

# PREPARED TO LIVE IN VICTORY: TESTIFYING ABOUT OUR HOPE

Houses of Light Church • August 13 y 14, 2022 • Pastor Netz Gómez

## 1 Pet. 3:13-14

***"Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good? <sup>14</sup> But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled."***

### I. AN APPARENT CONTRADICTION

- A. This section begins with a rhetorical question and the first thing we can assume is that no one can harm us if we have a passion for doing good. But then Peter tells us that even if we suffer we are blessed, this may seem contradictory but it is not. The apostle has spoken to us several times in his letter about Christians who suffer because they are committed to doing good.

**1 Pet. 2:20** ***"For what credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure? But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God."***

- B. So what does Peter mean when he says ***"who is there to harm you?"*** You can have a zeal for what is good and they can make fun of you and you can be committed to justice and suffer because they speak ill of you as he says a little later.

**Pet. 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."***

- C. The reality is that many people are going to oppose you for following Jesus. So this statement by Peter has a deeper meaning and we know it when we stop to consider what he has just said:

**1 Pet. 3:12** ***"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."***

- D. The reason why you should be passionate about doing good is because the eyes of the Lord are on you and His ears are attentive to your prayers, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil, that is, those who will harm you. What Peter is telling us is who is going to hurt you if the Lord has his eyes on you? As Paul also states:

**Rom. 8:31-37** ***"What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be[i] against us?... <sup>33</sup>Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.... <sup>35</sup> Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?... <sup>37</sup> No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us."***

- E. So what Peter is telling us is: no one can hurt you because God is completely in charge. He doesn't say that no one can harm you because they don't want to but because God is sovereign and has ultimate authority over them. The sovereignty of God, according to Scripture, does not always free us from suffering.

**1 Ped. 3:17 "For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil."**

- F. We know that God's will can allow us to suffer for doing good. So the way we can paraphrase this verse is that **"no harm can come to a Christian unless God wants to use it for his good."** (Rom. 8:28) Today's verse is an overflow of the previous verse affirming that the Lord is against your enemies so that no one can harm you unless God wants to use that difficulty to produce something good in you.
- G. A sister asked David Sliker: *"If we are the bride and our husband loves us passionately, why would He not protect us so that we do not go through the tribulation?"* And David's summed up answer was: *"I love my wife and As a loving husband, I would never want to deprive her of anything that would allow the beauty she was created to emerge. If my wife told me: my love, I want to go to the missions in the Congo, but travel prevention says that an American should never travel there. Does love imply that he go or not go? Is love equivalent to protecting or leading? In other words, **should love protect you out of prudence or lead you through the storm?** Particularly if the storm produces the full beauty in who she is supposed to be the bride."*
- H. One of the 21st century American values is to avoid pain at all costs, we are training a generation to do what they can to avoid all forms of disappointment and medicate all forms of pain. But in fact according to **Rom. 5:3-4** pain is the context for grace to produce more perseverance, character and hope...Think about your own journey, everything you are now is not just the result of avoiding pain but the product of responding to pain to love Jesus. You don't want to define love narrowly."

## **II. HAVE THEY ASKED YOU ABOUT YOUR HOPE?**

**v.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...*"**

- A. Why would anyone ask you for a reason for the hope that is in you? And the reason why this question is not so obvious is because hope is something of the heart, how can someone see your hope to the point of asking you about it when it is something internal?
- B. The clearest answer that is in the context of the letter is that what they can see is that we are not afraid of their persecution nor do we fear the adversity they are putting us into. Then you can see that our hope is such that we are not afraid. Hope is expressed when we do not panic or become vindictive, but rather return good for evil. Peter said something similar to the wives:

**1 Ped. 3:4-6 "but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious. <sup>5</sup> For this is how the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves, by submitting to their own husbands, <sup>6</sup> as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord. And you are her children, if you do good and do not fear anything that is frightening."**

- C. Having hope in God produces this kind of calm and peaceful spirit that is not anxious or bitter, nervous or fearful. Wives show that they are daughters of

Sarah, and men sons of Abraham, when we are not afraid; which comes from having our hope in God.

- D. So when someone sees this in us they can think: if you are not afraid of even losing your life, or your house, or your safety, then you must have your hope in something other than me. Those who do not know Jesus have their hope in life, in the security or power of money; when others accept them.
- E. **The world will ask us about our Christianity and our hope when they see the courage that comes from the hope that in turn came from Christ, that's why in this verse it says: "*Have no fear of them, nor be troubled.* " (Isaiah 8:12). So the main point is: give yourself to honor Christ as supremely valuable and precious until your hope is unshakeable in Him and when it is, you will not fear what they fear and the world will start asking us questions and this is what we want to happen.**

### III. DEFENDING OUR HOPE IN CHRIST

**1 Pet. 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."**

- A. We are going to examine what we do to answer the one who asks us to give us a reason for this hope that we have when we see what Christ has done that gives us hope. If we ask what it means to "***make a defense***" we can think that it is about giving philosophical arguments and apologetic reasons and historical defenses to the point that we can never feel competent but if we stick to the context **we can all present a defense because being a Christian means precisely knowing the reason for our hope.**
- B. **In this context the reason for our hope is Christ Himself.** We have the Messiah, the Lord who rules; we have One who is infinitely Holy and perfect. Once we have laid this foundation, that may be all we can say: Christ is my hope, Christ is Lord of all. He is infinitely perfect, valuable, my greatest treasure and you can end your testimony there and that is good enough but also the rest of the letter tells us about what Christ has done to give us foundations for our hope. **There are at least 7 answers that we can point to:**
  - 1. **HE CAME:** 1 Pet. 1:20-21 "*He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you <sup>21</sup> who through him are believers in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.*"
  - 2. **HE BORE OUR SINS:** 1 Pet. 2:24 "*He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness.*"
  - 3. **HE ROSE:** 1 Pet. 1:3 "*God ...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. **HE HAS ALL THE AUTHORITY BOTH IN THE NATURAL AND SPIRITUAL.** No one can be against Him: 1 Pet. 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.*"

5. **HE IS COMING SOON** to give continuity to everything that started 1 Pet. 1:13 *"Therefore, preparing your minds for action,[b] and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."*
6. **WE WILL BE FOREVER IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD:** 1 Pet. 3:18 *"For Christ also suffered[b] once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God."*
7. **THE TRIALS WE HAVE ARE USED BY GOD TO REFINE US SO THAT WE CAN RECEIVE ETERNAL REWARDS.** 1 Pet. 1:7 *"so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ."*

C. This is how we respond when they ask us and explain the reason for the hope we have. Our job is not to persuade the world, only God can do that, we testify and say everything that He is and does in us.

#### **IV. REFLECTION QUESTIONS**

1. How has God used suffering to build character in your life?
2. How have you given yourself to honoring Christ to develop a kind of hope that is noticed and causes you to be asked about it?
3. What points from today's teaching help you make defense for the hope you have in Christ?

#### **THIS WEEK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

1. **Our Parenting School starts on Wednesday August 24 at 7:00pm.** Please register at the information table or at [www.casadeluz.la](http://www.casadeluz.la)
2. **The School of Discipleship Graduation will be August 27 and 28 during services.** Come celebrate with our graduating students, friends and family! **The new quarter begins September 12.** Sign up today at the table outside or at [www.casadeluz.la](http://www.casadeluz.la)
3. **Passion for Jesus and the Leadership Summit will be September 8-10.** Register as soon as possible space is very limited; at the table outside or at [www.pasionporjesus.la](http://www.pasionporjesus.la)