

## Learn to Say No to Fear

*Strangers and Aliens*

1 Peter 3:13-4:6

February 16, 2020

### THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE

*Context:*

Peter is writing to Christians who were forced to flee Rome because of heavy persecution. They were starting to feel the pressure of living in a culture that was hostile toward them. Thus, the apostle sought to comfort them. He wanted them to thrive and be a light for Christ.

He assured them that their trials were for the purpose of growing their faith and that a great inheritance awaited them in heaven. He called them to be holy and to love each other, while proclaiming the glory of Christ, and submitting to earthly authorities.

But it can be frightening to live in a hostile world. Peter desired to encourage these precious believers that when they held fast to Christ, lived holy lives, and were willing to suffer, they could live in peace. This text hits close to home. You can live without fear.

### Key Scripture -

#### 1 Peter 3:13-4:6

<sup>13</sup> Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good? <sup>14</sup> But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, <sup>15</sup> but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, <sup>16</sup> having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. <sup>17</sup> For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil.

<sup>18</sup> For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, <sup>19</sup> in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison, <sup>20</sup> because they formerly did not obey, when

God's patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water. <sup>21</sup> Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, <sup>22</sup> who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.

**4** Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same way of thinking, for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, <sup>2</sup> so as to live for the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for human passions but for the will of God. <sup>3</sup> For the time that is past suffices for doing what the Gentiles want to do, living in sensuality, passions, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and lawless idolatry. <sup>4</sup> With respect to this they are surprised when you do not join them in the same flood of debauchery, and they malign you; <sup>5</sup> but they will give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. <sup>6</sup> For this is why the gospel was preached even to those who are dead, that though judged in the flesh the way people are, they might live in the spirit the way God does.

## **DISCUSSION & APPLICATION**

- 1. What scares you? As you examine the world you live in, what circumstances, or people, cause you anxiety and worry?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 2. Peter commands us to "say no to fear." One of the tools that can help us do that is living a righteous life. Living in holiness keeps us close to Christ where there is great security. Are there areas in your life you can identify that are keeping you out of fellowship with Jesus? What would it take for you to change?**

**3. In a paradoxical way, Peter offers another tool to stave off fear: Suffering. When we are willing to suffer, we can live without the fear of being harmed. We understand at a deep level, that we are the Lord's forever, regardless of what happens on earth. Are you willing to suffer? What would suffering look like in your life?**

**4. Jesus is the anchor that can help you live without fear. The Lord said in John 16:33: "I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world." Take some time to thank him and ask him to encourage you and give you courage.**

## **NEXT WEEK'S TOPIC**

**February 23<sup>rd</sup>: The Hope of Christ's Return and a New Home - 1 Peter 4:7-11**

