

## THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS

**“For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps” (1 Pet. 2:21, NKJV).**

**G**ranting, it hurts when we are maligned and slandered by those who don't understand us. To minimize antagonism Peter counsels self-control, honorable conduct, a law-abiding life, and impeccable integrity (1 Pet. 2:11-15). After all, no need to give ammunition to those already firing.

But in spite of our best efforts, coarse men will delight in attacking us. We can worry ourselves with *why* it should be so, but the truth is such has its place in the purposes of God: “*to this you were called*” (1 Pet. 2:21; cf. 3:9). The real question is, “How are we going to handle it?”

As victims of occasional injustice, Peter reminds us that we are in good company: “*Christ also suffered ... who committed no sin, nor was guile found in His mouth*” (1 Pet. 2:21-22). What a contrast between the Lamb of God who harmlessly surrendered to His enemies and Peter who slashed his opponent with his sword! Peter's writing reveals that, decades later, Jesus' life has left deep impressions in his soul.

His memory seared with the horrible events of that night, Peter recalls that Jesus, “*when He was reviled, did not revile in return ... He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously*” (1 Pet. 2:23). When daunted by some Herculean task, we take great courage from those who have walked ahead of us and endured similar experiences. Their example reassures us that we, too, can rise to the occasion.

We can respond to our persecutors in kind and enjoy a carnal satisfaction. But in doing so we become what we despise. Or we can aim higher and “*put to silence the ignorance of foolish men*” by doing good (1 Pet. 2:15). Take the road less traveled. “*Follow His steps.*” JMJ