

Small Group Outline for the Week of October 25, 2020
Respect Everyone – Fear God 1 Peter 2:13-17

1 Peter 2:13-17

¹³ For the Lord's sake, submit to all human authority—whether the king as head of state, ¹⁴ or the officials he has appointed. For the king has sent them to punish those who do wrong and to honor those who do right.

¹⁵ It is God's will that your honorable lives should silence those ignorant people who make foolish accusations against you. ¹⁶ For you are free, yet you are God's slaves, so don't use your freedom as an excuse to do evil. ¹⁷ Respect everyone, and love the family of believers. Fear God, and respect the king.

Let's look briefly at the government they had back then:

Note: Rome at the west; Asia Minor the east.

The people in these churches were suffering with a Roman led government; the same government that crucified Jesus Christ, and indeed many others 20-30 years earlier. Different ruler but the same desire for more power and more authority. They lived under a tyrant.

These people were often less than citizens, near the bottom of the social ladder, so their civil and human rights were almost non-existent. Foreigners, aliens, landed immigrants, temporary residents.

- There was Nero, a horrible Emperor, who despised Christians and treated them beyond horrible.
- Then there was a governor appointed to oversee the area.
- Peter was trying to encourage the Church to live doing good so as to not awaken the ire of the governor. To live peacefully
- We live in Canada; we live in a democracy. We can speak up with our opinions, even as a Church. But back then they were ground out often - no respect, but total disrespect. Democracy is a good political system, but it is nor God ordained. There are many world systems. But as you look into Scripture at the end of time in Revelation, and from Genesis, we see that God Almighty is all about a "Theocracy." God's kingdom on this earth, He is supreme. That gives us hope.

How did the Apostle Peter give hope to an insignificant group of people in the eyes of the government?

1 Peter 2:9-12 (see the context of verses - important)

- Who we are
- Who we belong to
- We can show others the goodness of God as different than the current king or leader
- We are no longer living in darkness (2 Corinthians 4:6)
- The Apostle Peter helps with perspective that our real home is in Heaven, and our place on earth is temporary. We live honorable lives - 2:9 to show others the goodness of God; helping others out of the darkness into His wonderful light.

Back to 1 Peter 2:13-14: Submitting to leaders is a form of humbling oneself before God. Submit does not imply total obedience, but to live within the governmental structure; to be peacemakers as Jesus taught in Matthew 5:9. See what Jesus does:

- Even Jesus paid his taxes (today a blessing is charitable giving! Honoring the good)
- Jesus healed a Roman centurion leader's daughter and another's servant - cared about the person not what he stood for
- Submitted quietly to Pilate and the Romans soldiers who tortured and killed Him. An example of how to act in the midst of persecution

- We are Christ-followers, Christians, how did He live towards the unrighteous authorities around Him
- He lived and went about His business
- He spoke to his accusers, and at times He was silent.
- Look at the Apostles in the Book of Acts; they spoke, they preached, they lived, they were jailed, and at times they disobeyed the leadership and continued to preach and share Jesus.

In that time Peter boiled it all down to four things: **1 Peter 2:17**

In this time of world issues, in the midst of COVID 19 and the world pandemic, in the midst of our Canadian political landscape, Peter instructs with his authority as an Apostle included as the Word of God. These we must do:

- The first two:
 - **Respect** everyone ("honor all people")
 - **Love** our fellow believers, the family of believers See Galatians 6:9-10.
- The second pair:
 - **Respect the King** (reverse order)
 - Whereas the Emperor/King is to receive respect ("honor").
 - This connects with Jesus' teachings that we should love our enemies (Matt. 5:44; Luke 6:27, 35), and "render to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's" (Matt. 22:21; Mark 12:17; Luke 20:25).
 - **Fear God**
 - God deserves "fear" - a righteous fear... He is God
 - Humble yourself under the mighty hand of God

1 Peter 2:9; 2 Corinthians 4:6; 1 Peter 5:6-7

Discussion Questions:

1. How do you imagine living at the time of 60 AD, in the Roman Empire as a Christian?
2. What do you take for granted living in a democracy like Canada, compared to the Roman Empire or 60 AD or another country in the world today?
3. What stands out to you in the passages we are studying here in 1 Peter 2:9-17?
4. How do feel about the political landscape of Canada currently. Share both thankfulness and fears.
5. Discuss as noted below...

Weekly Reflection

1. Read 1 Peter 2:9-17; Romans 13:1-7
2. Check your attitude towards the leaders and authorities in your life. Is there submission and respect?
3. Pray each day for one Political leader or official by name: for wisdom and a relationship with God: pray for them as human – they are human remember 😊
 - a. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau
 - b. Premier Brian Pallister
 - c. Mayor Brian Bowman or your local mayor or reeve
 - d. Dr Brent Roussin: Chief Provincial Medical Officer for Manitoba
 - e. Dr Theresa Tam: Chief Public Health Officer of Canada
4. Pray each day for one authority in your life.