

1 Peter Chapter 2E *A Living Hope in a Hostile Land Part 2*

We who are called “Elect Exiles” a people of God’s own possession, Sojourners, Strangers, Aliens and Refugees in this present world, A Royal Priesthood who have been ransomed from our futile way of life by the precious blood of the Lord Jesus, have been purified by obedience to the truth.

Born again to a living hope through the imperishable seed of God’s Word, we live, here and now, in the hope of an eternal inheritance that is being kept, being guarded by God’s gracious gift of faith for a salvation that is ready to be revealed.

As God’s people, we are called TO (1:13) **“Set OUR hope fully on the grace that will be brought to US at the revelation of Jesus Christ.**

We are called to RESIST the internal influences and passions of our old sinful nature and strive to be holy in all of our conduct, even as God himself is holy. (1:15)

- Having made so bold a command Peter must answer the question, “What does this holiness look like?” What does it mean to be set apart for God?

Should we all drop out of this corrupt culture, totally abandon this sinful society? Should we form our own little communities ruled by the elders of the church,

Does “coming out from among them and being separate” mean that we should unplug from the world, reject modern technology and live our lives off the grid.

- Should we refuse to pay taxes as long as the government continues to subsidize things like “Planned Parenthood” and the “National Endowment of the Arts?”
- How far should we go in removing ourselves from the corrupt systems of this fallen world?
- Should we lock ourselves in a monastery and wait for the rapture?
- What about the great commission? Go into all the world and preach the Gospel

Do we have any hope of evangelizing our generation if we remove ourselves from this corrupt world?

- Turn with me and look at the Prayer that Jesus prayed on the night that He was betrayed.

John 17: 9 **I am praying for them. (Believers) I am not praying for the world but for those whom you (Father) have given me, for they are yours. 10 All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them. 11 And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one.**

14 I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. 15 I do not ask that you take them out of the

world, but that you keep them from the evil one. 16 They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. 17 Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. 18 As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world.

- God the Father chose a people to be his very own possession before the foundation of the world. He gave these same people, these elect exiles as a love gift to the Son.
- The Son faithfully procured their redemption through His sacrifice on the cross; He gave them His Word to sanctify them and sent them into the world to make disciples of all nations.

By the grace of God we have become, citizens of Heaven, A Royal Priesthood, dwelling here on the earth. We are no more OF the world than He is of the world; Yet by the work of GOD we are somehow “**Seated with Christ in heavenly places.**”

Paul writing to the believers at Philippi said: Phil. 3:20 **Our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,**

- You could say, as the Adopted Children of God we have two addresses. Our citizenship is in heaven but for now, we live as exiles here on the earth.

The natural question arises when one possesses dual citizenship, where do my allegiances lie? John Piper addresses this question in a blog:

“One of the crucial issues before the church in America today is: Shall we be American with a pinch of religious flavoring? OR: Shall we be Christ’s people with a pinch of American flavoring? If we are ever to appear to the world as aliens and exiles on the earth, then we are going to have to go back and renew the declaration of allegiance by which we became Christians, namely, Jesus is Lord!”

- Friends our first and primary allegiance is to Christ. He alone is Lord of all.

Paul described Christ in his letter to Timothy as: **he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light,** (1 Timothy 6:15-16)

He is the same one of whom Isaiah declared, “**and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.**” (Isaiah 9:6)

- We live in the anticipation of that day when Christ will come to rule and reign.

That great day announced by the Angel” **“The kingdom of the world, become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever.”** (Rev. 11:15)

- As citizens of God’s Kingdom, how should we relate to the governments of man?
- That is the question I put before you today.
- Can we simply ignore Federal, State and Local governments?
- What does the Scripture say?
- According to God’s revealed Word, we must live in submission to the authority of human government because God is the one who established it.

- Turn with me at the book of Proverbs.

Proverbs 8: 14 (God speaking) **I have counsel and sound wisdom; I have insight; I have strength. 15 By me (God) kings reign, and rulers decree what is just; 16 by me princes rule, and nobles, all who govern justly.**

- This morning the Apostle Peter is going to give us a much needed attitude adjustment concerning human government.
- So let's set aside all of those presidential tweets, cleanse you minds of all the Fake News you have heard this week and join me as we focus together on the Word of God.

1 Peter 2:13-17 Outline

1. Appeal for Submission
2. Affects of Submission
3. Attitude of Submission

I realize that I am taking a great risk using the word "Submission" so early in my sermon, Submission is not a word that sits well with our flesh but over the next 3 weeks, if the Lord permits we will consider the great value of living a surrendered life, a fruitful life under the authority of God. Let's look at verse 13.

1. (Here Peter makes an) Appeal for Submission

1 Peter 2: 13 **Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, 14 or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good.**

- As believers we are called of God to live in submission to, under the authority of every human institution,
- Peter further clarifies this as institutional government when he says: **whether it be to the emperor as supreme, or to governors as sent by him.**

My Friends, the Bible speaks clearly about the relationship a believer is to have with those who are in authority over them. WE are to Submit, to align ourselves under those in authority over us. Like the drill Sargent who says, "Fall In." So we are commanded to fall in behind, the governmental authorities that God has ordained.

- This is not merely a suggestion it is a command and Peter doesn't add any qualifying conditions, (like only when the Republicans are in control or only when government doesn't overstep its boundaries)

And I would remind you again that Peter is writing in a time when Nero is Emperor of Rome and the church is beginning to feel the pains of persecution.

- Our submission is not based upon the moral or ethical purity of the government but on the authority that God has given to the institution. Peter helps us understand the role of government when he writes:

1 Peter 2:14 **whether it be to the emperor as supreme, or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good.**

- Paul affirms the God ordained role of government when he writes:

Romans 13:4 **for he (*Governing officials*) is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer.**

- God established human Government for the purpose of restraining evil and imposing His judgment on those who do wrong. (*who break his law*)
- Those who seek to do good, to honor God and live at peace with their fellow man should be able to live with a clear conscience, and free from fear.

It has been my experience that Governmental regulations TEST our willingness to submit. Will we live in peace as those who yield to the commands of our rulers OR will we live in fear, looking over our shoulder because we know we are guilty of rebellion. Example Driving is much less stressful when I am doing the speed limit.

When the state changed the requirements of our water testing from quarterly to monthly, I moaned and complained about the cost, (*\$50 qtr to \$50 Month*) but we submitted to their request and now I can live with a clear conscience.

When FEMA informed us that receiving federal funds to purchase food for the food bank meant that we could no longer proclaim the Gospel, we politely told them to keep their money and we looked to YOU the people of God to give of your own resources to feed the poor. Now FEMA gets to keep their treasure and WE get to lay up treasure in heaven where no moth or rust will destroy it. (Win, win situation)

It is only when the government commands believers to act in blatant disobedience to God's revealed Word that WE have the option, the right, the duty to resist.

- When the State government tells my son that, he is required to undress after gym class next to a teenage girl, because she identifies as a male, I will guard the integrity and innocence of my son by utilizing every legal right I have to graciously, peacefully and respectfully express the Truth of God's Word.
- But before we get carried away with the exceptions to our submission, let's make sure that we understand the command that Peter issues. Because our sinful flesh is all too eager to rebel against authority.

The Apostle Paul agrees w/ Peter: Romans 13:1 **Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. 2 Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment.**

- First I want you to notice that Paul says “Every Person.” As a matter of fact those words, “**Every Person**” are in the emphatic position in the front of the sentence.
 - When it comes to submission to authority, no one is excluded.
- “**Let every person be subject**” this is the same word that Peter used in 2:13, to come into line with, to align yourself under the authority of the government.
- And you should know that this includes every form of human government from democracy to dictatorship, federal, state and local, because all governments function in the same delegated authority of God.
- To resist that delegated authority is to resist what God has ordained for our good, and Paul tells us that resistance opens the door to judgment. (That judgment which is meted out by the Government on God’s behalf)
- Of course the motivation for our submission is just as important as the actual act of submission.

So what Is My Motivation? Peter tells us that we should submit to governmental authority “**For the Lord’s sake.**”

- Our obedience is motivated by our reverence for the Lord and our desire to honor Him in all things.
- Therefore, whether our rulers are elected or appointed, whether they are born into their position or ascended to power in a hostile takeover, our response remains the same, We live in submission to them.
- Despite their human frailties, we must recognize that they hold their position of authority not by chance or popular opinion but by the sovereign will of God.

Daniel communicated this truth to King Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel 2: 20 **Daniel answered and said: "Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, to whom belong wisdom and might. 21 He changes times and seasons; he removes kings and sets up kings; he gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding;**

Now that we understand the command, we move on to see the positive effects that our submission has on the society around us.

Remember from 2 weeks ago, we learned that godly behavior paves the way for evangelism. We are to live our lives for the glory of God so that people will see our good works and glorify God on the day of His visitation.

2 Affects of Submission

1 Peter 2: 15 **For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people.**

Peter plainly states that Submission to governing authorities is the Will of God and that by doing the will of God, doing that which is good, we should silence, (literally Muzzle) the ignorance (agnosticism) of foolish, senseless people who lack reason.

- Foolish and ignorant people are easily caught up in gossip and controversy and they spread their foolishness throughout the population like the flu.
- IN Peter's day people foolishly spoke of the church as being subversive to the Roman Empire because they proclaimed Christ as the only True King and they refused to bow in worship to Caesar.

The Pharisees and Sadducees sought to FRAME the Lord Jesus by tempting him to Rebel against Roman authority. You may remember how that worked out:

Matthew 12:14 *And they came and said to him, "Teacher, we know that you are true and do not care about anyone's opinion. For you are not swayed by appearances, but truly teach the way of God. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not? Should we pay them, or should we not?"* 15 *But, knowing their hypocrisy, he said to them, "Why put me to the test? Bring me a denarius and let me look at it."*
 16 *And they brought one. And he said to them, "Whose likeness and inscription is this?"* They said to him, "Caesar's." 17 *Jesus said to them, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." And they marveled at him.*

When unbelieving people observe your attitude toward government, Do they marvel at the wisdom of your submission OR do they lump YOU in with all of the other radical groups that promote anarchy? (*Let me ask you a tough question*)

- Does all of your ranting and raging against governing officials on social media work for or against you when you seek to share the Gospel? (*that same platform*)
- Did all of the talk, the blogs and websites declaring Barrack Obama as the Antichrist help to bring even one soul to repentance of sin and faith in Christ?
- When we publically, passionately malign our elected officials, when we speak evil of those in authority we are in rebellion against the revealed will of God.

Submission to Divine Authority, whether that authority is found in the Home, In the workplace or in the government, that submission will eventually stop the waging tongue of foolish unbelievers.

In these times of civil unrest, when the nation is so violently divided; when passions run so deep and the talking heads (liberal and conservative) continuously scream at one another at the top of their lungs;

- HOW wonderful it would be to see a body of people who quietly go about their business, yielding to authority, loving one another, proclaiming good news to the poor, setting captives free and doing good the works that God foreordained we should do.
- What evil can be spoken of a people who live with integrity, with impeccable moral fiber and purity of life? To speak evil of these people defies logic.
- Paul commanded Titus to tell the Believers on the island of Crete:

Titus 3:1 Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, 2 to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all people. (WHY? Because)

3 For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. 4 But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, 5 he saved us,

- What do we know so far? We understand that we are commanded to Submit to governing authorities and when we do so, it will still the tongues of unbelieving people and pave the way for the Gospel message.
- Now we consider the attitude behind our submission.

3 Attitude of Submission

Submission begins in the redeemed heart of God's Elect Exiles. In verse 16 Peter shows us that there is a direct connection between our submission and the freedom that we have received in Christ.

- We are free from the bondage of sin; free to live the life of a servant like Christ who lived among us as a stranger an exile bearing the nature of a servant.
- So Peter exhorts us to:

1 Peter 2: 16 Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God.

Peter was not primarily concerned with the outward act of submission as much as the attitude of the Heart giving rise to the outward action.

- Looking at the text, there are three phrases that explain the origin and nature of our submission.

For those of you who enjoy the study of Biblical languages:

- In each phrase of verse 16, the verb is not supplied by the text, instead it is implied by the context. The ESV "LIVE as people who are free" The word "Live" is not in the text. We need to pull the verb from a previous verse and read it this way: "SUBMIT as free people."
- ONLY those who have been set free from the bondage of sin have the capacity to freely submit.
- Sinners love their own sovereignty, they refuse to recognize or submit to divine authority in any form.
- Let's look quickly at these three phrases to see the attitude behind our submission.

First: Because Christ has set us free from slavery to sin, we are no longer subject to the futile lifestyle that is characteristic of this world. Our submission is not rendered out of weakness, it is offered as an act of worship from a truly FREE heart.

- We submit because we have been set free to walk in obedience to God.

Second, As free people we do not use our freedom as a cover up for evil. Our freedom in Christ actually liberates us to do that which is right, to do what is good. Those who use their freedom as a covering for evil show by their actions that they are not free at all. Their actions show they remain under the dominion of sin.

Finally, Believers submit to the delegated authority of God because they are servants of God.

Our freedom in Christ is not an unrestricted, or unrestrained freedom, it is the freedom of those who have become “**slaves of righteousness.**”

- WE NOW bear the IMAGE of Christ who is the Greatest in the Kingdom of God AND the Servant of ALL.

Mark 9: 35 **He said to them, "If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all."**

CLOSING: I am fully aware that there are Biblical examples of righteous individuals who resisted Governmental Authority when that authority commanded behavior that was contrary to the revealed Word of God.

- Daniel 6, When King Darius Was tricked into making a decree that no one in the Kingdom should petition any god or man other than Darius for 30 days. Daniel prayed to the Lord and spent a night in the Lion’s Den.
- Acts 4 When the Jerusalem Counsel forbid the Disciples from speaking or teaching in the name of Jesus.... They responded in righteous defiance.
- BUT listen my focus this morning is NOT on the exceptions to the rule. I believe that we have more of a problem with willful submission than we do with rebellious defiance.

Friends: I believe that we can make a greater impact on our society through submission than we can by being just another voice of nagging criticism.

As a Community of Believers we should be known for our humble and loving submission. We should bear the reputation of servants, those who proclaim the truth in love and joyfully lay down their lives in service to our neighbors. The tongues of our accusers should be silenced when they observe our good behavior. (ALL of this is of course by the grace of God at work in His people)

One Last thought from the Prophet Jeremiah.

At the time when Israel was overtaken by the Babylonians. When the survivors were living under the dominance of a Pagan King,

- When the walls of Jerusalem were destroyed and Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego endured the fiery furnace.
- When God's chosen people, His Holy Nation was living as strangers in a foreign land, the Prophet Jeremiah said:

Jeremiah 29:4 "Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: 5 Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat their produce.

6 Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease. 7 But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.

- I believe this is good counsel for the Elect Exiles who live in this fallen world today.
- Build and maintain your houses, plant your gardens and eat the produce.
- Marry off your children to other believing children. Enjoy your grandchildren.
- SEEK the welfare of the city where you dwell as an exile.
- Pray for the city, Pray for kings and rulers and all those who are in authority over us that we may live quiet, godly and dignified lives for the glory of God.
- As the city prospers so we also will prosper.