

"Strangers and Aliens"

1. "In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted" (2 Timothy 3:12). To what degree should this statement of Scripture guide our actions? Does an absence of persecution indicate that you are not living a godly life? Should you intentionally behave in ways that provoke persecution?
2. "When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats" (1 Peter 2:23). Jesus is our example for how we should respond to unjust treatment. Peter likely had in mind Isaiah's prophecy:

*He was oppressed and afflicted,
yet he did not open his mouth;
he was led like a lamb to the slaughter,
and as a sheep before its shearers is silent,
so he did not open his mouth. Isaiah 53:7*

Is it never right to defend yourself against unfair charges? What factors would you consider when deciding whether to reply or to remain silent?

3. Should we fit in with others *a la* 1 Corinthians 9:19–23, or should we be non-conformists in conformity to Romans 12:2? Give examples when each is appropriate. Is there a single underlying principle that should guide our decision?

Recurring Questions

- » How have you seen God working in your life or the lives of those around you this week?
- » What prayer requests would you like to share with the group, including prayer for any spiritual struggles you may be experiencing?