

Defending What We Believe

Week 2: Why We Defend — The Reason for Our Hope

A Bible Study by Apostle Robert J. Douglas Jr.

 Opening Thought: What Are We Really Defending?

When people ask about our faith, they're not just asking for facts—they're asking if what we believe makes a difference. They want to know if our hope is real, if our peace is steady, and if our God is alive.

Peter reminds us that defending our faith begins in the heart. It's not about being clever or loud—it's about being anchored in Christ. When Jesus is truly Lord in our hearts, our words and actions will naturally point others to Him.

This week, we explore why we defend our faith—not to win arguments, but to share the hope that has changed our lives.

 Core Scriptures

- 1 Peter 3:15 – Be ready to share the reason for your hope, with gentleness and respect.
- Colossians 4:5–6 – Walk wisely and speak graciously to outsiders.
- 2 Corinthians 5:18–20 – We are ambassadors of reconciliation.
- Romans 5:1–5 – We rejoice in hope, even in suffering.
- John 4:13–14 – Jesus offers living water that satisfies forever.

 What These Verses Teach Us

1. The Central Call: Honor Christ as Lord

Peter begins with the posture of the heart:

Defending our faith doesn't start with arguments—it starts with worship. When Jesus is truly Lord in our hearts, our lives reflect His character. We speak from conviction, not fear. We share from overflow, not obligation.

We're not selling ideas—we're introducing people to a living Savior.

2. The Reason We Defend: The Hope Within Us

The world is searching for meaning, peace, and security. As believers, we carry a living hope—anchored in Christ, not circumstances.

This hope is powerful because it's personal:

- Hope of forgiveness (Colossians 1:13–14)
- Hope of peace with God (Romans 5:1)
- Hope that suffering has purpose (Romans 5:3–5)
- Hope of eternal life (John 3:16)

We defend our faith not to prove we're right—but to offer a reason for hope.

3. Our Mission: Ambassadors of Reconciliation

Paul calls us ambassadors—representatives of Christ's invitation to peace:

We're not prosecutors demanding judgment—we're messengers offering grace. Our words should build bridges, not walls. Our defense must reflect the heart of the King we represent.

4. The Manner of Our Defense: Gentleness and Respect

Peter adds a vital condition:

We can have the right answers but the wrong attitude. The gospel may offend sin, but we don't have to be offensive in how we share it.

- Gentleness: Strength under control—responding with calm, even when challenged.
- Respect: Honoring others as image-bearers of God, even if they reject the message.
- Gracious speech: Our words should invite, not push away (Colossians 4:6).

Defending our faith in love is more persuasive than defending it in anger.

5. The Power of Personal Testimony

Scripture is our foundation, but personal stories often open hearts. The Samaritan woman didn't preach—she simply said:

Your testimony is living proof that the gospel works. Stories of transformation speak where arguments cannot. Your journey with Jesus may be the bridge someone needs to hear the truth.

6. The Role of Love in Our Witness

Love changes everything. We share the gospel not out of duty, but because we love God and people. We listen as much as we speak. We see skeptics not as enemies, but as potential family in Christ.

Love is the difference between a debate and a divine invitation.

Discussion Questions

Use these in your group or for personal journaling:

- Why is it important that defending the faith begins with honoring Christ as Lord in our hearts?
- In what ways does Christian hope differ from the world's idea of hope?
- Think of a time when someone asked you about your faith. How did you respond, and what would you do differently now?
- How can a spirit of gentleness and respect make our defense of the gospel more effective?
- Share a short version of your own testimony that highlights the hope you have in Christ.

Reflection & Journaling

- Write in your own words why you have hope in Christ.

- Identify one person in your life who is searching for hope. Write their name and pray for them.
- Reflect on an area in your heart where fear or pride may hinder you from sharing your hope. Write a prayer asking God to help you.

Prayer Points

- Thank God for giving you a living hope through the death and resurrection of Jesus.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to make your life a credible witness for the gospel.
- Pray for wisdom and courage to share your testimony with love and humility.
- Pray that God will open doors to have meaningful conversations about faith and hope.

Key Takeaway

Our defense of the faith is not about winning arguments.

It's about sharing the hope we have in Christ—with hearts ruled by love and words seasoned with grace.