

Sharing your hope

1 Peter 3:13-22

Peter encourages persecuted Christians to keep doing good, even when faced with evil. They should replace any fear with readiness to gently explain the reason for their hope in Jesus, who also suffered to bring salvation.



Read this week's passage:



WATCH



If you are interested in how Christians defend their faith in an intellectual manner, you could check out Justin Brierley's YouTube channel or read C.S. Lewis' *Mere Christianity*.



Decorates a paper heart to represent your love for Jesus. Fold the heart and put it in an envelope. Draw yourself or write your name on the envelope. How does having a heart full of love for Jesus help you to love and care for others?



Write down the names of three people in your life who don't yet know God's love. Put those names in a place you look at each day and pray for them every day.

Find more free Roots resources to reflect on this week's theme:



Living Scripture

'Do not fear what they fear, and do not be intimidated, but in your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord.' 1 Peter 3:14-15

Here Peter speaks into a situation of fear and mistrust on both sides. The Christians stood out from the people around them, because as followers of Jesus, they lived differently. They were often blamed for any bad luck experienced by the wider community and suffered because of this. Non-Christians feared the Christians and the Christians were afraid of the non-Christians. Fear was everywhere.

Fear is still present in the world today and it divides many communities around the world. All too often, people are afraid of those who live differently to them, even though, like the Early Church, those people simply want to live kindly and faithfully.

But Peter reminds us that we do not have to be afraid of those around us. Jesus tells his followers not to be afraid because God and God's love are greater than all things. When we remember this, we 'sanctify Christ as Lord', and when we ask for God's help, we can leave fear behind and face the world with hope. Where do you see a need for hope in the world? How can you respond?

First impressions

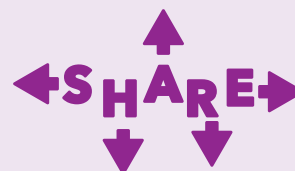
- Have you ever had something really exciting you've wanted to tell people about?
- Does the idea of 'sharing your hope' fill you with joy or dread (or indifference)? Why?
- What might be a good conversation starter to prompt a gentle and respectful conversation about faith?



Pray



God, your love for us is for always.
Help us to bring peace in our neighbourhood and world.
As we share your hope may we know your joy.
Amen.



Make a hope board with a heading 'Share your hope'. Put it with a pen on the fridge or another prominent place. Write or draw your hopes on the board.