

## Always Be Ready

### *Proclaiming the Gospel by Defending the Faith*

The beginning of a series

- This series was birthed out of a comment made in our community group several weeks ago.
- There are many reasons that we find NOT to share our faith and NOT to preach the gospel: awkwardness, fear of rejection, disconnected from the lost or *fear that we are ill-equipped for the task*.
- What I hope to do in this series is to equip you and give you confidence in sharing the gospel and engaging in conversations about your faith.

### **1 Peter 3:13-17**

<sup>13</sup> Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good? <sup>14</sup> But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, <sup>15</sup> but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, *always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you*; yet do it with gentleness and respect, <sup>16</sup> having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. <sup>17</sup> For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil.

Things to take note of in this passage:

1. The desire to be ready is birthed out of a zealousness for what is good (and for God) – vs. 13
2. Honouring Christ as Lord is described as “always being prepared to make a defense” – vs. 15
3. We are commanded to make a defense with “gentleness and respect”.
4. “when” not “if” you are slandered. – vs.16,17

Why is this so hard in our culture?

Here is a statement I would very much like you to remember:

### **GOD IS NOT LIKE ICE CREAM.**

- If I say Haagen-dazs, butter-pecan ice cream is delicious this room would be divided into two groups: those that (correctly) agree with me and those that do not.
- There are types of truths that are subjective (true for the individual) and those that are objective (true to everyone)
- My statement about butter pecan is a subjective truth, but if I were to say butter pecan ice cream is a medicine that cures diabetes? That is an untrue statement for anyone, and in fact is a dangerous claim if anyone were to take it as truth.

- Religious matters and the question of God is not an ice cream kind of thing, it's an insulin kind of thing.

**2 Corinthians 5:20 - Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.**

Paul implies three things in this short clause:

➔ Let's separate them into three categories:

**Head:** As Christians we are Ambassadors for Christ, whether we are fit for the task or not.

- We are all on display, and you've heard Mike say that "everyone is a good example of something" – a famous theologian once said that in terms of non\_Christians there are two types... those who are not Christians because they don't know any Christians... and those who are not because they do!
- The fact is that we are all ambassadors and representing our King whether we are doing a good or a poor job of it.

**Heart:** As Ambassadors you represent Christ to the people he wants to reach.

- This is a really big deal that we sometimes neglect: God makes his appeal through us! The Sovereign God of the universe has ordained that the means through which he reconciles men and women to himself is through the appeal of His people!
- DO NOT take this lightly.

**Hands:** Become fit for the task by your.

- Knowledge: Understand the King you represent and the message you are to deliver.
- Tact: You also need a tactical wisdom in how to deploy that knowledge.
- Character: embody the character qualities of the king you represent.