

Connection to 1 Peter 2:11-25

Peter continued to exhort his readers to live holy and honorable lives. He made a case for followers of Christ to live in a way that pleases God regardless of circumstances. Our beliefs about God and about our relationship with Him inform our behavior. Peter urged godly living and good works as the proof that we are following in the steps of Christ Jesus who also suffered unjustly for us and for our salvation.

Introduction/Opening

When you travel, there are some surefire ways of telling if others around you are tourists as well. Here are a few signs to help you: taking photos of everything, carrying a map or guidebook, wearing inappropriate clothing for the setting, not wearing an employee badge, carrying an oversized backpack or fanny pack, wearing "local clothing" (no one wears a Viking helmet today, for example). When we travel, we must always remember that we are on someone else's turf.

Peter reminded his readers that they were to live as if they were tourists in a foreign land. Doing so would impact how they interacted with each other and with those whose land they were visiting.

Outline

- I. Conduct Yourselves Honorably Before Unbelievers (1 Pet. 2:11-12)
 - a. Conduct yourself through godly living (v. 11). Because we are a people that belong to God and are expected to live holy lives, Peter once again urged his readers "to abstain from fleshly desires" that wreak havoc on us. When we live for God rather than for ourselves, we point unbelievers to something—or rather, to Someone—greater than us.
 - b. Conduct yourselves through good works (v. 12). Peter's readers were undergoing persecution, so he told them to do "good works." Even though unbelievers revile us and speak evil against us, they will glorify God someday because of what they've seen in us. Ephesians 2:10 says that we are "created in Christ Jesus for good works," and James adds that our faith is validated by good works done for Christ (Jas. 2:14-26).
- II. Conduct Yourselves Honorably Before Governmental Authorities (1 Pet. 2:13-17)
 - a. Submit to the governing authorities (vv. 13-14). Paul reminds us in Romans 13:1 that "everyone must submit to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except from God, and those that exist are instituted by God." Submission to the

authorities God instituted is an honorable way to live, inasmuch as you can live in peace without the violation of religious commitments.

- b. Live as free people (vv. 15-17). If we do “good works” (as mentioned above), we silence the ignorance of foolish people by giving them no cause to stand against us. So Peter warns us not to use our freedom “as a way to conceal evil” but rather to honor God and the authorities He’s instituted. Because we are free, we can freely follow these commands: “Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the Emperor.”
- III. Conduct Yourselves Honorably Before Unjust Leaders (1 Pet. 2:18-20)
- a. Submit to your leaders (v. 18). Once again, God puts people in authority over us; therefore, we are expected to submit to them, “not only to the good and gentle but also to the cruel.” Another good exhortation to help us here is found in Colossians 3:23, which says, “Whatever you do, do it enthusiastically, as something done for the Lord and not for men.”
 - b. Endure unjust suffering (vv. 19-20). Peter’s point is this: it is more favorable before God and more honorable for you if you endure suffering, not because of bad things you’ve done, but for the “good works” He’s called for previously. Like Jesus, who endured unjust suffering without cause, we too will have God’s favor upon us as we submit ourselves to Him and walk honorably before Him in times of suffering.

Conclusion

As we walk as tourists in this foreign land called earth, we walk in God’s strength, pursuing holiness and good works in order to please Him. And we will walk with honor before unbelievers, before governmental authorities, and before unjust leaders so that God’s favor rests upon us and God is glorified “on the day of visitation” (v. 12).

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