

POWER HOUR

3/17/2024

Lesson Text:
1 Peter 3:8-17

Background Scripture:
1 Peter 3:8-17

Devotional Reading:
2 Timothy 4:1-8

“DEFENDING OUR FAITH”

NLT TRANSLATION

Learning Facts: To identify the Old Testament text quoted (Ps 34:12-16).

Biblical Principle: To compare and contrast the things he or she “must do” with what he or she “must not do.”

Daily Application: To state one “must do” and one “must not do” for personal focus in the week ahead.

1 Peter 3:8-17 NLT

8 Finally, all of you should be of one mind. Sympathize with each other. Love each other as brothers and sisters. Be tenderhearted, and keep a humble attitude. **9** Don't repay evil for evil. Don't retaliate with insults when people insult you. Instead, pay them back with a blessing. That is what God has called you to do, and He will grant you His blessing. **10** For the Scriptures say, “If you want to enjoy life and see many happy days, keep your tongue from speaking evil and your lips from telling lies. **11** Turn away from evil and do good. Search for peace, and work to maintain it.

LESSON CONTEXT

Peter was one of Jesus' original 12 disciples (also known as "apostles"; Luke 6:13). Peter (also called Simon or Cephas; John 1:42) was known for being impulsive (examples: Matthew 14:22–28; 16:22; 26:35; Mark 9:5–6; John 18:10). Despite that fact—or perhaps because of it—he seems to have held a special place among the Twelve. He is named first in all four listings of those Twelve (Matthew 10:2–4; Mark 3:16–19; Luke 6:14–16; Acts 1:13). Jesus conferred on him the “the keys of the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 16:19). After Jesus' ascension, Peter was a leader of the first-century church (see Acts 1:15–17; 2:14–40; 15:6–29). The apostle was chosen to be the first to take the gospel to the Gentiles (Acts 10; 15:7), but his ministry was primarily to the Jews (Galatians 2:1–10). In that position, he experienced persecution (example: Acts 12:1–4), which informed his outlook

regarding suffering and trials.

The letter of 1 Peter is one of two existing letters by that apostle (1 Peter 1:1; 2 Peter 1:1). The recipients of both letters were the various churches found in an area of northeastern Asia Minor, located in modern-day Turkey (1 Peter 1:1; 2 Peter 3:1). The first letter was likely intended to be circulated among the regions, perhaps by way of Silas, an assistant to Peter (1 Peter 5:12).

The occasion for Peter's letter was primarily a response to the suffering of believers, particularly since more was yet to come (see 1 Peter 1:6–7; etc.). Peter could address whatever suffering his audience had or would experience because he had been “a witness of Christ's sufferings” (1 Peter 5:1); Peter himself had suffered for that name (Acts 12).

QUESTION(S)

- What might prevent Christians from experiencing God's gift of unity?
- Which situations are most difficult for us to not respond with **evil for evil**?
- What blessings have you experienced during or following suffering for righteousness sake?
- How would someone hearing you speak about your hope describe your attitude?

CONCLUSION

Finding Meaning

Few of us will experience the level of suffering endured by the martyrs of Christian history. However, that does not make Peter's directives any less applicable—quite the opposite! When faced with suffering, we may search for meaning in that experience. The question asked relentlessly is, Why?

That question is natural and understandable. But it must also be temporary because ultimately the Why? needs to change to What's next? This is a way that our response to suffering can also serve as a way to point people to a life of faith in Jesus. God wants the best for people. When such suffering occurs, believers should remember to be unified in demonstrating trust in God.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we thank You for being with us in all situations. Help us be unified with other believers. Show us how we can be attentive to the working of Your Spirit. Fill us with peace and humility in all the trials that we might face. We trust that You will work through us to complete Your will in the world. In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.

THOUGHT TO REMEMBER

Let suffering strengthen your faith.

ANTICIPATING THE NEXT LESSON

Next week's lesson is called "*Stand Up for God,*" where we analyze the "ends justify the means" tactic used by Stephen's opponents. Study Acts 6:7–15.