

1Peter 11-04-22b

Let's pick up our study now in 1 Peter chapter 3 verse 15. Give a defense, an apologia, to everyone who asks you. One of the great principles and truths of our Christian faith that tends to get lost in the programmatic approach to evangelism is that we can witness without a word and we can wait to witness until we are asked.

It's like the words of the song we sing that my father wrote. The reason for the hope that is in you is something that should show. Your life will be your witness.

Your life will be your witness. Scripture shows the way. So this scripture tells us that we should be ready, *he toimoi*, ready ones, ones who are ready to and give you notice is in italics because we should be ready to apologize but not in the English sense of the word.

To apologize originally meant to give a stout and well-reasoned defense of a thing, not to kick your toe in the dirt and say I'm real sorry. So give a stout and able defense, give an explanation, give an apologia to everyone, the ones asking, a logon. You give an apologia when someone asks you for the logon.

We translate this as reason but this is a form of the same word that's in John 1. In the beginning was the logos. Logos was with God, the logos was God. So logos has the idea not only of word but matter or substance or body of ideation, a thought, a concept concerning perites elpidas, the hope in you.

And what might surprise you a little bit about this is that we look at the concept of hope and we say well is it in the individual or is it in the group? And in this case we find that it is given to us as a plural. Remember when Jesus said the kingdom of God is in you, it was the same phrase, in whom in. And what's our task here is to determine how to translate it.

Is it a reason for the hope that is in you personally or that is among you as a group? And we know that when Jesus was talking about the kingdom and he said the kingdom of God is in your midst is how we translate in whom in there. The kingdom isn't some sort of a little spiritual kingdom in our heart and we'd go there and plop down beside a palm tree and drink from the water of life and say oh well God's little kingdom is in my little heart. Jesus said the kingdom of God meaning the king and the potential for the kingdom to come in, it's in your midst, you're looking at it.

If they would have accepted him, John the Baptist was Elijah, and if they would have accepted him Jesus Christ was the Messiah and the kingdom was at hand. The kingdom is in your midst. Well this is the same thing we have here.

These you's here sanctify the Lord God in your hearts y'all and you all be ready to give a defense to everyone asks you a reason for the hope that is in you all that characterizes your group. You

don't have to be a particularly sprightly bubbly hopeful looking personality and people say oh I've just got to find out what's your secret? How do you stay so so positive and optimistic and and just a regular Lawrence Welk bubble machine there? How do you how do you just stay so effervescent and and looking on the bright side and tipping through the tulips and how do you do that? That's that's not it. Some of us could never be mistaken for such a person on our best day but someone can ask a reason for the hope that Christians share that we represent and we certainly ought to be a part of.

Be ready to give a defense when they ask you somebody might see a Christian over here and they say well you're one of those Christians what what's the deal here? How can be it doesn't have to just be you is the point that's why it's a plural. Be ready always to give a defense. This is one of my verses for when that's going to cost you one now this is one of my verses for participating in in public forums getting on the internet and joining some club or whatever where there's a discussion group that occasionally impinges on Christianity atheists and agnostics and wayward ignorant Christians and well-intentioned Mormons and all kinds of different people get in this group and try to talk about God and talk about the scripture make pronouncements then I dive right in and I give a defense and when people say like happened this last week oh your God's a God of slavery and human sacrifice and even this and the other I give a defense.

I just posted a thing today the guy's saying oh your God is a big fan of human sacrifice and I said there has been one human sacrifice and that sacrifice secured the deliverance of hundreds of millions of people and the victim was brought back to life and elevated and honored above anybody else in the universe that's God's view of human sacrifice and in terms of animal sacrifice you know we're never going to run out of animals what's the problem no the Jews the Jews haven't sacrificed an animal in 2,000 years Christians never did so why are you bringing it up you want to go talk about some dusty practices from millennia ago or do you want to talk about the present you can't blame Christianity even if if there was any blame to be laid for the Levitical offering system and God made the animals if he makes them it's like Bill Cosby's father you know I can get rid of you make another one just like you and God can do that all the time and to him it's no more trivial than somebody here and I gave this example you the most of these guys are programmers now say you you write a program you make several copies of it then you go back and delete one of those copies have you committed some sort of moral turpitude there by deleting something that you made well no you made it it's yours well guess what God owns the cattle on a thousand hills he created every creature on this planet they're his and he can drown him he can burn him he can roast him he can enjoy them as sacrifices he can feed them to his people he can let them be out there for others to find and make use of they're his you're not gonna go tell God what he can do with his animals any more than somebody's gonna come in your house and tell you what you can do with your socks it's nobody's business so anyway be ready to give a defense and we should be well enough informed about our faith and our children should be knowledgeable enough about our faith and our the truth of God's Word to be able to specifically give a reason give a defense not for the faith not for the love not for the Bible stories

but for the hope and sooner or later it is our job to steer these conversations not to the past not trying to explain why it was okay for the Canaanites to be slaughtered women women and children not to go explain why the Psalms say you know I can't wait for you Babylonians to have your baby's heads dashed on a rock and you know they always want to go to these quote-unquote problem passages and try to make hay out of it that's not why we're here if you're able to give a defense for those great but what you're basically hoping to do is clear the decks so that you can now talk about the expectation where are you going to be when this life is over where are you going to be when you are held accountable to a righteous and just Creator and all this other is preliminary it's it's like when you have some business to discuss with someone this is really true in the in the Middle East and it's even true in our culture if you've got business to transact you know you don't just say you see somebody and you say hey where's that tire I brought here last week to be fixed you say well hello how are you doing and you know how are the kids and you know that by the way you know what about that tire we have preliminaries we lead into things this is this is part of being civilized and having a gracious demeanor and kind of easing into a thing and establishing a little bit of rapport familiarity disarming of defenses some some conviviality some fellowship before getting into what might be kind of a delicate subject or something that might be met somebody might be touchy over we we try to build a little bit of fabric there well the same is true when you give the apologia when you give the defense for our hope you can't just jump in and say oh by the way you're gonna fry in hell if you don't believe in my God that we lead into these things we have to have some have to have some context and so there's a lot to this when Peter says be ready always to give a defense a defense has parts it's like when the Marine Corps tells a lieutenant be ready always to give a five paragraph order for your next mission all right you know smek this situation you know you start figuring that out but there's pieces to it there's parts of it somebody says be ready always to write a business letter well you know the parts of a business letter you've got to have the addressee you've got to have the salutation and the date you have the introduction you got the body you have the closing you got the closing greeting you got the signature you got the CC line and there are parts to it well it's no different with the apologia and if you're going to give a defense not for the faith not for the scriptures not for anything else but be ready to defend the hope well what is the hope well one of my favorite books on this earth right up there and almost indispensable companion to the Bible is the new treasury of scripture knowledge and if you go to first Peter 3:15 in your NTSK there is as always a helpful set of references next to the hope and the first one it gives you is from our book our letter first Peter 1:3 & 4 I reviewed that before the break blessed be the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ who according to his abundant mercy has begotten us again with a view toward a living hope you may have noticed when you got saved that you didn't end up in heaven immediately if you remember when you got saved think most of us do some of you may not because for some people it's not so much an episode is kind of a process you can realize one day you know I think I'm safe but regardless at the point that you woke up and said hey I'm saved you didn't start seeing angels in the heavenly throne and and and leave this life did you because we were begotten again and left here looking forward to ultimate sanctification looking forward to

the return of Jesus Christ looking forward to leaving behind this body and this sinful world and and our weather the day when our labors will be or right it's a hope it's an expectation is something unseen why would God do that he's all-powerful he can organize you know the universe and history and in our lives anyway he chooses why don't we just pop like a bubble when we get saved and we're just not here anymore believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and now shall be saved I believe gone you just I mean would that be a great evangelism tool so I guess it would be better to be here to evangelize but you have to leave the gospel on the wall somewhere somebody reads it believe me say well that sounds good to me they're gone why does it get happened that way why are we saved and we're still here if old things have passed away and all things become new and so on why are we still there well we know the answer to this question because there are things that God can teach us things that we can learn in this life that we can only learn in this life that you can't learn in perfection you can't learn them when you're glorified you're not going to be tested you're not going to be asked to have faith did you know that there is no faith in the kingdom of the Father think about it no faith required in the kingdom of the Father why faith is the substance things hope for not hoping for anything anymore you've got it all evidence of things not seen there are no unseen things you see everything unless you're one of the forlorn miserable sots way out there at the edge of the thing waiting for somebody to bring you leaves from the tree of life to get healed with then you might but we are I'm convinced of better things of you brethren things that company salvation and you're not going to be out there so there's really no need for faith faith is now the trial of our faith works patience now not later there's me a whole different learning paradigm whole different way of gaining access to greater and greater understanding of God in the eternal future we're not going to be wrestling against principalities and powers and the rulers of the darkness of this age not going to be wrestling our own flesh not going to be wrestling each other you know sometimes we're our own worst enemies and not only ourselves but each other and God works it together for good God is the only God anywhere who can take evil and work it together for good there's no God that can do that certainly no people can do that no angel can do it God is amazingly powerful and wise enough to take suffering people say oh how can you have a God who allows little children to starve and you know all of these bad things happening and there are there tragically gruesomely horrible things that happen in this earth and God allows God saw them all the Lord Jesus Christ bore the penalty for them all on the cross but they say happen people experience horrendous unimaginable suffering and pain in this life and God allows it why it's worth it at the end when all is said and done God is going to have a population of creatures who accompany him into the eternal future and join him in the eternal future who are fully committed fully qualified fully appreciative fully understanding of the heinous wretchedness of sin and the horrific pain and suffering that it causes and nobody is ever going to pull another Lucifer nobody is ever going to reach out and take another piece of forbidden fruit because everybody there has already been there and done that and doesn't want to see it or do it again it's vaccination it's insurance and is it painful are there a lot of people are going to suffer and die there a lot of people are going to disappear from the human race never to be seen again yes but everybody that is there with God in the eternal

future is there by choice everyone is going to appreciate God in ways that were unthinkable and unknowable in the eternal past when the angels were with God in glory they didn't know what God could do until they saw him create this universe they didn't know what he could do when they saw the perfect man and his wife in the garden and then the catastrophe of the fall and they thought now what they'd never seen anything like it Lucifer's fall was different we don't have any knowledge or inkling of a redemption or of a rescue or of a it's it's a fall of a different sort it's a creature of a different kind but when the man fell and then God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son so that whoever believed in him wouldn't perish but have everlasting life it was a totally new thing the angels are just stunned it's like the best movie ever made it is the most interesting thing here is the God that they serve revealed the fullness of deity and bodily form and they're fascinated by it God has a purpose God has a plan and we have been called to a specific function in that plan we are called to stay here we're called to be submissive we are called to look unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross disregarded the shame and now he is seated at the right hand of God the Father and that's our hope so when you go to first Peter one three and four we have been begotten again unto with a view toward a living hope we live day by day and we've got that hope in front of us that's our calling it's the hope of our calling our calling is to live in hope God asks us to believe in something we can't see God says there's heavenly glory there's an inheritance there's stuff beyond your imagination do you believe me and he's looking for people to say yes Lord I do and I believe you so much that I'm going to build my life on it and I'm gonna make my decisions in anticipation of it and I'm going to be invest myself from this life to invest in it that's my hope that's what we should be able to explain and defend that's what we should be able to give an apology for somebody says oh you're God allows all this pain and suffering he can't be God allow that you say look let me give you a little apology on that let me give you a little bit of a picture there's a reason why God is doing what he's doing and don't don't try to drag God down to a merely human level like he's got to have some plan that you can easily understand the first two minutes of looking at it it's the plan of God do you think it might take a little while to just begin to comprehend the edges and the undersides of it do you really expect that you're going to be able to figure God out in your puny human brain when he is the omnipotent God beyond the universe and beyond anything that can be described or thought of he can only even express himself to us in by analogy and in figures and in in in anthropomorphism and anthropopathism and he's I mean get used to it he's much bigger than your mind is going to wrap itself around but he has explained himself and if you'll take a little time invest a little effort in understanding your questions about this will be answered and this separates those with a spark of interest whatever you want to call it positive volition positive at the point of God consciousness what however you choose to think of it but they're going to get there there's a little spark there's a little frame the flame there's a little bit of response to God and the things of God God the Holy Spirit is going to nurture and fan and try to build that thing up and and give it every possible encouragement and we can be part of that encouragement by providing accurate information well it's just the mysteries of God you just have to try we don't have to dissemble we don't have to give a human type apology there is there's a

wonderful biblical truth pertaining to that and we can share it and we can live in the light of it and it will show in our lives and it will make a difference acts 26 7 Paul is talking here and when he is standing in front of Agrippa he says for years according to the strictest sect of the Pharisees I lived out my life I was in the strictest part of Judaism I was a Pharisee the Pharisees now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made by God to our fathers to this promise our twelve tribes earnestly serving God night and day hope to attain what is the hope of the twelve tribes of Israel what is the hope of the Israelite faith it is resurrection it's the hope of the resurrection all these people to say there's no hope of the resurrection the Old Testament ask the Old Testament scholar and Pharisee Paul whether or not the Old Testament teaches the hope of the resurrection and tell them they can go argue with him because it's all through you look at Job Abraham dwelt in tents waiting for a city whose founder and builder is God well what are they going to do drag his bones in there he's going to rise again what about Ezekiel the valley of dry bones what about the the comfort ye my people and then here comes the Lord and his reward is with him the lambs are in his arms and Rachel's how can Rachel be comforted if she's dead it's all through their people just want to you know skim a few verses that they got on some atheist website and think they've got the Bible figured out that it's all a bunch of nonsense and those people there probably is no hope but for us there is it's the hope of the resurrection it's the hope of the expectation of the fulfillment of our salvation that's what the Old Testament Saints hope was it wasn't it God will bring the Messiah God will restore the land that we will have the land flowing with milk and honey we will be restored we will be blessed we will be alive again fathers reunited with children children reunited with fathers parents and children and so on in the resurrection it's the hope of the resurrection God can't fulfill all of these promises of salvation if we don't come back you look at Romans 15 verse 4 for whatever things were written before this would be your Old Testament were written for our instruction did ask Aaliyah remember did ask alas point main kite did ask alas that's your pastor and teacher in Ephesians he gave some Apostles some prophets some evangelist some point main kite did ask all shepherds and teachers well this is the DOS Galea these things were written beforehand pro grapha written for our learning so that through patience hoopoe Monet remain under that's remain under is like submission right endurance is part submission and comfort para classe o's this is like the Holy Spirit's name the paraclete these things were written for our teaching our instruction our learning so that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures of those writings graph on might have hope now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like minded toward one another according to Christ Jesus that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ that's a great one sentence summary of the Christian life our horizontal relationship with one another to be like minded with one heart with one voice to praise the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ because we have a relationship with the God of patience and comfort that patience and that comfort are ingredients they are components of our hope hope gives you patience when the dentist is drilling on your tooth you can be patient because you know it will soon be over he's a skilled guy he's going to get it done he's done it before and if you didn't have hope that it would be over you know my idea one of my ideas of you know some sort of eternal punishment would

be to be strapped into a chair with an army dentist for all eternity and just never never never get up never get out those guys never could find my nerves never could get my teeth filled right filling after filling all that one crack drill it out put another one in all that one crack drill it out put another one in hard and a teeth left by the time I by the time Dan had very little to work with and he did a did a beautiful job but but you expect you have an expectation the things you know our trials and troubles will soon be over and we can we can last when we know it it's going to end soon this will only pinch a little bit it's not going to pinch forever more it's not going to pinch the rest of your life can you imagine somebody said well you know this is going to pinch from now until you die would you take it not me let me die by some other means I don't want that it's it's momentary it's a momentary light affliction not worthy to be compared so that's what Paul talks about Romans 15 for Colossians 1 5 and by the way that whole chapter of Colossians 1 we've been through it a few years ago Paul tells the Saints in Colossi that he's heard of their faith in Christ Jesus and their love for all the Saints because of the hope why has he heard of their faith why is he heard of their love because of their hope it's remarkable it makes people remark it makes people talk it makes them ask questions because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven of which you heard before in the word of truth of the gospel which has come to you as it has also in all the world and is bringing forth fruit the truth of God's word engenders fosters stimulates feeds nourishes builds up strengthens hope it's pretty hard to be expecting everything that God has for us in the future if you never read about it never see the promises never see the the beautiful ways that God expresses these things and tells us about it never give the Holy Spirit a chance to affirm and confirm those truths by rehearsing them by going over them by reading some scripture by attending Bible class by having some meditation on those truths that's what makes it real things are real when you think about them I've finished construction projects little carpentry projects and mechanical projects in my head before I ever put my hands on the materials I have to I have to be able to see it in my mind before I can do it with my hands I'm just kind of a visual guy when I go places I don't read the street signs I just know my way by the way it looks I know where the turn is because oh yeah you turn here because that's where I am I don't know the name of anything it's a little embarrassing I was thinking the other day driving down central I pass all these exits I bet you I can't name three exits between here and downtown office central because I never read the signs I I can get anywhere I want to go but I don't get there by knowing the streets I get there by just knowing the geography and so we visualize when you want to I want to try to build a thing and sometimes that's why it takes so long because my I don't have enough RAM to build the whole thing in my mind and you got to keep dumping it off and feeding in little bits but when you can visualize it it's real and once it's real it's like oh yeah it reminds me I believe me I am no Michelangelo but you remember he said somebody asked him you know how did he get this beautiful angel carved out of marble or granite or something he said well you know I've had this big piece of rock and I just chipped away everything that didn't look like an angel there was an angel in there and I just chipped away all the stuff to set him free well he could see it in his mind before he ever he wasn't sitting there with a bloop he wouldn't do it the way I did it and have to try to mark he just said you know there's an angel trapped in there I got to get him out and he just

chipped all the rock away and there's the angel he could see it we see our hope this is why we attend Bible class this is why we speak the truth to one another in love this is why we meditate let God the Holy Spirit refresh and renew these truths because that is the motivation that's what makes our faith and our love work that's what gives it its motive force its energy if you do not think about the eternal future your spiritual life will suffer and suffer badly because now why are you doing what you do are you doing it because you're waiting for that day when the Lord Jesus can say well done are you doing it so that people will say well now there's a good there's a good Joe there's a there's a nice person there's somebody that doesn't owe me anything because they've done for me as much as I've done for them you know if you get it all in this horizontal earthly mundane plane it's all going to be energy of the flesh it's gonna be wood hay and stubble it's gonna go up in smoke we have to see it that hope has to be in us and it has to be among us and I think one of the most overlooked things in this whole passage is the plural they ask us a reason for the hope that is shared by us that is in our midst there's not just one of us there's not one lonely soul trudging onward with stars in their eyes and you know the tattered flag waving in the breeze marching trudging on to the shores of Jordan it's we're a group we're a a the body of Christ there's more of us than just one you look at the 23rd verse of that same chapter Colossians 1 if indeed you continue in the faith if indeed you continue it's a choice don't have to you can throw it over you can get worldly minded if you continue in the faith grounded and steadfast and are not moved away from the hope so many believers today have been moved away from the hope I'm not interested in heaven I want an experience now I want a worship experience I want a jumbotron I want a choir to waft me to emotional heights of giddy joy with their musicianship and with their stage management and their light kit and their and their you know whatever it is that they're that they're doing I want an entertainment experience if you want to be entertained go see a 3d movie worship is not entertainment worship is not for our benefit to make us feel good worship is so that we can get together pool our gifts build one another up and glorify God and be reminded and refreshed and restored about our hope of that wonderful kingdom that is coming if indeed you continue in the faith grounded and steadfast not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard same thing down in verse 27 God willed to make known to them the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles which is Christ in you the hope of glory guess what the phrase is it's the identical same phrase that we have in first Peter chapter 3 in whom in Christ in you all the hope of glory is not just individual you can't just run off and leave everybody in your dust I'm gonna get to super grace I'm gonna get to the pinnacle of you know that I'm gonna stand on top of my edification complex and wave the victory flag we are a fellowship we forsake not the assembling of ourselves together we benefit we are gifted to edify one another and you don't sit there in splendid isolation and well I'm a I'm like a lone wolf Boy Scout no we get there together Christ among you Christ in you all the hope of glory in whom in well I think you can begin to see the picture here I'll just give you a couple more references Titus 1 2 he opens Paul opens his letter to Titus this young pastor he says Paul a bondservant of God an apostle of Jesus Christ according to the faith of God's elect God's chosen and the epinosis of truth the epinosis of truth which is according to godliness built upon this is epi

built upon the hope of eternal life which God who cannot lie promised before time began the faith of God's elect the faith of God's chosen the faith of the called the Romans 828 believers is built upon the hope of eternal life it is upon it epi if you do not have that hope Paul says in another place if Christ is not raised the dead are not raised you are yet in your sins and we are of all men most miserable everything is built on resurrection and fulfillment of promise in the future that's our hope that's what we should be able to defend that's what we should be able to explain that's what we should be able to talk about when we are asked why do you Christians live the way you do I don't have to explain how the wild men of Borneo could get saved without a missionary I don't have to explain you know how Moses parted the Red Sea or how Jonah survived in the belly of the fish I don't have to explain the flood don't have to explain fossils don't have to explain anything except why I am so confident in my expectation that God is going to raise me from the dead to live with Christ and with fellow believers for all eternity and what a wonderful opportunity that is that's my job that's my calling as Peter explains it here so you see this throughout the rest of Scripture Hebrews mentions it several times Hebrews 3 6 Christ is the son in his own economy his own house and we are that house if we hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of the hope firm to the end we are the house of Christ we belong to him he is our authority if we hold fast our confidence and our joy in that confidence rejoicing of the hope firm to the end not to the middle not to the 90% mark to the end be not dismayed whatever be tried God will take care of you nothing diminishes it nothing mutes it nothing deteriorates it nothing tarnishes it nothing takes it away Hebrews 611 we desire that each one of you show the same diligence with a view toward the full assurance of hope until the end until the end 618 by two immutable things in which it is impossible for God to lie we have strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope that is set before us we go to God and we lay hold of hope this hope we have as an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast which enters in to the presence of God beyond the veil into the Holy of Holies into the throne room of God himself that's what that hope does for us it's a new and living way through the veil through the Lord Jesus Christ well you can talk about this subject almost infinitely but I think we've at least got the picture submission has a purpose it is an expression of our hope I can submit to squirrely twisty authority because of my hope that hope is my testimony that hope causes remark causes comment raises questions and I can explain it anybody that asks me I can tell him exactly why I persevere why I'm excited about this life and about the next no problem explaining that all of us should have that hope it's our anchor it's our foundation our faith and love stem from it our enthusiasm our joy our praise of God in heaven is based on it the Lord Jesus Christ is the embodiment of our hope he is the one human being that God has raised from the dead he is our hope our living hope and we will be united with him and live with him forevermore that's worth talking about it's worth living for its worth investing in as opposed to the vagaries of this mundane mortal and ephemeral existence will close here in a word of prayer we'll pick up in verse 16 where it talks about having a good conscience next week father thank you for the truth of your word thank you for the living hope that we have through the Lord Jesus Christ it is such an inexpressible privilege to have been rescued and have been placed into union with him and sharing all of his assets and being gifted with his righteousness

and having been reconciled and redeemed through his work on our behalf we thank you for our salvation we thank you for our life thank you for our trials and our tests we thank you for the opportunity to live more hours and more days in this life to learn and grow in grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus and to try to put into practice these things that we have received by way of exhortation from this letter penned by the Apostle Peter we pray that God the Holy Spirit will impress these things on our hearts we ask it in Jesus name Amen