

PETER'S EPISTLES

1 Peter: Living In Conflict With The Culture

V. Practical Steps For Effective Living In A Deteriorating Culture

(1 Peter 1:13-16)

I. Introduction

- A. Several believers in different states of the nation have reported on the increasing difficulty they face in living in accord with Bible truth since doing so conflicts with the godless world's deteriorating culture around them.
- B. "First Peter was written to Christians . . . whose stand for Jesus Christ made them aliens and strangers in the midst of a pagan society" (Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 837), so we study 1 Peter for insight and edification.
- C. 1 Peter 1:13-16 teaches us believers practical steps for effective living in a deteriorating culture (as follows):

II. Practical Steps For Effective Living In A Deteriorating Culture, 1 Peter 1:13-16.

- A. For effective living in a deteriorating culture, we believers should prepare our minds for action, 1 Peter 1:13a:
 - 1. The KJV verb "gird up" renders the Greek verb *anazosamenoī*, the middle aorist participle of *anazonnumi*, "bind, gird up the long Oriental robes to facilitate work or walking" (U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 792; The Analyt. Grk. Lex. (Zon.), 1972, p. 22; Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 53), and the "robes" involved here are those of the "mind" (*dianoias*, Ibid., p. 186).
 - 2. In figurative language, then, Peter was directing his readers to prepare their minds for action, a "tough-minded holiness that is ready for action" in difficult times, Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 843.
 - 3. In other words, the godless world's deteriorating culture is not a time for complacency in the Christian life, for complacency in such a time breeds spiritual defeat. Rather, we must be strong and affirmative.
- B. For effective living in a deteriorating culture, we believers should be controlled by the Holy Spirit from the inside out, not controlled by the godless world around us, 1 Peter 1:13b:
 - 1. The KJV verb "be sober" renders the Greek verb *nephontes*, a participle of *nepho*, "be sober [from mental and spiritual 'drunkenness']," Ibid., The Analyt. Grk. Lex., p. 277; Ibid., Arndt & Gingrich, p. 540.
 - 2. Since literal drunkenness results from a party being controlled within by ingesting alcoholic beverages, in its figurative sense as here, the call to be sober meant, "Rather than being controlled by outside circumstances, believers should be directed from within," Ibid., Bible Know. Com., N. T.
 - 3. A lot of strong pressures come at us believers from a deteriorating culture that is moving further from God, so we are to be controlled by the Holy Spirit from within to counter the influences of the world around us.
- C. For effective living in a deteriorating culture, we believers should set our hope completely on the grace to be bestowed on us at the coming of our Lord, 1 Peter 1:13c:
 - 1. The phrase "to the end" (KJV) renders the Greek adverb *teleios*, "fully, perfectly, completely, altogether" (Ibid., Arndt & Gingrich, p. 818), indicating that our hope is to be set determinably on the grace to be bestowed upon us at Christ's coming for us.
 - 2. A world that is deteriorating in its culture in departing from the Lord can tempt us to be distracted into thinking our existence is hopeless, but we are to counter such defeatism by focusing on our eternal destiny.
- D. For effective living in a deteriorating culture, we believers should not conform to the evil desires of our past sinful lives as unbelievers, 1 Peter 1:14:
 - 1. The KJV verb "not fashioning" renders the Greek verb *suschematizo*, "forming, molding," Ibid., p. 803.
 - 2. Especially in a spiritually deteriorating culture, we believers who have been saved from sin should not mold our thinking and behavior after the former lusts in our ignorance in our past, unsaved lives!
 - 3. Rather, we need to be obedient to the Lord Who has called us away from living in such godlessness!
- E. For effective living in a deteriorating culture, we believers should live separate from evil, 1 Peter 1:15-16:
 - 1. The KJV adjective "holy" translates the Greek adjective *hagios* that carries the overriding emphasis on "pure" or "clean," Ibid., U. B. S. Grk. N. T.; Ibid., Arndt & Gingrich, p. 9-10; T. D. N. T., vol. I, p. 88-89.
 - 2. In the context of 1 Peter 1:14, the holiness of God to which the believer is called is a life pure from and separate from defilement by the former lusts in our ignorance in our past unsaved lives! (1 Peter 1:15-16)

Lesson: For effective living in a deteriorating culture, we believers should prepare our minds for action, be controlled by the Holy Spirit from the inside out, set our hope completely on God's grace at Christ's return, not fashion ourselves after our former unsaved lives of lust and ignorance and live separate from all such evil.

Application: May we make the adjustments we need to make to live effective lives in a deteriorating culture.