

Living Here, Longing for Home: Honorable Aliens

1 Peter 2:9-18

Read 1 Peter 2:9-18 together:

⁹ But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. ¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

¹¹ Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. ¹² Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation. ¹³ Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, ¹⁴ whether it be to the emperor ¹⁵ as supreme, ¹⁶ or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good. ¹⁷ For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people. ¹⁸ Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants ¹⁹ of God. ²⁰ Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor. ²¹ Servants, be subject to your masters with all respect, not only to the good and gentle but also to the unjust.

- ? 1 Peter 2:9-10 lists 6 different descriptions of who we are as believers. What are they and how do they (or should they) impact our daily relationships?
- ? What does it mean to be an exile or a sojourner? How does the addition of the word sojourner expand your understanding of a believer's relationship around him/her?
- ? What are some of the dividing lines within the church that have no business in the church? How can one distinguish which *dividing* lines the church should "draw a line in the sand?"
- ? We learn from 2 Corinthians 11:14, "And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light." How does Satan confuse the "us vs. them" argument and how can we recognize when we're drawing the wrong battle lines?

We are strangers, not only in person, but in character. When an English man crosses over to France, he is quickly recognized as a Stranger and a foreigner, and a true Christian is not in any place long before it is discovered that he is of a different nationality from those by whom he is surrounded.

-Charles Haddon Spurgeon

His People

- ? Peter says believers are a “holy nation,” a people for God’s own possession. Think about what strives to gain possession of you in this world. Note how the knowledge that you are His possession affects your relationship with (thoughts and actions toward) God (as it relates toward other believers and unbelievers).
- ? Why is it that Christians love grace until they have to offer it? How does the exercise of grace and truth make the power of the gospel shine for our friends and neighbors?

His Way

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. Hebrews 12:1-2

- ? How does one distinguish between a spiritual battle and a political battle? What are the consequences of mixing those two up?
- ? 1 Peter 2:13 says, “Be subject for the Lord’s sake to every human institution.” Does this mean that we are to honor the governing laws that we disagree with? Can we, with the Lord’s blessing, ever choose to ignore the human institution? If so, what are the circumstances by which we can disregard the human institution?
- ? What does “for the Lord’s sake” mean in 1 Peter 2:13 and why is this important?

His Kingdom

- ? What is Peter's point in 2:17?
- ? Discuss the following and how we can not only bring unity to the body but impact the unbelieving world.
 - o We Need:
 - More grace and less judgment
 - More love and less defensiveness
 - More faith and less doubt
 - More trust and less fear
- ? Peter is not the only New Testament writer who talks about how to relate to governing authorities. Paul spends some time on the topic as well. Both men had more than their share of tense moments with those in governmental authority over them. Ultimately, both submit to the governmental authority to the point of martyrdom. Look up Romans 13:1-7 and note with Paul as to Peter’s thoughts on submission to governing authorities. What reasons does he give for our submission?

For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them. To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law. To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law. To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings. - 1 Corinthians 9:19-23 ESV