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# Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

**The Oaks Baptist Church**  
Grand Prairie, Texas

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## Defending Our Faith 1 Peter 3:8-17

### Lesson Background and Introduction

Peter was one of Jesus’ original 12 disciples (also known as “apostles”; Luke 6:13). Peter (also called Simon or Cephas; John 1:42) was known for being impulsive (examples: Matthew 14:22-28; 16:22; 26:35; Mark 9:5-6; John 18:10). In spite of that fact, or perhaps because of it, he seems to have held a special place among the Twelve. He is named first in all four listings of those Twelve (Matthew 10:2-4; Mark 3:16-19; Luke 6:14-16; Acts 1:13). Jesus conferred on him the “the keys of the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 16:19). After Jesus’ ascension, Peter was a leader of the first-century church (see Acts 1:15-17; 2:14-40; 15:6-29). His ministry focused mainly on Jews (see Galatians 2:8). In that position, he experienced persecution (example: Acts 12:1-4), which informed his outlook regarding suffering and trials. Peter was not shy about confronting ruling authorities when necessary (Acts 4:19; 5:29). As one writer notes, 1 Peter is “one of the earliest Christian documents reflecting on the problem of the relation of the Christian to the state.” The letter of 1 Peter is one of two existing letters by that apostle (1 Peter 1:1; 2 Peter 1:1). The recipients of both letters were the various churches found in an area of northeastern Asia Minor, located in modern-day Turkey (1 Peter 1:1; 2 Peter 3:1). The first letter was likely intended to be circulated among the regions, perhaps by way of Silas, an assistant to Peter (1 Peter 5:12). Were the intended recipients primarily of Jewish background, primarily of Gentile background, or a roughly even split? The letter’s dozen or so quotations from the Old Testament could indicate that the intended audience was primarily of Jewish background. A stronger case can be made, however, for seeing the audience as primarily Gentile in background as Peter addressed their former lives of “ignorance” (1:14; compare Paul’s use of this same word in Ephesians 4:17-19 to refer to Gentiles). The occasion for Peter’s letter was primarily a response to the suffering of believers, particularly since more was yet to come (see 1 Peter 1:6-7; etc.). Peter could address whatever suffering his audience had or would experience because he had been “a witness of Christ’s sufferings” (5:1); Peter himself had suffered for that name (Acts 12).

Few of us will experience the level of suffering endured by the martyrs of Christian history. However, that does not make Peter’s directives any less applicable, quite the opposite! When faced with suffering, we may search for meaning in that experience. The question asked relentlessly is, Why? That question is natural and understandable. But it must also be temporary because ultimately the ‘Why’ needs to change to ‘What’s next?’ This is a way that our response to suffering can also serve as a way to point people to a life of faith in Jesus. God wants the best for people. When such suffering occurs, believers should remember to be unified in demonstrating trust in God.

*(Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)*

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

**THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:**  
The best way to defend Jesus is to live like Him

**COMMENT FOR THE WEEK:**  
It may surprise us to consider that God doesn’t need us to defend Him. He wants us to represent Him

**SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:**  
A soft answer turns away wrath,  
But a harsh word stirs up anger  
(Prov 15:1 NKJV)  
*(from "Our Daily Bread", May 23, 2017)*

**Series: Examining Our Faith**  
**UNIT 1: Faithful vs Faithless**

**NEXT WEEK**  
**Living In Faith**  
**(Acts 6:7-15)**

## NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

### **Defend by Living Godly (1 Peter 3:8-12)**

#### *Living godly by loving one another (8)*

Loving one another because it is the commandment of Jesus (John 13:34-35)

Loving one another through being imitators of God (Eph 5:1-2)

Loving one another through Jesus making love increase (1 Thess 3:12)

Loving one another because it is taught by God to do so (1 Thess 4:9)

Loving one another through obedience to the truth of God's word (1 Peter 1:22)

Loving one another to cover sins (1 Peter 4:8)

#### *Living godly by not taking revenge (9)*

Do not seek revenge, but love our neighbor (Lev 19:18)

Do not seek revenge or try to pay back (Prov 24:29)

Do not seek revenge because it is God's role to avenge (Deut 32:35)

Do not seek revenge because God is a jealous and avenging God (Nah 1:2-3)

Do not seek revenge because God does the judging (Heb 10:30-31)

#### *Living godly by pursuing peace (10-11)*

Peace that comes through faith (Rom 5:1-2)

Peace that comes through a mind controlled by the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:6)

Peace that comes through the kingdom of God (Rom 14:17)

Peace that comes from the God of peace (1 Cor 14:33)

Peace that comes through Jesus, who is our peace (Eph 2:14)

#### *Living godly by seeking righteousness (12)*

Live righteously because Jesus sacrificed Himself for this (1 Peter 2:24)

Live righteously because God's Divine power empowers us to do so (2 Peter 1:3)

Live righteously through obedience (Rom 6:16)

Live righteously to obtain the goal of our hope (Gal 5:5)

Live righteously because I am commanded to do so (1 Tim 6:11)

Live righteously because there is a crown awaiting us (2 Tim 4:8)

### **Defend by Being a Faithful Follower with Hope (1 Peter 3:13-17)**

#### *Follower of goodness (13)*

Goodness should be done at every opportunity (Gal 6:10)

Goodness is one of the fruits of righteousness (Eph 5:9)

Goodness is pleasing to God (Heb 13:16)

Goodness from God who is the only one good (Luke 18:19)

#### *Follower who is not afraid (14)*

Not afraid just trust in God (John 14:1)

Not afraid because love drives out fear (1 John 4:18)

Not afraid just rely on the Spirit of power (2 Tim 1:7)

Not afraid just keep the faith (2 Tim 4:6-8)

Not afraid just be faithful and seek the crown of life (Rev 2:10)

#### *Follower who has been born again (15-16)*

Born again to enter into the kingdom of God (John 3:5)

Born again through the Word (James 1:18)

Born again through the power of God, not man (John 1:12-13)

Born again to see the kingdom of God (John 3:3)

Born again through belief in Jesus (1 John 5:1)

#### *Follower willing to suffer (17)*

Willing because suffering for God is commendable (1 Peter 2:19-20)

Willing because God will provide the endurance (2 Cor 4:8-9)

Willing because inwardly God is renewing day by day (2 Cor 4:16-17)

Willing because of God's great love and compassion (Lam 3:22-23)

Willing because persecution should be expected (John 15:20-21)