

Living Godly Lives in a Pagan Society

“Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.” (1 Peter 2:12, NIV)

I changed jobs last year, moving from a Christian college to a community college after working in Christian higher education for over twenty years. One of the things that scared me most was the thought of having to keep my mouth shut regarding spiritual matters. I thought that I would not have the opportunity to share the gospel with anyone, or that I could not mention the name of Jesus to others. I was wrong. As I get to know the students, staff, faculty, and administration, I have been pleasantly surprised at the number of Christians I encounter on a daily basis.

This does not mean that everyone I meet is a Christian. I certainly never assumed that everyone in a Christian college was a Christian. In that same line of thinking, I do not assume that everyone I encounter now is not a Christian. When I announced my job change to my small group at church, they prayed that I would have more opportunities to share Jesus with those around me, and that has certainly been the case.

In 1 Peter 2:11-15, Peter urges us to use this same type of thinking. The heading before this section in my Bible says, “Living Godly Lives in a Pagan Society.” We certainly live in a pagan society that is waging war against our souls (v. 11). I see it every day at my library, and I’m sure you do, too. So what are we to do? Do we live in a bubble and never interact with non-Christians? If we did that, we would not have opportunities to share the gospel with the world

around us. Therefore, we are to submit to every human authority (v. 13). We are to live in this world, and interact with it, always with the thought in our minds that we are set apart from this world. One way that I do this is to show others that I submit to Jesus as Lord of my life.

By being set apart, or being sanctified, we do good in this world for the cause of Christ. That does not mean that we, in ourselves, are good. God is good, and because He is good, we can show others what is good. I like to think of this in library terms as showing students the best of the best resources, like the “Scholarly/Peer-Reviewed” button, or the best books on their topic. In library terms, this is one way to silence the foolish talk (v. 15) of only Googling for resources. In spiritual terms, it means showing others the good Way of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

One question that I received from several people when I announced my job change was, “Are you going to remain a member of ACL?” to which my response was, “Of course!” My prayer is that that by being a Christian librarian at a secular institution, I may point others to “see [my] good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us” (v. 12).



—**Jamey Wilkes**

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