



1 Peter

Always Ready

Peter speaks to us as members of the church. He hits this especially in verse 8, “All of you” meaning all Christians are always ready or are committed to living together. We are always ready to be a certain kind of people with 5 character traits.

Read 1 Peter 3:8-12

1. Be of one mind, “harmonious”, in having the same thoughts and assessments of the essentials of life – God, salvation, and virtue.
2. Be “sympathetic”, feeling what others feel so that you can respond with sensitivity to the need.
3. Called to be “brotherly”, that you don’t view each other as strangers or as mere acquaintances or as a distant relative.
4. You are to be “kindhearted”, being well-disposed to each other in your hearts. You feel generous in your hearts.
5. You will also be “humble in spirit”, that our dependence of our very lives is on God. That we are unworthy apart from the grace of God.

All 5 of these characteristics are who we are inside, not primarily how we act. It is impossible for us to attain without being saved by the mercy of Jesus our Lord.

Question: Which one of the 5 characteristics are you doing well in and which one do you need the Holy Spirit to strengthen you in?

Question: Don’t retaliate evil for evil, insult for insult, but give back a blessing. How difficult is that to do? How have you received a blessing in living this action out?

Read 1 Peter 3:13-17

Persecution was a reality in Peter’s world and also in ours. The apostle proclaimed that those who suffer for righteousness will be blessed.

Question: Do you think people are shocked in today's world when they hear about persecuted Christians? Do you think believers are shocked or surprised when they experience persecution or oppression?

Peter encouraged Christians to make a ready defense of their faith, but he didn't encourage them to do so with arrogance or callousness. He encouraged them to respond respectfully to their accusers.

Question: What keeps believers from being prepared to share Jesus with others? How are you prepared to defend your faith in Christ?

Read 1 Peter 3:17

Sometimes suffering is caused by wrong actions on our part; other times by doing the right thing.

Question: Why is suffering for one's faith a powerful witness to those who don't believe in Jesus?

Read 1 Peter 3:18-20

Peter pointed to the example of Christ. Jesus suffered for our sins, but those sins weren't his. He suffered once for all.

Question: How can a good or noble cause become a substitute for pointing others to Christ? How can it become a vehicle for pointing others to Christ? What's the difference?

Read 1 Peter 3:21-22

Peter didn't intend to indicate that the physical act of baptism saved a person. Baptism itself does not remove the "filth" of the flesh. What has happened inside a person is represented outwardly by the washing of baptism.

Question: How does Jesus's authority bring you comfort and courage to faithfully stand for Christ?

Assignment: What of the 5 character traits do you need special work done in your heart? Ask the Holy Spirit for guidance to change your heart.

Next week: Read 1 Peter 4:1-11 Living for God