



<b>SERIES:</b>	60   & 2 Peter - Rock Solid - 2013
<b>MESSAGE:</b>	<b>When Holiness Meets Hostility</b>
<b>SPEAKER:</b>	Skip Heitzig
<b>SCRIPTURE:</b>	1 Peter 3:13-17

## MESSAGE SUMMARY

Faith is not neutral. It's a powerful and dynamic force that changes behavior (if it is genuine faith). Unbelief is also a powerful force, and when believers try to live out their faith in an unbelieving environment, there are some predictable and unavoidable results. Let's consider four truths from Peter's pen that will be helpful when God's holy people meet up with a hostile world.

## DETAILED NOTES

- I. Introduction
  - A. What does a preacher say when he hits his thumb with a hammer?
  - B. The world is always watching Christians; what happens when your holiness meets the world's hostility?
  - C. Graham Staines and his two sons burned to death in India because they were Christians
  - D. Peter offers the believer two possibilities
    1. You do good and the world leaves you alone
    2. You do good and the world harms you
- II. Normally, Goodness Is Profitable (v. 13)
  - A. Doing good usually works out for the believer
    1. Verse 13 is a rhetorical question
    2. Answer? Nobody!
  - B. The history of Christianity is, in part, the history of societies benefitting from the goodness of Christians who live in them
    1. Human and women's rights
    2. Hospitals and education
    3. Eradicating slavery (England); child labor laws
    4. Alexis de Tocqueville saw the impact of Christianity on American culture
- III. Eventually, Persecution Is Inevitable (vv. 14, 17)
  - A. Isaiah 8:12
  - B. Being righteous will not make you immune to trouble
    1. John 3:19
    2. 2 Timothy 3:12
  - C. The world will tolerate you, but not for long
  - D. If people's eyes are adjusted to darkness and you shine a light on them, they will not be happy with you
  - E. Jesus Christ went about doing good (see Acts 10:38), but the world still killed Him
  - F. Persecution is the result of obedience; great persecution is the result of the Great Commission

- G. People will eventually ask you why you do good things; when you say you do them because you love Jesus, sparks will fly
- H. John 15:18-20
  - I. Christians aren't better than anyone else, but we are better off than everyone else, and we have a better message; John 14:6
  - J. Blessed are those who are persecuted for *righteousness'* sake (see Matthew 5:10)
    - 1. You can be persecuted for being obnoxious, but you won't be blessed for it
    - 2. Matthew 10:16
    - 3. The Lord is looking for sharpshooters, not grenade launchers
    - 4. *Blessed* means honored by God
- IV. Practically, Reasons Are Beneficial (v. 15)
  - A. People will ask why you're doing what you're doing—you need to be ready to share your reasons
  - B. Better translation of "sanctify the Lord God in your hearts" is "set apart Jesus Christ as Lord in your heart"
    - 1. In the early days of the church, a Christian wouldn't get in trouble for saying "Jesus Christ is God," but "Jesus Christ is Lord," because *Lord* was the title reserved for Caesar, considered the lord above all gods
    - 2. Setting apart Jesus as Lord needs to start inwardly with your heart before you can take it outwardly to the world
    - 3. The only way you can stand publicly is because you can kneel privately, like Daniel (see Daniel 1:8)
  - C. *Defense = apologia* (Greek)
    - 1. We get *apology* and *apologetics* from it, meaning to have a defense or to offer an explanation
    - 2. Can also mean, in reference to ancient lawyers, to stand in a courtroom and give good, compelling reasons on behalf of a client
    - 3. This world is a living courtroom; believers are always on trial
    - 4. Unbelievers have really good questions—Christians ought to have really good answers
    - 5. Do you know why you believe what you believe?
  - D. The Bible encourages Christians to think
    - 1. "Love the Lord your God... with all your *mind*" (see Matthew 22:37; emphasis added)
    - 2. "Any Christian who cannot present a biblically clear explanation of their faith will be insecure when strongly challenged by unbelievers. In some cases, that insecurity can undermine their own assurance of salvation. The world's attacks can overwhelm them"
  - E. *Meekness and fear* means gentleness and respect
    - 1. The goal is not winning the argument; the goal is saving the soul
    - 2. It takes time
- V. Inwardly, Conscience Is Indispensable (v. 16)
  - A. Your conscience is a divinely implanted mechanism whereby you either feel accused or excused, convicted or confirmed
  - B. At salvation, your conscience is cleansed—Hebrews 9:14
  - C. You must win the inward war with sin to keep your conscience clear
  - D. Acts 23:1

- E. Peter's point: a clear conscience will help you face a hostile world
- VI. Closing
  - A. Graham Staines' wife Gladys and daughter survived
    - 1. Gladys wrote a letter that was published in Indian newspapers
    - 2. She said she would stay in India to spread God's love
  - B. That's how a Christian should respond to having their thumb hit with a hammer—with love, forgiveness, and grace

**Figures Referenced:** Graham Staines, Gladys Staines, Alexis de Tocqueville, Caesar

**Greek/Hebrew words:** apologia

**Cross references:** Isaiah 8:12, Daniel 1:8, Matthew 10:16; 22:37, John 3:19; 14:6; 15:18-20, Acts 10:38; 23:1, 2 Timothy 3:12, Hebrews 9:14, 1 Peter 3:10, 13-17

**Topic:** Persecution

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