

I Peter 3:13-4:6

Answering Critics through both Words and Actions

- > Summarize the command given in 3:15. Serve Christ from the heart and be prepared to answer questions people may have about the hope you have in Christ...doing so in a gentle and respectful way.
- > What key ingredient is essential in situations where we defend our faith (v. 16)? A clean conscience/good conduct.
- > As we follow the example of Christ, our behavior will be focused on God's will, not our own (4:1-3). What response may people have of your Christ-like behavior (v. 4)? They may think your behavior is strange, even speaking evil of you because of it.

Application

To an unbelieving world, sometimes their only understanding of the gospel will come through what they see in the lives of Christians. For this reason, our words and actions must display an accurate picture of Christ. Consider this:

- People do notice godly behavior, and they are curious to know what makes you different.
- Telling your own personal testimony is a powerful way to point a person to Christ. So be ready to share it!
- Answer questions people ask the best you can. If you don't have an answer to a tough question, be honest with them. Do research and get back with them later.
- Never forget that as people watch you, your actions often speak louder than your words. Hypocrisy hurts the cause of Christ; genuine faith leads people to Him!

A godly lifestyle, evidenced by a clear conscience, adds great power to your witness. There will be those who reject your message, just as there were those who rejected Christ. But be faithful in your Christian walk, and over time, your witness may impact the world in ways you never thought possible!

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