

## 21S26 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:13-22 Do Right

Hello everyone. Thank you for joining me today @ the PUNLA Coffee Table. I hope everyone is doing well. Today we are continuing our series on 1<sup>st</sup> Peter with 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:13-22.

The author of this letter is the Apostle Peter. Most scholars believe this letter was written sometime in AD60-64. The main theme of 1<sup>st</sup> Peter is “Where does our Hope come from?” for those suffering persecution. This letter was written to Christians living in the Roman Empire and facing persecution because they follow Jesus.

I’m reading from the International Children’s Bible (ICB) again today, I like the plain English in this translation. But of course, you can use whatever translation you choose.

Before we start today, these next seven verses have been yelled about and argued about for many years. In our culture in the United States, women don’t like this scripture, but I think it is because we don’t understand this scripture.

Let’s read 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:13-22 (ICB) *<sup>13</sup>If you are always trying to do good, no one can really hurt you. <sup>14</sup>But you may suffer for doing right. Even if that happens, you are blessed. “Don’t be afraid of the things they fear. Do not dread those things. <sup>15</sup>But respect Christ as the holy Lord in your hearts.” Isaiah 8:12-13*

*Always be ready to answer everyone who asks you to explain about the hope you have. <sup>16</sup>But answer in a gentle way and with respect. Always feel that you are doing right. Then, those who speak evil of your good life in Christ will be made ashamed. <sup>17</sup>It is better to suffer for doing good than for doing wrong. Yes, it is better, if that is what God wants. <sup>18</sup>Christ himself died for you. And that one death paid for your sins. He was not guilty, but he died for those who are guilty. He did this to bring you all to God. His body was killed, but he was made alive in the spirit. <sup>19</sup>And in the spirit he went and preached to the spirits in prison. <sup>20</sup>These were the spirits who refused to obey God long ago in the time of Noah. God was waiting patiently for them while Noah was building the boat. Only a few people—eight in all—were saved by water. <sup>21</sup>That water is like baptism that now saves you—not the washing of dirt from the body, but the promise made to God from a good heart. And this is because Jesus Christ was raised from death. <sup>22</sup>Now Jesus has gone into heaven and is at God’s right side. He rules over angels, authorities, and powers.*

Okay, I know there is some very odd things in these verses. So, let’s go back and look at verse 13. 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:13 (ICB) *<sup>13</sup>If you are always trying to do good, no one can really hurt you.*

Obviously, Peter is not telling us we will never be hurt. Or if we get hurt, we did something wrong. NO that is not true. Peter is telling us nothing that happens here on earth can “really hurt you” because our Happily ever after with Jesus is not impacted by

the things that happen to us when we do “good things”. We don’t have to fear, only follow Jesus and rely on His promises.

Let’s read on, 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:14-15 (ICB)<sup>14</sup>*But you may suffer for doing right. Even if that happens, you are blessed. “Don’t be afraid of the things they fear. Do not dread those things. <sup>15</sup>But respect Christ as the holy Lord in your hearts.” Isaiah 8:12-13*

Peter means we have a “Good Conscience” Peter is quoting Isaiah which most Jews would know well. We all have whispers in our minds. Urges to do good and do bad. We, as Christians, don’t fear what the world fears, we respect Jesus as the Lord of our hearts. That is why we choose good rather than bad.

Let’s read the next two verses again, 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:14-15 (ICB)*Always be ready to answer everyone who asks you to explain about the hope you have. <sup>16</sup>But answer in a gentle way and with respect. Always feel that you are doing right. Then, those who speak evil of your good life in Christ will be made ashamed. <sup>17</sup>It is better to suffer for doing good than for doing wrong. Yes, it is better, if that is what God wants.*

I like how Peter says this, “be ready to answer everyone”. When we live like Peter is telling us, people will notice. Some in anger, others in wonder. Just tell them the truth. When we answer in a gentle respectful way, they will listen. We can feel confident we are doing right in the sight of God. People who make fun of you or hurt you, will be made ashamed when you treat them Kindly.

We all suffer in this life on earth. But when we suffer for doing good, we discover that God is with us and our relationship with God gets stronger.

Let’s read verse 18 again, 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:18 (ICB) *18Christ himself died for you. And that one death paid for your sins. He was not guilty, but he died for those who are guilty. He did this to bring you all to God. His body was killed, but he was made alive in the spirit.*

Peter wants us to remember what Jesus did for us. Okay, now it gets a little strange. Let’s read verse 19-20 again, 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:19-20 (ICB) *19And in the spirit he went and preached to the spirits in prison. <sup>20</sup>These were the spirits who refused to obey God long ago in the time of Noah. God was waiting patiently for them while Noah was building the boat. Only a few people—eight in all—were saved by water.*

I have no idea. I have to be honest. Spirits in prison from the time of Noah. Who, what, where? Lots of questions. Now, people have lots of opinions, but I don’t think anyone really understands this completely, we are just guessing. I’d be wrong if I tried to tell you anything about this. So, I’m just going to move on.

Let’s read verse 21-22 again, 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:21-22 (ICB)<sup>21</sup>*That water is like baptism that now saves you—not the washing of dirt from the body, but the promise made to God from a good heart. And this is because Jesus Christ was raised from death. <sup>22</sup>Now*

*Jesus has gone into heaven and is at God's right side. He rules over angels, authorities, and powers.*

Peter again wants us to be focused on Jesus and what He did for us. Jesus is King now and He's in charge of everything and everyone.

Let's Review,

- 1) **Is every part of the Bible easy to understand?** Obviously No. The Bible has some tricky parts. But it's okay if we don't understand every part of the Bible. Some people struggle with these. Some of these parts no one really understands, no it's okay
- 2) **Is suffering a sign we did something bad?** Well no. Everyone suffers in this world from time to time. Sometimes we do things that get us into trouble, and we suffer. But more often, life just happens around us and we can suffer. People do bad things to us. Natural disasters like COVID or typhoons. And yes, we can suffer. How we behave during our suffering is what is important. God is with us. Trust Jesus.
- 3) **Does suffering make sin more powerful? Or less powerful?** Suffering makes our friendship with God more powerful, and the whispers of sin less powerful. No one wants to suffer, but when we rely on God in our suffering our relationship with God gets stronger.

Let me leave you with this today. There are some parts of the Bible that are just beyond our ability to understand and that's okay. Peter can tell us in heaven someday. What is important is the message. We can Trust Jesus. Jesus is King. We do what is right no matter what. Not because it's easy but because it's right. Live for Jesus, He has earned it.

**Let's Pray.**

**Heavenly Father thank you. Even though we don't always understand every part of the Bible it's okay. I trust you will reveal the truth I need today. Help me to do what is right, even when it means I might suffer. I trust you Lord. I pray this in your Name Lord Jesus. Amen**

I hope you are enjoying our study of 1<sup>st</sup> Peter. I hope you will join me for the rest of this series

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