

Both of Peter's epistles provide relevant counter-cultural answers to our culture

A review of 1 Peter, leading up to chapter 3 verse 15:

1 Peter 1:1-12 provides the doctrinal basis for the exhortations and commands of the epistle

1 Peter 1:13 is the first command: prepare your mind to *"set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ"*

1 Peter 1:15 is the second command: *"Be holy in all your conduct"* is based upon the condition of conquering your *"former ignorance"* (vs. 14).

1 Peter 2:9-10 contains more wonderful indicatives which preface the next two commands

1 Peter 2:11 is another command to holiness, *"to abstain from the passions of the flesh."*

1 Peter 2:12 *"Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable ..."* Peter is concerned with how the Christian behaves before the world, so that when the world does revile us, they cannot lay anything to our charge

So, we honor authorities in our government, jobs, church and home (1 Peter 2:13-20, 3:1-2)

1 Peter 3:13-17: The imperatives of this pericope are: 1) do not fear man, 2) do not be troubled, and 3) sanctify the Lord Jesus Christ in your heart

Drawn for Isaiah 8:12-13 Jesus Messiah is YHWH (LORD)

You cannot fear the culture's arguments and fear God

*"in your hearts, honor Christ the Lord as holy"* means to order your life with Christ as priority

As you do this:

The world will hate your message and make you suffer because of it

You will not respond to suffering the same way the world does

*"always being prepared to make a defense ... with gentleness and respect"*

A reasoned defense requires logic, not emotional feelings (like the world)

You will not return evil for evil (like the world)

The final goal of all of this is not to win an argument, or to show how smart you are, or even to convince someone to become a Christian, but it most concerned that your response to persecution might provoke *some* to ask you for the reason for your steadfast hope, while others who mock you are put to shame because of your confidence, gentleness, respect, holiness, and good behavior that you display in the midst of suffering

This is how the early church spread like wild-fire!