

Nice To Meet You.



Passage: 1 Peter 3:13-17

¹³Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good? ¹⁴But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, ¹⁵but 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, ¹⁶having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. ¹⁷For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil.

Background

Today we launch a new sermon series, Nice to Meet You, as we consider the ways God opens opportunities for us to share with others about our relationship with Jesus. In this opening message, Pastor David will show us how the apostle Peter challenged the persecuted believers scattered across the Roman Empire to live a holy life in a hostile environment so that when pressed they will be fully prepared to explain why they have hope in the midst of suffering. While we might not face the same exact challenge as the first century believers, if we live with great HOPE because of Jesus, especially after the year we have all experienced, our lives will cause others to want to know what is different about us. As we engage in genuine conversation with others, we can share the hope we have and truly help others leave that conversation saying, "It was nice to meet you!"

Service Notes

What is your biggest takeaway from today's message?



DISCUSSION GUIDE

Instructions

This discussion guide is to help you facilitate a conversation with your small group. The “Getting Started” section serves as a quick opener and introduction to the group conversation. In the “Talk it Over” section, feel free to use all or only some of the questions. Again, our hope is to have meaningful and encouraging conversations around the passage used in the sermon, not simply answer all the questions. Give each member of your group opportunity to respond. Take your time. Finally, the “Live it Out” section is to help identify a specific next step. Use these questions as a guide to find practical ways to apply the passage to our everyday life.

Getting Started

- ▼ What do you believe God is teaching you through this passage right now? How can you put into practice what He is teaching you? What is one thought from the message that made you hopeful? What prompted questions? How can we pray for you this week?

Talk it Over

- ▼ What keeps us from being “prepared” or prevents us from genuinely sharing the hope we have in Jesus when others may ask? How would you explain in a few sentences the reason you have hope despite difficult or even tragic circumstances in your life? Who do you know who embodies the principle in this passage? How has that encouraged you?
- ▼ Peter tells us how to offer our answer to others—with gentleness (or meekness) and respect (fear/reverence). Why is the manner in which we answer others (even those who persecute us) so important for communicating our message? What does it look like to answer someone like this? How do we often mess this up? How can we overcome the temptation to ‘win an argument’ but ‘lose the person’?
- ▼ **Read Acts 16:25-34.** How did Paul and Silas maximize their difficult circumstance to share the hope of Jesus? How did Paul and Silas share the right message in the right manner as Peter described? What are some practical ways that we can be more prepared to tell people about Christ when we face persecution? What are other biblical examples of people prepared to give an answer for the hope they have?

Live it Out

- ▼ Who is the one person this week God continues to bring into your life that you need to share the hope of Jesus with? Ask your group to hold you accountable to take every opportunity this week to start (or continue) a spiritual conversation with that person.

