

ALIENATED

THE GOSPEL IN A POST-CHRISTIAN WORLD



Scripture

⁸ Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind. ⁹ Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing. ¹⁰ For

*“Whoever desires to love life and see good days,
let him keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit;
¹¹ let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it.
¹² For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayer.
But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.”*

¹³ Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good? ¹⁴ But even if you should suffer for righteousness’ sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, ¹⁵ but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, ¹⁶ having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. ¹⁷ For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God’s will, than for doing evil.

¹⁸ For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, ¹⁹ in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison, ²⁰ because they formerly did not obey, when God’s patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water. ²¹ Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²² who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him. (1 Peter 3:8-22 ESV)

Outline

Big Idea: Righteous living blesses people who diminish your faith

Point 1. Posture your attitude like Christ

Point 2. Have a testimony to bless people through your faith

Point 3. Make your faith public and obvious

Discussion Questions

Icebreaker: Share with the group, about your baptism experience? Why, where, how, and with whom?

Point 1: Posture your attitude like Christ

- How do the attitudes and attributes in verse 8 help us fulfill the command in verse 9? How does Jesus help us fulfill this difficult command?
- Share a personal experience where maintaining a Christ-like attitude in the face of opposition has been beneficial?

Point 2: Have a testimony to bless people through your faith

- What is meant by a "testimony" in the context of this passage? How is it different from simply sharing information about your beliefs?
- How can our own experiences of God's grace and love equip us to be effective witnesses? Share a personal story about how your faith has been a source of blessing to others?

Point 3: Make your faith public and obvious

- What practical steps can we take to make our faith public and obvious in our daily lives?
- What are some potential challenges or risks associated with making our faith public, and how can we address them?

Application Questions:

- Choose one difficult relationship in which you are currently involved. How could you "bless" that person this week? What would you need to say or do?
- How does the idea of righteous living blessing those who doubt your faith challenge your approach(es) toward evangelism? How does your evangelism need to change?

Your Prayer

Write out a three-sentence prayer based off this passage.