

:: Summary

The Church (made up of course of every believer), is meant to be the living expression of God's Kingdom come to earth. One aspect of this reality is that we are called to live by Kingdom principles of civility. In contrast, as one online article puts it, there are many *“who believe even the most intensely aggressive speech is appropriate and without need of real-life accountability—as long as it’s for the “right” cause ... standards of decency and respectfulness don’t apply to people who take up [a] noble cause ...”* In the face of this growing sentiment within our culture, you are called to not waste this moment by practicing uncommon civility.

:: Share

Growing up, what were some of the ways you were taught about manners, politeness, and respect? What was your overall reaction to this training? What were one or two of the key lessons you learned?

:: Explore and Discuss | Read 1 Peter 2:11-17 and Notes

What are the key implications for every believer that flow from 1 Peter 2:9-10?

In verses 11-12, Peter urges believers to make a conscious decision to reject every sinful desire that wages war against your soul. Reflecting on Miroslav Volf’s comment (see notes below), are there any virtues you nurture to live such a good life that people take notice? Are there any you wish to start?

Read verse 16 and G.K. Chesterton’s comment below. As noted in the message, *“freedom in Christ means you are free to not do what everyone else is doing.”* How is it possible to “live as free people” and yet live as God’s slaves”?

:: Apply it to Your Life

How would you talk about God’s command to *“show proper respect to everyone”* (v. 17) to a child or grandchild?

Pastor Mike shared six practical steps toward greater civility: 1) Make a commitment to always respect everyone. 2) Let your conversations be seasoned with grace. 3) If you don’t like a particular viewpoint or value of someone else, keep on liking them. 4) Show openness to listening and considering opposing viewpoints. 5) Advocate your position in such a way that people do not feel forced to take sides - to choose you or reject you. 6) As a Christian, if you are not willing to follow and live out these values, then you should



refrain from engaging in public discourse that will draw out of you behaviors that are contrary to these values.

Which one or two resonate spiritually with you? Why?

:: Pray

Offer praise or gratitude to God for what he has taught you in 1 Peter 2:11-17.

Pray for each other in light of God's call to grow in uncommon civility.

:: Notes

*"It is not just matter of mind but also habits of heart. We need to nurture in ourselves virtues and prepare ourselves in advance of conflict so that we are ready when conflict arises."*

Miroslav Volf, Saddleback Civil Forum

*"To have a right to do a thing is not at all the same as to be right in doing it."* G.K Chesterton, "The War of the Usurpers,"

