

Small Group Outline for the Week of October 18, 2020
Living Properly & Honorably - 1 Peter 2:11-12

Message: Let's get into 1 Peter 2:11-12

Dear friends, I warn you as "temporary residents and foreigners" to keep away from worldly desires that wage war against your very souls. 12 Be careful to live properly among your unbelieving neighbors. Then even if they accuse you of doing wrong, they will see your honorable behavior, and they will give honor to God when he judges the world.

Notice the words he used: temporary resident, alien, or landed immigrant; and foreigner, sojourner, only temporarily here. This is not in a legal sense but as an illustration or metaphor.

- Peter seems to be leaning towards and is more interested in our sense of belonging elsewhere-belonging in Heaven!
- But just because our real home is in heaven doesn't mean we live disregarding earth. If I am a tourist and visitor to another city or town or country, how should I act there? With respect towards the people there. I obey the laws and rules there, I don't litter, I treat the restaurant servers and merchants and gas station attendant nicely and friendly and smile. I say hello to people as I walk past them. Don't we? Illustration: snow birds

Discussion: Share about some places you have travelled to, both far and near home.

Peter challenges us in verse 12 about how we live:

- Be careful to live properly (NLT)
- Live such good lives (NIV)
- Live honorable lives (TPT)
- Keep your behavior excellent (NASB)
- Conduct yourselves honorably (CSB)

Other verses in 1 Peter

- 1:14 Live as God's obedient children
- 1:15 You must be holy in everything you do

Matthew 5:16 "In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father."

Scot McKnight in his commentary makes a really good point (P. 272)

"We are countercultural in our society because we are out of step with the trend and passions of the world; its priorities and lifestyle. It is not that we are trying to be odd in our living, but we are odd because we are trying to be godly. Living countercultural is not the goal of the Christian, rather countercultural living is a result of following Jesus Christ."

Discussion:

1. What do you think about "not trying to be odd, but trying to be godly?"
2. Share of any good deeds you did in the last two weeks. How did that feel? Go ahead and pat yourself on the back.
3. Share of any good deeds or acts of kindness that you received from others. How did that feel?
4. Pause and give thanks for those opportunities to give or receive good deeds.
5. Pray for opportunities to do more good deeds and acts of kindness.

Even if the world (the people around us) accuse us of doing wrong, (and we will do wrong), we make it right, we apologize, we change, we grow, we do better - they will see our honorable behavior - and they will want Jesus, and they will want to hang around with us.

1 Peter 3:13-16

- *“Now, who will want to harm you if you are eager to do good? 14 But even if you suffer for doing what is right, God will reward you for it. So don’t worry or be afraid of their threats. 15 Instead, you must worship Christ as Lord of your life. And if someone asks about your hope as a believer, always be ready to explain it. 16 But do this in a gentle and respectful way. Keep your conscience clear. Then if people speak against you, they will be ashamed when they see what a good life you live because you belong to Christ.”*

Discussion Questions

1. Share of a time when you treated badly for doing good? How did it feel? (Would you need to forgive that person?) How did it turn out?
2. Share of a time you failed and it reflected bad on you and Jesus? Yes, go ahead and be open to each other.
3. What makes it so difficult to do good when it is tough? What would be our natural or sinful reaction?
4. If you are currently in a situation like this right now, stop and pray for each other about this.

The idea here is that by the observing the good conduct or good works, the accusers would see that their accusations were false (but even if true and they would see how we made things right and changed), they would change their minds and outlook, and having their eyes opened to see a new hope in a relationship with Jesus.

There is conflict in this world, in all arenas of life; politically, schools, work, families, sports, and more. The direction here is not aggressive behavior, but good conduct and good deeds - to overcome evil with good. This would be a good witness and example and would draw people to God.

Weekly Reflection:

1. Read 1 Peter 1-2; focus on 2:11-17 this week
2. What is one thing you can do to grow your spiritual insides?
3. What is one outward behavior you should repent and change? What step can you take; confession, apology, prayer and Bible Study in that area; ask for help?
4. Look for ways to smile at others, be kind, have a meaningful conversation with a neighbor, classmate, or co-worker. This can be an opening to a conversation about your faith.

Prayer:

1. For each other’s needs
2. For a person in your life who is difficult to be kind to.
3. For the Staff and Elders as they try to navigate our Church through the times and season of COVID and other challenges.
4. Pray for our Weekend Services. Thank God for all the volunteers that make these services happen.