

Living Before The World (1Peter 2:11-25)

I. INTRODUCTION – ABSTAIN FROM FLESHLY LUSTS

- A. There is a famous saying that's goes something like this: *"It's easy to die for something, but it's much harder to live for something"*. That's where we are as Christians in the world we live in today. How do we live for Christ today? High profile people throw the phrase, *"I'm a Christian!"* around, but what does that look like?
- "Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evil-doers, they may, by your goods works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation." (1Pe. 2:11-12)***
- B. The Apostle Peter says, ***"I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul" (v.11)***. The word lusts is *epithymia*. It means, strong desire, craving, longing, desire for what is forbidden. He calls this, ***"fleshly"***. The word is *sarkikos* which means, under the control of animal appetites, governed by mere human nature.
- C. It is important for us to realize the 3-fold composition of the nature of man. Scripture tells us we are a tri-part being, made up of body, soul and spirit (1 Thess. 5:23, Heb. 4:12). The body is the dimension that deals with the physical realm we live in. The soul is the dimension that deals with mans intellect, will, reason, thinking. The spirit is the dimension that deals with the spirit-realm. The part of you that knows God.
- D. The spirit-man is the "hidden man of the heart" (1Pe. 3:4, Jn. 4:4), He is the "inward man" (2 Cor. 4:16). He is "eternal" (2 Cor. 5:1). The "body" and "soul" is to be surrendered to God to be transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 12:1-2).
- E. So Peter exhorts us – Live in such a way that God, through your spirit-nature, is in control of your life and actions, not your fleshly-nature, and not your soul-nature. Remember, you a sojourners and pilgrims, he says!

II. SUBMISSION TO GOVERNMENT

- A. As Christians, we are to recognize the importance of good government and godly rulers. God gives us these to "punish evildoers" and "praise those who do good" (v.14). We "submit" to righteous rulers and laws *for the Lord's sake*, because he instituted these for the peace and happiness of man.
- "Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme, or to governors, as those sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good." (1 Pe. 2:13-14)***
- B. God governs the universe and man through laws for the wellbeing and happiness of man. Many of the laws passed by civilized nations today are based on the Word of God. The laws and instructions as delivered to Moses in the Torah, teach us what is righteous and just.

- C. It is our duty as Christians to uphold godly, righteous laws and to oppose laws that are contrary to the Word of God. The opposite of law and order is rebellion, chaos, anarchy and “every man doing what is right in his own eyes” which leads to the end of civilized order.
- D. We are exhorted **“to pray for kings and all who are in authority (1 Tim. 2:1-4) that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence”**. The purpose we do this is because “God desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (v.4).
- E. As Christians, we understand that God has given us moral and transcendent values, meaning they are superior and supreme. We don’t make them up, but we discover what they are through God’s Word and we take these as the plumb-line to measure our lives and institutions by them.

III. LIVE AS FREE BONDSERVANTS OF GOD

- A. We are free bondservants of God. We are not our own. We belong to Jesus Christ and are to live for Him and to honor Him through our lives, in our homes and in public life. When we let the light of Christ shine through us, we are doing good.
“For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men – as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God. Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.” (1Pe. 2:15-17).
- B. **“As free, yet not using liberty as a cloak of vice” (v.16):** The word “liberty” means license to do as one pleases. You are free in Jesus, but you are obligated to live for Him because you are bought at a price for His purposes (1 Cor. 6:20). We can’t just do what we we want to do.
- C. **“Bondservants”:** Is the word “doulos”. A voluntary slave in subjection to a master (Ex. 21:5-6). A love-slave is one who chooses to give up his rights to voluntarily follow his master in all things.
- D. “Today we hear the world crying out for more rights. More freedom. Two hundred years ago, the great statesman, Edmund Burke, penned this warning: ‘Men qualify for freedom in exact proportion to their disposition to put moral chains on their own appetites. Society cannot exist unless a controlling power is put somewhere on will and appetite, and the less of it there is within, the more there must be without. It is ordained in the eternal constitution of things that men of intemperate minds cannot be free. Their passions forge their fetters.’ Contemporary history is filled with movements for the rights of men. But no man can change the world until he himself has been changed. No man can free others until he himself is truly free.” Winkie Pratney – Free as a Slave.