

Respecting Others

Scripture Reading — 1 Peter 3:8-16

Do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience ...

1 Peter 3:15-16 —

Somewhere today, a child will remind her parents that respect must be mutual. Moms and dads may not like hearing that, but it's true. The bars of our prisons become all the more poisonous when guards treat their wards as if they're subhuman and prisoners consider their guards only as objects of dirt and derision. Mutual respect is essential for relationships at home, church, and everywhere else.

Peter calls us to "be like-minded" and "love one another," calling for sympathy, compassion, and humility. Can we summarize these with one word: respect? At least in part. Respect calls for relating in ways that acknowledge our identity as imagebearers of God and recipients of his divine love.

Peter reminds us that we should not expect to be harmed for doing good. But if that happens, we can count it as a blessing of honor. After all, Jesus suffered for doing good, didn't he? We are to explain why we act the way we do in the light of our confession that Jesus is Lord. But the manner of our explanation must show respect for our questioner along with a gentleness that echoes the love of the Savior.

This means responding in such a way that malicious accusers will be ashamed. It means letting our actions speak louder than our words. Nothing new, is it?

Prayer

Father, thank you for the respect you show us in your gentle dealing with us, despite our sins. Empower us to see you in others and to respect them as objects of your love. Amen.

Devotion topics: [Life](#), [Family & Relationships](#)

Written by George Vink — <https://today.reframedia.com/authors/george-vink>

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