

Sermon Questions for Life Groups
Preparing for Minority Witness (1 Pet. 3:13-17)
Pastor Paul Carter
Sunday, October 16, 2016

*These questions are generated by several authors for Life Group discussions
or family or personal devotions*

1. Consider the title of this week's message and what we see happening around us that justifies this warning. Are you living a life of witness? How so?
2. We were told that 1 Peter was written to the Church as they were beginning to experience cultural marginalization – a pushback from the broader culture as they strive to live for God. Sound familiar? Briefly review 1 Peter 1:1-3:12 and identify Peter's various exhortations for how they/we should live as God's people.

10 PRINCIPLES FOR MINORITY WITNESS:

Don't Exaggerate Opposition (v. 13)

3. What does this mean? Are you/Christians doing this? How does this affect our witness? What does the Bible teach about this (1 Peter 3:13, Hebrews 12:4, Romans 8:35, Hebrews 10:32-39, Rev. 2:10, etc)? Consider the protection we have as Canadians and count your blessings!

Be Active and Obvious in Good Deeds (v. 13)

4. Read Matthew 5:16 and others that apply. What has to happen for our good works to cause others to give glory to God? Read also Matthew 25: 31–40. Do these passages teach the same message? In considering our culture, what types of good deeds give glory only to God?
5. Read the following verses Genesis 1:3-5, Psalm 119:105, John 8:12, Matthew 5:16 and 1 Peter 2:9
 - a. Why do you think God uses the word **light** throughout so much of the Bible?
 - b. What are the differences in how light was used in these different passages?
 - c. We are called both to be light, and to point others to Christ, the light of the world. How does the passage in 1 Peter 3:13-17 relate to this?

Adjust Expectations in Light of Shifting Realities (v. 14)

6. There is less Christian influence in our culture than ever before, and it is beginning to show. Consider how we can use what influence we have to speak into government policy-making. Consider how we can support those who are discriminated against in their work places.

7. Pastor Paul cautioned “ A little pain now, a great reward later – a little compromise now, a great catastrophe later”. Consider some of the ways that we are being challenged to compromise in our community and world today. How can we face up to these challenges?

Do Not Be Afraid (v. 14b)

8. Read II Tim. 3: 12, then vs. 10-11. What hope can we have from vs. 11:b. Consider other Scriptures that tell of the faithfulness of God to His children.

Set Apart Christ as Lord (v, 15a)

9. What are some of the ‘lords’ of our culture that can so easily infiltrate our lives?

10. “A gap between the Christian and culture is good for the Gospel.” Are there gaps between your life and those of your neighbours? How can you be intentional about these gaps without being offensive?

Be Prepared (v. 15b) – know your faith and your friends!

11. Pastor Paul noted that we live in a “post-authority” type of world where truth is relative and the Bible is no longer considered relevant. Below (and on an attached worksheet) are the basic questions that we need to know how to answer as we share our faith with others. Make it a personal (and Life Group?) goal to find and memorize Scripture that answer these questions. Keep in mind that scriptural knowledge needs to be partnered with personal testimony of God’s work in your own life.
 - a. Can I Trust the Bible?
 - b. Did Jesus really claim to be God?
 - c. If God is good why do so many people suffer?
 - d. Why does God’s design for sexuality matter?
 - e. Does science contradict what the Bible teaches?
 - f. If I become a Christian, will I have to change the way I live?
 - g. Would a loving God truly condemn people to an everlasting punishment in Hell?

Inspire Curiosity (v. 15) – Will They Ask About Your Hope?

12. We were told to be “weird” to the world in many good ways. The speaker said to use the good we do and the way that we stand out to point others to Christ.
- a. Why does this advice give you the opportunity both to be mocked and to be a witness?
 - b. How does this behavior model that of Christ?
13. Considered the viability of the points made on being an observable difference in our culture. How do these counter our culture?
- a. Get married/stay married
 - b. Have babies
 - c. Live below your means
 - d. Serve selflessly
 - e. Worship faithfully

Do All with Gentleness and Respect (v. 15b)

14. Has anyone in your life ever told you that you (or Christians in general) are judgmental? Review Romans 3:23-24 to consider your own righteousness. Then review John 8:3-11 and Philippians 2:3 for perspective as we consider relating to the concerning sinful lifestyles in our culture.

Maintain Your Own Integrity (v. 16)

15. “The best service you can give to the Gospel is an unfailing commitment to your own sanctification.” Sanctification is the practical experience of ‘being’ God’s children. What does this mean and how do we go about doing it?

Endure Suffering, Trusting in God’s Will (vs. 17)

16. Our responses to being ‘wronged’ are being watched by our culture. “Consider embracing suffering as an opportunity to display the Gospel.” Review scriptural teaching on our potential suffering for the Kingdom of God: 1 Cor. 6:1-8, Matthew 5:39-40; 1 Pet. 3:18). “It is hard to share the gospel with people you are fighting. Suffer graciously.”

Being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you! (1 Peter. 3:15)

The Challenge	Scriptures to Know	Personal Evidence
Can I Trust the Bible?		
Is Jesus God?		
If God is good why do so many people suffer?		
Why is God concerned about human sexuality?		
Does science contradict what the Bible teaches on creation, evolution and otherwise?		
If I become a Christian, will I have to change the way I live?		
Would a loving God condemn people to an everlasting punishment in Hell?		