Week Five Assignment: 1 Peter 3:10-22

Some verses in 1 Peter 3 pose problems in interpretation. Keep in mind that the main idea Peter is conveying through this section is this: **it is better to suffer for doing good than for doing evil, for the sake of Christ.** Peter is encouraging his original readers, and us, to bear witness boldly in the midst of a hostile culture, just as the Christians in Asia Minor were having to do, and just as Noah did.

1. Peter begins this section by quoting verses from Psalm 34. Read Psalm 34 in its entirety. The occasion for this Psalm is David’s victory over the Philistines. David was delivered from many dangers while he sojourned among the Philistines. He could be considered an “exile” during his journey there. Now Peter is inserting several verses from David’s Psalm for his Gentile readers, who are “exiles” in Asia Minor. What is Peter’s reason(s) for quoting these specific verses from Psalm 34? How is this an encouragement to the Gentiles? And to us?

2. The suffering that Peter has in mind is not what we Americans typically consider suffering, such as chronic illness, grief or relational problems. Rather, he is writing about opposition, persecution, and abuse for being a Christian. With this type of suffering in view, Peter tells his readers and us “to be ready to give a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you, yet do it with gentleness and respect.” We have talked about “hope” in the context of our Living Hope, and in the context of our “eschatological hope” that looks forward to Christ’s return. Are you hope-filled? If not, what gets in the way? Are you prepared to give a defense for the hope that lies within you? How can we encourage one another?