

Session 8 – 1 Peter 3:13 - 4:6

The Promise of Vindication

*Hope in Suffering:
Studies in First Peter*

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1. The Logic of our Text

- **(3:10-13) The Truth:** If God is for you, no one can do you _____.
 - (3:10-12) God is ___ the righteous
 - (3:13) You are zealous to do _____
- **(3:14-17) The Apparent Contradiction:** But even if, temporarily now, you should suffer for doing right, it's to your _____ so respond rightly!
 - (3:14) Don't _____ men
 - (3:15) Set Christ apart as Lord in your heart
 - (3:15) Be ready to give an _____ to those with questions
 - (3:16-17) Keep a good conscience
- **(3:18-22) The Example of Christ:** Christ persevered in suffering for doing right and was vindicated.
 - (3:18) Jesus suffered, the righteous for the unrighteous.
 - (3:18-19) Jesus was _____ from the dead and proclaimed his victory over demonic spirits.
 - (3:22) Jesus is now exalted at the right hand of God with all authorities and powers _____ to him.
- **(4:1-6) The Only Reasonable Response:** Therefore, choose to suffer for doing right (God's will) because this is the _____ to victory and vindication.
 - (4:1-2) Since Christ chose the path of righteous suffering (and was vindicated), you also embrace suffering when it lies in the path of God's will.
 - (4:3-6) Remember that those who choose the course of this world, and refuse to do the will of God will very soon give an _____ to God the righteous judge.

2. In Depth: Christ's Example (3:18-22)

Consider Christ (v. 18-19)

- **Spirits:** In his resurrected state or during his ascension, Christ proclaimed victory and judgment over all _____ powers represented by the angels who sinned by "marrying" women according to Gen 6:1-4. (Majority view)

Outline for 1 Peter:

- Salutation (1:1-2)
- God's Gracious Activity in the Lives of Suffering Believers (1:3-2:10)
- The Mission of Suffering Believers in the World (2:11-4:6)
 - The General Strategy (2:11-12)
 - The Specific Strategy (2:13-3:12)
- **The Promise of Vindication (3:13-4:6)**
 - The Mission of Suffering Believers in the Church (4:7-5:11)
 - Final Greeting (5:12-14)

Notes

Other Major Views:

- **Humans:** Christ (in spirit) preached through Noah to those who lived while Noah was building the Ark but are now “spirits in prison” (people in hell). (Augustine, Aquinas, Guthrie, Grudem)
- **Humans:** Christ went and liberated OT saints (in prison) between his death and resurrection. (Calvin)
- **Humans:** After his death, Christ went to hell and preached the gospel, offering them a second chance of salvation. (Barclay)
- **Humans:** After his death, Christ went to hell and proclaimed to people his victory and their condemnation. (Lenski)

Arguments for View:

- **Linguistically:**

- **“Spirits”**= Almost without exception, the plural form of “pneuma” refers to _____ (mostly evil) (Heb. 12:13 is the only place “spirits” refers to human beings).

- **“Prison”**= It is used 47 times to speak of a physical earthly prison. It is _____ used as a place of punishment for humans after death. It is used 3x in Revelation, twice to refer to a place for evil spirits (Rev 18:2) and once as Satan’s place of confinement during the millennium (Rev 20:7).

- **Contextually:** The knowledge that all powers, all authorities, all demons, all people are under the subjection of Christ would bring enormous _____ to suffering believers.

- **Theologically:** Christ’s death, resurrection and ascension in the NT is repeatedly _____ to his triumph over demonic powers (Col. 2:14-15; Heb. 2:14; Eph 1:19-22).

- **Historically:** The accepted Jewish interpretation of Gen. 6:1-4 can be found in the literature of Peter’s day (1 Enoch 6-19, 21, 86-88; Jub. 4:15, 22, 5:1; T. Reu. 5:6-7; T. Naph 3:5; 2 Bar. 56:10-14; Jos. Ant. 1:73). Jews of the first century, including, I think, Peter, believed that prior to the flood, angels cohabitated with women producing giants. This resulted in so much evil that God destroyed the earth via a flood and, according to Jewish tradition, imprisoned the angels who sinned. What is interesting is that a connection was made between the angel’s sin and the presence of evil spirits on the earth.

- Whether Peter believed in every detail of this tradition cannot be known. That he is alluding to it in order to make a point is difficult to deny.

Remember Noah (v.20)

Noah	Peter's Readers
Righteous minority	Righteous _____
Surrounded by hostile unbelievers	Surrounded by _____ unbelievers
God's judgment is delayed for a time giving opportunity for repentance	God's judgment is _____ for a time giving opportunity for repentance
An Ark is being built through which Noah and his family escape judgment	A "Spiritual house" is being _____ through which one escapes judgment
Noah witnessed boldly by his actions	They should witness boldly by their _____
Salvation is experienced by passing through the waters of the flood	Salvation is experienced by passing through the waters of _____
Noah was finally vindicated	They will finally be _____

- Noah made the _____ that it was better to suffer now for doing God's will than to suffer judgment later.

Remember your Baptism (v. 21)

- **Water=** typifies _____ and _____.
- **An appeal to God for/from a good conscience:** Two possibilities
 - Pledge (as in a legal contract) to God _____ a good conscience.
 - Appeal (request, prayer) to God _____ a good conscience
- In baptism, we ask God, on the basis of Christ's death and resurrection, that He would _____ us from sin and an evil conscience.
- When we get baptized, we are like the few in Noah's day, who make the _____ that it is better to be identified with Christ now and suffer with Christ now than suffer judgment later.

Again... Consider Christ (v. 22)

- Christ made the _____ that it was better to suffer for doing God's will and was vindicated. All things, whether angels, or authorities, or powers have been subjected (hupotasso- same word as 2:13, 18; 3:1) to him.

"The waters of baptism, like the waters of the flood, demonstrate that destruction is at hand, but believers are rescued from these waters in that they are baptized with Christ, who has also emerged from the waters of death through his resurrection."

(Schreiner 194)

3. In Depth: Preaching to the Dead (4:6)

- “Gospel had been preached even to the dead” =
 - _____ dead (Augustine, Luther)
 - Second _____ after death. (Barclay)
 - Gospel had been preached to people who were alive but are “_____” dead. (Majority, NIV)
- **Summary:** “Unbelievers viewed the death of believers as proof that there is no advantage in becoming a believer, for all without exception die. Peter indicated, however, that unbelievers do not understand the whole picture. Even though from a human perspective believers seem to gain no benefits from their faith since they die, from God’s perspective (which is normative), they live according to the Spirit.” (Schreiner 208)
- **Paraphrase:** We preach the gospel to people who will die so that even though they experience _____ in the flesh and thus are judged according to men, they might _____ according to God by means of the Spirit.

Notes

Question for August 5

What does Peter mean in 4:17-18 when he implies that their participation in the sufferings of Christ (4:13) is in fact God’s judgment on his people? What light does Malachi 2:17-3:6 shed on 1 Peter 4:17-18?

4. Conclusion

Christ’s (2:21-25)

_____ Realm: “in the flesh”

- Christ is our _____
- _____
 - _____
 - No Retribution

Christ’s (3:18-22)

_____ Realm: “by the Spirit”

- Christ is our _____
- _____
 - Bold
 - In Your _____

