

# Glad You Asked

Sunday, April 6<sup>th</sup> 2014

## 1 Peter 3:14,15

### I. Introduction

*"You and I need to contend for the truth. But there's a fine line between contending for truth and being contentious." Josh Harris*

### II. Defend the faith

***"But in your hearts honor/sanctify Christ the Lord as holy,"***

To sanctify Christ has the sense of to recognize, to worship, and to honor Him as the only Lord.

*How do we "honor Christ the Lord" in our hearts? We turn everything over to Him, and live only to please Him and glorify Him. It means we fear displeasing Him rather than fear what men might say about us as His disciples or what they might do to us. And one evidence that Christ is Lord in our lives is the readiness with which we tell others about Him.*

***"Always begin prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you..."***

**Defense** - apologia - literally means, "to talk one's self off from". Apologia was a technical word used in the Greek law courts and was used of an attorney who talked his client off from a charge preferred against him. In short it refers to a speech given in defense.

There are 9 uses of apologia in the NT...

The English word "**apologetics**" comes from the Gr. word here translated "defense." Peter is using the word in an informal sense and is insisting that the believer must understand what he believes and why one is a Christian, and then be able to articulate one's beliefs humbly, thoughtfully, reasonably, and biblically. When Jesus Christ is Lord of our lives, each crisis becomes an opportunity for witness. We are "ready always to give an answer."

*"Paul didn't just want to beat his opponents in an argument; he wanted to win them to the truth." Josh Harris*

***"for a reason for the hope that is in you;"***

**Hope** in Scripture is not the world's definition of "I hope so", with a few rare exceptions. Hope is defined as a desire for some future good with the expectation of obtaining it. Hope is confident expectancy.

### III. Be Gracious and Humble

***"yet do it with gentleness and respect..."***

*"There are many people who state their beliefs with a kind of arrogant belligerence. Their attitude is that anyone who does not agree with them is either*

*a fool or a knave and they seek to ram their beliefs down other people's throats. The case for Christianity must be presented with winsomeness and with love, and with that wise tolerance which realizes that it is not given to any man to possess the whole truth. Men may be wooed into the Christian faith when they cannot be bullied into it. W. Barclay*

*"We must care deeply about truth, and we must also defend and share this truth with compassion and humility." Josh Harris*

**Gentleness** - *prautes* - describes the quality of not being overly impressed by a sense of one's self-importance. It's a quality of gentle friendliness - consideration, restrained patience, patient trust in difficult circumstances.

**Reverence/Respect** - *phobos* is literally "fear" and in context refers to a sense of reverence because of the solemnity of the subject.

*"Gentleness and respect means to be winsome, kind and gracious in your dealings with the lost. You can't argue people into the Kingdom of God. And you can't swear at them and then say, "Don't you want to accept Jesus?" It doesn't work that way. We must be winsome if we would win some. And we must treat people with respect. Don't ever confuse arguing with answering. If we don't show respect for them, how will they ever show respect for us or for our message? People know when we are talking down to them or making fun of them or taking them lightly. Treat people with gentleness and respect, and they are likely to listen to what we have to say. On a practical level, this means listening to people, paying attention to them, looking at them while we talk to them, listening for the details, remembering names, and letting them tell us about their spiritual journey. It also means that we don't try to cram everything we know into one conversation. Most people come to Christ slowly, over a period of time, as they understand more and more of the truth. Better to give them bits and pieces than to try to force the whole message on them if they aren't ready to hear it." Ray Pritchard*

#### **IV. Conclusion**

*"One of the mistakes Christians often make is that we learn to rebuke like Jesus but not love like Jesus." Josh Harris*