

Living in a Hostile World

(Part 2)

1 Peter 3:15-17

1 John 3:11-24; Revelation 2:8-11



A Letter to Saints

We Are Warned of Persecution

- Acts 14:22; Luke 14:28; 2 Tim 3:12; Philippians 1:29.
- Jesus taught, "Count the Cost" (Luke 14:26-27; John 15:18-20).

Living in a Hostile World: Submission NOT Rebellion

Christ Is Our Example (1 Peter 2:21-25)

How to Live in A Hostile World: Part 1 (1 Peter 3:8-12)

- ① (v. 8) "Be of one mind" – This is a HIGH CALLING for Christians. (1 Cor 1:10)
 - ★ If Christ is the HEAD, then the Body must ALL be in perfect harmony with HIM! (Eph 1:22; 5:23; Colossians 1:18)
- ② (v. 8) Show sympathy; compassion one to another.
- ③ (v. 8) Show brotherly love toward each other.
 - ★ We are to love our brethren "just as" Christ loves us! (John 13:34-35; 1 John 3:16)
- ④ (v. 8) Be "tenderhearted" or "kindhearted" toward one another. (Eph 4:32)
- ⑤ (v. 8) Be courteous ("humble-minded") toward one another. (Eph 4:2)
 - ★ Christ is our supreme example. (Philippians 2:5-8)
- ⑥ (v. 9) Do not return evil for evil, but bless! (Matt 5:44; Rom 12:19; Luk 6:27-28)
- ⑦ (v. 10) Refrain one's tongue from speaking anything evil and deceitful.
 - ★ Christians are absolutely committed to the truth.
- ⑧ (v. 11) Peter quoted Psalm 34:14 here which gives four commands:

❶ Turn away from evil.	❷ Do good.
❸ Seek Peace.	❹ Pursue peace.

The Reward (1 Peter 3:12; Psalm 34:15-16)

- ★ Check: The Lord's eyes, ears, and His face.

A Christian In the Midst of Hostility (1 Peter 3:13-17)

- ① (v. 13) Pursue Goodness.
 - ➔ "follower" one who imitates.

- ☆ Paul says, "Imitate me as I imitate Christ!" (1 Cor 11:1)
- ☆ We are to imitate GOD! (Ephesians 5:1)
- ☆ Paul complimented the saints at Thessalonika of being "followers of the LORD." (1 Thess 1:6-7; 2:14)
- ☆ We are to diligently imitate those who have gone before us who through patience so inherited the promises of God. (Heb 6:11-12)
 - ★ "Patience" here means "endurance, constancy, steadfastness, perseverance, longsuffering".
- We ought (have a responsibility to) "pursue what is good both for ourselves and for all." (1 Thessalonians 5:15)
- John tells us, "Do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. He who does good is of God, but he who does evil has not seen God." (3 John 11)
- ② (vv. 14, 17) Follow Christ's example in suffering for doing good, accept suffering for doing what is wrong.
 - It is God's will if a Christian suffers for doing good.
 - ★ Suffering is a part of being a Christian. (John 15:18-20; Acts 14:22; Philippians 1:29; Romans 8:17-18; 2 Cor 4:17-18)
 - ★ God works ALL things for the good of His people. (Rom 8:28)
 - ★ Suffering for what is good works for us! (2 Cor 4:17-18; Romans 5:3)
 - In the New Testament, suffering for the sake of righteousness and for Christ is a privilege. (Acts 5:40-41; 1 Peter 4:13-16)
 - There is a GREAT REWARD for those who suffer for righteousness sake. (Matthew 5:10-12; Luke 6:22; James 1:2-5; Rev 2:10)
 - It is God's discipline, His will, if a Christian suffers for his sins.
 - ★ God's discipline has its purpose, too!
 - ★ Holiness and righteousness are God's goals in disciplining us! (Hebrews 12:9-11)
 - We are "not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled". Peter is quoting Isaiah 8:12-13. READ Isaiah 8:11-14. God was telling King Ahaz not to fear Assyria and Israel as they had planned attacking him and Judah.
 - ★ We are to fear GOD, not man. (Proverbs 29:25; Matthew 10:28; Luke 12:4-5; 1 Peter 4:16, 19)
- ③ (v. 15a) Sanctify Christ as Lord in Your Heart.
 - Again, Peter is using Isaiah 8:13.
 - "sanctify" means "to set apart". To sanctify Christ as Lord means:
 - ★ We acknowledge that He, and He alone, is our supreme Owner, Master, and Ruler.
 - ★ We submit ourselves to His Law.
 - ★ We submit to His will.
 - ★ We set Him as the sole object of our love, loyalty, obedience, and worship.
 - Even in the midst of suffering we acknowledge Him as Lord. See Acts 16:22-25.

④ (v. 15) Always Be Ready to Give a Defense.

- "defense" or "answer" is *apologia* which is a reasoned statement or argument.
- "always" means that a believer must be ready at any time to give a reasoned argument for the hope that is in him. To do this the believer must prepare himself.
- "hope" is the same as "faith" in this context.
- Believers are to do this in "meekness and fear".
 - ★ Meekness is NOT weakness. Meekness is STRENGTH submitted to the control of another!
- "fear" here is a supreme respect for God and of those who ask.

⑤ (v. 16) Maintain a Good Conscience.

- ★ LAST WEEK: (Acts 24:16) Paul says, "I always strive to have a conscience without offense toward God and men."
- READ: 1 John 3:19-21 - To whom do the pronouns "we, us, and our" belong? Consider first - - -

• (v. 19) BY THIS WE KNOW WE ARE IN THE TRUTH.

→ We are assured of our salvation by what we are DOING not by what we SAY or FEEL! (Matt 7:21-23, 24-27, 12:50; John 14:15, 21, 23-24; John 15:10)

→ (vv. 20-21) "heart" here is our conscience.

- ★ Verse 20-21 are true for only for:
 - God's little children – 1 John 3:1; James 1:18; Romans 8:14
 - Those who are walking in the light as He is in the light - those pursuing holiness. (1 John 1:6-7; Hebrews 12:14; 2 Cor 7:1)
 - Those who see sin as God sees sin, loathe sin, confess their sins, and repent of their sins. (1 John 1:9-10)
 - Those who have an ADVOCATE in heaven. (1 John 2:1-2)
 - Those who obey His commandments. (1 John 2:3-4)
 - Those who are walking as He walked. (1 John 2:6)
 - Those who are laying down their lives for the brethren. (1 John 2:9-11; 3:16)
 - Those who are strong and overcoming the wicked one. (1 John 2:12-14)
 - Those who hate the world and the things of the world. (1 John 2:15-17; James 4:4; John 15:19; Romans 12:2; Colossians 3:1-2)
 - Those who confess Christ publicly. (1 John 2:23; Matt 10:32-33)
 - Those who purify themselves just as He is pure. (1 John 3:3)
 - Those who practice (have a lifestyle of) righteousness as defined by God – not culture. (1 John 3:4-10)

★ The Bible instructs us about different kinds of consciences:

- ① Weak consciences (1 Cor 8:7, 10)
- ② Wounded consciences (1 Cor 8:12)
- ③ Defiled conscience (Titus 1:15)
- ④ Evil conscience (Hebrews 10:22)
- ⑤ A seared conscience (1 Timothy 4:2)

The Bible commends:

- ⑥ A good conscience (1 Tim 1:5, 19; Acts 23:1; Heb 13:18; 1 Peter 3:16)
- ⑦ A blameless conscience (Acts 24:16)
- ⑧ A pure conscience (1 Tim 3:9; 2 Tim 1:3)
- ★ Those who are *living* as Christians (in accordance to the Word of God) have a conscience that will serve them well, but those who are walking in darkness will be *deceived by their consciences*. (Jer 17:9-10; 16:12; Gen 6:5; 8:21; Prov 28:26; Matt 15:19; Heb 5:13-14)
- ★ The conscience does not determine whether an action is either right or wrong. Paul's own conscience had allowed him to persecute Christians! Our conscience can tell us that something is right when, in fact, it is wrong.
- ★ The conscience is a God-given tool that passes moral judgment on one's actions. (See Romans 2:14-15)
- ★ The conscience can only pass moral judgment using the highest standards perceived by the individual.
- ★ The conscience is NOT infallible! In fact, it, along with all of man's faculties, was/is corrupted by sin.
- ★ The conscience can only pass moral judgment (by God's standards) as long as it is instructed AND submissive to the Word of God. (Hebrews 5:13-14)
- ★ The Word of God is the only rule for what is right and what is wrong. (John 17:17; 2 Timothy 3:16)
- ★ One must use it, the Word of God, routinely in order to discern right from wrong. (Hebrews 5:11-14) One who is being disobedient or ignorant of the Word of God cannot use his/her conscience – their conscience will not give them proper information.
- ★ One can damage or even destroy one's conscience! Sin dulls, hardens and then destroys the conscience. (1 Timothy 4:1-2)
- ★ Our consciences must be "maintained" by subjecting them to the Word of God.
- ★ Those with good and pure consciences will be free of guilty as they face a hostile world.
- ★ The PROMISE: Those who slander those who have done what is right will be ashamed themselves.

What Must We Learn & Do

- ① Pursue goodness. (3 John 11)
- ② Be willing to suffer for righteousness and unrighteousness sake.
- ③ Sanctify Christ as Lord in our hearts (minds, emotions, wills).
- ④ Always be ready to give a reasoned argument for our faith. (1Pe3:15)
- ⑤ Maintain a good conscience in the evil world we live. (Heb 13:18)