

Our Character and Calling as Followers of Christ

We are living in a time in which civility seems to have all but have disappeared at times. This is certainly the case in the broader society as we face disagreements of various kinds. Unfortunately, this can also spill into our interactions in the church. Today's passage gives us an opportunity to reflect on the tensions that we sometimes experience both from within and without the church and it offers great wisdom for how we should treat one another even in the midst of disagreements and difficulties. And so may we each be challenged as we consider our character and calling as followers of Christ.

Read 1 Peter 3:8-12

1. In verse 8, Peter gives five qualities that are to characterize believers. What are these qualities? In your own words, how would you summarize the kind of people that Peter says we are to be?
2. Why are these qualities essential for sustaining Christian community? And why are they important for our ability to carry out our redemptive mission?
3. Most commentators believe that verse 9 addresses how we are to interact with the unbelieving world around us. As you consider the command of verse 9, why is this so hard to do at times?
4. When are you tempted to return evil for evil or insult for insult with those who are not Christ-followers?
5. How does social media make it harder at times to obey these commands? What are some specific ways that this passage speaks to interactions in this kind of arena?
6. Peter cites Psalm 34:13-17 in vv. 10-12. How does this support his argument in 8-9?
7. Do you think the Church in general is known for living out what Peter says in this passage? Why or why not?

8. Think of a difficult relational situation you are in either with another believer or with someone outside of the church. How might that situation be affected if the teaching in this passage was applied?