

We Are What We Are

We must not allow our peace of mind to rely on the tongues of other people.

The desire to be well thought of by other human beings is a natural one, and quite harmless up to a point, but when that desire becomes so all-consuming that we cannot be happy apart from the praises of other human beings, it is no longer harmless.

Such a situation has become sinful in itself and injurious in its effects on us and other people.

One of the first things a Christian should get used to is abuse.

John 15:18-21 [New King James] *“If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. But all these things they will do to you for My name’s sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me.”*

The only way to avoid evil tongues would be to withdraw entirely from society and even then people will say we must have had some sinister reason for doing such a thing.

In His final prayer to God the Father while on earth for His disciples, Jesus Christ said we should remain in society but **not** be a part of it, [**John 17:15-19**] to be able to fulfil His commandment recorded in **Matthew 5:14-16**.

To do nothing in any situation is to be abused of laziness, to do anything is to get abused for not doing something else.

Voltaire once said that, *“some people are like insects, they would never be noticed except that they sting.”*

This is how life is for true Christians; some people delight to swarm around their ears as they move onward toward their appointed goal, the Kingdom of God.

We may all expect to be stung by many fellow human beings who appear to be dedicated to causing us minor heartaches wherever they can for as long as they can.

These misguided people cannot be escaped, they can only be endured.

One thing is certain, a Christian’s final standing before God does **not** depend only upon their standing before other human beings.

A high reputation does **not** make a person dearer to God, nor does the tongue of a slanderer influence God’s attitude towards His people in any way.

The Creator God knows each of us very well, [**Psalms 139:1-16**] and we stand or fall in the light of His perfect knowledge.

Let us be sure we are in right standing with our Creator God and with other human beings.

Romans 12:3-21 [New King James] *“For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith. For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members*

of one another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honour giving preference to one another; not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion. Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, 'Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,' says the Lord. Therefore 'If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head.' Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

Paul gives the Roman Church, who were suffering at that time great persecution, guidelines on how to be in good standing with God and our fellow human beings.

Such a true Christian life can **only** be lived with the powerful help of the Holy Spirit, [**Galatians 5:22-25**].

We may then be doing our hoping and waiting in such a way that even our enemies will be forced to say of us the same as they did of the disciples Peter and John, [**Acts 4:13**] "*we have been with Jesus Christ and learned from Him.*"

Also we may have a chance to fulfil what Peter tells us we should be prepared for at all times.

1 Peter 3:13-17 [New King James] "*And who is he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good? But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you are blessed. 'And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled.' But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defence to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed. For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.*"

Such a life is a powerful witness for our Saviour Jesus Christ.