

CHRISTIAN CONDUCT IN **A HOSTILE WORLD** **I Peter 3:13-17**

How can a suffering Christian effectively serve God?

I. DO GOOD! (13-14)

A. BE ENTHUSIASTIC (13)

1. The content: Good stuff
2. The condition: Proving zealous for what is good
3. The question: Who will harm you for this?
4. The conclusion: Enthusiasm for what is good is not harmful nor dangerous

B. BE COURAGEOUS (14)

1. Reality
 - a. There is a difference between doing good and being righteous
 - b. You may suffer for righteousness
2. Response
 - a. Know that you are blessed - See Matthew 5:10 and I Peter 5:10
 - b. Do not fear their fierceness - An adaptation of Isaiah 8:12-13
 - c. Do not be troubled

II. EXALT CHRIST (15-17)

A. SET CHRIST AS LORD (15a)

- Exalting Christ personally

1. Sanctify: A command
2. As Lord: The ruler to whom I yield
3. In your heart: The place of sincerest devotion

B. DEFEND YOUR FAITH (15b)

- Exalting Christ publicly

1. Be Ready
 - a. Able to declare and defend what you believe from the Bible
 - b. Anticipate opportunities to engage others
2. Be Aware
 - a. Unbelievers are intrigued by our hope!
 - b. This is something that they do not have and cannot understand

3. Be Gracious

- How we answer is as important as what we answer!

- a. Speak with gentleness
- b. Speak with reverence

C. MAINTAIN GODLINESS (16-17)

1. By keeping a good conscience (16)

- a. The goal: No guilt
- b. The reason: So that revilers are silenced

2. By knowing what's best (17)

- a. God's will may involve suffering
- b. God's wish is for good suffering

CONCLUSION:

*Christians should do good and exalt Christ whether they are suffering or not ...
but it's harder when we're suffering*

**The danger is that we become so suffering focused that we forget to be Savior focused
- We must avoid this**