



The Scrolls

Helping **CENTRAL BIBLE CHURCH** Families Belong, Become and Go Beyond V26 N16 April 21, 2024

HIGHER UP

“When Jesus is Lord (Part 1)”

1 Peter 3:13-18a

THIS WEEK'S CORE COMPETENCY

Jesus Christ

I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God, who became man, died for sinners, and rose from the dead.

“The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.”

Hebrews 1:3



How can believers take advantage of suffering?

In 1 Peter 3:15, the apostle writes: “But in your hearts revere *Christ* as Lord.” Of course, he is referring to *Jesus*, for in 1:3, he writes: “Praise be to the God and Father of our *Lord* Jesus Christ!” It’s interesting to note how many times the words *Jesus*, *Christ*, and *Lord* appear in the same New Testament context – at least eighty-three. In the vast majority of these, the title “Lord Jesus Christ” is used to refer to Jesus of Nazareth. In the book of Romans alone, a number of passages refer to “*the* Lord Jesus Christ” (e.g., 1:7; 13:14), “Jesus Christ *our* Lord” (e.g., Rom 1:4; 5:21; 7:25), “*our* Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom 5:1, 11; 15:6), and in one other Pauline passage to “*my* Lord Jesus Christ” (Php 3:8). Moreover, in Philippians 2:11, Paul writes: “Jesus Christ *is* Lord” – cf. “Jesus Christ *as* Lord” (2Co 4:5) and “Christ Jesus *as* Lord” (Col 2:6). In Peter’s second epistle, he refers to “our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” three times (1:11; 2:20; 3:18).

But what does “revere Christ as Lord” actually mean? Does it not mean, acknowledge him as your sovereign God? To answer that question, one must understand that “Lord” (Gk. *kurios*) when used with reference to Jesus, while sometimes a polite form of address (e.g., Mt 8:8, 21; 15:27; 17:15; 18:21), most often is a substitute for Yahweh (*yhwh*), “the LORD” of the Old Testament, the Creator and Sustainer of heaven and earth, the omnipotent sovereign God. So one theologian writes: “When *kurios* is applied to Jesus, it is an unambiguous affirmation of deity, with only a few exceptions” (Stephen J. Wellum, *God the Son Incarnate*, 200).

There are many instances in the New Testament where “Lord” is used of Jesus

Christ with this sense “the LORD” who is Yahweh or God himself – not only in the Gospels (cf. Lk 1:43; 2:11, 18; Mt 3:3; 22:44), but also in the epistles. Another theologian writes: “Such usage is seen frequently in the Epistles, where ‘the Lord’ is a common name to refer to Christ. Paul says, ‘there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and *one* Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist’ (1 Cor. 8:6; cf. 12:3, and many other passages in the Pauline epistles).

“A particularly clear passage is found in Hebrews 1, where the author quotes Psalm 102, which speaks about the work of the Lord in creation and applies it to Christ:

You, Lord, founded the earth in the beginning,

and the heavens are the work of your hands;

they will perish, but you remain;
they will all grow old like a garment,
like a mantle you will roll them up,
and they will be changed.

But you are the same,

And your years will never end. (Heb. 1:10-12)

“Here Christ is explicitly spoken of as the eternal Lord of heaven and earth who created all things and will remain the same forever. Such strong usage of the term ‘Lord’ to refer to Christ culminates in Revelation 19:16, where we see Christ returning as conquering King, and ‘On his robe and on his thigh he has a name inscribed, King of kings and *Lord of lords*’” (Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 544-45).

1

EXAMINE GOD'S WORD

Read 1 Peter 3:13-18a

13 Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good? 14 But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. "Do not fear their threats; do not be frightened." 15 But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, 16 keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. 17 For it is better, if it is God's will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil. 18a For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God.

Read in another translation

13 Now, who will want to harm you if you are eager to do good? 14 But even if you suffer for doing what is right, God will reward you for it. So don't worry or be afraid of their threats. 15 Instead, you must worship Christ as Lord of your life. And if someone asks about your hope as a believer, always be ready to explain it. 16 But do this in a gentle and respectful way. Keep your conscience clear. Then if people speak against you, they will be ashamed when they see what a good life you live because you belong to Christ. 17 Remember, it is better to suffer for doing good, if that is what God wants, than to suffer for doing wrong!

18a Christ suffered for our sins once for all time. He never sinned, but he died for sinners to bring you safely home to God. (NLT)

After reading the text, practice your Observation skills by noting the following:

- Bracket the rhetorical question in v. 13.
- Box "But" indicating *contrast* in vv. 14, 15 (2x).
- Box "even if" indicating a *condition* in v. 14.
- Bracket "you are blessed" in v. 14.
- Highlight the quotation in v. 14.
- Circle "their" in v. 14.
- Circle "revere" in v. 15.
- Circle "reason" in v. 15.
- Circle "hope" in v. 15.
- Circle "clear conscience" in v. 16.
- Bracket "in Christ" in v. 16.
- Box "so that" indicating *purpose/result* in v. 16.
- Box "For" indicating *reason* in v. 17.

Underline "if it is God's will" in v. 17. What one word would you use to describe the **TONE** of this passage? (i.e., stern, joyful, cautious, etc.)

What word or idea stands out to you in this passage?

What one thing do you not understand in this passage?

Try to summarize the **THEME** of this passage in one word. If you were going to describe these verses, you might say, "This text is about _____."



DIG DEEPER

Answer the questions to help you apply the passage and prepare for discussion

1. Express the *meaning* of the rhetorical question (v. 13) in a *direct* statement.
2. Explain *why* the *meaning* of the rhetorical question is *true* in general.
3. *What* are the *chances* Peter's readers will in fact suffer for doing what is right?
4. In what sense are believers "blessed" (v. 14) should they suffer for doing what is right?
5. Put what "revere Christ as Lord" (v. 15) means in your own words.
6. How is regarding "Christ as Lord" an *antidote* to fear and being frightened?
7. *What* should believers *always* be prepared to do? Explain.
8. Explain the *contrast* between verses 15b and 16.
9. *What* does "keeping a clear conscience" (v. 16) mean, and *how* does one do that?
10. **Discussion:** Talk about why it's better to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.

Commentary On The Text

In 1 Peter 3:13, after wrapping up his section on household codes (2:11-3:12), the apostle begins a new section of his epistle. One commentator describes what his readers have in store this way: “Peter has now instructed various groups with specific guidelines on how to live in a world that is hostile to their presence. What has surrounded the discussion has been the problem of suffering; this is, his guidelines for these groups have been shaped under the fire of persecution. Peter now gives his principles for enduring suffering in a way that is thoroughly Christian. His first guideline, that good behavior will ultimately lead to victory (3:12-22), is followed in chapter 4 with the present value of suffering (4:1-6)” (Scot McKnight, *The NIV Application Commentary: 1 Peter*, 211-12).

Verse 13 opens with a rhetorical question—“Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good?”—which links to the thought of verse 12—“For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.” On this link, one commentator explains: “This statement carries on what the psalmist said in the quotation just cited. If God will punish those who do evil (v. 12), who will harm those who do good? God certainly will not, is the implication, and under normal circumstances no other person will either” (Thomas L. Constable, “Notes on 1 Peter,” 2024 ed., 78, planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/1peter.pdf). Peter’s reasoning echoes that of Paul in Romans 8:31, “If God is for us, who can be against us?”

Somewhat ironically, after questioning that believers will suffer for doing good, Peter acknowledges that although unlikely, some will *in fact* suffer (v. 14). (By the way, suffering in this context means to “suffer grief in all kinds of trials” (1:6), not to suffer illness, accidents, natural disasters, etc.) But those who *do* suffer are “blessed,” that is, they enjoy God’s favor. As the psalmist says, he sees what they’re going through, hears their prayers, and turns his face toward them to help (v. 12; cf. Ps 34:12-16). Later Peter writes: “If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you . . . if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name” (4:14, 16).

Consequently, believers should not fear nor be frightened of their persecutors. Instead, they should continue to acknowledge “in their hearts” Jesus

Christ as their sovereign Lord *God* (v. 14). Remember that “Lord” (Gk. *kurios*) when used with reference to Jesus, while sometimes a polite form of address (e.g., Mt 8:8, 21; 15:27; 17:15; 18:21), most often is a substitute for Yahweh (*yhwh*), “the LORD” of the Old Testament, the Creator and Sustainer of heaven and earth, the omnipotent sovereign God. It is this *holy fear* or reverence for Christ “that drives out *other fears*, and makes possible an honest and effective response to interrogation” (J. Ramsey Michaels, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 49, *1 Peter*, 187).

And regardless of whether believers suffer or not, they should always be prepared to explain the reason for their hope of salvation “that is ready to be revealed in the last time” (1:5)—although they are to do “this” (v. 15), namely, answer their interrogators, “with gentleness and respect,” all the while maintaining their moral integrity. As another commentator explains: “Christians ought to defend the Lord in a humble and respectful manner. Such a manner can lead both to conversions (3:1-2) and to leniency when persecution strikes (3:13). Moreover, if they live a good life before their opponents, they can have a ‘clear conscience’ (Rom. 2:15; 9:1; 2 Cor. 1:12)” (McKnight, 214). If believers do as Peter says, those who accuse them will be ashamed of their slander.

Peter concludes his discussion of suffering for doing good by appealing again to the example of Jesus (vv. 17-18a; cf. 2:21-23). He writes: “It is better, if it is God’s will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil” (v. 17), which invites the following question: Why is it better to suffer for doing good than doing evil? He then answers that question: “For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God” (v. 18a). In other words, it is better to suffer for doing good because that is what Jesus did. He suffered for doing good and was ultimately vindicated by God. Note this analysis of Peter’s thinking: “Such wrongful suffering patiently endured is so remarkable that it becomes a powerful form of witness, leading unbelievers to salvation (cf. 2:12; 3:1-2). This understanding is confirmed by the following verse, which shows that Christ himself also suffered unjustly ‘that he might bring us to God’. . . Just as Christ endured unjust suffering for our salvation, Peter reasons, so we are blessed by God if we endure unjust suffering for the salvation of others” (Wayne Grudem, *1 Peter*, TNTC, 154-55).

Word Studies/Notes

v. 13 *Who is . . .* Lit., “zealous of good.” I.e., “No one is going to harm you if you are eager to do good.” “If Christians have the zeal for good that Psalm 34 speaks of, who will do them harm?” (Edwin A. Blum, “1 Peter,” in *The Bible Expositor’s Commentary*, vol. 12, 239). The rhetorical question “implies that harm is not the normal expectation, for usually those who do what is right are rewarded, not punished” (Wayne Grudem, *1 Peter*, TNTC, 151). Nevertheless, Peter is aware that believers will from time to time endure suffering (cf. 1:6-7; 2:11-12, 15, 18-25; 3:9).

v. 14 *even if* “The verb form (optative) is the one a writer would use to speak of an event he considered unlikely, and the phrase even if contributes further to the sense of unlikelihood implied” (Grudem, 151). The conditional clause (fourth class) has a “future less probable” sense.

v. 14 *you are blessed* “This blessing includes the favour of God in general, but more specifically the readers would think of the blessing promised to the ‘righteous’ in verse 12. The word *makarios* (‘blessed’) has the sense ‘blessed, happy’, with emphasis on blessing which comes from God (cf. Mt. 5:11-12)” (Grudem, 151) — “a gift of the *divine favor* to human beings” (Norman Hillyer, *1 and 2 Peter, Jude*, NIBC, 110, italics added).

v. 14 *“Do not fear . . .”* Lit., “Do not fear the fear of them.” Peter’s quotation, based on Isa 8:12-13, extends into verse 15. “Grk ‘do not fear their fear,’ referring to those who cause their suffering. The phrase ‘their fear’ [lit., fear of them] may mean ‘what they fear’ (subjective genitive) [cf. HCSB], but in a situation of persecution it more likely means ‘fear of them’ (objective genitive) [cf. ESV, NASB 1995]” (*The NET Bible*, 22tn on 1 Pe 3:14).

v. 14 *their threats* I.e. the threats of any who should cause Peter’s readers to suffer.

v. 15 *revere* Cf. “honor Christ the Lord as holy” (ESV); “sanctify Christ as Lord” (NASB 1995); “set Christ apart as Lord” (NET) — “in your hearts.” *Revere* “translates *hagiazō*, which normally means ‘sanctify, make holy’, but here seems to have the sense, ‘treat as holy, regard reverently’ (it has a similar sense in Mt. 6:9, ‘hallowed be thy name’, or ‘may your name be revered’)” (Grudem, 152). “This acknowledgement must take place, Peter says, ‘in your hearts,’ as the positive counterpart to the ‘fear’ against which he has just issued a warning . . . It is this ‘holy fear,’ or respectful awe focused on Christ, that drives out

other fears, and makes possible an honest and effective response to interrogation” ‘fear’ against which he has just issued a warning . . . It is this ‘holy fear,’ or respectful awe focused on Christ, that drives out other fears, and makes possible an honest and effective response to interrogation” (J. Ramsey Michaels, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 49, *1 Peter*, 187). “In biblical revelation, the heart is the religious center of man (cf. DNTT, 2:180-84). When the center of one’s life is rightly related to God, he is able to respond properly to the vicissitudes of life” (Blum, 240).

v. 15 *reason* Cf. “a defense” (ESV); “an answer” (NIV©1984, NET); “an explanation” (NCB). “The type of questioning could be either official interrogations by the governmental authorities — the word for ‘answer’ (*apologia*) can relate to a formal inquiry (cf. Acts 25:16; 26:2; 2 Tim 4:16) — or informal questioning” (Blum, 240). Although *apologia* frequently refers to the reply to an accusation, “Peter must be assuming that the inward hope of Christians result in lives so noticeable different that unbelievers are prompted to ask why they are so distinctive (cf. 4:4). Christians therefore should always be ready (prepared) to give an answer” (Grudem, 153; cf. Blum, 240).

v. 15 *hope* I.e., understood *inclusively* of all that salvation entails (1:5).

v. 16 *clear conscience* The term “denotes personal integrity before God [rather than sinless perfection]. This is the stance from which Christian believers are urged to make their ‘defense’” (Michaels, 190). The term “stands basically for a man’s inner awareness of the moral quality of his actions . . . The expression ‘good (or clear, pure) conscience’ . . . signifies the consciousness of freedom from guilt and of having nothing to hide” (J. N. D. Kelly, *A Commentary on the Epistles of Peter and Jude*, 144).

v. 16 *in Christ* The expression “your good behavior *in Christ*” likely means “your good behavior as Christians,” or “your good behavior resulting from your relationship to Christ.” It “does not refer to the developed Pauline ‘in Christ’ relationship but simply means the ‘good lives’ required of the readers as Christians” (Michaels, 190).

v. 17 *if it is . . .* “The phrase *if that should be God’s will* again (as in v. 14) uses the unusual optative mood, indicating something which Peter thought possible but unusual, not ordinarily to be expected” (Grudem, 154).

4

APPLY THE TEXT

CENTRAL MESSAGE OF THE TEXT

Always be prepared to answer anyone who asks you about your salvation hope – not defensively but with gentleness and respect.

CENTRAL MESSAGE FOR YOUR LIFE

(Rewrite the Central Message above to personally apply to your own life)



3 LIVING QUESTIONS

The “Living Questions” are simple questions we may ask of any text in order to apply the Bible to our life. Answer the questions below as personally as you can.

1. What does this passage teach me about God?

2. What does this passage teach me about myself?

3. What does this passage lead me to do?



FAMILY TALK

So many times, we're hyper focused on our kids' salvation. Our heart's desire is for our kids to know Jesus Christ and trust Him as Savior. We talk to them about Jesus, sing songs, share Bible stories and diligently bring them to church. Once they've trusted Christ, we celebrate big and feel a huge weight lift from our shoulders. Whew! They're in! But guess what, Mom and Dad? That's basically Step 1 of their Jesus story. It's truly incredible that they know Jesus Christ and have a salvation experience. We honor that and celebrate with you! But now the work of discipleship really begins. What we truly desire for our kids is a deep, growing, abiding relationship with their Savior. One simple exercise that will help build that relationship is preparing them to share their story. Do they know how to communicate their salvation experience? Can they talk about sin and what that means in their "before and after" story? Can they communicate forgiveness of that sin and how they're different because of Christ's death on the cross? Can you? This week, share your personal salvation story with your kids. Help them understand the difference Christ has made in your life. Then, work with your kids and help prepare them to have a gentle and respectful answer for the hope they have. It's a comfort to have words ready that explain their salvation experience, plus it allows them to be on the ready to share Jesus' love with others. Who knows, they might be the next great evangelist, and it all starts with this simple story. We're praying for you!

What Does The Bible Say?

Read 1 Peter 3:13-18a

1. What happens when you suffer for doing right?
2. What should you be prepared to answer?
3. How should you give an answer for the hope you have?

What Do You Think?

What does revere mean? How can you revere Christ?

What Do You Do?

Have you ever shared your salvation story with anyone? How would you tell others about Jesus? Practice by writing it down and bring it to the KidPix for an extra token.

CORE COMPETENCY: Jesus Christ

I believe Jesus Christ is fully God perfectly man and died for my sins.

MEMORY VERSE: Psalm 139:23-24

"Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

KidPIX COUPON

Earn 1 KidPIX Token by completing the CENTRALKids Bible Study on this page and another token by memorizing and reciting the memory verse for this week.

Questions: kids@wearecentral.org

- I completed my Bible Study
- I memorized this week's verse
- I brought my Bible to church
- I brought a friend



CHILD'S NAME

GRADE

PARENT SIGNATURE

OUR CORE COMPETENCIES

CENTRAL BELIEFS

Authority of the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Church (Ephesians 4:15-16)

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Eternity (John 14:1-4)

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

The Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9)

I believe the Holy Spirit convicts, calls, converts and changes me as a child of God.

Humanity (John 3:16)

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Identity in Christ (John 1:12)

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:1-4)

I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who became man, died for sinners and rose from the dead.

Life Purpose (Acts 20:24)

I believe I am a steward of God's resources and have been redeemed to participate in His Kingdom purposes for His glory.

Personal God (Psalm 121:1-2)

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Salvation by Grace (Ephesians 2:8-9)

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.



CENTRAL VIRTUES

Love (1 John 4:10-12)

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Joy (John 15:11)

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace (Philippians 4:6-7)

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself and others.

Patience (Proverbs 14:29)

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness (1 Thessalonians 5:15)

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others

Faithfulness (Proverbs 3:3-4)

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Gentleness (Philippians 4:5)

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Self-Control (Titus 2:11-13)

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Grace (Colossians 3:13)

I demonstrate forgiveness, mercy and generosity to others, even when they have offended me.

Hope (1 Peter 1:3-5)

I have a growing anticipation of God's promises and my secure eternity with Him.

Humility (Philippians 2:3-4)

I choose to esteem others above myself.



CENTRAL PRACTICES

Bible Study (Hebrews 4:12)

I study the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Biblical Community (Acts 2:44-47)

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Compassion (Psalm 82:3-4)

I seek to serve the last, the least and the lost in my community.

Disciple-Making (2 Timothy 2:2)

I multiply godly beliefs, virtues and practices in others to encourage their spiritual growth in Christ.

Evangelism (Acts 1:8)

I share Jesus with others through personal proclamation and demonstration of the gospel.

Generosity (2 Corinthians 9:6-11)

I gladly give my resources to fulfill God's purposes.

Prayer (Psalm 66:16-20)

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-Mindedness (Matthew 6:33)

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts (Romans 12:4-6)

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Worship (Psalm 95:1-7)

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

Tom Bulick (M.A. in Educational Leadership, Eastern Michigan University, Th.M. in Old Testament, and Ph.D. in Bible Exposition, Dallas Theological Seminary). For more than forty years, Tom has served as pastor, faculty member, and administrator. Tom was Vice President for Student Life and Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Trinity Western University (Vancouver, B.C.) from 1986 to 1998 and Spiritual Formation Pastor at Central Bible Church (Fort Worth, TX) from 1998 to 2022. He and his wife Ruth have one son, Zach.

Stephanie Thomas (B.B.A University of Texas at Arlington). Stephanie is married to James and they have five children: Elijah, Levi, Bo, Ella and Simon. Stephanie has attended Central Bible Church for more than 20 years, has been on staff since 2014, and now serves as Children's Minister.

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**CENTRAL
BIBLE CHURCH**

8001 Anderson Boulevard
Fort Worth, Texas 76120
817-274-1315
wearecentral.org