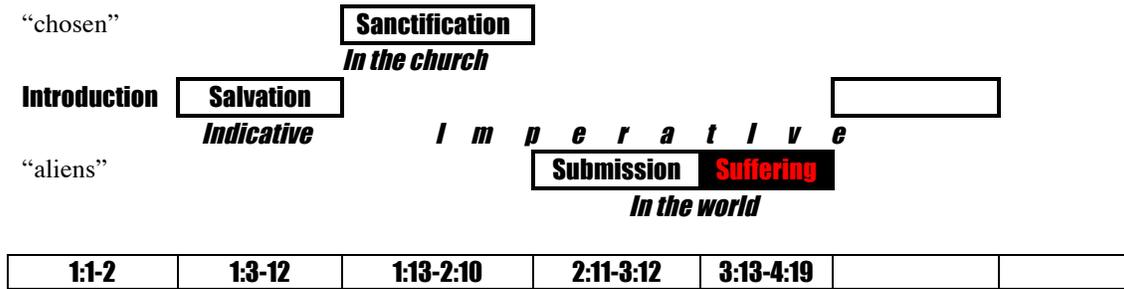


1 Peter 3:13-22



Suffering

Be prepared to turn hard times into ministry opportunities.

When injustice comes your way, do not be afraid . . .

13 And who is there to harm you if you prove zealous for what is good? 14 But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, {you are} blessed. *And do not fear their intimidation, and do not be troubled,*

. . . but be prepared to tell your story of hope . . .

15 but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always {being} ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence;

. . . and back it up with a lifestyle of righteousness . . .

16 and keep **a good conscience** so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. 17 For it is better, if God should will it so, that you suffer for doing what is right rather than for doing what is wrong.

. . . after Jesus’ example . . .

18 For Christ also died for sins once for all, {the} just for {the} unjust, in order that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit;

. . . who set you apart through baptism . . .

19 in which also He went and made proclamation to the spirits {now} in prison, 20 who once were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through {the} water. 21 And corresponding to that, baptism now saves you-- not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for **a good conscience**—

. . . linking you through his resurrection to glory.

through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, 22 who is at the right hand of God, having gone

into heaven, after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him. **I**

Peter 3:13-22

Suffering provides a unique opportunity to renew our minds. Rom.8:6,18-39

13 And who is there to harm you if you prove zealous for what is good? 14 But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, {you are} blessed. *And do not fear their intimidation, and do not be troubled,*

Suffering provides a unique opportunity to talk about our hope.

15 but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always {being} ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence;

Suffering provides a unique opportunity to live a life of power.

16 and keep a **good conscience** so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. 17 For it is better, if God should will it so, that you suffer for doing what is right rather than for doing what is wrong.

Suffering provides a unique opportunity to identify with Christ.

18 For Christ also died for sins once for all, {the} just for {the} unjust, in order that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit; 19 in which also He went and made proclamation to the spirits {now} in prison, 20 who once were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a

few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through {the} water. 21 And corresponding to that, baptism now saves you-- not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for **a good conscience**—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, 22 who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him.

13 And who is there to harm you if you prove zealous for what is good? 14 But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, {you are} blessed. *And do not fear their intimidation, and do not be troubled,*

The “who” that can harm you = the present authorities and earthly powers but this is nothing compared to the assessment of you by God. They can kill the body but not the soul.

15 but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always {being} ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence;

This is the clearest general exhortation to personal evangelism in all the epistles. Note: 1) Prepare your heart and your mind to bear witness. 2) Respond with sensitivity to those who show an interest. 3) It is your hope in the midst of your suffering that will catch the attention of those who have no hope but long for it. 4) Speak with respect and sensitivity to those who seek the truth.

16 and keep **a good conscience** so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. 17 For it is better, if God should will it so, that you suffer for doing what is right rather than for doing what is wrong.

Suffering for doing the right thing is sometimes God’s will for us in that it gives power to our good behavior. Doing the right thing in the midst of suffering identifies us with Christ as does water baptism.

18 For Christ also died for sins once for all, {the} just for {the} unjust, in order that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit;

Jesus was judged one way in the flesh (in the eyes of man) and quite another in the spirit (in the eyes of God).

19 in which also He went and made proclamation to the spirits {now} in prison, 20 who once were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting

in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through {the} water. 21 And corresponding to that, baptism now saves you-- not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for **a good conscience**— through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, 22 who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him.

The spirits = fallen angels that cohabited with humans in the day of Noah (Gen.6). Jesus announces his victory over sin to them. The remnant that was saved through the flood in Noah's day is not unlike the remnant that are identified with Christ in baptism today. Both were set apart from the world unto God. They have confidence toward God in that Christ was judged for them and they share the benefits of His work as they identify with his death and resurrection (through water baptism).

“15 but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always {being} ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence;”

Observations - sharing the faith

1. Heart.

Jesus must be the center ring in your circus.

2. Mind.

Intellectual preparation for offering a defense or explanation of the Gospel, our hope, is important.

3. Timing.

We need to be sensitive to share with those who indicate some interest in listening.

4. Sensitivity.

When we share our story we should be gentle – sensitive to not share more than is called for or press for a response before the time is right.

5. Respect.

We should always show great respect for all people's personal story and for the seriousness of the Gospel story.