

In Christ: GOOD LIVES & SUBMISSIVE

1 Peter 2:11-3:7

Study over two weeks beginning 1 & 8 March 2009

Discuss (5 minutes as a group)

What it is about the word “submission” that people don’t like and react to? Do you have an opinion about whether it is a particular problem for Australians?

Read, Reflect and Apply

Read 2v11-12

1. What is our status in the world from God’s point of view? Believers struggle with sin—if you don’t think so you are probably a liar and therefore struggling with sin. What sort of sinful desires do Christians struggle with? What are we to do with them?

2. What is the purpose of living good lives among the nations (ethnos) v12? Was there a person who was significant in your ‘coming to Christ’? What was it about them that influenced you?

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

This verse has evangelistic intent. Believers living such good lives that on the last day people who give us a hard time now might be with us then glorifying God.

This gives content to this study because the word submit is used in the context of evangelism, living such good lives before unbelievers that people are won to Christ and therefore God is glorified. There are four sections.

- 2v13ff Submit ... to every authority instituted amongst men.
- 2v18ff Slaves submit to your masters.
- 2v21ff Christ’s example of submission.
- 3v1ff Wives in the same way be submissive to your husbands.

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For Christ’s Sake

Read 2v13-17

3. The government announces a ‘no government’ day for tomorrow. You can travel to the city anyway you choose. Drive the M2 tunnel on the wrong side. Not pay tolls. Bicycle along the western rail line. U-turn on the Harbour Bridge. Every person in Sydney is entitled to do what they like. What will the journey to the city be like?

4. What reasons does Peter give for submitting to human authority v13-15? What is their role? How does He want Christian believers to be perceived by the authorities? What is his greater purpose? (Don’t forget he was writing to a world which was ruled by a dictatorial super power).

5. How might a believer use their freedom in Christ as a cover for evil?

6. We are free but we are also called to be “slaves of God’ v16. How do you make sense of that? (Read Romans 6 in your own time)

7. v17 covers all areas of society and God's reign over each. What are they and how is a believer to relate to each?

Read 2v18-20

8. Slave is probably better understood as "household servant". Peter recognises that working conditions might vary from person to person. What differences in employment might they experience? How are they called to live in response to their differing situations?

9. What's work like for you at present? How might these verses be applied to your situation?

10. v19 & 20 say some suffering is commendable and some isn't. What's the difference?

Read 2v21-24

11. Peter uses Christ Himself as an example of suffering in v21-24. Describe Christ in the words of these verses. How did He respond to His suffering? What does the passage say was the result of Christ's suffering? What do you think Peter wants us to do when he says "we should follow in His steps" v21?

12. How is it a comfort and protection in suffering to know that we belong to "the Shepherd and Chief Overseer of our souls"?

Read 3v1-7

13. How are verses 1 and 2 an application of 2v12? Can you tell the group about any man you know who has been won to Christ because of the behaviour of his wife? How might a believing wife undermine her witness to her husband?

14. What fears in v6 might a woman have about being submissive to her husband?

15. v3-6 contrast inner and outer beauty. How do these verses describe each?

16. In our society what might a display of outer beauty be? Describe and name someone you know who is full of inner beauty. Who are they and what is it about them?

17. What is a believing husband's responsibility to his wife? What does this passage say her status is in God's eternal kingdom? What are some of the practical things a husband might do for his wife in terms of their children, their sexual relationship, their family spending?

18. Why do you think Peter talks about our prayers being hindered? What expectation do you think he has of husbands leading in their family? (Think about what sort of a witness it is for a husband to be all religious on Sunday and even in prayers at home but at the same time not leading his family considerately.)

Pray

(Try to stay focussed on the issues the passage raises)

- That we would have a Christ honouring respect for authority.
- That we would honour Christ in our workplaces and bear unjust treatment.
- Thanks for Christ's suffering so "that by His wounds we are healed"
- Godly leadership and yielding in our families. Consistency of witness.
- Pray for group members who have shared particular difficulties tonight.
- That people would be won to Christ by our lives and by our words.



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