

1 Peter 2:11-25 – Living the Good life in a Hostile World

A. Introduction

- **1:3-2:10** -Peter has described the glorious blessings which we have in Christ – hope, confidence, joy and an amazing status (2:9-10).
- He now tells us how we should live in this hostile world.
- We must not opt out of the world and form a holy huddle.
- We must not opt into the world and conform in order to avoid conflict.
- We must engage in this world by living good lives (2:11-12).

B. 2:11-12 – The Purpose of a Good Life

- **2:11 – Live a distinctive life** - we are aliens here (1:1,17). If we are to be of use in this world we must not conform to its distorted standards.
- It is difficult - we still have an active sinful nature (Galatians 5:19-21)
- **2:12 – Live an attractive life** - We are to be among non-Christians - we are on mission. We are not there to moralize, but to live good lives which point to the beauty of Jesus. We are to “*out-good*” the world.
- Peter now applies this to two spheres in which we live.

C. 2:13-20 – The Pattern of a Good Life

- ❖ **2:13-17 – Citizens:** We are to submit to the authorities who have been appointed by
- ❖ God (Mark 12:4-17; Romans 13:1-7; 1 Timothy 2:1-3)
 - Submit means to rank oneself under legitimate authority.
 - We should obey the law and respect our leaders – not because they deserve it, but because they are appointed by God to bless us (13-14).
 - We should engage with our society in a positive way – this is the divine strategy for dealing with foolish attacks on the faith (15-16).
- ❖ **2:18-20 – Slaves:** The gospel would lead to the end of slavery, but at this point it was some years off. We are not slaves – but some principles apply.
 - We must submit to our employer – this does not mean that we cannot appeal to work tribunals - we are not slaves. But we must live out Christ-like lives in the workplace (Ephesians 6:5-8; Colossians 3:23)
 - We must be willing to suffer unjustly without becoming bitter or despairing.
 - We are called to this kind of life (2:21). How is such a life possible?

D. 2:21-25 – The Power for a Good Life

- ❖ **Jesus left us the power of a good example**
 - Jesus is the stencil we use to plot our lives as we follow his example.
 - He did not react with anger or vengeance – he trusted God and loved his enemies, praying for them even as they killed him (Luke 23:26-49)
 - He does not ask us to do something that he has not done himself.
- ❖ **Jesus died to save us and free us from the power of sin.**
 - He was sinless (22), but he bore our sins on the cross (Isaiah 52:13-53:12). It was a real body and a real death on a real cross (24).
 - “*The tree*” alludes to the fact that this was a cursed place where he bore the wrath of God (Deuteronomy 21:23; Galatians 3:13)
 - We are freed from the penalty and power of sin so that we can live like this as we draw strength from our Shepherd and guardian (24-25).

E. Application

- Are you engaged in this world in a generous hearted way?
- Do you have non-Christian friends who are exposed to your life?
- We must both promote and proclaim the gospel. Do your friends, neighbours and workmates know you are a Christian?