

1 Peter 3:13–4:11 (NKJV)

And who is he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good? ¹⁴ But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, *you are* blessed. "And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled." ¹⁵ But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always *be* ready to *give* a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; ¹⁶ having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed. ¹⁷ For *it is* better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil. ¹⁸ For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, ¹⁹ by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, ²⁰ who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while *the* ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. ²¹ There is also an antitype which now saves us—baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²² who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him.

^{4:1} Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, ² that he no longer should live the rest of *his* time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. ³ For we *have spent* enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles—when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries. ⁴ In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with *them* in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you. ⁵ They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. ⁶ For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit. ⁷ But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers. ⁸ And above all things have fervent love for one another, for "love will cover a multitude of sins." ⁹ Be hospitable to one another without grumbling. ¹⁰ As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. ¹¹ If anyone speaks, *let him speak* as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, *let him do it* as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Interpretation: *Read through the passage, and then review and make notes under the questions below.*

1. What do you think is the main theme for 3:13–4:11? What statements in the passage support this theme? (You may want to use colored pencils or a highlighter on the other side of the page.) Can you state your theme in a sentence?

2. Do you think the persecution experienced by Peter’s original readers was primarily verbal or physical? What statements in the text support your conclusion?

3. Why is it so important to have “a good conscience” (3:16) during times of persecution?

4. How would the suffering of Christ serve as an example (3:18) and encouragement (4:1) for Peter’s audience?

5. When Peter says that Christ “preached to the spirits in prison” (3:19), what could he be referring to? [Note: Consider consulting a Bible commentary on this passage. Ask your teacher for commentary recommendations.]

6. Who is Peter referring to in 4:1 when he speaks of “he who has suffered in the flesh”? In what sense has this person “ceased from sin”? Does Peter say anything else here that helps clarify this verse?

7. What effect should the nearness of the end have on Christian living (4:7)?

8. What does Peter identify as the ultimate result of faithful Christian living (4:11)?

Application: *Take time to reflect on the implications of 1 Peter 3:13–4:11 for your own life today.*

9. What does this passage mean for your walk with the Lord?

10. How does this passage challenge the way you think about situations in daily life? What should you do about that?
