

# 1 Peter 3:15

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[ 0 : 00 ] We shall turn now to 1 Peter chapter 3, reading at verse 15. 1 Peter chapter 3 and verse 15.

And the second part of the verse. Be ready always to give an answer to everyone that asketh you.

A reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear. Now a fortnight ago we were reflecting on the great commission.

And we saw that part of that commission is that the church should teach disciples to observe all that Christ has commanded.

And I suggested that in that particular directive the Lord is emphasizing the need for us to teach especially young believers the practical side of the Christian faith.

[ 1 : 29 ] The focus falls specifically on observing the Lord's own commandments.

On the duties that cluster around the Christian life. Now those practical obligations are very numerous.

They involve all our relationships. They involve our own self-discipline and self-management. They involve every aspect of a role within the church of God.

They involve our own emotions, our own affections, our own gifts, our own moods, responsibilities. I want this morning to focus on just one responsibility.

That of Christian witness. Because it is by any standard a major part of the New Testament's concern.

[ 2 : 42 ] That we in our own private lives should bear our own testimony to Christ and to his salvation.

That we in our own private lives should bear our own lives.

Responsibility. Responsibility. Responsibility. Responsibility. Responsibility. That we should go to our own places of work, of leisure, of recreation and influence.

And in all of these we should shine as the lights of the world and should hold forth the word of life.

God has given to us a confession. And God wants us to hold fast that confession.

[ 3 : 57 ] And yet as all of us know, there is nothing that causes a deeper sense of failure in our lives than this responsibility of our own personal witness.

And I want bearing that in mind this morning to reflect on the problem in the light especially of this particular text in 1 Peter chapter 3.

We should note, I suggest, for it is that we are to bear witness to. We are, we are told to give a reason of the hope that is in us.

A reason of the hope. Now it's enormously important to notice how tremendously positive, how joyful, how confident that is.

Because so often when we ask ourselves, what does the church stand for? We get the whole perspective wrong.

[ 5 : 23 ] We will so often tell people what our church is against. At least not so often as a church's image. You are the church.

You are the church which is against so and so and such and such. And far too often that is our own mentality as well.

We see the church of God so often in terms simply of principles. In terms of a stand. In terms of negatives.

In terms very, very often only of law. And not in terms of the gospel. We are the Sabbatarian church.

We are the church which has no hymns. We are the church which has no organs. We are the church in which women appear to have no particular role.

[ 6 : 30 ] We are the anti-abortion church. We are the pro-capital punishment church. And before we know where we are, we have moved the whole focus away from the gospel.

It has moved away from the good news. It has moved away from all that is fitted to elevate and fitted to encourage.

Now that is absolutely fatal. And it is also totally false to the perspectives of the New Testament. Because what the church of God should have if it holds to its integrity is good news for lost men and women.

We have good news for every creature. And while all those negatives are their own importance. Yet our image.

Our great basic message. It's a message of hope. And we have to so live. And so conduct ourselves.

[ 7 : 44 ] And so affect our own society. That the earth led to us. This hope that you have. What is it?

Where does it come from? This patience you show. This joy with which you are so full. This great confidence. This great positive, optimistic creativity.

Where does it come from? This hope. Bear in mind. That the world doesn't have it. The world is without God.

Says Paul. And it is also without hope. And the church is distinguished by this fact. That in this dark world.

It alone has hope. Now let us do all in our power to ensure. That our own tactics in life are such.

[ 8 : 48 ] And our self projection is such. That when we have to engage in argument. And battle. And discussion. And conflict. With the world. At this level of personal testimony.

Then the ground we are standing on. Is gospel ground. Let us be sure. That what we are defending. Is the great.

Positive. Hopeful. Inspirational quality. Of the Christian gospel. In this hope. That we entertain. That we can go.

Before the judgment seat of God. Fearless. That we have no fear of death. We have no fear of judgment.

We have no fear. Of eternity. That is our hope. Our hope. That in the moment of death.

[ 9 : 49 ] We are taken to be present with the Lord. Our hope. That our body shall yet know. A glorious resurrection.

And transformation. The assured confidence. That the bonds of Christian fellowship. Which we form and fashion.

In this life. Are not going to be. Terminated by death. But that one day. We shall all be together.

With the Lord. The assured confidence. That God shall work. All things together for good.

To them. That love him. It is to those things. To our hope. To our assurance. To our confidence.

[ 10 : 47 ] To our optimism. To our patience. To our endurance. To the sheer. Creative. Joyousness. Of our old Christian lives. It is to those things. Says Peter. That we are to try. To direct your attention. We are to witness.

To the hope. That is in us. And then you will notice. Secondly. What form. Our witness is to take.

The apostle uses two words. Be ready always to give. An answer. To every man. First of all.

We must give an answer. And then the second word is this. Those people are asking. A reason. For the hope that you have.

[ 11 : 44 ] So there is. A reason. And there is an answer. I want to reverse the order for a moment. And take first of all.

This word that. The AV renders as reason. It is in fact. The common. Greek word for. A word. The word logos.

We have it also in Paul's. Statement. The word of the cross. That is. The logos. Almost the logic.

Of the cross. In other words. Our witness has to consist. First and foremost. Of. A reason. Statement. Of our own hope. We have to be able. To state. Our hope.

[ 12 : 41 ] We have to be able to give. An orderly. And a coherent. And a rational. And reasonable. And lucid statement.

Of what it is. That lies. At the basis. Of our optimism. And at the basis. Of our own confidence. Now nothing.

Could be more. Elementary. Than that. And yet. We so often. Forget. That the very. First. Business.

Of witness. Is to. State the truth. In reasonable. And in intelligible. Propositions. Peace. And that is something.

At which every. Single one of us. Must work. So that the moment. We are challenged. We can say. This. Is.

[ 13 : 40 ] The Christian position. This is what Christ. Taught. This is what the apostles. Taught. This is what we. Commonly believe. Believe.

That is why. It is. Absolutely. Fatal. To disjive. Theology. From testimony. We have to have.

This ability. To state. Clearly. Our own hope. To state. Unambiguously. And compellingly. Our own position.

Be ready. To give this. Reason. Statement. Of the position. That you hold. That is why. We have to.

Immerse ourselves. In scripture. That's why. We must listen. To the preached. Word of God. That's why. We must read. That's why.

- [ 14 : 35 ] We must meditate. And it is. So large. A part. Of the church's. Contemporary tragedy. That many. Christians.
- Are simply. Quite. Unable. To give. This. Recent. Statement. Of the hope. That they have. And that. In my experience.
- Is not. Confined. To apostate. Bodies. It is. Far. Too. True. Of evangelicals. And far.
- Too. True. Even. Of many. Of us. Within the free church. Itself. That we cannot. Give this. Recent. Statement. Of the position. That we hold.
- So we must. Be ready. Says the apostle. To tell people. Exactly. What we believe. That's not all. We must.
- [ 15 : 31 ] Give them an answer. In other words. We are sometimes. Going to be challenged. For our faith. And the word.
- That Peter has here. Is the word. Which. Lies. The basis. Of our English word. Apology. Be ready. To give.
- An apology. Now it is apology. In the technical sense. We have the same word again. In the apostle Paul's.
- Letter to Philippi. In what he says. That he is set. For the defense. Of the gospel. That is. Apologia. Apology.
- Apologetic. Defense. Of the gospel. The apostle. Is saying. To Christians. Be ready. Always.
- [ 16 : 28 ] To give. To those. Who ask. Of you. A defense. Of the gospel. Be ready. To defend. Your own position.
- How it is astonishing. That Peter should say that. Because. He is not writing. To theologians. Or to professional apologists.
- Or even to Christian ministers. Or evangelists. He is writing. To God's elect. To those poor believers. Scattered. Through.
- Pontus. Galatia. And so on. These. These. Ordinary men and women. And the apostle is saying to them. What you know to be true. That in the course of your ordinary lives.
- In your daily intercourse with the world. You are going to be challenged. And going to be asked. Not only what you believe.
- [ 17 : 29 ] Which can be disconcerting enough. That you may be asked. To defend. What you believe. And the apostle says.
- You must be ready for it. There is no point. In walking naked. And unarmed. Into that kind of situation.
- You have to go in prepared. You have to go in. Wearing the armor of God. You have to go in. Having done your homework.
- So that not only do you know your position. But you know the defense of your position. In other words. We have to take.
- Our apologetics. Out of our colleges. Into our pulpits. Out of our pulpits. Into the daily lives.
- [ 18 : 26 ] Of the members. Of the church of God. And what I am saying is. That you are the apologists. That the terrible burden.
- Of defending the faith. Falls upon your shoulders. It falls on mine too. Marginally. In my own role. As a member of society.
- But it in no way falls. On me distinctively. It falls. On every single member.

Of the church. We may. All. At any moment. We may be asked. To give a defense. And it's a defense.

Of our hope. And suppose. For a moment. I was asked. How can I defend. My position. How can I.

[ 19 : 26 ] Defend. My confidence. That in a few years. I shall be with Christ. My confidence.

In the transformation. Of my body. My confidence. In the transformation. Of this whole universe. My confidence.

That God. Will work all things together. For good. For me. Men will say. How can you have such a hope. What is the basis.

Of this hope. Of this assurance. Of this joy. God. And what shall I say. I might say.

That I met a man. I met a man. Jesus. I met a man. Who was more than a man. A man.

[ 20 : 23 ] The son of God. I met him. In the pages. Of the new testament. I met him. In the preaching.

Of the gospel. And when I met him. He spoke. With authority. He spoke. Compellingly.

He spoke. Cogently. And he spoke. Convecingly. And he gave me hope. He gave me hope. Of forgiveness.

And of immortality. And of transformation. And try so may. That is my bedrock.

That is my foundation. I'm not sure that I can get even. Behind Christ. Two reasons for Christ.

[ 21 : 23 ] It seems to me. At last. That it is the livingness. The compelling credibility.

Of the Christ. Who leaps at me. From the new testament. Who lives there. Three dimensionally. Who speaks there.

So insibly. And so. Concurringly. He is. His own. Attestation. He is. His own. Vindication.

It would have been. No use. Saying to Paul. After. Damascus. Rolled. Why do you believe. In Christ. Christ. He believed. Because he had met him.

It had pleased God. To reveal the son. In me. And I would suggest. That for all of us.

[ 22 : 24 ] As Christians. The fundamental reason. And the fundamental defense. Of our hope. Is this. Christ.

Who has spoken. To ourselves. In and out. Of the word of God. The Christ. Who lives. Who is.

If I may come back to it again. So impressively. Three dimensional. And so impressively. Vital. In the pages.

Of the new testament. Itself. But I wouldn't stop there. I would certainly say.

I have hope. Because I find. The Christ. Of the new testament. So real. And so credible. But I would also say.

[ 23 : 23 ] I have hope. Because of the empty tomb. That greatest moment. In human history. When the angel.

Pointed. To the tomb. Where the church. Was looking for Christ. And said. He is not here. He is risen.

Behold. The place. Where they laid. Behold. The emptiness. Of that place. Remember. The place. The place. The place. The place. The place. The place. The place.

The place. The place. Remember. How the apostle. Paul. At Athens. Says. That God. Has given assurance. That Christ.

- Will judge. The world. By erasing him. From the dead. That's where my faith.
- [ 24 : 19 ] My intellect. Goes back to. Time and time again. There is a form of scholarship. That wants a Christian faith. Erased up. As it says. Above the vagaries. And the vicissitudes.
- And the uncertainties. Of historical scholarship. That wants the Bible. And God. And Christ. Protected. Against critical questions. Against documentary analysis. Against academic research. That whole procedure. Can. Appear very plausible.
- [ 25 : 22 ] But I remind you. That. The world. Became flesh. And that the moment. Christ. Became flesh. Christ. And God. In Christ. Became vulnerable. To academic scrutiny. To historical scholarship. To research. To documentary analysis. Just the same way. As soldiers. Could crucify him. So scholars. Could crucify him. All that is involved. In the enfleshment. Of the son of God. Christ's. Name. Christ's parents.
- [ 26 : 20 ] Go on the register. Christ comes. Into human history. In that he is crucified. Under Pontius Pilate.
- Christ. He is not crucified. In some. Supra. Temporal soul. But he is crucified. In time. Uncrucified. At a place. And I am saying. And for this reason. That the resurrection.
- Of Jesus Christ. Is a matter. Of historical scholarship. The empty tomb.
- Is a matter. Of demonstrable. Historical reality. The resurrection. Appearances. Are a matter. Of demonstrable.
- [ 27 : 18 ] Historical reality. The eruption. Of the crucified. Nasirene. Into the life. Of Saul of Tarsus. Is a matter. Of historical reality. And. Of historical verifiability. It is a matter. Of academic. Asseveration.
- And if at one level. I am appealing. To the sheer. Three dimensionalness. Of the Christ. Of the gospels. At another level. I am appealing to. All those. Documentary evidences. Of the recentness.
- Of the son of God. It is a documentary fact. That he was crucified. It is to me. A documentary fact.
- [ 28 : 16 ] That he rose. And in that resurrection. There is a vindication. Of biblical supernaturalism. And there is a vindication.
- Of all the claims. Of Jesus Christ. To be the son of God. And in that great empty tomb. There is the most brilliant irradiation.
- Of the certainty. Of the certainty. Of the only emergence. From death. And from the grave. The great faultist.
- And the great pledge. That one day. Christ. Will be the destruction of death. And the plague of hell. And the great.
- And its documentary. It is. The best. Attested fact. In ancient history.
- [ 29 : 12 ] That the nucleus. Which was. The Christian church. Believed. In the resurrection. Of the flesh. Of Jesus.
- It is. It is. A tested fact. That that belief. Rested. On the empty tomb. And on the resurrection.

Appearances. Peter. Had seen. Christ. And John. Had seen him. And Paul. Had seen him. Not before his death.

But afterwards. And I give. As a reason. For my faith in him. And for my hope in him. That applying.

All the. Acids. Of my own. Radically. Skeptical. Intellect. And my own. Inborn. Cynicism. To all those.

[ 30 : 11 ] Affirmations. That I have yet. To yield. My consent. I must consent. That. There is documentary proof.

Truth. There is historical truth. There is. Proof in time. And space. That. At. That empty tomb.

God erupts. In history. And God. Perforates history. And God. Destroyed. Death. In the death of Christ.

Peter. Peter. I have been right down. In the depths of despair. As he tells us. In first Peter chapter one. The great.

First point. Of his thanks to God. Is. Blessed be God. Who begot us again. To our living hope. Now you will notice.

[ 31 : 09 ] God. Not simply. Be God. To our living hope. But be God. Us again. Again. To our living hope. He had lost.

His hope. It had perished. In the darkness. Of Calvary. Accentuated. By the darkness. Of his own. Denial.

Of his salvation. God. God. Had brought it. Back. How? By the resurrection. Of Jesus Christ.

From the dead. But I am asking you. To follow that. God. Has given us hope. By the resurrection.

Of Christ. From the dead. Not by giving us. Ideals. Or principles. But mark you. By giving us.

[ 32 : 05 ] An event. A datable event. A placeable. Event. A documented. Event. An event.

That. People were. Able to witness to. Because they had seen. And they had heard. And they had touched.

And they had handled. The word of life. And it is. Terribly important. To get a grip. Of the. Fleshliness. Of it all. The sheer.

Tangibility. Of it. The solidity. Of it. Almost. I would say. The sensuousness. Of the resurrection. It is.

There. In the realm. Of. The empirical. My belief. In God. Is. Is. Not at all.

[ 33 : 02 ] Rooted. In a. Priory. Reasoning. It is not. To me. An innate idea. I believe in God.

Because. Because. There are documented. Indications. That time. And time. And time. Again. He has. Perforated. Human history.

He has. Erupted. Into it. In the flood. In the exodus. In the stable. At Bethlehem. In the empty tomb.

And he will erupt. Into it again. In the glory. Of his. Second coming. And I'm.

Coming back again. To the methodological question. It is not. An innate idea. It is not. A logical.

[ 33 : 59 ] Deduction. It is an. Empirical reality. That which we have seen. And heard. For her eyes. Have looked upon. And her hands.

- Have handled. Of the word of life. I have hope. Because the Christ. Of the gospels.  
Has won my heart. And persuaded. My intellect. I have hope. Because the tomb. Was empty.
- I have hope. We have hope. Because the collective. Is so important. We have hope. Because.
- Of our own experience. We have cried. Audaciously. Into. Into. An apparent void.
- [ 35 : 01 ] We have cried. Like fools. To the wind. As Elijah did. On Mount Carmel. We have cried.  
We have cried. Audaciously. And have cried. Absurdly. And God. God has answered. And I say again.
- That is empirical. Out. Of that nothingness. Out of that void. Out of that.
- That darkness. There have come. Incredible. An astonishing answer. That is the church's. Collective experience. And my. Experience. Is a little. Of that collective. Experience. You said.
- [ 36 : 02 ] Side by side. The great. Forward. Futuristic. Affirmation. Of Romans 8.  
We know. That God. Works. All things. Together. For good. To them. That love. That's one thing. I said.
- Over against that. The great. Retrospective. And backward looking. Affirmation. Of the closing verse.
- Of Psalm 23. In the Hebrew. Only. Goodness. And mercy. Have followed me. All the days. Of my life.
- Only. Goodness. And mercy. All the days. I give a reason. For the hope. That is in me. My reason is.
- [ 36 : 58 ] The three dimensional. Living. Vibrant. Coaching. Convincing. Christ. Of the New Testament. My reason is. The empty tomb.
- My reason is. That the God of Elijah. Has heard us. And has answered me. And answered in fire. And shown. That out there.
- There is no void. There is no emptiness. There is no nothingness. But there is the hearing. Answering. Living. Seeing. Concerned. Involved.
- God. That is the reason. My. Very personal. Very personalized. Reason. For my hope. But you must have used.
- You have your own statement. Of your hope. You have your own vocabulary. You have your own terminology. You must have it. You have your own defense.
- [ 37 : 58 ] Your own defense. Out. Of the fact. That it is your hope. It is the hope. That is in you. Because a witness. Can only testify.
- To what. Is a matter. Of his own experience. You have your hope. What is it? You must put words. On your own hope. It must be your own words.
- You must have your own defense. For your own hope. And before we embark. Upon this terribly solemn business. Of bearing our witness.
- Then let's be sure. We can state our hope. Let's be sure. That before God. We can defend. Our hope. Well let me go on to ask this.
- If what we are to defend. Is the hope that is in us. If what we are asked to do. Is to give a reason statement of it.
- [ 38 : 53 ] And a defense of it. Then what preparation is necessary. I'm going to repeat myself. Once more.



I'm going to say. That the most basic preparation. Is that before you go.

Into the conflict. You must have worked out. In your own mind. What your hope is. You cannot wait.

To the world asks. You must have it clear. In your own mind. And again. You must have your defense. Clear.

It would have been the height of folly. And presumption. For me to walk. Into the pulpit this morning. Without preparation. I must know.

[ 39 : 53 ] Where I'm going to begin. I must know. Where I'm going to end. And I must know. Every stage. On the terrible journey.

That lies in between. It is absolutely no use. Thinking. That without prior preparation. Without homework.

Without understanding. Without reflection and thought. Without very, very serious criticism. Of our own words.

Of our own arguments. Without holding. Without holding. Our prejudices. Up to the light of scripture. Without that preparation. We can walk effectively.

Into the world. And bear our witness. So the very first preparation is. Know your hope. And know.

[ 40 : 49 ] The reasons. For your hope. Know them. Before you go in. And the next preparation. Is this. Be sure.

That we are right. In our relations. With God. Now let me. Come back again. To the earlier part. Of this verse. Sanctify the Lord.

God. In your hearts. There are certain. Textual problems. With the text. What Peter is saying.

Is this. Sanctify Christ. As Lord. In your hearts. Let me put it.

Quite simply. Before. You start witnessing. Be sure. That your hearts. Are yielded. That your hearts.

[ 41 : 47 ] Are consecrated. To the Lord. Of Christ. Be sure. That that.

Is true. As a matter. Of general principle. And reality. But be sure. To. That on each.

Particular occasion. On which you. Venture. Into the arena. Into the arena. Of witness. Be sure. That you are sanctified.

Christ. As Lord. In your hearts. Because. If we are not right. In relation. To God. Then we cannot witness.

Now that is. Maybe a very. Elementary matter. To some of you. That it is. That it is. That it is. That it is.

[ 42 : 44 ] Something. Absolutely. Monumental. Let me raise. A very. Trivial question. By some standards. What can a man.

Do as a witness. If he lacks. Assurance. Of his own salvation. A man.

Who knows. He is a Christian. Asks. A reason. For his hope. Hope. And what that man. Wants to know. Is not the hope.

You think. Christians have. It's the hope. You have. And then. You tell the man. But. Well I'm not sure. I am a Christian.

I'm not sure. I have. Hope. Now just imagine. The effect. Upon the questioner. If he had problems. Before.

- [ 43 : 45 ] He's got more problems. Than ever now. Because. He's got his mate. A Christian. Who doesn't have assurance. Doesn't have hope. We have to sort out.
- Our own relationship. With God. We may lack assurance. We may be backslidden. We may be grieving. The Holy Spirit.
- The joy. The verve. The zeal. The exuberance. We have gone. Out of our religion. We have to sort it out. I'm not saying to anybody.
- And I want this. Unmistakably clear. I don't want you to say. Well. I don't need to witness. Because I'm not right. In my relations with God.
- I've said to you. You must witness. You absolutely must. And in order to that witness.
- [ 44 : 45 ] You must immediately. Sort out. Your own relationship with God. Sanctify Christ. As Lord. In your heart.
- God. So you must know. Your hope. You must know. The reasons for your hope. You must be right. In your relations with God. And you must be right.
- In your relations. With the man who is asking. Here is a man asking you. Why you are so hopeful. Why you have such confidence.
- Why you have such joy. Such patience. Such assurance. You must be right. In your relations with that man. I'm not going to develop.
- That. But I would put it to you. That far too often. We are in no position to witness.
- [ 45 : 45 ] Because we are totally and utterly wrong. In our relations. With those. To whom we are talking. Maybe we've compromised ourselves with them.
- Maybe we've been discourteous. Maybe we've done something shoddy. Maybe we've lost our temper. Now the terrible tragedy.
- Of these things. When they happen. To Christians. In dealing with the world. Is that they make it virtually impossible. For you. To witness.
- You've blown it. He will never listen to you. Unless. By the grace of God. You can sort. The relationship out.
- That is why. This whole question. Of our relations. With unconverted people. Are so terribly important. They are important.
- [ 46 : 47 ] Because. If the relationship is strained. Or disrupted. Or compromised. If there is the barrier. Of a personality difference.
- Or some disagreement. Then you know. You can never. Never climb. Over that barrier. And start witnessing.
- We must be right. In relation to God. And right. In our relations. With men. If we are going to bear.
- Any effective witness. So much for the preparation. Be ready. And then this terrible word. Be ready. Always.
- Always. Always. Have your reason statement. Always have your defense ready. Always be right with God.
- [ 47 : 45 ] Always be right with man. Always be. In a proper. Personal. And spiritual. And relational. And intellectual. And physical condition. To give an answer. And an explanation. Always. Now you know.
- How demanding that can be. How tempting it is. To say not now. How tempting it is. To say come back later. It may be a child.
- A member of her own family. Asking questions. Questions. Questions. Relentlessly. Irritatingly. Most annoyingly.

And yet. That child's. Whole. Personal future. May rest. Upon my response. At this moment.

[ 48 : 47 ] To that question. So be ready. Always. To give this statement. And to give this defense. And finally.

And very briefly. This. How. Are we to give. Such a statement. And give such. A defense.

There are just. Two words. That are mentioned. Here in verse 15. With meekness. And fear. Meekness.

In other words. Not overbearingly. Not arrogantly. Not.

In that posture. That says. We are the people. We are the free church people. We are the good people. Not in a way. That expresses.

[ 49 : 44 ] Contempt. For those. Less spiritual. Less sensitive. Than ourselves. But this. Great perspective.

We have. In Galatians 6. Considering. Thyself. Knowing. What we used to be. And knowing.

What is sometimes. More devastatingly. What we might have been. And what we would have been. And where I would be. Today. Had grace.

Not arrested me. Knowing that. You give your answer. Meekly. Even when the question is provocative. When it's discourteous.

When it's militant. When it's arrogant. When it's overbearing. You give it meekly. Let me put it this way. Here is a man asking.

[ 50 : 43 ] In a curious way. The truth. That I have waited for him to ask.

In other words. I haven't gone at him. I haven't forgotten. That he is a person. I haven't forgotten.

That I don't always have the right. To invade his life. I don't. Have the right. To pound him. With evangelism.

I don't have the right. To regard him. Simply as conversion fodder. I don't have the right. To treat him. As a thing.

At which. I constantly spout. My religion. Or my religiosity. It is at this level. A part of my meekness.

[ 51 : 45 ] That I have waited for him. To take the initiative. That is only one truth. Against which. There are many other truths. To set.

To get the biblical balance. But. What is terribly important. Is that we see human beings. As persons. And that we relate to them.

Lovingly. Creatively. Meekly. The unconverted know. When you despise them. They know.

When you think. They're only things. They know. When you talk down. They know. When you have no interest.

In them. But as a potential convert. And that to me. Is all wrong. There are many. Men in my profession.

[ 52 : 45 ] Who are in this situation. Would refuse. To discuss anything. But religion. They would walk in. They would ask. How the family were.

They would have. Worship. Read the bible. Pray. Say good day. Walk out. And they have not. Contaminated themselves. By discussing.

By discussing. Anything secular. Now. Suppose. That person. Is interested. In something secular. Suppose. He is a secular person. I must meet him.

As a person. I must show. That I'm interested. In his interests. I must at last. Show. Christ's word. Upon his interests.

I must meet him. Where he is. And I will discuss. The weather. And the plowing. And the fishing. And the car. And the football. And the cricket. As a human being.

[ 53 : 41 ] Person to person. Because he is. A person. There to be loved. In the totalness. Of his own. Personal humanness.

So we give this. Statement. And this defense. With meekness. And at last. We give it with fear. The one that's in that.

Is this. It's a kind of fear. That Paul spoke of. With regard to his own. Preaching at Corinth. I was among you.

In weakness. And in fear. And in much trembling. Paul never shrunk. From preaching. I believe that very often.

Paul enjoyed it. But I believe that Paul. Was always. Frightened of it. Why the fear. Because we are handling.

[ 54 : 36 ] Mysteries. We are handling. Depths. We are handling. Human souls. And you must. Never never forget. The sheer. Holiness.

Of this. Personal. Conversation. In which you are. Stating your faith. And you are. Defending it. The sacredness. Of the human personality.

Being witnessed to. The sacredness. Of the truth. That is being discussed. And the monumental. Consequences.

That hang. Upon the conversation. So the witnessing. The witnessing. The witnessing. This always. Holy. Always reverent. With reverence.

For that man. And reverences. The word. With reverence. For the truth. And with reverence. For the issues.

[ 55 : 37 ] Be ready. Always. To give a reason. Statement. And a coherent. Defense. Of the hope. That you have experienced.

Let us pray. Amen. O Lord. O God. We. Bless thee. For the clarity. Of thy directions.

And we pray. For grace. To heed them. And to apply them. Give us. We pray thee. Grace. To be effective. God dependent. And God honoring.

Witnesses. For thy glory. Sake. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Our closing praises. In the 40th Psalm. And we shall sing. Verses 8 to 10. To the tune St. Paul. Psalm 40.

[ 56 : 35 ] Verses 8 to 10. To do thy will. I take delight. O thou. My God. That art. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. In my heart, within the congregation pray, I righteousness in reach.

Know thou thou strong, O Lord, that I, Reveal him in my heart, I should be.

[ 57 : 58 ] I ever give within my heart, O still my righteousness, I hear thy salvation, I hear thy salvation, I hear, and show thy faithfulness.

Thy righteousness, O Son, in his, Considu et alo d'er,urch God's deepest free reign.

Amen. für arczelbede kick ...