

Worth Sharing Even When We Suffer – 1 Peter 3:8-18

Introduction

Last week we reflected on the incredible treasure we have in Christ. Peter reminds us that we have been born again into a living hope and have received an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade.

This week, Peter asks a challenging question:

What happens when sharing that treasure comes at a cost?

Christians in Roseville won't face imprisonment or violence because of their faith. Yet many of us know the awkwardness of being misunderstood, dismissed or quietly mocked because we follow Jesus.

Peter reminds us that although Christians are "foreigners and exiles" in this world, we need not retreat or hide. Instead, we are called to display Christ, bless those around us, and be ready to speak about the hope we have.

Read 1 Peter 3:8–18

1. Peter begins with a series of characteristics in verses 8–9. Which of these qualities do you think would stand out most in our culture today? Why?
2. Verse 9 tells Christians not to repay evil with evil, but with blessing.
 - Why do you think responding with blessing is such a powerful witness to Christ?
 - Can you think of someone who has modelled this well?
3. Peter assumes that Christians may suffer for doing good (vv.13–17).
 - What kinds of opposition or awkwardness do Christians commonly experience in Australia today?
 - How is this different from the persecution faced by many Christians around the world?
4. Read verses 14–15 carefully. Peter doesn't simply say, "Don't be afraid." Instead, he says, "In your hearts revere Christ as Lord." Why is treasuring Christ a better answer to fear than simply trying to be braver?
5. The sermon suggested that Christians are people who have found treasure.
 - What "treasures" compete with Christ for our hearts?
 - How might comfort, reputation, success or approval make us reluctant to speak about Jesus?
6. Peter says Christians should always be prepared to give the reason for the hope they have (v.15). Notice he doesn't say people will first notice our arguments; they will notice our **hope**.
 - What might a hopeful Christian life look like in Roseville?

7. Can you think of a time when someone asked you about your faith?
 - What prompted the conversation?
 - If you've never had that experience, what opportunities might God already be giving you?
8. Verse 15 speaks about giving an answer "with gentleness and respect."
 - Why is our manner just as important as our message?
 - How might this shape the way we speak with friends who disagree with Christianity?
9. Read verse 18.
 - How does Jesus' own suffering encourage us when sharing our faith feels costly?
 - What does Peter want us to remember about Christ's victory?
10. As a church, we're preparing for our upcoming outreach talks. Take a few moments to think about people God has placed in your life.
 - Who might God be prompting you to pray for?
 - Who could you invite?
 - What fears tend to hold you back?
 - How does today's passage encourage you to take one small step this week?

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank you for the priceless treasure we have in your Son, Jesus Christ. Thank you that through his death and resurrection we have been born again into a living hope and have received an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade.

Please help us to treasure Christ above our comfort, our reputation and our fears. When we feel awkward, misunderstood or opposed because we belong to Jesus, remind us that he is Lord and that our true home is with him.

Grow in us the character Peter describes – hearts full of compassion, humility and love. Help us to repay evil with blessing, to live such good lives that others see something different in us, and to be ready to speak with gentleness and respect about the hope we have in Christ.

We pray especially for the upcoming outreach talks. Please prepare the hearts of those who will come, and give us courage, joy and love as we invite our family, friends and neighbours. May many people come to discover for themselves the treasure of knowing Jesus.

In his precious name we pray. **Amen.**