

PETER THE BOLD

Preached on September 28th 2025

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SCRIPTURE - 1Peter 3:13 -16

¹³Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good? ¹⁴ But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. "Do not fear their threats; do not be frightened." ¹⁵ But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, ¹⁶ keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.

Background

Peter wrote these words when he was in his late 50's or early 60's. He is an old man by 1st century standards. The average lifespan of Jewish man living at this time was 35 years old. Much of that is due to the extremely high infant mortality rates. But even for those who made it to adulthood, the lifespan was not much longer than 60 years.

So, Peter is coming to the end of his life. But he knows he's not going to have the opportunity to die of old age. You see, Peter is in Rome. The emperor of the Roman Empire when Peter is writing this is Nero. Nero is the emperor who may be best known for feeding Christians to lions. Four years before writing these words, Peter's brother, Andrew, was murdered by Nero. Within four years after writing the letters of 1st and 2nd Peter, Nero would have Peter crucified, and the apostle Paul beheaded.

Peter is writing to the churches in Asia Minor (modern day Turkey). These churches are largely made up of Jews who converted to Christianity. They are living in Asia Minor as exiles, victims of what was known as the Great Dispersion. The Great Dispersion went on from the time of the Babylonian exile through the time of Christ. This is where we get the modern word "diaspora" from.

As part of the "People We Become" sermon series, studying the life and words of Peter gives us a rather rare view at one of the New Testament writers. We not only have the letters of Peter, written when he was in his old age, we have the accounts of Peter when he was a younger man (in his 30's) in The Gospels and Act. This means that we can look at The Gospels and Acts accounts of Peter and then see the man he became in 1st and 2nd Peter. This makes the Holy Spirit breathed pastoral advice that comes from Peter later in his life significantly more rich, more real, and more applicable to us today.

As we walk through our “Peter the Bold” sermon, we are going to focus on 1st Peter 3:13-16, but we’re going to look at these verses through the prism of several major events from the Gospels:

1. Peter’s calling - Luke 5:1-11
2. Peter walks on water – Matthew 14:25-30
3. Peter draws his sword – Matthew 26:30-35 and John 18:10-11
4. Peter goes back fishing – John 21:1-8

Hard Questions

1. Where is your boldness lacking? (Another way to ask this is, what are you unwilling to suffer through to follow Christ?)
2. What is your definition of “bold”?
3. In thinking about “suffering for what is right” – how do you know what’s right?
4. As flawed people, we sin. What do you think Jesus does when you sin?
 - a. How often to you pray to Him right before you sin?
5. How do you prepare to be bold?
6. What is the reason for the hope you have?

Final Thoughts / Key Takeaway

Be bold IN CHRST to suffer what is right ACCORDING TO CHRIST