

When They Ask

Problem:

Acts 16:16-18 - why was Paul annoyed? Because she took all credibility from the truth.

we study evangelistic techniques to tell people news they are not interested in. we study apologetics to answer questions no one is asking.

the world hates the gospel but we don't even get to give the gospel - they are not even rejecting the real thing because they are often first rejecting us. often we are not compelling. we look identical to them with a different jersey.

Text:

Be a blessing no matter what

1Pet. 3:8 ¶ Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind.

1Pet. 3:9 **Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless**, for to this you were called, that you may obtain a **blessing**. (*eschatological reference to the kingdom*)

1Pet. 3:10 For

“Whoever desires to love life
and see good days, (*eternal life*)

let him keep his tongue from evil
and his lips from speaking deceit;

1Pet. 3:11 let him turn away from evil and do good;
let him seek peace and pursue it.

1Pet. 3:12 For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous,
and his ears are open to their prayer.

But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.”

do not repay - why? 1 Peter 2:21-23; Luke 6:27-36 -> Rom 12:14-21

(1 Thess 5:15); 1 Cor 4:11-16

called to this - 3:8 and psalm 34 > used with eternity in view—> 1 Peter 1:3-9

this is the whole point of the letter in essence - heavenly pragmatism

and always be prepared to explain why

1Pet. 3:13 ¶ Now who is there to (*that will*) harm you if you are zealous for what is good?

1Pet. 3:14 But even if you should suffer (**small possibility**) for righteousness' sake, you will be **blessed**. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled,

1Pet. 3:15 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,

1Pet. 3:16 having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame.

1Pet. 3:17 For it is better to **suffer** for doing good, **if that should be God's will** (again a possibility **but not normative**), than for doing evil.

(13) who can harm you - Rom 8:31-39; (zech 3); psalm 118:5-7;

(14) even if you should suffer (4th class condition low probability generally)

our normal testimony- 1 Tim 2:1-4

(14) have no fear of them - Isaiah 8:11-13 don't fear what they do -> ISIS etc.; Luke 12:4-5

*(15) your submission is entirely reasonable - **our extreme testimony***

-not a weakness but a real heavenly pragmatism - phil 4:4-9

-consider yourself blessed when you face unfair treatment

When They Ask

*-present suffering is distinct from ultimate suffering - we know this from sports analogies: present suffering for a great reward
(16) put to shame- 1 Pet 2:4-8; (every knee bow or is made to bow)*

when they ask

Implication: Acts 16:19-32

unjust suffering is your chance to differentiate yourself and the gospel from all the noise

someone is watching you

to fail to act on the truth when it costs you something
may cost them everything.

Application:

you must know the right answers

Action: theology and apologetics - tuesday nights

and cause the right questions

Action: Your good attitude while suffering unjustly may be the price tag for a listening ear about the gospel.

Main Idea:

We are not called merely to know the right answers - we are called to cause the right questions

Here are some articles to discuss and study further:

on the one hand we looked at **our normal testimony**- 1 Tim 2:1-4 -I would add 1 Thess 4:11
here is a great article to think about:

<http://blog.acton.org/archives/53944-the-new-legalism-missional-radical-narcissistic-and-shamed.html>

on the other hand we are all called to suffer but some uniquely suffer unjustly for the sake of Christ and it must be counted as a privilege:

<http://www.christianpost.com/news/indian-missionaries-call-it-a-privilege-to-suffer-45207/>