:1-4?
- 2 Peter 2:4; For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment;
- Jude 6; And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day—
- Perhaps the sin in Gen 6:1–4 is the climax of sin in the world.
- The enormity of sin is now great enough to justify the extermination of all humanity – save 8 souls.

How Does God Saving Noah Help Peter's Readers?

- They were also sojourners and exiles on earth, a small community beset by opponents who mistreated them.
- They should not be discouraged by the smallness of their numbers but must remember that God now extends his patience to all, but the day of judgment is coming in which their opponents will be ashamed and they will be vindicated.
- The appeal to Noah and God's patience reminds them to persevere.
- If God preserved Noah when he stood in opposition to the whole world, he will also save his people, even though they are now being persecuted.



1 Peter 3:21–22

- Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²² who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.

Baptism

- Next to Mark 16:16 this is the most straightforward and unequivocal statement in the New Testament concerning the relation between baptism and salvation.
- In plain words it simply says, “Baptism now saves you.”
- This affirmation is made following some comments on Noah and the ark.
 - Regarding the ark Peter says, “In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water” (1 Pet. 3:20, NIV).
- In some way this water, or this salvation through water, is a type or analogy of the fact that baptism saves people in the New Testament age.

How Baptism Saves

- The ultimate answer is that it saves through the divine power of the resurrection of Christ (more to come).
- Peter addresses what we do in Baptism.
- The answer is given in the form of a contrast: not this, but this.
 - Baptism saves not because it is “the removal of dirt from the body,” but because it is “an appeal to God for a good conscience.”
 - The negative part of this contrast refers to the outward function of water as a means of washing dirt off the body.
 - Note: Sprinkling does not wash dirt off the body. Immersion does.
- Baptism saves insofar as it is an appeal to God for a good conscience. Note: Infants can't appeal to God.
- The spiritual aspect of baptism is what saves you: not the way it cleanses the body but the way it cleanses the conscience.

A Good Conscience

- A person may have a clear conscience because he has had his sins forgiven, because his guilt and thus his condemnation have been removed (Rom. 8:1) and he is no longer burdened by the pangs of conscience or guilt feelings.
- God gives us a clear conscience in baptism in this sense in that He therein applies the blood of Christ to our guilty souls and gives us forgiveness or remission of sins.
- Hebrews 9:14; how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

Saved Through Christ's Resurrection

- 1 Peter 3:21–22; Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, **through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,**²² who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.
- In the final analysis everything else, even the atoning death of Christ, depends on His triumphant conquest of death and His eternal reign as the living Lord over all His enemies.

The Resurrection Validates Jesus Life and Death

- His resurrection validates the extraordinary claims Christ made as well as the work which He had already done.
- His resurrection establishes the authority of Christ over all things.
- 1 Peter 3:22; who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.
 - Matthew 28:18
 - Acts 2:32-36

Review: How to Live in a Hostile World

- Peter gives five principles we need to embrace to equip and defend ourselves against the threats of an unbelieving, hostile world:
 - A passion for goodness
 - A willingness to suffer
 - A devotion to Christ
 - A readiness to defend the faith
 - A pure conscience