**The Defense for My Hope**

*1 Peter 3:15*

**Introduction**

1. **2 Timothy 3:10-15** – The reality of persecution for Christians requires “perseverance” and continuance in the matters of conviction concerning our salvation.
2. Those of great faith impress us with their resolve to stand firm no matter the consequences – **Hebrews 11:35-38**
3. One aim of persecution is to cause one to renounce their faith, and perhaps blaspheme God – **Acts 26:11**
4. When one stands firm, and does not blaspheme their faith is shown to be true, and strong – **1 Peter 1:6-7**
5. Such a steadfastness and conviction might cause one to inquire as to the confidence the persecuted has – **1 Peter 3:13-15** – Peter charges the Christian to be ready to give a defense in such circumstances.
	1. Certainly, we would never put up with such treatment if we were not truly convicted.
	2. If such conviction exists, there must be good reason, and we must be able to give it.
6. I am confident in the hope I possess, and I must be able to defend such – why do I possess such confidence?
7. The following is a defense for my hope.
8. The Grounds of My Defense
9. The Need for a Defense
	1. Defense – *apologia* – a reasoned statement or argument. (Strong)
	2. “Christians should have a reason ready for their Christianity, that it may appear they are not actuated either by folly or fancy.” (Matthew Henry on 1 Peter 3:15)
	3. Paul’s preaching was with reason, and evidence – **Acts 17:1-4**
	4. The Bereans sought reason behind Paul’s teaching – **Acts 17:11** – they were not willing to just take his word as gospel but investigated it.
	5. Faith is evidence based – **Hebrews 11:1**
	6. What is the pile of evidence upon which my hope rests? Or is it “by folly or fancy?”
10. The Standard
	1. The Lordship of Christ – **1 Peter 3:15** – ***“but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts” (NASB)***
		1. When the fear of God is greater than that of man one is equipped to endure the hardship.
		2. THE DEFENSE TO BE GIVEN RELIES ENTIRELY UPON THE AUTHORITY OF JESUS.
	2. Salvation is based on His authorized means – **John 5:24-27** – Jesus determines how one is to obtain hope.
	3. His words are the standard of judgment – **John 12:48**
	4. If my hope does not rest on the words of Christ in totality it is false hope.
	5. The conduct of my defense:
		1. Meekness – humility – this is not an arrogant defense of my own merit, but of the grace of God given to me through Christ.
		2. Fear – reverence before God, and acknowledgment of the power of judgment He wields – my defense is not without integrity. It is not to be made through the twisting of the standard, but in conformity to it.
	6. The reason for my defense – **Acts 26:28-29** – same as Paul, so that you can become such as I am – a Christian with hope.
11. The Defense for My Hope
12. The Hope
	1. The hope introduced in 1 Peter – **1 Peter 1:3-5**
		1. **(v. 3)** – hope gained via birth.
			1. By God – **John 4:24** – who is spirit, thus, SPIRITUAL BIRTH.
			2. “again” – not original (physical) birth, but additional.
		2. **(v. 4)** – object of hope – inheritance – AGAIN, SPIRITUAL.
			1. Hence the birth – inheritance given by parent to a child.
		3. **(v. 5)** – hope to be realized through the keeping of faith.
			1. Hope is not seen – **Romans 8:24-25**
			2. Kept for the hope through faith – **Hebrews 11:1** – until it is realized, faith is the substance.
				1. NOTE: hope not only persists, and is realized by means of faith, but begins with it.
				2. **Hebrews 11:6** – diligently seek Him in faith knowing He will reward (hope).
		4. Established:
			1. The hope is a spiritual inheritance.
			2. Thus, the hope is possessed by a child.
			3. The hope is given one who is “begotten” of God.
			4. This birth is spiritual, because God is spirit, and is connected with faith which will ultimately see us to the realization of the hope.
	2. The “right” of birth whereby the hope is given (“begotten us again”) – **John 1:12-13**
		1. Right – *exousia* – authority.
			1. Authority granted “TO BECOME” God’s child to those who “receive” Jesus, and “believe” in His name.
			2. They have the authority to become because they have received and believed, but AUTHORITY REQUIRES OBEDIENCE – **Luke 6:46**
				1. ***“believed in His name”*** (acknowledgment of His authority) – **Colossians 3:17** – speaks of submission to His commands.
			3. They are children of God who are obedient – **1 Peter 1:13-14**
		2. Additional to receiving and believing – **(v. 13)** – born of God.
			1. Hence – ***“begotten us again to a living hope” (1 Peter 1:3)***.
		3. Established:
			1. One does not have hope of the inheritance unless he is a child of God.
			2. One is not called a child of God unless he is born of God.
	3. SO HOW IS ONE BORN OF GOD?
13. Born of God
	1. Jesus speaks to Nicodemus of the new birth – **John 3:3-8**
		1. **(v. 3)** – “again” – **1 Peter 1:3** – “begotten us again”
			1. Same birth to receive hope of inheritance.
			2. Thus, same birth to become a child of God.
		2. **(v. 5)** – characteristics of birth introduced.
			1. “born of God” = “of water and the Spirit”
			2. **(v. 4)** – Nicodemus’ confusion.
			3. **(vv. 6-8)** – Jesus’ explanation.
			4. Again, SPIRITUAL BIRTH.
		3. Birth to “enter the kingdom of God” **(v. 5):**
			1. Voluntary (of free-will) – implied in text – **cf. Luke 13:24** – strive to enter.
			2. For salvation – **Matthew 19:23-30 –** “regeneration” – rebirth.
				1. **Colossians 1:13-14** – redemption and forgiveness in kingdom.
		4. Established:
			1. One who is a child of God is one born of God, and has hope.
			2. One who is born of God is born of water and the Spirit.
			3. This is a voluntary birth to enter the kingdom for redemption.
	2. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE BORN OF WATER AND THE SPIRIT?
14. Born of Water and the Spirit
	1. New birth expounded upon with the introduction of the hope – **1 Peter 1:22-25**
		1. **(v. 22)** – purified souls = blessings of entrance into the kingdom.
			1. Such had to come from the new birth of *“water and the Spirit.”*
		2. **(v. 23)** – born of incorruptible seed, word of God.
			1. Incorruptible seed = word (**cf. Luke 8:11** – seed is the word)
			2. Seed in you = born of God – **1 John 3:9; James 1:18** (brought us forth = begotten us)
				1. Born of God = begotten again by God (**1 Peter 1:3**)
				2. Born of God = of water and Spirit (**John 1:13; 3:5)**
				3. Born of God via the word of God which is His seed…born of the Spirit?
		3. Where is the Spirit (born of Spirit) in this?
			1. **(v. 22)** – obeyed truth through Spirit.
			2. What does the Spirit have to do with the truth?
				1. **1 Peter 1:2** – Spirit sanctifies.
				2. **John 17:17** – truth, word of God sanctifies.

**2 Thessalonians 2:13-14** – sanctification by Spirit and belief in truth.

For salvation – purified souls **(v. 22)**

* + - 1. Spirit’s work = word’s work. (The word is the Spirit’s instrument – **Ephesians 6:17**)
			2. BORN AGAIN THROUGH THE WORD **(V. 23**) = BORN OF THE SPIRIT.
	1. Born of WATER?
		1. “and Spirit” – the birth of water is one and the same as the birth of the Spirit.
		2. Birth of water = birth of Spirit = born of the word of God.
		3. Word of God = gospel – **1 Peter 1:25**
			1. By the Holy Spirit – **1 Peter 1:12**
		4. What does the gospel say? – **Mark 16:15-16**
		5. Is this “baptism” in water?
			1. Great commission to be carried out at first by the apostles.
			2. Peter’s conclusion in 1st gospel sermon – **Acts 2:38** – baptism.
				1. This baptism is “in the name of Jesus Christ.”
				2. Baptism “in the name of the Lord”?

**Acts 10:47-48** – in water.

* + 1. Established:
			1. Gospel revealed by Spirit obeyed = born of Spirit
			2. Gospel commands water baptism.
			3. Born of water and the Spirit = baptized in water in the name of the Lord.
		2. Supporting evidence:
			1. **Titus 3:5** – washing of regeneration and renewing of the HS.
				1. Regeneration = renewing = rebirth
				2. Synonymous with – **John 3:3, 5** – born again of water and the Spirit

Washing of regeneration = of water

Renewing of the Holy Spirit = of Spirit

* + - 1. Washing of water?
				1. **Hebrews 10:22** – conscience cleansed when bodies washed with pure water.

Sprinkled from an evil conscience?

**Hebrews 9:13-14** – when sprinkled with blood of Christ. (cleanse your conscience)

* + - * 1. When is the conscience cleansed?

**1 Peter 3:21** – in baptism.

Water – parenthetical statement – not removal of filth of flesh. (Bodies washed with water)

But as an appeal – “answer” – *eperōtēma* – inquiry. (STRONG)

“an appeal to God for a good conscience” (NASB)

1. Validity of My Hope Defended and Established:
	1. I have been born again and am God’s child.
	2. This happened when I was born of water and the Spirit.
	3. This happened when I was baptized in water in the name of the Lord where I received a clear conscience through the removal of my sins.
	4. Having been born again, I have been given a living hope, i.e. an inheritance, for which I am kept by faith for salvation in the end. (**1 Peter 1:3-5**)
2. A Final Defense for My Hope – **Galatians 3:26-29**
	1. NOTE: the hope is an inheritance, and an inheritance belongs to a child, in this case one who is “begotten again” by God. (**1 Peter 1:3)**
	2. I am a son of God through faith in Christ – because I have been baptized into Christ – thus I have put on Christ – and I am Abraham’s seed, and an heir according to the promise.
	3. If this be true, then the opposite is true:
		1. IF NOT? I am NOT a son of God through faith in Christ – because I have NOT been baptized into Christ – thus I have NOT put on Christ – and I am NOT Abraham’s seed, and I am NOT an heir according to the promise.

**Conclusion**

1. The defense rests.
2. My hope is certain, not based on anything I have done to earn it, but because I have met the conditions of God’s grace.
3. This defense is meant as evidence for God’s standard for salvation. Will you obey it and receive the hope of eternal life in heaven?