



1 Peter

The Journey Home

Resident Aliens

1 Peter 2:11-17

Message #5 of 12 – S681

Sermon given on March 20, 2016



Sunday Morning Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster

Resident Aliens

1 Peter 2:11-17

Opening Comments

- Turn to **1 Peter 2**
- Today, we continue our series through the first letter from Peter – **The Journey Home**
- In my travels around the world I have learned something very important
- The rest of the world will not adapt to my desires and preferences
- If I leave California or the country, I am the one who has to adapt
- For example, Kupang, Indonesia is 15 hours ahead of us - 1am Monday morning
- Kupang is not going to change their time to adapt to my needs
- Why? Because I am a visitor
- I must adapt to their time – otherwise I am going to be 15 hours late to everything
- There are some in the Christian church that believe this world needs to adapt itself to our beliefs
- That's not going to happen – not until the Prince of Peace, Jesus comes back
- This world is not our home – we are sojourners and pilgrims – just passing through
- The question is how do we adapt to this world without compromising our faith, or our witness
- Peter is going to begin to tell us how to do that
- If you are able and willing to do so, please stand as we read today's text as a sign of reverence for God's Word
- Read **1 Peter 2:11-17**
- **Pray**

Teaching

- **Resident Aliens**
- Peter ended the last chapter describing their and our identity in Christ

- Let's read that again to remind ourselves
- **1 Peter 2:9-10**
- And then Peter begins a new section of his letter with the word 'Beloved'
- **1 Peter 2:11-12**
- That is packed with meaning – most importantly it describes our standing with God
- Not because there is anything in us that warrants God's love
- We are God's beloved because Jesus is His beloved Son and because we have believed on Christ for salvation **Ephesians 1:5-6**
...having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.
- It also says something about Peter's heart for those he is writing to
- 'I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims'
- Peter reminding them, this is not your home
- He is so anxious for them to get this next part that he begs them to pay attention
- 'abstain from worldly lusts which war against the soul'
- These are strong or inordinate natural, worldly desires
- This is much more than just sexual desires – includes the full range of human desires
- For power, control, influence, money, possessions, relationships
- Earlier Peter had called us to a higher standard **1 Peter 1:15**
...as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct...
- Interesting phrase 'war against the soul' = these lusts – serving as enemy soldiers against your soul
- Galatians 5 teaches us that there is a battle going on inside of all believers
- Peter says to 'abstain' = avoid those things that are harmful to your soul
- What things are harmful to your soul – the things God's Word tells you not to do
- Pride and arrogance may tell you that you can handle it, all the while you are opening the gates of your soul to your enemy

- Instead, we should do the things in verse 12
- **1 Peter 2:12**
- ‘having’ = ‘keeping’ – implies continuous action
- Peter is concerned about how they are behaving as they go through this life as pilgrims
- ‘conduct honorable’ = morally good
- ‘among the Gentiles’ = when you are among the unbelievers
- Because we live in a fallen world, we are surrounded by people who do not believe in God
- And sometimes they are going to falsely accuse us of evil
- But if you keep your conduct morally good around them, your good works they see will testify against them when they stand before the Lord
- ‘day of visitation’ could speak of two things – judgment or salvation
- Starting in verse 13 through the rest of the book, Peter is going to describe what honorable conduct looks like
- And this brings us to what might be three of the most controversial sections of 1 Peter
- As a Bible teacher – I believe I am called by God to take Him at His word
- Even when His Word goes counter to the culture I am living in
- And the section we are going to look at now, is not so much counter to the culture of the world as it is counter to the culture of the modern church
- **1 Peter 2:13-14**
- Peter is telling his readers to submit to the humanly created governmental structures, including the king and governors and their representatives
- Let’s put this in context with his readers
- Peter is saying they are to submit to the Roman government and to Emperor Nero and his other officials
- Telling them to obey the laws of the land they are living in
- With only one qualifier, ‘for the Lord’s sake’
- If it doesn’t violate God’s law, I am to submit myself to it and obey

- Here's a simple example – we all know what a red, octagonal sign with the word 'Stop' means right?
- If I was to base my obedience on what the culture of my neighborhood does, this is what I would do
- If I come to the intersection and there does not appear to be any danger of me hitting someone, I don't need to stop
- If there are others at or near the intersection, than I need to slow down and do what we call a California rolling stop
- One problem with the culture of my neighborhood – the law says that you are to cease all forward motion before the intersection, and then proceed when it is safe
- If I follow the culture of my neighborhood I will not be submitting to the ordinance of man and I will be sinning against God
- It is for the Lord's sake that I submit – to the ordinances of man, to the king, governors, and representatives
- We don't have a king – we have a president
- Peter says we are to submit to him and to whoever replaces him
- People, including Christians are freaking out over who might be elected as our next president
- Listen, whoever gets elected, probably won't be as bad as Nero was – and Peter told his readers to submit to him
- Then makes it more emphatic
- **1 Peter 2:15-16**
- 'this is the will of God' – what is the will of God? 'submitting yourself...'
- Every time a non-Christian reads of a Christian leader acting badly, they assume all Christians are just like them
- It is up to us, through 'doing good' to silence their ignorance
- 'as free' – we have freedom to do as we please
- But we are not to use that freedom in order to sin
- Instead, our pleasure is to serve God by doing good
- Peter concludes with four rapid fire exhortations
- These are some of the things that constitute honorable conduct – verse 12

- **1 Peter 2:17**

- This could be a whole message by itself
- First exhortation – **Honor All People**
- It is sad to say but honor is not something that is common in our culture
- To honor someone is to show them respect, to treat them in a favorable manner
- Peter says that we as Christians are to honor all people regardless of their skin color, their occupation, their religion, their social status
- Honor is important to God **John 5:22-23**

For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son,²³ that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.

- It is also in one of the Ten Commandments – honor mother and father
- Verse 12 told us that honorable conduct in good works glorifies God
- Honorable conduct includes honoring all people
- Second exhortation to honorable conduct – **Love the Brotherhood**
- This repeats what Peter said in **1 Peter 1:22**
Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart...
- Jesus says this is one of the ways the world gets to know Him **John 13:35**

By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.

- Christians glorify God when they love other Christians
- Third exhortation –**Fear God**
- This means to hold God in reverential awe
- It is this fear of God that puts Him at the center of your life
- He becomes the source of all wisdom, hope, joy, peace
- He becomes the reason for everything, the person in whom you can place all your trust
- Four and final exhortation – **Honor the King**
- I can't imagine what it would have been like to live under the reign of Emperor Nero
- It was during his rule that severe persecution of the Christians began
- It was Nero that had Peter executed
- We don't have a king – we have a president and other elected officials

- Peter would tell us to honor the president
- Verse 16 says we are ‘free’ and in this country we still have the freedom to say what we want
- But just because we have the freedom to say what we want, doesn’t mean we should
- As Christians we need to stand for truth, and stand against evil and injustice, but at the same time honor those who God has placed in positions of authority **Romans 13:1-2**

Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.

- Let’s be good citizens and exercise our right to elect people with a Christian worldview
- But regardless of who gets into office, God put them there, and so when we dishonor them with our words or actions, we are dishonoring God
- This is not our home – we are sojourners and pilgrims on the journey home to heaven
- This world will not adapt itself to be more Christian
- But through the honorable conduct and good works of Christians, this world will see God’s glory, and through Christians loving each other, honoring all people, including our elected officials, some will come to know their Lord and Savior, Jesus
- I believe this world can get better, but to help make that happen, I need to be better, to abstain from worldly desires, and be more like Jesus
- If you want to make this world better as you travel through it
- Love God with all you are, receive Jesus as your Savior AND Lord, and let the Holy Spirit lead you and help you to conduct yourself honorably and in good works
- And then watch and see if some small part of this world doesn’t get better
- Amen—**Pray**