

# Studies in I Peter

## I Peter 3:13-18

### *If We Should Suffer for Righteousness*

Sunday, May 10, 2020

Intro: I Peter 3:9b-12 was a transitional paragraph leading into Peter's main subject of this letter. Peter really wants to talk about suffering for one's faith in Christ and this topic occupies most of the rest of the letter. As we move through it we will come upon some of the most difficult verses in the New Testament to interpret; not that the understanding is crucial to the faith, but that they are as interesting as they are difficult. We must remember always that God does not waste words and that Peter is speaking by Divine inspiration.

#### **I. Peter Asks a Rhetorical Question (v.13)**

- A. It is not expected to suffer for doing what is right
- B. This concept is expressed in many sayings and proverbs, both within the Scriptures and in the general literature
- C. People who live righteously and do what is right are typically left alone, or, at best, even recognized and rewarded

#### **II. Suffering & Blessing (v.14)**

- A. But what if you should suffer for doing what is right (this was the main concern of Peter's audience)
- B. Firstly, Peter states clearly that you are blessed
  1. What does it mean to be blessed? Is it merely "happy"?
  2. Who is happy when they are suffering or being persecuted?
  3. There is teeth in the blessing, it actually means something good will happen to you, if not now, then most especially, eternally
- C. Secondly, Peter says we are not to fear
  1. Fear is the most common human emotion when we are threatened
  2. Yet, for a believer it is a state we should never accept as normative  
God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, and love, and a sound mind
  3. Fear results in (a) irrational and panicked behavior, or (b) angry outbursts, or (c) paralysis of action. We must recognize the power that is ours in Christ Jesus, the love we can have for our persecutors, and have the sound mind to behave thoughtfully and rationally
  4. Do not fear and do not be troubled, he says

#### **III. Put Christ First and Be Prepared (vv.15-16)**

- A. Sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts
- B. Be ready to explain your hope to everyone who asks, but with gentleness & reverence
- C. Keep a good conscience so when you are slandered those who slander you will be put to shame by their obvious lie

#### **IV. It Is Better to Suffer for Doing What is Right, Rather than doing What is Wrong (vv.17-18)**

- A. "If God should will it so...". We must realize that there is no temptation taken us but that God will make a way of escape; also that Satan and his demonic powers are still held in check by God and nothing can touch us that He does not allow—for our good!
- B. Jesus Christ, the only truly righteous One, died for our sins; He suffered on our behalf
- C. Was He blessed? YES! "Who for the joy set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame
- D. He was raised from the dead to reign eternally from the Throne of God