



river west church

Doing Good Before Gospel Critics

1 Peter 2:11-12

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We live in a post-Christian society. Sure, there are scads of churches and all sorts of people who self identify as Christians. But things have radically changed over the last 50 years. Not long ago Christian faith was celebrated as a huge positive in our culture. Times have changed.

Lots of people don't like Christians these days, or maybe they are just guarded; dismissive; fearful; annoyed; or suspicious. You get the idea. You have felt it at times, haven't you?

The Book of 1 Peter speaks to our situation. It gives direction for believers living in a culture that views Christian faith with suspicion.

Here's how Peter puts it: "When they speak against you as evildoer" (1 Peter 2:12)

But why would they do that?

Put simply, true Christians exist as a sub-culture within the larger culture. This is always true, at all times and in all places in the world. Christians are different. Just read 1 Peter 1:1-2:10. If you get it, you get that Christians are different. Which is why Christians are called "sojourners and exiles," or as the New American Standard version puts it: "aliens and strangers" (1 Peter 2:11).

Guess what. If you're different, people might not like you. They might not understand you. Or maybe if there are problems in the society, you will be blamed. It's just the way things work. Christians of the first century had this exact experience. They were called troublemakers and haters of society!

So what's the answer? What are we to do?

"Do good!" That's the short answer. Here's how Peter puts it: "That by doing good you might put to silence the ignorance of foolish people" (1 Peter 2:15).

This is where Peter gets practical. There IS something for us to do; not because we will be accepted by God based on our efforts or works, but because this is how we live out our faith in a culture that views us with suspicion. This is how we make an impact for Christ and the Gospel. Doing good means doing good deeds, good works, and positive things. It is practical, hands on, and makes a difference in our world.

May the Lord empower us to be HIS people, shining HIS light, not just through what we believe, but through what we actually DO in our broken world!