

# expound

EXPLORING THE  
**TRUTH** OF THE  
WORD OF GOD

Dr. Mike Chapman  
City Church Chattanooga

## **God's Grace in Submission**

### **1 Peter 2:1 – 3:7**

In chapter one, Peter introduced his letter (sent to five areas and Roman provinces in Asia Minor, which is modern day Turkey). His motive was to prepare their hearts and minds for a coming season of intensified persecution. He focused on the effect of the grace of God in salvation. Here were some of the key points...

- As the elect of God, Christians are resident aliens in the world and should conduct themselves as such.
- Through grace, Christians have been born again and received a living hope – Jesus, the resurrected Lord.
- Through grace, Christians are empowered to live holy in this present world.
- Through grace, Christians can live in harmony with fellow believers because they have been born again through the living and enduring Word of God.

In this session, we will follow Peter as he builds his case for Christians living as aliens in this world. Specifically, he focuses on the principle of living a submissive life.

### **Who Are Christians?**

#### **2:1-12**

Peter begins this section with four metaphors that describe the Christian life. Each picture contains a privilege and a responsibility.

1. We are children in God's family. (2:1-3)

"Therefore" connects the imperative "crave" with the declaration of 1:23-25.

"Rid yourselves" is actually not an imperative verb. It is an aorist participle, better translated as "now that you have 'stripped yourselves of.'"

We are to "crave" the pure Word of God so that we can grow.

2. We are stones in God's Temple. (2:4-8)

Christians are living stones built on *the* Living Stone and we comprise a spiritual temple for God's glory.

We are also priests in this temple, offering up spiritual sacrifices through Christ. (Romans 12:1; Hebrews 13:15-16).

To those who trust him he is precious. To those who reject him, he is a stumbling block that makes them fall.

3. We are a New Nation. (2:9-10)

We are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God.

These descriptions were originally spoken concerning Israel (Exodus 19:5-6).

Our purpose is to declare the praises of the one who called us out of darkness into *his* light.

Peter contrasts our condition under darkness and our condition under light by the use of the words "once and now."

4. We are aliens and strangers. (2:11:12)

Because we are "not of this land" we should live like the unique people we are.

"Sinful" is a translation of the adjective that means "fleshly."

"Flesh" is a term used in the New Testament to refer to unredeemed human nature – human nature apart from God.

Righteous living by God's people will declare God's praises.

## The Grace of Submission 2:13-3:7

1. Christians submit to the human authorities. (2:13-17)

Civil authority has a rightful place – to punish, protect, and commend. (Romans 13:1-7)

Proper submission to civil authority can stop ignorant talk by the foolish.

V. 17 is Peter's summary statement: Show respect to everyone ... love the family of God ... fear God ... honor the King.

2. Christian servants submit to their masters. (2:18-25)

Peter uses the institution of slavery from the 1<sup>st</sup> Century Roman Empire to illustrate to all Christians the principle of suffering unjust treatment.

v. 21, Christians are "called" to model Christ's example of non-retaliation when treated unfairly.

Our salvation rests on Jesus submission and his non-retaliation to his unjust treatment at the hands of wicked men.

3. Christian submission in the Home (3:1-7)

Christian wives submit to their husbands...

A Christian wife's beauty should be more than just outward adornment.

Her beauty found in a gentle and quiet spirit can break down the hardness of her husband's heart of unbelief.

Christian husbands submit as well (“in the same way”)

“Live with your wives in an understanding way” (NASB)

Think of “weaker” as “more fragile” and of “great value.”

Christian husbands are to see their wives as equal heirs with them in eternal life. (Galatians 3:28)

Difficulties in a Christian marriage cause difficulties in their spiritual lives as well.

### **Questions for Table Conversation**

1. Why is it often hard for Christians to truly “crave” the Word of God? How do you think Peter would address this problem?
2. What kind of tension do you face in trying to live as a citizen of God’s Kingdom and living as a citizen of this world as well?
3. What is your “gut level” reaction to Peter’s saying that God has called us to endure unjust treatment in a Christ-emulating way?
4. What is typically our knee-jerk reaction when we feel we have been treated unfairly?
5. How can a Christian wife to be more beautiful on the “inside?”
6. What can a Christian husband do to learn how to understand his wife better?

## **Before Our Next Session**

Before next week's session, read 1 Peter 3:8-22 – once a day if possible.

Use the following questions to assist you as you reflect on your reading:

- To what are we as Christians called in v. 9?
- If we obey the call in v. 9, what will we inherit?
- In v. 15 what are we to be prepared to do?
- What is our attitude to be when giving an answer for the hope that we have? (v. 15)
- Does Peter say that it can be the will of God for a Christian to suffer in v. 17?
- As you read a very challenging passage of Scripture (vv. 18-22), what questions about this passage would you like to address?