

## “Our Defense” - 1 Peter 3:13-22

Ask - Have you ever had to defend yourself in some way? Share your story.

Background - Thus far we have discussed our inheritance in Christ, our mandate for Christ, our identity in Christ, our witness for Christ, and our relationships with Christians. In today's lesson we will cover our defense of Christ.

“Be Ready” - 1 Peter 3:13-17

(v13-14) How would you answer the question posed by verse 13? How should someone feel when they suffer for the sake of righteousness? Read Isaiah 8:12.

(v15) What should a Christian always be ready to do? In what manner should they make their defense?

(v16) What does it mean to have a good or clean conscience? What will happen to those who slander someone who is innocent?

(v17) If you're going to suffer anyway, what is it better to suffer for? Have you ever suffered for doing what's right? Share your story.

SUFFERING FOR THE SAKE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS OFTEN PROVIDES AN OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS. BE READY TO GIVE AN ANSWER TO THOSE WHO ASK.

“Be Assured” - 1 Peter 3:18-20

(v18) For whom did Christ suffer? For what purpose? What did His suffering and death make possible?

(v19) There are many possible interpretations of this passage. Who might these spirits be that Jesus went and spoke to in prison (read Jude 6)?

(v20) Whoever these spirits refer to, approximately when were they imprisoned and why?

CHRISTIANS CAN BE ASSURED THAT CHRIST'S SUFFERING HAS PROVIDED THEM WITH SALVATION AND ETERNAL LIFE.

“Be Glad” - 1 Peter 3:21-22

(v21) What type of baptism saves a person and what type does not? (*answer: Baptism of the Holy Spirit does and water baptism does not*) How does a person stand righteous before God?

(v22) Where is Jesus now? What, if anything, has been subjected to Him? Read Matthew 28:18.

DESPITE HIS SUFFERING, JESUS WAS RESURRECTED, ASCENDED TO HEAVEN, SITS AT GOD'S RIGHT HAND, AND HAS BEEN GIVEN ALL AUTHORITY.

Application - No one likes to suffer. It's unpleasant and uncomfortable. Yet, there are good things that come from suffering. It makes you stronger and more able to face life's challenges. Sometimes, if you suffer with dignity and grace, it prompts others to ask how you could keep such a good attitude in the midst of it. This provides an opportunity to share the good news of Jesus - the reason for your hope. How good are you at handling suffering in a Christlike way?