

Contending for the Faith Successfully

1PE 3:8 Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble. ⁹ Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing. ¹⁰ For, "Whoever would love life and see good days must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from deceitful speech. **1PE 3:11** He must turn from evil and do good; he must seek peace and pursue it. **1PE 3:12** For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil."

I.) The righteous have a clear conscience: blameless before the Lord.

A.) 1PE 3:13 Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good? ¹⁴ But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. "Do not fear what they fear; do not be frightened." ¹⁵ But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, ¹⁶ keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. ¹⁷ It is better, if it is God's will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil. ¹⁸ For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit, ¹⁹ through whom also he went and preached to the spirits in prison ²⁰ who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, ²¹ and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also--not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²² who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand--with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.

B.) The righteous are humble and have a desire to see God glorified through his people. Nehemia 1:1-10

II.) No excuses to justify the lack of commitment to the work of the Lord.

A.) The righteous have power and authority through the Holy Spirit. LK 10:18 He replied, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. ¹⁹ I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. ²⁰ However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

B.) The Righteous have all their needs met. With the favor of God, the hearts of men will show favor to the righteous. Nehemiah 2:1-

III.) We must contend for the faith, and not be intimidated.

Nehemiah 2:10-20

A.) Hold fast to the truth, stand against false doctrines, and protect the weak. Jude 14-24

B.) Stand in faith against the adversary that would rise up at the mention of your working for the Lord. Nehemiah 4:1-15

C.) Working together with our brothers and sisters in the faith to protect one another and complete the work of the Lord.

Nehemiah 4:16-21 ^{NE 6:15} So the wall was completed on the twenty-fifth of Elul, in fifty-two days. ¹⁶ When all our enemies heard about this, all the surrounding nations were afraid and lost their self-confidence, because they realized that this work had been done with the help of our God.

D.) The righteous have a reward waiting, their labor is not in vain.

^{REV 22:12} "Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done. ¹³ I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.