

The Book of I Peter Part 10 – I Peter 3:13-18

In I Peter chapter 3, we've looked at duties as wives and husbands, and we've also looked at our duties as brethren. Now we want to look at duties for righteousness' sake. This, of course, is I Peter 3:13-22. The first thing I would look at here are verses 13-17, and these are things to remember. It says there in verse 13:

¹³And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good? ¹⁴But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled: ¹⁵But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and by ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear: ¹⁶Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ... [or good behavior...] ¹⁷For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing.

What we're seeing here is something that is really hard to understand sometimes as a Christian, and we let the human being in us overtake this thought sometimes and the thoughts that we've read here, that it seems to be teaching us that we're to rejoice when something goes wrong in our lives. I believe that as a human being when something happens to me, it bothers me, but then I stop to think, if I'm doing good and something bad happens, if someone accuses me of something and I've been doing good, then I don't have to worry about it. I just turn it over to the Lord, because it says, "Happy are ye," and I could be happy. When something goes wrong in my life, I can turn it over to the Lord. And that doesn't mean that, if I can do something to correct something that has happened, it doesn't mean that I shouldn't try to

correct it. It simply means that, if someone has done something to me and said something wrong about me, I need to forgive that person and realize that in the sight of God I've done right, and I don't have to worry about it, because in the sight of God I am pure through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, I'm not saying that in this flesh we don't do things wrong, but the Bible here is teaching us that we need to do things right as Christians.

Verse 13, I believe, is saying, "Who can harm you if you do good?" If you do good and they say evil things about you, remember, they said all types of evil things about our Lord, but yet, He was without sin and He loved the people even those who said things about Him that were untrue.

In verse 14, it talks about righteous suffering. In I Peter 4:16, it says, *Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.* Righteous suffering brings blessing, according to the Scripture. We think a lot about the persecuted church, and the persecuted church is any church throughout this world that stands upon the Word of God, that preaches Jesus Christ crucified, buried, and resurrected. The persecuted church is any church that stands for God, for Jesus Christ, who is going through a difficult time. The government tries to shut down the church. People are beaten. People are killed. Anywhere the church is being maligned and persecuted is what it's talking about. That is the persecuted church, and it says, *If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.* We're not to hang our heads in shame if we're being persecuted for Christ's sake, but we're to lift up our heads and

glorify the Lord Jesus Christ. Don't be afraid of threats the Bible is teaching here.

In verse 15, the first part of that verse is talking about sanctification. Sanctify or extol, lift the Lord up. Set Him apart. Let people see the Lord in your life instead of seeing you. And then we see in verse 15, the rest of that verse, it says be prepared. Be prepared for what? To give an answer. Of what? The Gospel.

In Ephesians 6:15, the Bible says we are to do this. *And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace.* We're to have ourselves ready to give an answer to those people who say, "Well, who are you? What do you stand for?" And we need to be able to say, "I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as my Savior. I believe He was crucified, buried, and resurrected for me," and then you can continue on and say, "By the way, He died for you. If you will accept him as your Savior, He's ready to save you, and when this life is over, you can go to Heaven the way I'm going to Heaven."

That is a witness for the Lord. Your testimony is seen in verse 16. Your testimony, your conversation is the defense against false accusers. They may say all kinds of bad things about you, but just as Christ stood before Pilate, he said, "I find no fault in this man," they couldn't find anything wrong with Christ. Why? Because He was righteous. He did no sin.

It's true that we're in this human body, and we, as humans... there are times when sin creeps into our lives, but once again, we're to rise above that as much as possible and let the Lord be seen through our lives. And when you do good, people will still say bad things about you, but don't worry about that. Keep going on for the Lord.

As we have a good conversation, the Bible is teaching here, a good testimony to this world, this helps us to maintain a good conscience, that

when others may defame us as evildoers, we still have that good conscience of knowing that we've done what is right. And those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed. In other words, they can be made ashamed, not simply of you using words to cause them to be ashamed, but it's your life in Jesus Christ that will cause them to be ashamed.

And verse 17 goes on to say that suffering for the will of God is better than suffering for doing evil. We're to remember these things. We're to remember that people will say bad things about us as Christians, and if you've been saved for any length of time, you know that is true. I don't have to tell you these things and neither does the Bible, but the Bible needs to tell us and remind us that, when people say evil things about us as Christians, we need to love that person and help that person as much as possible. As long as you're doing good for the Lord, don't worry about it. Let God take care of it.

And then we are also to remember Christ, according to verses 18-22 of I Peter chapter 3. It says, *¹⁸For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: ¹⁹By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; ²⁰Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. ²¹The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh... [It says there, it's teaching us it doesn't save you...], but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ: ²²Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.*

Verse 18, first of all, is teaching that Christ died. He suffered. And He only did this once. He's not going to do it again. Hebrews 7:27 says, *Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice...* [In other words, He's not going to do it again...], *first for his own sins...* [The priest would go in and offer up sacrifice for sin for himself first, and it says there...], *and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.*

In other words, the high priest of old would go in and he would first have to offer up sacrifice for himself, but Christ didn't have to do that, because He was sinless. And then the priest would go in and offer up a sacrifice for the sins of the people, and he would have to do this often. But it teaches there in Hebrews 7:27 that Christ only did it once. In other words, He went in and offered up His blood for the sins of people. He did it once, that verse says, when He offered up Himself. Remember, He was sinless. We are in the sinful flesh. We have sinful flesh, so Christ had to be a priest for us who first offered up His blood. He offered Himself. He offered his blood to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

So, Christ died, He suffered, and He only did it once. He's not going to do it again. You're saved once. You're saved and you're safe within the Lord Jesus Christ.

And we also see there in verse 18 that He is alive by the Holy Spirit. In Acts 2:32 it says, *This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.* And in Acts 10:40, it says, *Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly.* In I Corinthians 6:14, *And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power.*

He's alive by the Holy Spirit. It's by the Spirit of God that Jesus Christ was raised. And we also

read in those verses that, just as He was raised up, we will be raised one day, as well.

Now, it's not teaching that when a person dies in the Lord that they simply sleep. It's speaking here of the physical body. I don't know how it's going to take place. I don't know how God's going to do it, but I believe the Bible, and I know that the Bible says that we are going to be raised incorruptible. We're going to have a new body fashioned like that of our Lord Jesus Christ, and we're not sleeping when we go to be with the Lord. If I were to die right now, I'd go into the presence of the Lord. Paul said, to be absent from the body... he knew that to be absent from the body he would be present with the Lord.

So, the real person, not the body at the time of death, goes to be with the Lord. The real person goes to be with the Lord, not the body. That body one day will be raised incorruptible. Well, what about those people who were cremated? Those people who are in the ocean? Some people come up with all kinds of questions like that. I don't know how the Lord's going to do it, but the Bible says we're going to have a new body; it's going to be fashioned like His, and we will retain our identity. People will know us as we are known here on this earth. How's it going to happen? I don't know how the Lord's going to do it. I'm not God. If I knew all the answers, I would be God. Thank God that He is God and He has the answers.

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