

1 Peter 3:13-22 ESV

Instruction and Motivation

For All Who Are Alive In Christ!

Sunday, May 25 at 8:00 & 10:45

Sixth Sunday of Easter – 2014

~~NO Monday This Week~~ – Returns on June 2

This Week: Ascension Service This Thursday: May 29 at 7 PM

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ:

- Last week, in *1 Peter 2:2-10*, God reminded us that we are living stones – *who have been placed into alignment with Christ, the Cornerstone*.
- Then, *in between last week's text and today's text*, God urges us – *for His sake* – to be subject to every human institution, for example: ♦citizens to government, ♦servants to masters, and ♦wives to husbands. In each case, *God has a noble purpose!*
- Then, *just before today's text (3:8-12)*, God is urging His holy children – *who are forgiven in Christ* – to be united, caring, and humble; also, not seeking revenge but seeking peace with everyone, *even pursuing it!*
- Now, *in today's text, in the first half* God is urging us to ♦do what is right, ♦live without fear, and ♦be a blessing to others – *even if we suffer for it*; then, *in the second half* God tells us *WHY* as He reminds us of Jesus' saving work for us – *which included much suffering!*

1. Instruction for Believers:

- a. Do good: ¹³ **Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous [enthusiastic] for what is good?** ¹⁴ **But even if**

you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. //

- i. The reaction of others: Most people – *regardless of whether or not they would join us in doing good* – will NOT harm us for doing good. However, *in rare cases*, some may put us down *and others may even harm us*. But why? To some, *our doing good makes them look bad*; to others, *they simply prefer evil rather than good*.
 - ii. Encouragement to keep doing good: Peter wrote: **'even if you should suffer..., you will be blessed.'** Jesus said something similar: **"Blessed are you when men hate you, and ostracize [ignore] you, and cast insults at you, and spurn [reject] your name as evil, for the sake of the Son of Man. Be glad in that day, and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven..."** (Luke 6:22-23 NAS)
- b. Tell others about your hope in Jesus: **Have no fear of them, nor be troubled,** ¹⁵ **but in your hearts honor [hold in reverence] 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,** ¹⁶ **having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. //**
 - i. Don't be fearful or troubled: Those who oppose Christ and Christians want us to fear them, but, instead, let us fear God (Mt. 10:28) and *keep doing good!*
 - ii. Say WHY you are doing good: *I have sinned and deserved God's wrath*, yet God has enabled me to receive His gift of forgiveness and eternal life! Also, let us → speak with **"gentleness and respect,"**

– which glorifies God and →strive to live blameless lives so that those who try to shame us will finally bring shame upon themselves.

- c. Do good – even if you suffer for it: ¹⁷ **For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God’s will, than for doing evil.** // So, sometimes, it is God’s will that Christians suffer; but why? To ♦draw us even closer Him, ♦grow our faith even stronger, and ♦make us a Christ-like example to others!

2. **Motivation for Believers:**

- a. Since Christ suffered for us: ¹⁸ **For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous [Jesus] for the unrighteous [people], that he [Jesus] might bring us [who have sinned] to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit,** ¹⁹ **in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison [when He descended into hell],** ²⁰ **because they formerly did not obey [the call to repent], when God’s patience waited in the days of Noah [a preacher of righteousness; 2Pe 2:5], while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water.** //
- i. Jesus is our perfect substitute: *The sinless Son of God, †received all wrongs, †received God’s punishment, and †laid down His life.*
 - ii. Jesus proclaimed His victory down under: Then, having been “made alive in the spirit,” “...retaining His flesh and blood in glorified form, [He] went forth, as our triumphant Champion, into the abode of the damned and of the devils, and there proclaimed His victory to the spirits in prison, that is, in hell...” (Kretzmann NT II:534) – Not to offer those in hell another chance to believe *but to let them know of their missed opportunity for eternal*

life! Those people now serve as *an example* and a *plea* to all other unbelievers!

- iii. God used the worldwide flood to save the believers: Normally a flood destroys or kills, *but with the worldwide flood, “the water lifted [the eight] up and thus saved them from destruction.”* (Ibid.)
- b. Since God has saved us through baptism: ²¹ **Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,** ²² **who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.** //

 - i. Some parallels: As God used the flood water to physically save, *so He uses baptism water to spiritually save!* Jesus has purchased salvation for everyone, but it must be *given by God* and *received by us!* So, *in baptism,* God gives and enables the person being baptized to receive!
 - ii. A summary: “This salvation...does not consist in washing off the dirt which may have gathered on the skin... but it cleanses the heart of sins... Thus all Christians are, by reason of their baptism, happy and blessed people, having the certain hope of eternal life through the grace of God in Jesus Christ which they received in the water of Baptism.” (Ibid.)

Conclusion: Therefore, since we are SO BLESSED THROUGH JESUS, *let us gladly do good – even if we suffer for it!* **Amen!**

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Having been saved thru Jesus, let us live for Him and share the good news!
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