

Discussion on 1 Peter 3:13-17

Sunday School – February 25, 2018
Sleater Kinney Road Baptist Church, Olympia, WA

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1. TEXT (1 Peter 3:13-17):¹

So, who'll harm you, if you're zealous for what's right? But, even if you *do* suffer because you're doing what's right, God will bless you. So, don't be afraid of their threats or be intimidated. Instead, reverence the Messiah as Lord in your hearts.

Always be ready to give a defense to every man who's asking you for an account of the hope inside each of you. But, do this with gentleness and reverence in order to have a good conscience, so that when they keep slandering your good way of life because you belong to Christ, they might be ashamed. Because it's better to suffer because you're doing what's good (if that's God's will), than because you're doing what's evil.

2. THINKING THROUGH THE TEXT:

I got nothin'. Sorry, no teaching notes this time ... ☹️

3. THOUGHT-FLOW DIAGRAM & GREEK TRANSLATION NOTES:

¹ This is my own original translation from the UBS-5 Greek text. I've put all my translation and exegetical notes at the end of this document. I actually produced two translations; one more literal (closer to the KJV and NASB), and the other a bit more colloquial. I've decided to use the colloquial translation in the body of these notes, but you can find the literal version at the end of this document.

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I can hardly think of anybody who'd be interested in these notes. I made them for myself as I studied the passage, and I need somewhere to store them so I find them later. This is as good a place as any. Please feel free to ignore all this, if you wish! These are not preaching notes, and are not intended to be. Nobody in his right mind should mistake them for teaching notes. They're simply translation notes about particular points of grammar and syntax.

a. Translation (1 Peter 3:13-17):

So, who'll harm you, if you're zealous for what's right? But, even if you *do* suffer because you're doing what's right, God will bless you. So, don't be afraid of their threats or be intimidated. Instead, reverence the Messiah as Lord in your hearts.

Always be ready to give a defense to every man who's asking you for an account of the hope inside each of you. But, do this with gentleness and reverence in order to have a good conscience, so that when they keep slandering your good way of life because you belong to Christ, they might be ashamed. Because it's better to suffer because you're doing what's good (if that's God's will), than because you're doing what's evil.

b. Thought-flow Diagram:²

RHETORICAL QUESTION (in light of vv.8-12)	- So, who'll harm you, if you're zealous for what's right?
HYPOTHETICAL SCENARIO + ENCOURAGEMENT	o But, even if you do suffer because you're doing what's right, God will bless you.
RESULTING COMMAND #1	- So, don't be afraid of their threats or be intimidated.
RESULTING COMMAND #2	- Instead, reverence the Messiah as Lord in your hearts.
RESULTING COMMAND #3	- Always be ready to give a defense to every man who's asking you for an account of the hope inside each of you.
HOW TO DO COMMAND #3	o But, do this with gentleness and reverence
why with gentleness and reverence?	▪ in order to have a good conscience,

² This format is based off Richard Young's discussion on thought-flow diagrams (*Intermediate Greek* [Nashville, TN: B&H, 1994], 268-271) and the format in the ZECNT commentary series. It blends both versions, and I'm not entirely sure it gets the point across well, but I'm using it for now.

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why have a good conscience?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ so that when they keep slandering your good way of life because you belong to Christ, they might be ashamed.
why do this for God?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Because it's better to suffer because you're doing what's good (if that's God's will), than because you're doing what's evil.

c. Translation Notes:

- **Row #1:** Greek text (UBS-5);
- **Row #2:** parsing;
- **Row #3:** gloss;
- **Row #4:** brief syntax notes;
- **Row #5:** cardboard, but more “literal” translation;
- **Row #6:** smoother, slightly more colloquial translation

Καί	τίς	ὁ	κακῶσων	ὑμᾶς	ἐάν	τοῦ	ἀγαθοῦ	ζηλωταί	γένησθε
conj	pro,nsm	nsm	fapnsm	2 nd pl, acc		gsm	gsm	npm	2 nd ,pl,aor,m,subj
and, so	who, what?	the	one is harming, mistreating	you	if	the	good	zealous	you are being
	subj	<i>attributive mod. τίς, deliberative future, simple active</i>		<i>d.o. κακῶσων</i>		<i>obj. gen</i>		<i>predicate w/ γένησθε</i>	<i>predicate w/ ζηλωταί</i>
So, who will harm you, if you're being zealous for what's right?									
So, who'll harm you, if you're zealous for what's right?									

ἐάν ... γένησθε. A third-class conditional sentence, presenting a very realistic, hypothetical situation. See especially Richard A. Young's discussion about the shortcomings of the traditional sentence classification.³

ἀλλ'	εἰ	καί	πάσχοιτε	διὰ	δικαιοσύνην	μακάριοι
conj		conj	2 nd ,pl,p,a,opt	prep	asf	npm
but	if	even	you are suffering	for	righteousness, justice, uprightness	blessed
<i>contrast</i>		<i>ascensive</i>	<i>Implied subj., optative of possibility, futuristic present</i>	<i>reason</i>	<i>obj. prep</i>	<i>predicate nom.</i>
But, <i>even if</i> you happen to suffer because you're doing what's right, you'll be blessed.						
But, even if you <i>do</i> suffer because you're doing what's right, God will bless you.						

εἰ ... πάσχοιτε. Another third-class conditional sentence, presenting a very realistic, hypothetical situation. The verb is a futuristic present, especially considering the

³ Young (*Intermediate Grammar*, 227-230).

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future tense-form of the participle *κακώσων*, which introduced this topic. Many exegetes classify this as a fourth-class conditional, meaning it has even even further remote possibility of coming to pass. This is more a dispute about neat syntactical categories than actual meaning, so I won't bother to quibble too much. The point is clear enough; suffering is a possibility. It may not be an immediate possibility, but it's certainly out there, on the horizon.

My major objection to the fourth-class conditional is that suffering is a very real possibility; the storm clouds are beginning to form on the horizon. The Neroian persecution was a local affair in Rome, to be sure. The readers of this letter are in present-day Turkey, far away from that mess. But, Peter saw the writing on the wall. These Christians may not be enduring state-sponsored persecution now, but they face social pressures to “return to the fold,” so to speak. Honor and shame were major factors in Greco-Roman society, and we can be certain it was being employed to woe Christians back to their former way of life.

διὰ δικαιοσύνην. There are two issues with this phrase; (1) how is the preposition used, and (2) what on earth does *δικαιοσύνην* mean? These questions are a packaged deal; you have to deal with both of them.

The preposition could express *reason* (i.e. they're suffering *because of* righteousness), or it could mean *benefaction* (i.e. they're suffering *for the benefit of* righteousness).

The word here could mean “righteousness” in the sense of a legal status (BDAG, s.v. “2004 *δικαιοσύνη*,” 2). The Christians would then be suffering because of (or for the sake of) somebody's righteousness, their status before God. Or, the word could mean uprightness, in the sense of “doing what's right,” (e.g. NET Bible; cf. BDAG, s.v. “2004 *δικαιοσύνη*,” 3). The idea would be that Christians are suffering because of (or for the sake of) doing what is right in God's eyes. It would be a synonym of *τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ*, from the previous verse.

I'll put my money on the preposition expression *reason*, and the word *δικαιοσύνην* getting across the idea of “doing what's right in God's eyes.”

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τὸν	δὲ	φόβον	αὐτῶν	μὴ	φοβηθῆτε	μηδὲ	ταραχθῆτε
asm	conj	asm	pro,gpm	neg	2 nd ,pl,aor,pass,subj		2 nd ,pl,aor,pass,subj
the	but	intimidation	them	not	do not be afraid, afraid	nor	you are being troubled
<i>d.o.</i> φοβηθῆτε	<i>transition</i>	<i>d.o.</i> φοβηθῆτε			<i>subjunctive of prohibition, constative</i>		<i>subjunctive of prohibition, constative</i>
So, don't be afraid of their threats or be intimidated.							

φόβον. The sense here seems to be something that produces or results in fear. The normal gloss is *intimidation*, but that's vague and stuffy. What produces intimidation in somebody? In this context, probably *threats* (e.g. Phillips' translation).

κύριον	δὲ	τὸν	Χριστὸν	ἀγιάσατε	ἐν	ταῖς	καρδίαις
asm	conj	asm	asm	2 nd ,pl,aor,a,imp	prep	dpf	dpf
Lord	but	the	Christ, Messiah	you must reverence, sanctify, set apart	in	the	hearts
<i>predicate acc.</i>	<i>contrast</i>	<i>d.o.</i> ἀγιάσατε		<i>imperative of command, constative, simple active</i>		<i>d.o. prep</i>	
Instead, you must reverence the Messiah as Lord in your hearts.							
Instead, reverence the Messiah as Lord in your hearts.							

κύριον ... τὸν Χριστὸν. “The Messiah” is the direct object of the verb ἀγιάσατε; that much is clear. But, what do we do with κύριον? Some believe it's an appellation or a title, in which case it would be an accusative of apposition (e.g. “Christ the Lord”). Others take it as a predicate accusative or an adverbial accusative of manner (e.g. “Christ as Lord”).

I suppose it really depends on what you do with the article in τὸν Χριστὸν. I take it to be pointing out the monadic noun Χριστὸν, so I actually translate it (e.g. “**the** Messiah”). I don't see a smooth way to make the appositional sense work with this understanding; it'd read something like, “you must reverence the Messiah, *the Lord*, in your hearts,” with the apposition stressed with italics (e.g. “He's **the Lord**, after all!”). I went with the predicate/adverbial sense for Χριστὸν.

Later manuscripts read τὸν θεὸν instead of τὸν Χριστὸν, but the earliest reading dates from the 9th century. In contrast, there is evidence for τὸν Χριστὸν from the 3rd – 5th

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centuries (see the CNTTS apparatus; the UBS-5 gives this reading an “A” for probability).

ὕμῶν	ἔτοιμοι	ἀεὶ	πρὸς	ἀπολογία	παντὶ	τῷ	αἰτοῦντι
2 nd ,pl,g	npm	adv	prep	asf	dsm	dsm	papdsm
your	ready, prepared	always	to	make a defense	each, every	the	the one who is asking
	<i>predicate</i>		<i>purpose</i>	<i>d.o prep</i>	<i>indirect obj. πρὸς; substantival, iterative, simple active</i>		
Always be ready to give a defense to every man who's asking							

ὕμᾱς	λόγον	περὶ	τῆς	ἐν	ὑμῖν	ἐλπίδος
2 nd ,pl,acc	asm	prep	gsf	prep	2 nd ,pl,d	gsf
you	account, reckoning, explanation	about	the	in	you	hope
<i>d.o. αἰτοῦντι; double acc w/λόγον acting as indirect obj.</i>		<i>reference</i>	<i>obj.gen</i>	<i>space</i>	<i>obj.prep</i>	<i>obj.gen</i>
you for an account of the hope inside each of you.						

ἀλλὰ	μετὰ	πραΰτητος	καὶ	φόβου	συνείδησιν	ἔχοντες	ἀγαθὴν
prep	prep	gsf	conj	gsf	asf	papnpm	asf
but, yet	with	gentleness	and	reverence	conscience	you are having	good
<i>contrast</i>	<i>manner</i>	<i>obj.prep</i>		<i>obj.prep</i>	<i>dbl.acc, d.o. ἔχοντες</i>	<i>adverbial (purpose), iterative, simple active</i>	<i>dbl.acc, d.o. ἔχοντες</i>
But, do this with gentleness and reverence in order to have a good conscience,							

φόβου. It's best to see this as reverence for God, not merely respect for the unbeliever you're providing a defense to. This usage also supports the adverbial participle of purpose which follows.

ἔχοντες. The participle could be an attendant circumstance which “piggybacks” on the prepositional phrase, so it would read, “do this with gentleness and reverence, always having a good conscience.” Or, it could be an adverbial participle expressing purpose, in which case Christians would provide a defense with gentleness and reverence **in order to have** a good conscience.

The second option is best because, if the Christian has a clear conscience that he's represented God with reverence and been gentle and kind to the unbeliever, then he'll make the unbeliever ashamed as he continues to slander the Christian.

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It flows better than the attendant circumstance option, but both get the point across.

ἵνα	ἐν	ᾧ	καταλαλεῖσθε	καταισχυνθῶσιν	οἱ	ἐπηρεάζοντες	ὑμῶν	τὴν
conj	prep	dsn	2 nd ,pl,p,pass,i	3 rd ,pl,aor,pass,subj	npm	partpm	2 nd ,pl,g	asf
so that	about	which	you are being spoken evil about	ashamed, disgraced, dishonored	the	they are mistreating	you	the
<i>purpose clause w/ καταισχυνθῶσιν</i>	<i>reference</i>		<i>iterative, simple passive</i>	<i>purpose clause w/ἵνα</i>	<i>substantival, adverbial (time) iterative, simple active</i>			
So that (concerning that which you are being spoken evil about) when they keep slandering your								
So that, when they keep slandering your								

ἐν ᾧ καταλαλεῖσθε. The antecedent is more conceptual, orienting the reader to the content of the slander. I'm not sure why this is here, but it's redundant in English. I left it out my more colloquial rendering.

ἀγαθὴν	ἐν	Χριστῷ	ἀναστροφὴν	κρεῖττον	γάρ		
asf	prep	dsm	asf	asm	conj		
good	in	Christ, Messiah	way of life	better	for, because		
<i>d.o. ἐπηρεάζοντες, dbl.acc.</i>	<i>association</i>	<i>obj.prep</i>	<i>d.o. ἐπηρεάζοντες, dbl.acc.</i>	<i>predicate</i>	<i>explanatory</i>		
good way of life that's in union with Christ, they might be ashamed.							
good way of life because you belong to Christ, they might be ashamed.							

ἐν Χριστῷ. I think Peter's doing more than just describing the believer's life (i.e. it's in union with Christ). I think this fact is the content which leads unbelievers to slander them; that is, it's the fact that these folks are in union with Christ (i.e. belong to Him, and one with Him, abide in Him, are in union with Him) that drives unbelievers to slander them.⁴ Most English translations use the generic gloss "in Christ," which tells you precisely nothing. It's meaningless.

κρεῖττον ... πάσχειν. This is a very difficult construction. It's best to see the anarthrous infinitive as the subject ("suffering"), and the accusative κρεῖττον as the predicative, and to supply an equative verb. In a cardboard fashion, it would read, "To suffer is better because you're doing what's good ..." Master Yoda would like that sentence. I don't. So, I put the predicate first to smooth things out ("it's better to suffer ...").

⁴ See especially Daniel C. Arichea and Eugene Albert Nida (*A Handbook on the First Letter from Peter*, in UBS Handbook Series [New York: United Bible Societies, 1980], 108–109) and Greg Forbes (*1 Peter*, in Exegetical Guide to the Greek New Testament [Nashville, TN: B&H, 2014; Kindle ed.] KL 3777-3780).

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γάρ	ἀγαθοποιούντας	εἰ	θέλοι	τὸ	θέλημα	τοῦ	θεοῦ	πάσχειν	ἢ	κακοποιούντας
conj	παραρμ		3 rd ,s,p,a,opt	nsm	nsm	gsm	gsm	p,a,inf	part	παραρμ
for, because	they are doing what is right	if	wills	the	will	of	God	to be suffering	than	they are being criminals
<i>explanatory</i>	<i>adverbial (reason)</i> <i>mod. πάσχειν;</i> <i>iterative, simple active</i>					<i>subj.gen</i>		<i>subject</i>		<i>adverbial (reason)</i> <i>mod. πάσχειν;</i> <i>iterative, simple active</i>
Because it's better to suffer because you're doing what's good (if God's will desires it), than because you're doing what's evil.										
Because it's better to suffer because you're doing what's good (if that's God's will), than because you're doing what's evil.										