

1 Peter 2:11-17 | *Godly Living in a Godless World*

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¹¹ Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul. ¹² Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.

¹³ Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human authority: whether to the emperor, as the supreme authority, ¹⁴ or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. ¹⁵ For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish people. ¹⁶ Live as free people, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as God's slaves. ¹⁷ Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honour the emperor.

NOTES

- We are **strangers and aliens** in our own country.
- We are called to **submit in all circumstances**, not just when we like who's in charge!
- We are called to **submit to God's delegated authority, not obey blindly**
- We are called to **shine among non-believers** with our good deeds

QUESTIONS

1. Peter advises his readers to engage their society as "foreigners and exiles" (v.11). This phrase is found in Gen 23:4 where Abraham describes himself to the Hittites, "I am a *resident alien* and a *visiting stranger* among you. Therefore, sell me property for a burial site." With the allusion to Abraham, Peter reminds his readers that they stand in a long tradition of people in God's redemption story who were called to be aliens and strangers in the places where they lived.

How are we strangers and aliens in our own land? What are the values and beliefs that set us apart in our country, our workplaces, our society?

2. What challenges have you faced in choosing to submit to earthly authority in your government, workplace, or elsewhere?

3. In v.17 Peter writes: "Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honour the emperor." What are some circumstances in which your call to fear God has superseded your submission to earthly authority?

4. Peter tells us to shine among non-believers so that, though they accuse us of doing wrong, they may see our good deeds and glorify God on the day that he visits us (v.12). What are you doing to shine in our world, as non-believers observe the way we live?