Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Always Ready
Scripture: 1 Peter 3
Code: BQ71411

Always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence. (1 Peter 3:15)

Christians must be ready **to make a defense** of the faith. The Greek term for **defense** (*apologia*) is the word from which the English terms *apology* and *apologetics* derive. It often means a formal defense in a judicial courtroom (cf. Acts 25:16; 2 Tim. 4:16), but Paul also used the word informally to denote his ability to answer those who questioned him (Phil. 1:16). **Always** indicates believers' need for constant preparedness and readiness to respond, whether in a formal courtroom or informally, to **everyone who asks** them **to give an account** for why they live and believe the way they do. **Account** is simply *logos*, "word," or "message," and it calls saints to be able at the time someone **asks** (present tense) **to give** the right words in response to questions about the gospel.

The gospel is identified as **the hope that is in** believers. **Hope** is synonymous with the Christian faith because the motive for believers' embracing Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior is their anticipation of escaping hell and entering eternal glory (cf. Acts 26:6; Eph. 1:18; 4:4; Col. 1:23; Heb. 10:23). Thus **hope** becomes the focal point of any rational explanation believers should be able to provide regarding their salvation.

The believer's defense of this hope before the unbeliever who asks must be firm and uncompromising, but at the same time conveyed **with gentleness and reverence. Gentleness** refers to meekness or humility, not in the sense of weakness but in the sense of not being dominant or overbearing (cf. Eph. 4:15, "speaking the truth in love"). The Lord Himself was characterized by this virtue, as was Paul: "Now I, Paul, myself urge you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ" (2 Cor. 10:1a).

Reverence expresses devotion to God, a deep regard for His truth, and even respect for the person listening (Col. 4:6; 2 Tim. 2:24–26).

Christians who cannot present a biblically clear explanation of their faith (cf. 1 Thess. 5:19–22; 1 John 2:14) will be insecure when strongly challenged by unbelievers (cf. Eph. 4:14–15). In some cases that insecurity can undermine their assurance of salvation. The world's attacks can overwhelm those who have not "put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation" (1 Thess. 5:8; cf. Eph. 6:10–17).

Available online at: http://www.gty.org
COPYRIGHT (C) 2013 Grace to You
You may reproduce this Grace to You content for non-commercial purposes in accordance with Grace to You's Copyright Policy (http://www.gty.org/connect/copyright).