

LISTENING GUIDE

| THIS SECTION IS FOR YOU TO READ AHEAD OF TIME AND CONTEMPLATE WHILE LISTENING.

- What are different things Peter calls Christians? How does he describe them?
- Notice the order of various instructions.
- Listen for the difference in blending in, fighting back, withdrawing, and a different strategy... what is it?
- Consider: if someone watched the way I live this week, what would they conclude about the God I represent?

TALK ABOUT IT

| THIS SECTION LETS YOU DIVE INTO GOD'S WORD AND SERMON CONTENT.

- Before Peter tells Christians what to do, he reminds them who they are: beloved, chosen, God's people, sojourners, and exiles. Why do you think Peter begins with identity before activity?
- How might remembering that YOU belong to God change the way you respond when you feel out of place, misunderstood, or opposed?
- Peter says the passions of our flesh "wage war" against our souls, and only then turns toward how we engage the world around us. Why do you think he puts the battles in that order?
 - Where are we sometimes more eager to fight what is wrong "out there" than what God wants to change within us?
- The sermon summarized Peter's strategy simply: fight the war within you, live beautifully among others, and do good. Which of those sounds easiest to you? Which is most challenging?
 - What makes simple faithfulness sometimes feel insufficient when we would rather win an argument, change the culture, or fix the situation?
- Verse 17 gives four short commands: "Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor." What distinctions do you notice between those commands?

| Open Discussion: The sermon put it this way: "Everyone gets honor. The church gets love. God gets fear. The emperor gets honor. God alone gets ultimate allegiance." How does that help us think about authority without confusing respect with worship or allegiance?

- Peter's vision is neither assimilation nor retreat: "stay present, stay distinct." Where do you find that tension hardest to navigate right now?
 - What might faithful presence look like there?

LIVING A STEADFAST LIFE

| THIS SECTION IS FOR US TO CONSIDER HOW TO APPLY IT TO OUR LIVES.

| Concluding Point: Peter's strategy is "surprisingly ordinary:" fight sin harder than you fight people, do visible good, refuse to let disagreement become dishonor, use your freedom to serve, love the church, and fear God more than people's opinions.

- Choose one place where you will intentionally live as an ambassador of Jesus this week. What is one specific act of goodness, service, honor, or self-denial you can practice there?
- At the end of the week, how do you think you'd answer if you asked yourself: did the way I lived merely make me look good? Or did it make something about my King look beautiful?

PRAY

| THINGS TO CONSIDER PRAYING FOR, A GUIDE/REFERENCE.

- Ask God to help us remember who we are and whose we are.
- Ask Him to help us fight sin within us and live honorable and beautiful lives.
- Pray to encourage each other "to love and good works."
- Pray that our church verbs the appropriate nouns found in this passage.