

Christian Civility Defending Our Faith without Being Defensive

How do we disagree without being disagreeable? How do we handle conflicts when people slander or talk against us? Everywhere we turn, it seems as if our culture encourages division. It feels like there is little room for civil debate on nearly any topic, and confrontation and hatred of those with different viewpoints are becoming normal. Even when our faith is challenged, the Bible urges Christians to respond differently than the world would expect. Join us as we seek biblical wisdom for navigating a divisive culture in faithful and Christlike ways.

AWARENESS Before listening reflect on what you already know or understand about topics we'll cover in the episode.

- What does the word “society” mean?
- Is there a difference between responding and reacting? If so, what is it?



LISTEN TO THE EPISODE: [*Christian Civility Defending Our Faith without Being Defensive*](#)

READ [1 Peter 3:8-17](#), [Titus 3:1-11](#)

REFLECTION After listening, consider the following questions:

- Hosts Scott Hoezee and Darrell Delaney noted that in [1 Peter 3:8-9](#), the apostle Peter encouraged believers to 1) take and absorb insults, rather than react and return the insult, and 2) respond to insults with blessing. Which part of the command feels more challenging: not retaliating or responding with a blessing? Why?
- Reflect on Darrell's example of the interaction of the snake and human in segment 2, specifically the human's response, “Just because it is in your nature to be a snake and bite people, it is in my nature to show kindness and mercy, and I am not going to let the way you are change the way I am.” What determines our nature and who we are? How does thinking about this help us stay rooted in who we are when we might be tempted to change based on how another treats us?
- Do you know Christians who exemplify the light of Christ well and live with the civility and politeness Peter encourages? Have you ever witnessed Christians doing this poorly?
- Read the [Heidelberg Catechism Q&A 112](#). It can be easy to think we're good or don't struggle with the temptation to retaliate or slander. How does this explanation of the ninth commandment expose how we might still struggle with the sin of bearing false witness?

RELATED PASSAGES for further study

[Matthew 16:1-4](#), [Matthew 19:1-12](#), [Romans 12:21](#), [2 Corinthians 5:18-21](#), [Isaiah 49:6](#), [Matthew 5:13-16](#), [Proverbs 26:4-5](#)

CONCLUSION

God does not leave us on our own to figure out how to respond with gentleness and respect in each different situation. We have his wisdom and power through Jesus Christ and the daily guidance of the Holy Spirit. How does this make you feel? What does it tell you about God? Close your reflection with a prayer of thanksgiving and seek the guidance and assistance of the Holy Spirit to cultivate this godly attitude in your own life.

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