

FOCUS – Part 4
Community Group Discussion Guide
June 27, 2021

This week we wrap up the ***FOCUS series***. Sometimes what we believe and why we believe it isn't as clear as we would like. Especially when it comes to explaining it to someone else.

We need a short and focused answer to the question of why we've chosen to follow Jesus. To do that we need to focus on the essentials of our faith.

*Share an example of a time when you found yourself getting tongue tied, confused, or overcomplicated things when talking to someone about your faith.

To be honest, we've all probably shared these experiences or would rather avoid having to share a conversation about our faith all together.

This series has provided us with some helpful tools for knowing what to say when there's little **time** and even less **interest**. And we are told by the first post-resurrection evangelist, Peter, an ex-businessman turned Jesus follower.

Read together 1 Peter 3:15; Always be **prepared to give an answer** [*defense, reply*] to everyone who asks you to give the **reason** [*explanation*] for the **hope** that you have [*the hope in you*].

Be **prepared** to defend your decision to **follow** Christ. Be **prepared** to defend your **hope** or **confidence** in Christ.

Peter gave us the reason for his hope. It was the hope of the first-century believers. I think we should use it as well, because it is so **focused** and clear; His answer was the **RESURRECTION!**

We don't have to make sharing our faith difficult. Make it personal. No one can argue with you about what God has done for you, in, and through you. It's your story! Be confident in it!

Pastors, Preachers, and Evangelists don't hold the corner market on being the only ones who are to be prepared to share their faith. In fact, they are instructed to provide opportunities to prepare and equip believers, just like what's been happening throughout this series the last four weeks.

Paul encourages Timothy, the pastor of the church in Ephesus, through his letters written in the books of 1&2 Timothy. Paul provides some instruction about the final days before Christ's return. He reminds Timothy that there will be false teachings and those who walk away from their faith. Paul is reminding Timothy of the importance of preparing the believers about what they believe and why they believe it. He wants them to know the Word of God so they can be prepared to share with others as well as ***explain*** or ***defend*** what they believe and why they believe it.

***Read together 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 4:1-8** (Keep in mind that Paul is writing this to Timothy, a Pastor, and charging him with his role and responsibilities as a Pastor. While reading this together consider how this applies to you as you live out your faith and are prepared to share it with confidence.)

Scripture Support:

In this charge, Paul told Timothy that the people who obey God and live for Christ will be persecuted. Don't be surprised when people misunderstand you, criticize you, or even try to hurt you because of who you are and what you believe.

Paul reminds Timothy about the importance and power of scripture. The Bible is not a collection of stories, fables, myths, or human ideas about God. Through His plan God revealed his person and plan to certain believers/followers who wrote down his message for his people. Scripture is completely trustworthy because God was in control of the writing

3:16-17; The bible is God inspired. The bible is our safeguard against false teaching and provides guidance for how we should live.

v. 17; we should not study scripture to simply win arguments or prove what we believe, however, to point others to Jesus's grace, love, and forgiveness.

4:1-2; it is still incredibly important for believers to share the good news. Sharing this good news is the most important responsibility of the church and its members. Be **prepared for**, **courageous in**, and **sensitive to** the opportunities that present themselves to share this good news.

v. 2; this verse means to be ready to share in any situation, whether it's convenient or not. Be aware and sensitive to the opportunities God gives you.

v. 5; keep your head about you, don't get rattled, don't react, respond. Keep a clear mind

*How does this charge to Timothy give you a framework in the approach of sharing your faith with others?

God's Church started as a radical, spiritually intimate gathering of believers that ultimately changed history. Still, millions today are content to be mere observers at church. Many more have left, brokenhearted and cynical. But God is waking up His people—people who will risk anything and sacrifice everything to be the dynamic, world-changing Church of Scripture.

The hope is that today affirms your desire for "more God" even if you are surrounded by people who feel they have "enough God." The hope is it inspires confidence in your ability to share this good news with others, in season and out of season. Be prepared.

FOCUS