

1 **Spiritual Life of the Christian Apologist**

- Module: Introduction
- Lesson 3

2 **About First Peter**

- Written by the Apostle Peter, who himself had failed on more than one occasion because of fear.
- Written to believers scattered over the wide area of modern day Turkey.

3 **About First Peter**

- What do we know about the recipients?
 - Peter characterizes them as being aliens or strangers in the world. (1:1; 2:11) (See also Heb. 11:13)
 - They were experiencing resistance or suffering for their faith.

4 **The Theme of Suffering In First Peter**

- 1:7—Faith tested by fire.
- 2:12—Slandered as evildoers.
 - Accused of sexual orgies at their “love feasts.”
 - Accused of cannibalism because of the Lord’s Supper.
 - Accused of atheism for their refusal to worship the Roman gods.
- 2:21—Called to suffer after Christ’s example.
- 3:14—If you suffer for righteousness’ sake.
- 3:16—They were being slandered.

5 **The Theme of Suffering In First Peter**

- 3:17—Better to suffer for righteousness than for doing evil.
- 4:1—Follow Christ’s example of suffering unto death
 - Suffering in the flesh for Christ purifies the sinner
- 4:12-16— Don’t be surprised at the fiery trial
 - Keep on rejoicing
 - You are blessed by the presence of the Spirit of glory and God
 - Don’t suffer for doing evil, but for doing good
 - If you suffer for Christ, don’t be ashamed, but glorify God
- 5:10—Suffering for a little while.

6 The Theme Of Hope In First Peter

- 1:3—We have a living hope through Christ's resurrection.
- 1:13—Fix your hope on the grace to come when Christ is revealed.
- 1:21—Your faith and hope are in God.
- 2:6—The one who trusts in the Cornerstone will not be disappointed.
- 3:5—The holy women in former times hoped in God.
- 3:15—Always be ready to give a reason for the hope within you.
- 5:4—You will receive the crown.
- 5:10—After you suffer, Christ will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you.

7 The Context of Peter's Injunction in 3:15

- "Who is there to harm you if you prove zealous for what is good? 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 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 keep a good conscience so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ will be put to shame."
- 1 Peter 3:13-16

8 The Context of Peter's Injunction in 3:15

- "Who is there to harm you..." (3:13)
- But "even if"... (Peter acknowledges it may happen.) (3:14)
 - We are blessed.
 - We are not to fear or be troubled.
- Peter appears to be thinking of Isaiah 8:12, 13.

9 Peter's Admonition in 3:14 from Isaiah 8:11-13

- For thus the Lord spoke to me with mighty power and instructed me not to walk in the way of the people, saying:
- "You are not to say, 'It is a conspiracy!' in regard to all this people call a conspiracy, and you are not to fear what they fear, or be in dread of it. It is the Lord of Hosts whom you should regard as holy, and he shall be your fear, and he shall be your dread."
 - Isaiah's temptation: to fear what everyone else fears.
 - God's instruction:
 - Don't fear what others fear.
 - Instead you are to revere the Lord of Hosts as holy. (Note the similarity to Peter's injunction to sanctify [make holy] Christ as Lord.)

- Peter's application: Set Christ as Lord in your hearts, and don't fear.

10 **What Peter Says About the Source of Our Apologetic**

- "But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always ready to make a defense."
- Peter associates the Lordship of Christ in our hearts with our readiness and willingness to offer people reasons for our hope in Christ.
- Remember, Peter instructs us that it is crucial we "keep a good conscience" so as to disarm our critics.

11 **For What Are We Offering An Apologetic?**

- Do we merely seek to win an argument?
- Or are we seeking to introduce people to a living experience of Christ?
- A point to ponder: What will they have gained if their experience of Christ is like ours?

12 **Essentials For An Authentic Relationship With Christ**

- Time spent regularly in the Word of God.
- Time spent regularly in prayer.
- Communion with the people of God.
- Sensitivity to the Holy Spirit.
- Obedience to God.

13 **What Peter Says About How We Do Apologetics**

- We give people the best answers we can for the questions they ask.
- We do so with gentleness. ("A soft answer turns away wrath." Prov. 15:1)
- We do so with reverence (respect).
 - In the fear of God.
 - With respect for the person to whom we speak.
- Keeping a clear conscience. (v. 16)
 - So they have no grounds in our conduct to discredit our message.

14 **Next Week:**

- Foundations of Knowledge:
- What is knowledge, is it possible to have it, and if so, how is it acquired?