

1 Peter 3:13-15a

Verse 13

This verse is to be understood in light of the previous verse which speaks about the eyes of the Lord being on the righteous and His ears attending their prayers. Peter has labored the point about being called to suffering and trials and he is reassuring the readers that no matter what happens to them as Christians, nothing can cause spiritual harm against them. The living hope to which they are called is not to be harmed either. All the promises of God toward the Christian can't be harmed or destroyed by man.

Verse 14

Suffering for the sake of righteousness is a blessing and a privilege.

- **Matthew 5:10-12** "Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."¹¹ "Blessed are you when *people* insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me."¹² Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Do not fear man, fear God.

- Peter is quoting from **Isaiah 8:12-13**. In the context of Isaiah, he is instructed by the remnant of Judah to not fear man in the middle of their testing and trials which includes fighting and battles from other nations, but rather fear God. God would be the one who would provide and protect as He is the Holy sovereign God who watches and hears His people.
- **Luke 12:4, 5** "I say to you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that have no more that they can do."⁵ But I will ^[a]warn you whom to fear: fear the One who, after He has killed, has authority to cast into ^[e]hell; yes, I tell you, fear Him!
- **Psalms 56:4** In God, whose word I praise, In God I have put my trust; I shall not be afraid. What can *mere* ^[a]man do to me?

Verse 15

- Peter instructs the believer to sanctify Christ as Lord in their hearts.
- The word sanctify comes from the Greek word "hagiasate" to separate, consecrate; cleanse, purify, sanctify; regard, or reverence as holy.
- As Christians we are sanctified from the foundation of the world and at the time of our salvation. We are set apart and consecrated unto God and then continue in the lifelong process of sanctification. We have immediate sanctification at the time of our salvation, but will undergo progressive sanctification throughout our entire lives. Progressive sanctification is the process in which we become more set apart unto Christ as by means of the Holy Spirit we are being more conformed into the image of God.
- Peter instructs his reader to sanctify Christ as Lord in their hearts. Paul instructs to present our bodies as a living sacrifice to God (**Romans 12:1**). He also instructs the believer to present the members of your bodies as instruments of righteousness to God (**Romans 6:12-13**). We are to set our hearts apart and offer it unto God as we continue in our sanctification.

This verse is going to deal with apologetics or the defense of the gospel. Why does he mention the heart and not the mind which is where our thinking to respond in the defense of the gospel lies.

The heart and the mind are connected to the truth of God's word. God's word will never get to the heart unless it is first understood and processed in the mind.

- The greatest commandment is to love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind (Matthew 22:36-37)
- In the parable of the sower in **Luke 8:4-15**, the mind and the heart are connected.

Intellectual knowledge is not enough. People can intellectually understand the gospel and the truths of the Bible, but it may never get to the heart. It has to get to the heart, but can not get to the heart unless its understood in the mind.

- o **Romans 10:9-10** ^{a]}that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; ¹⁰for with the heart a person believes, ^{b]}resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, ^{c]}resulting in salvation.

Conversely, we can not just rely on a feeling “from the heart” about Jesus, but rather our affection that is in the regenerated heart of the believer is from an intellectual understanding of who He is and His truth.

We live in a Christian culture today that encourages people to shut off their minds when they enter church and just rely on emotions and feelings. The result of this is that people have “feelings for Jesus” but they don’t know who He is or His truth. The church is full of emotional people proclaiming they love Jesus, but they don’t even know who the Jesus of the Bible is. If you don’t know who Jesus is in the Bible and His truth, then you can never have true affection in the heart. The affection for Jesus grows with more intellectual knowledge of Him. The connection between the mind and the heart can’t be understated.

Therefore, the notion that when we place our faith in Christ, we are taking a blind leap of faith is inaccurate. For us to take a blind leap of faith would infer that we have no idea what and who we are placing our faith. When we place our faith in Christ, it is rooted not in blindness to the truth, but rather a mind that understands the truth and a heart as a result has affection for the truth and God. Theology=doxology.

There are several passages of scripture that discuss “thinking in our hearts.” Again, the connection between the mind and the heart is reiterated. The heart is the core of a person, where their core belief is. Those who are Christians have a heart that has been made new via regeneration (**Ezekiel 36:26**).

- **Matthew 15:19** For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, ^{b]}fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders
- **Proverbs 23:6-7** Do not eat the bread of ^{a]}a selfish man, Or desire his delicacies; ⁷For as he ^{b]}thinks within himself, so he is. He says to you, “Eat and drink!” But his heart is not with you.
- **Luke 24:25-32** And He said to them, “O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶Was it not necessary for the ^{b]}Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?” ²⁷Then beginning ^{b]}with Moses and ^{c]}with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures. ²⁸And they approached the village where they were going, and He acted as though He were going farther. ²⁹But they urged Him, saying, “Stay with us, for it is *getting* toward evening, and the day ^{b]}is now nearly over.” So He went in to stay with them. ³⁰When He had reclined *at the table* with them, He took the bread and blessed *it*, and breaking *it*, He *began* giving *it* to them. ³¹Then their eyes were opened and they recognized Him; and He vanished from ^{b]}their sight. ³²They said to one another, “^{b]}Were not our hearts burning within us while He was speaking to us on the road, while He was ^{b]}explaining the Scriptures to us?”

Peter is going to then instruct every believer not only to sanctify Christ as Lord in your heart, but also to be ready at all times to make a defense of the gospel and an account for the hope that is within us. The question that must be asked is: what do you believe and why do you believe it?