

Submission That Speaks

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[0:00] So you find your place, 2 Peter, I mean 1 Peter, chapter 2, verse 11, the Bible says this, And then what he's going to do these next few verses in these chapters is specifically show us what that looks like.

So he gives us a general view of how to live, but now he's going to talk about very specific things. That's what we see in verse number 13. Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether it be to the king as supreme, or unto governors as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well.

For so is the will of God, that with well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men, as free and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.

Honor all men, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king. So Peter comes right out of the gate, and we're going to see in a minute, this would have been a difficult part of the letter to stomach, and the culture and the society they were living in.

And I would submit to us tonight that we probably have a lot of correlation in some of those ways, how we view the society and the culture and the government that we live under as well.

[1:42] But the Lord still wants to use whatever like that is in our life, and I think we can learn a lot from it. And so let's go to the Lord in prayer and ask him to bless our time. Father, thank you for this time to gather again.

Thank you that we can open up your word. Lord, I'm so thankful that your word, it touches every area of our life. And we look at something like this in a text that speaks of authority and government and different things.

And Lord, that you care about everything. And I pray you would help us to have a good spirit about this. Lord, you would help us to evaluate our life and to make sure that we're living a life of submission to you ultimately, Lord, as we try to let our light shine.

I pray that you'd be with us now. You would help us to take these truths, apply them to our life. Lord, I pray you'd be with me. You would just give me the words to say that it would be a blessing to your people tonight. We ask it in Christ's name. Amen.

Thank you so much for standing. You may be seated. I just want us to imagine for a moment that we're living under a government that is completely corrupt. Now, I know we can laugh and we can have opinions about ours, but we have a lot of flaws.

[2:40] But there is still some semblance of a democracy here. Imagine that you're not living in a democracy. It's not a republic, but an absolute ruler. A dictator, and this dictator is a man who is self-indulgent.

He is self-serving. He is morally bankrupt. This man has no regard for God, no concern for the truth, really no care for the people. The people are just there to make his life better, to help him in whatever he wants to do.

Now, imagine that's what you're living under, and you're a committed follower of Jesus Christ in that culture, in that environment. So much so that you love everything that the ruler hates.

And on the other side, you stand for basically everything that he opposes. And when those two things clash, it's going to make life difficult.

And when you try to move forward, and when you're trying to do the right thing, maybe you're going to be mocked by the circle around you. You're going to be ridiculed. You're going to be mistreated.

[3:47] And you're thinking, is there ever any end to this? I need somebody to give me some good news. And then you receive a letter. You're at church, and you receive a letter from a well-known, well-respected spiritual leader within the early church.

A man who you admire, a man who much of his teaching has helped you understand the gospel of Jesus Christ. Maybe directly or even indirectly through this man's teaching ministry, your life has been changed eternally.

And when the letter comes, and it arrives, and you're excited, and you open it up, and here's what it says. Submit to the king. Honor the king. And I think if that was us, I don't think we would be encouraged by that letter.

Did he mean to write that in here? Does he know what we're living in? Confused? Sure. Frustrated? Probably. But that's not some pipe dream.

No, that's exactly what Peter is doing here in 1 Peter. That is the moment that we find ourselves in this little letter, and he's writing to these people that are fleeing persecution. And they're still loving the Lord, and they're still sharing the gospel, but life is difficult.

[4:59] And this leader that we mentioned, he's very detestable, and we mentioned this morning, his name is Nero. And I know not everybody loves history, but you've probably at least heard that name.

Nero is a name that is synonymous with cruelty and corruption. I mean, he would just kill Christians for fun. He would use them as human torches within the city limits of Rome.

He was all about building himself. He lived a life of debauchery. And yet, Peter says, honor the king. I think naturally the question may have been for them and even for us just thinking about Nero, how does that make sense?

Surely, Peter doesn't mean that. I mean, Peter may be off his rocker here. I'm not sure that's what he means. No, but that is exactly what he means. But if we lean a little further, I want us just to think about this question.

What does it look like for us today? Because, praise the Lord, we're not under somebody like Nero. But we're also living a world that is against the things of God. The spirit of Antichrist is here.

[6:07] It's been here. It always has been. But we can look at Scripture. We've already kind of looked a little bit in Luke. As we see the days approaching, we feel like this. It's just getting worse and worse. And I don't think that's just a feeling.

I think that's a biblical statement. Because it's going to get worse and worse. And Peter understood that. And we understand it maybe intellectually. But we've got to realize we're going to live our life like this.

And we have to go to work. And we have to do these things. And you've got to pay your taxes. I know. Yeah. That was a very depressing amen. Amen. Amen. I get it.

But really, basically the first chapter and a half, Peter is reminding his readers this. When you know who you are, when you know how much God loves you and how much He's changed your life, when you know those things, it will affect how you live the rest of your life.

It's going to affect how you serve and how you submit and how you respond to situations. So that's what we looked at last week in verse 11 and 12. He said, listen, there's a battle that goes on even within us.

[7:17] Sometimes we want to blame the devil. And we want to blame the government. We want to blame our coworkers. But here, the majority of the problem we have is right within our own flesh. That we're battling these things. We want what we want.

But he says, because Christ has saved you, that's not what we're living for. We need to fight the battle against these fleshly lusts. And we need to live a life, have your conversation honest among the Gentiles.

Because the reality is, people are watching us. They see how we live. They know we go to church. We invite them. We hand the track out. We ask if we can pray for them. But they want to see if the way we live matches up with what we preach.

And so what Peter's going to do is he's going to get very specific now and show us kind of some real life practical ways that that shows up. So if you're taking notes, here's the question we want to answer. How should Christians live under earthly authority in a broken world?

Because I think that's relevant for the first century. I think it's relevant for 2026. Because this world has always been broken. And any leadership, whether it's in a church or it's the President of the United States, is always going to be broken because we are broken, sinful people.

[8:25] But how do we move forward and how do we do the right thing? Well, Peter gives us two clear instructions on how to do this in our everyday lives. The first thing we see is in verses 13 through 16.

It's this, that we must submit to divinely ordained authorities. We must submit to divinely ordained authorities. See, before we dive into Peter's commands here where he tells us, submit yourselves, we need to understand something about God.

And I know we know this, so much of it will be reviewed, but it's going to help us to kind of get our bearings here. That the God of the Bible is the sovereign ruler of the universe. That he is absolute, he is the absolute authority over all things.

There's nothing that catches him off guard. I mean, we turn the news on and it seems like this world's a mess and everybody's fighting for power and everybody's fighting for control. He knows that. And guess what? He's still in control.

Everything else is a shadow under his light. And in his providence, God established three institutions on earth. He established the family, the government, and the church.

[9:34] You go all the way back to the book of Genesis, this is not something he said, oh man, I've got to come up with something. No, God had a plan. And God has a design for each of those institutions and he's given instruction for all three.

And I just want to remind us that government is not man's idea. It's not. It's God's institution. It's the way that God operates and he has it for a specific reason.

It's really to keep things moving forward. Anarchy is not a good situation to live in. I mean, go read the book of Judges. Everybody did right in their own eyes. That wasn't good. I mean, the book of Judges, if it was rated by Hollywood, many of the people in this room couldn't watch it because it's graphic.

And that's just a picture of what mankind does without any rule or any reign. So the question becomes, what's our responsibility? If God ordained this authority, what's our responsibility towards it?

You're going to love this. You're going to love this answer. Submit. Submit. That's exactly what Peter says. Submit yourselves to the things that you like.

[10:37] No. To every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake. Now, let's just be honest before we move forward.

That word doesn't set well in our culture. That word sometimes doesn't set well inside the church. I mean, it really is. You know, when I sit down with marriage counseling and I'll say, here's what the Bible says about husbands and wives and submissive. Oh, I don't like that word. And we kind of, we're ruffled by it and we don't like it.

But we live in a world that says, hey, do what you want. Live how you want. You answer to no one. That's the mentality that we have. But what I want us to see before we really jump into this, submission is not a bad word.

In fact, it's a biblical word. It's something that as believers, as children of God, we really shouldn't have a problem with. Because there's a giant scope of submission that we can see.

[11:40] I mean, when you look through scripture, you see it everywhere. We see Jesus, he submitted to his earthly parents. I mean, this is the creator of all things. And yet he submitted to Mary and Joseph.

Believers are called to submit to one another. Wives are called to submit to their husbands. Christians are called to submit to the leadership. Believers are called to submit to God. The church as a whole submits to God.

He calls us to do that. Even the Son, even Christ on this earth during his earthly ministry submitted to the Father. It's a pattern that we see. It's something that God calls us to.

And submission is not weakness. It's actually part of God's design. In all of these situations, it's not so one person has the authority and is able to lord over that person in that sense.

That's not what it's about. It's about the order that God designed it. So why do people struggle? Why do we struggle with submission? I think there's a few reasons.

[12:38] There's a lot of reasons. But here's probably some main ones. I think number one is because we live in a self-centered age. I mean, everything in our life, everything that's in our culture, it's all about you and you and you.

As long as you get what you want. We want control. We want our way. So when somebody comes and says submit, I'm thinking, nobody tells me what to do. I'm a grown man.

But that's not what the Bible tells us. I think another reason that we struggle with submission is because we don't understand it. Biblical submission does not mean inferiority.

In no way does it mean that. The Bible never teaches that. Jesus is submitted to the Father. He submitted to his will. He submitted to other things.

And he was not inferior to anyone. He's given everything. He's in charge of all things. He's the almighty God. And yet he submitted. He submitted himself unto death.

[13 : 36] He became obedient and put himself as a servant. Here's a really good reason that sometimes we struggle with it. Authority is sometimes abused.

Maybe we've all been in a situation like that, whether it's at work or even in a relationship. It could have been in a church. It could have been in any situation. And somebody abused their authority. And we say things like this. That's not going to happen to me again. I'm not going to let that take place. And we do that. And when authority is abused, people reject the idea altogether.

And I think we see that even in our country, in our culture. They've seen kind of the misuse and how it's not really about us. Some of these politicians, they talk real fast out of both sides of their mouth. And they think, well, I'm not doing anything. I'm just going to do what I want to do. And we've got a mess on our hands right now. So what is biblical submission? Well, number one, it's not about losing your identity.

[14 : 34] It's not about being less of a person. It's not about being controlled. But what it is, it's learning to not have your own way, but have God's way.

That's really what it boils down to. It is choosing to honor others, to prefer others amongst ourselves, to live with humility. Some of the very things that Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount.

Blessed are the meek. Blessed are the humble. Those are things that we have to choose. And at its core, submission is rooted in what Jesus said, if any man come after me, let him deny himself.

We love following Christ, but he says there's a cost to it. And here's what it looks like. You have to submit. You have to be willing to do that. Submission is not about losing your life.

No, in fact, it's about finding your life in Jesus. That's what he's teaching. So when Peter comes here in verse 13, I mean, they would have been pretty much on board with this whole first chapter and a half.

[15 : 39] But then they come to verse 13 and says, submit yourselves. He's not introducing something strange. No, what he's doing there and what he still does today through the Holy Spirit is he's calling us to live out something that is deeply biblical.

Something that is Christ-centered and is essential to being on mission for Jesus Christ. That's what he's calling us to do. So we see the command.

Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake. I think it's no coincidence that he chose the word ordinance.

Really, the idea is that it refers to institutions of authority. You know, because it just kind of is like a giant umbrella and everything goes under that. Because if he would have said something very specific, you know what we would do?

Well, I'll do it on that one thing, but I'm definitely not doing it on that and that and that and that. So he kind of puts it under the umbrella of any type of authority that we have. Now, notice what he said.

[16 : 43] What he didn't say, excuse me. Peter did not say that we have to agree with every decision. He didn't say when the authorities and when the government specifically, when they say things, we don't agree with every action, but the structure itself.

The institution of government is there. It is a biblical truth that God has established his authority.

Paul told us in Romans 13.1, the powers that be are ordained of God.

Well, we know that to be true. And as we mentioned already about Peter, but Paul would have been writing at the same time as Peter, they were both living under corrupt leadership, ungodly rulers, anti-Christian authorities.

And yet they both said in Romans, and Peter says right here, submit, be subject to, and honor the king. See, the idea that they're trying to get across and that we must, as believers, emulate in our own life is that we are called, the idea is to respect the office even when the person in office is flawed.

And guess who that is? Every single person that's ever stepped in office, that's ever had any sort of leadership in any aspect. Now, before we move on, I want to make sure that we do understand there is an important biblical balance.

[18:03] The Bible teaches that there are times when the people of God must say no to the government and say yes to God. I mean, you see in the book of Acts, Acts chapter number five, and they bring Peter and John in there, and they beat them, and they say, hey, you can't do this anymore.

You cannot preach the gospel. And Peter says, we ought to obey God rather than man. There's an opportunity for that, and we see it all throughout Scripture, really. I mean, you go to the book of Daniel.

I mean, you go to the book of Exodus. And the Hebrew midwives, when Pharaoh said, here's what we're going to do, we're going to kill all the babies, they said, we're not doing that. And they defied Pharaoh's command because it went against the word of God.

That was murder. We've seen the book of Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Yeah. They're there, and they said, listen, when all the music instruments play, everybody bows. It doesn't matter. It doesn't matter who you are.

It doesn't matter if you're from Israel or you're from here. Everybody's doing that. Well, Shadrach, they said, we don't think so. Our God whom we serve, he's able to deliver us. But if he doesn't, just be it known, he's still the king.

[19:11] And we're going to serve him only. In that same book, Daniel's adversaries, they couldn't find anything wrong with Daniel. And they were trying to get him out of the position because he basically, God had lifted him up to a place of leadership.

They said, the only thing we can even see about Daniel is he loves his Lord. And we know one thing, he's not going to stop praying. So they kind of backdoored the king and said, hey, you're, oh, king, live forever.

You're the only person that people should pray to. He said, that's a great idea. Makes the decree, knowing good and well, Daniel's not going to stop praying. And he didn't. So, yes, there are moments when obedience to God means disobedience to the government.

I'm glad y'all didn't just start screaming amen right there. But that is the exception, not the rule. I think sometimes we live in a culture both ways.

Sometimes we want to say this side or this side. I think we're kind of moving the direction where everybody's just kind of doing whatever they want to do. And that's not what God calls us to do.

See, simply put, the Bible's basic orientation is towards civil obedience.

[20:21] Even under ungodly and unjust authority. Because even when, I mean, you study the Old Testament when they're in exile. And they're under Babylonian captivity in all these different situations.

Jeremiah and these other prophets don't say, hey, here's what you need to do. You need to have a riot and overthrow everybody. No, they say things like this. Hey, make it a better place because you're living there. Hey, be a light. Be a witness in Babylon.

Plant gardens. Love people. Share the truth of the gospel. And I just want to remind you, I know that we do. Our submission, when we submit to these situations, it honors the sovereign providence of God.

See, we'll say things. We've already agreed. Oh, God's in control of everything. Well, God's still in control today. He was in control when Nero was the emperor of Rome. And he's in control right now.

And when we submit and we obey, we are honoring and saying, listen, I believe that God's still in control. And ultimately, we're going to see here in a moment, when we submit, it strengthens our witness to a lost and dying world.

[21:24] That we still would do those type of things. Because God is in control. He controls the rise and the fall of nations. God controls the authority which rulers possess. Remember when Jesus was talking with Pilate?

He said, you wouldn't have any power unless it was given to you. That all power, all authority comes from him. Now, man takes that power and twists it and uses it in a wrong way.

But God does give wisdom to those who seek him. God knows the course of history before it unfolds. In fact, he's writing history. Nothing surprises him. He already knows what's going to happen.

God never loses control. And since that's true, God calls us to joyfully and willingly yield on our will to his divinely ordained authorities in our life.

And in the context of 1 Peter, in our text here tonight, it is the government. And what Peter has already admonished in verse number 12 that we already read, that we need to live honest, having our conversation honest amongst the Gentiles.

[22 : 28] Why? So that we're a good witness. So that we're pointing others to Christ and we're not saying, well, I know we preach that, but really you can do whatever you want to do. You know, if you don't like what the government's doing, just completely disregard it.

Because sometimes we can get that mindset. And there's people that, under the guise of Christianity, they're anti-government everything. Well, God's the one that designed it. He's the one that's instituted it.

So now he begins to apply this teaching to real-life relationships. And he starts with a government to a people that probably absolutely detested their government.

And his command is straightforward. Submit to every authority. Why? Well, he gives the answer right there in verse 13. Here's the reason why. For the Lord's sake.

See, sometimes we read over that. That's not a little tagline that they just threw around. No, in this way, when we honor Jesus and his lordship over us, when we submit to those things.

[23 : 31] Because here's what we're saying. Lord, I can't change and I can't fix and I can't do, but I'm just going to trust that you know what you're doing. That's what Peter is reminding us here. And as we submit to these authorities, we are submitting to the lordship of Jesus Christ for his name's sake.

And in case the people were wondering what Peter meant, he specifies it. He says in verse number 13, For the Lord's sake, whether it be to the king as supreme or unto the governors as them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of them that do well.

So really what he does, he kind of lines out, he says, this is what the government is supposed to do. This is the idea behind it, to punish those that do evil and to praise those who do good.

That's really the scope of their authority. These leaders, the king is supposed to be in charge and the governors, the people that he sets up underneath him are to preserve law and order. They're to prevent anarchy.

They're to promote good conduct. That's why laws are there. I don't agree with some of them. I don't like the speed limit law. But you know what? It's there for the good of all the people.

[24 : 42] And sometimes whether we agree with it or not, we still have to follow it because if we don't follow it, then we pay a fine. They're like, well, what's their problem? Well, here's the problem. You were speeding. Those are there for the good of everybody.

And so we honor Christ by submitting to and honoring this God-ordained authority. And the only exception is if we're called to disobey God and to dishonor God.

Then we can step up. And we should step up and speak. And I think the church has lost its voice for a long time because we didn't step up and we didn't speak up when the government was doing things that are not right.

And now we're fighting this uphill battle whether it comes to abortion or same-sex marriage because we were so quiet for so long and we thought to ourselves, well, it's not really going to affect us. I mean, we live in the Bible Belt.

Well, guess what? It's here now. And that's just the idea that we're saying. And it's then and only then when we can civilly disobey or voice our opinion.

[25 : 42] But why is it so important that we submit ourselves to the government and to these situations? Peter answers that. He answers that in verse number 15. For so this is the will of God that with well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.

Here's what Peter says. When you live a life like this, people are going to take notice and they're going to maybe begin to ask you questions. Well, why would you do that? I mean, how can you do that?

That doesn't make sense. And it gives us a chance to have a good witness for Jesus Christ. And then by doing good, even in the face of evil, we may not agree with everything they're doing.

But hey, we're going to be good citizens. And it's a witness. It's a testimony. And it points to this. Listen, we're not doing it because we agree with this king. No, we're doing it because we love this king. And his name's Jesus.

And he knows where I'm at. And he knows what I need. And he knows what I'm facing. And when we honor and we obey him, we become better citizens. And never once in our life did we do

something God asked us to do and we're worse off for it.

[26:51] You know how you're a better husband, a better wife, a better son, a better daughter, a better friend? You know how you do that? You submit to the word of God. The same is true when it comes to authority. That we submit and we trust that God is doing it.

I love what Warren Wiersbe said this. God has willed that we silence the critics by doing good, not by opposing the authority. There's a time and place.

We mentioned that. I hope we understand this. I'm not saying Christians should never speak up or never say anything. We can do that. And we should do it in a loving voice and in a loving way. But that's not what we're talking about.

Sometimes we get in our mind that we have to speak out about everything. No, he's just saying just live your life. Live a life that's honoring to the Lord Jesus Christ.

And because we have a radical allegiance to Christ, it's going to prop some red flags up maybe around some people in your life. Well, why would you do that? You know, there's a way around that.

[27:49] You don't have to listen to what the government is. You don't have to do this. You don't have to do that. You say, listen, I'm doing that because that's what the Lord would have me to do. And people may begin to question. And Peter says, let your life prove otherwise.

Let your life prove that you trust God and you trust his providence. I mean, simply what he's saying in verse 15, that when we do well, we may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.

He's not saying be mean. He's not saying be a jerk to everybody else around you because you're better. No, here's what he's saying. Just make your life, make your place, make your circle of influence better because you're there.

You know, we talk about it all the time because sometimes we look around and we think, what difference does it make if I vote or not? I think a lot of people have that question. I mean, I'm just one vote.

What's the big deal? I think, number one, we should be involved in that. But I think here's where you can make a difference right here. You can make it at your school. You can make it at your workplace.

[28:46] You can make it in your home. You can make it in your neighborhood. And when people see how you live your life and that you're a good, upstanding citizen, that you don't think that none of the rules apply to you. No, you submit to them.

They're ready to realize, man, they actually seem happy. And they're following the rules. Because our world says, hey, if you want to be happy, just break all the rules. You have much more fun that way. But when that happens, you don't really have fun.

You pay the consequences for them. Peter's just saying that be a blessing where you live. Don't withdraw from the people around you. Engage them.

That's what Peter's saying. Because these original readers, these original readers of this letter, they would have every right, like, let's just kind of hole up here.

This persecution's coming. No, they were reminded what Jesus taught them. We're not to be of the world, but we are to be in the world. We can't just back away and say, well, you know, I don't want to get anything with them.

[29:42] No, we have to meet people where they are. Because sometimes we look at it as left and right and Democrat and Republican and all these things. You know what we need to see? They need Jesus Christ.

And when politics start coming into the church, and they do, people say, well, churches should stay out of politics. But when we're talking about just murdering millions of babies, and we're going against the word of God, we're not getting into politics.

Politics came into the Bible. And that we should be able to take a stand for that. And we do it in a loving way. Maybe we could say it like this.

That we need to be known more for what we do and what we love rather than what we don't do and what we hate. I think that's a good way for us to live our life as Christians.

Because there's some people under the guise of Christianity that go around, and they're just spewing hate. I can't remember the exact name of that church. They've kind of died off a little bit. But it was up in Kansas, like Westboro Baptist Church.

[30:43] And they would picket everything. I'm pretty sure that's not how it was supposed to be done. You know, the people you work with, the kids you go to school with, they need to know what

you're for and who you love.

And why your life has got some joy and got some peace and got some passion in it. Because Jesus Christ is the king. That's who you're really living for. We're not here to live for the government and make them, align their pockets.

No, we're here just to follow Christ. And sometimes we've got to do things we may not like. But ultimately, it's for the mission of Christ. And when we follow the example of Jesus, and we put the gospel on display, and we submit to the authorities around us, it's going to reveal something. What's it going to reveal? Verse 16, the Bible tells us. As free, not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. It reveals this wonderful truth that we're free.

And because we're free, we're called to live in a way that honors Christ before a watching world. This kind of harkens back to Romans chapter 6.

[31 : 49] Because before we knew Christ, here's what our master was. Sin. And we lived to ourselves. We lived to what the world system says. And we do this and we do that. But here's the great news.

Sin, if we know Christ, is no longer our master. He is. We've been set free from sin and Satan and this world. And all that's been given to us not to serve ourselves, but to serve God and to serve others.

I think Jesus said it like this. Here's the two, here's the great commandment. Love God with all your heart and the second's like unto it, love people. And that's what we are, we've given freedom, not as liberty to do whatever we want to do.

That's what that cloak of maliciousness is. And hey, well, nobody can tell me what to do. I'm free. I have all this ability, all this liberty in my life. You do. But we shouldn't use that as a cloak to do what we want to do.

And to live how we want to live. I mean, freedom in Christ does not lead and should not lead to us indulging in sin. Paul hit that head on in Romans 6.

[32 : 52] He said, should we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid. We're not called to live that life. No, we're called to glorify God by doing good things.

By serving others where others can see it. And praise God that we have the supernatural ability to do what we ought to do. See, because before you knew Christ, you couldn't do it on your own. Listen, even after we know Christ, we still struggle, don't we? Read Romans 7. Paul said, what I want to do, I don't do. And what I shouldn't do, that's what I find myself doing. But when we do have Christ in our life, we have the ability now to do the right thing.

And really, as we grow in grace, Peter's going to tell us that in 2 Peter, our life, it begins to line up. What I ought to do is what I want to do. I mean, there was times maybe before you were saved and you thought, if I go to church, I'm going one time a year.

I hope, I know who I'm preaching to, I hope you're excited to come to church. You know, you come and you learn about God and it encourages you.

[34 : 00] Maybe that wasn't who you used to be, but the more you know Christ and the more he's in your heart, it's just that desire to be there. And the thing is, is he's not calling us to be perfect, but this freedom he talks about in verse 16 that we have in Jesus, it should lead us to want to serve him.

To live a life that points and puts him on display and shows the world around us that there is a redeeming love and amazing grace is not just a song. It's something that you can experience in your life.

And sometimes that comes about by how we respond to the authority around us. That's what Peter is saying. So Peter ends this section here by not only reminding us to obey the authorities in our life, but he says this in our last verse, verse 17.

He says this, you should show Christ-like character to everyone. So let's not just leave it at the government and say, well, I'll do what I can, I won't be happy about it. But he's going to include a bunch of people in this short little verse right here.

Verse 17, it's just four quick commands. Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God.

[35 : 14] Honor the king. You say, preacher, what does honor everyone mean? Exactly what you think it means. The idea is that we are commanded to show respect to everyone without exception.

That we look at people, and here's how we should see people, as image bearers of God. Because the reality is whether we agree with them, whether what side of the aisle they lean, how they dress,

what they look like, how many piercings, how many tattoos.

It doesn't matter what it is, they are an image bearer of God. And then we respect them, not only that they are an image bearer, but Christ died for them.

How can we win somebody if we just offend somebody all the time? Because sometimes we, listen, we're not supposed to judge a book by its cover. Anybody ever judge a book by its cover?

We do all the time. If you've ever been to Walmart, you have judged so many books by their cover. It's what it is. I mean, we do it just, it's just so natural to us.

[36 : 22] But what Peter wants his readers to understand, I think what the Holy Spirit wants us to understand, is we need to step back. And realize that person, and we kind of, ugh. And we think, why would they dress like that?

Why would they do that? What was behind that? No, man, they need the Lord. We need to see people and realize they have worth regardless of what external considerations that are in play. So Peter says, honor everyone. Letter B, he says this, love your Christian family. I love this thought. I love this thought.

I'm sure we've all heard the phrase that blood is thicker than water. But I like how one pastor said it, he said, but the spirit is thicker than blood. I'm so thankful to have a church family.

Yes, he's called us to honor all men, but there's a tender bond. There's this familial love amongst Christians. That we can gather from all different backgrounds and all different personalities and all different hobbies.

[37 : 23] And I mean, you name it, we're different in so many things. But we come here and there's sweet fellowship. And there's just that sense of belonging. And the encouragement that you find here. And here's what Peter says.

He says, we need to love the brotherhood. I love that he commanded us to love. He said, honor everybody. Respect everybody. But here's what you should do.

You need to love the brotherhood. I don't know the situation here that Peter's writing to, but I think it applies to all of us. Maybe there's a gentle reminder when he says love the brothers, love the brotherhood, love the family.

That not everybody's going to be lovable. I mean, it doesn't matter where you go, whether it's in church, sometimes in your own home, at work.

I mean, you love some people, but you're like, if that person talks to me one more time, is that not what it is? Listen, we still should strive.

[38 : 24] He doesn't say within a church family, everybody has to be your best friend. No, but we should strive to love everybody. Why? We're all family. If Christ is our Savior, if God is our Father, we are brothers and sisters.

And sometimes families, we got disputes. Sometimes we want to just, sometimes you got to just knock somebody out and then say you love them and move on with your life. Please do it in the parking lot. Don't do it in here. But I mean, the reality is that, is we're called to love each other. Because sometimes we, sometimes your family may not understand it, but your family here does. Because we're all supposed to be on the same mission. We're all supposed to be moving the same direction. And you might be struggling with some of these things and you have family that comes alongside you and says, hey, listen, I've been there.

I understand where you're going through and we can walk through it with each other. We see the next thing that he tells us. Fear God. Fear is reserved for God alone.

This is not fear how we would commonly think of it. We're not to be scared of God. But there should be some awe. There should be some reverence. There should be some worship.

[39 : 36] I mean, it is a scary thing when we realize how good God is, how big he is, that he is the creator, that he is the sustainer. I mean, that he could do anything he wanted to and yet he still loves us.

That should bring us to some awe. That should bring some reverence in our life. And we fear him and him alone. It's interesting that he told them that because you know who a lot of these people would have feared?

Nero. Some of these people probably had family members that were murdered because of Nero. They were thrown into the Colosseum. They were used as human torches. They were part of the cruelty of Nero.

That's what they were scared of. That's why some of them are fleeing. They are fleeing the persecution. And he says, no, he is an evil man, but here's who you really need to fear. Fear God. Fear God.

Honoring the king that we're only giving praise to who deserves it. And I'll just say this. I don't know if I should say it, but I'm going to say it. And we'll just move on if it's not good.

[41:03] I think sometimes we can give praise and adulation to some people that is really not the right thing for Christians to do. We don't need to marry it.

Listen, we don't need to marry ourselves to a political party. Now, I have opinions on certain things like that, and I think you know where I stand on that. I don't think you can be a part of some things where they say, hey, you can just murder anybody you want.

I mean, you can have all these late-term abortions. I do not think that you should be able to support that and read the Bible. That's just what I think. But the danger of the church is when we align ourselves too closely with any government or political party, then we lose our voice.

Because at every point, some political party, maybe you would promote and promote and promote, then they start saying things and you're thinking, I'm not sure I want to be tagged with that.

I mean, we don't need to offer praise because he's really good at just giving it to himself on Twitter. I'm just going to say that. Listen, Donald Trump, we'll just say it because we all know what we're talking about.

[42:13] He's not the Savior. Jesus is. And Peter's not saying that we're looking for some Savior because this was a culture and society. They were always looking for political freedom and they thought the policies are going to free us.

Nothing's going to free you except Jesus Christ. And we've got to make sure that we fear God and him alone. Yes, but he does end up and he does remind us and we kind of come full circle. He says, honor the king.

See, we submit and honor the governing authority, not when it's easy, but always. Yes. And we have to do so respectfully and carefully and Christ-like.

Now, yes, we may express disappointments and disagreements. I'm thankful we live in a country. We can do that. We have to do that. Really without fear of consequence. But I think we even see that going a certain direction.

But we have to do it the right way. Listen, we have to avoid hatred and slander and misrepresentation and unkindness and harshness. Listen, that's not for either side of the aisle.

[43:16] That's for everybody. We've lost that in our world. We've lost that ability. Why is it so important that we honor the king, that we do it respectfully? Because we represent Jesus Christ.

We represent that kingdom. We're not living for an earthly kingdom. Listen, his rule, Jesus' rule over your life should control your temper and your tongue.

And it should be able to hold back your fingers on a keyboard. I mean, it really should. This is about as exciting as I thought it was going to be. But it's the reality.

Listen, you should be thankful that God knew this. This isn't a first century problem. They probably thought, man, we live in the worst political system ever.

I think everybody says that every generation. And we look and we say, look at all these problems. But as we close it up, I just want to remind us that we live in a broken world. We live under imperfect authority.

[44:22] But we serve a perfect king. And since we serve a perfect king, because that's true, we should submit not because the authority is always right, but because Jesus is always right.

That's what he wants us to do. And when we do that, when we put this into practice in our life, you know what our lives declare? There's a better king. There's a better kingdom.

And his name is Jesus. Because that's the goal of your life. We can keep voting and we should vote by what the word of God says. But what's going to change people's lives is right here.

That's what God has called us to do. We may not agree with every authority, but we live under them for the sake of a greater authority.

And I want to just take this home with us. We are free in Christ. Praise the Lord for that. But we live a submitted life for Christ and to Christ so others can see Christ.

[45:27] That's what Peter's telling them. Submit yourselves to every ordinance for the Lord's sake. Would you stand with your heads bowed and with your eyes closed?

We'll have a moment of invitation.

I think the message was pretty straightforward. But if you're here, you know the Lord is your Savior, just answer this question. Are you living in submission for the Lord's sake?

Or are you reacting like the world? Because sometimes we can have a disagreement. We can have a differing view. But how do we express that?

Do we express it in a way that honors the Lord Jesus Christ? That would allow us to speak life into somebody else? Somebody with a differing opinion that we could say, Well, why do you believe that?

[46:29] Instead of our goal is to win an argument, No, our goal is to win a soul. That should be the main focus of our life. Because that's what our King has called us to do.

He's called us to go into all the world and preach the gospel. To the Jew and to the Gentile. To the Greek and to the barbarian. Listen, the gospel crosses all partisan lines.

The gospel is for all people. Maybe you're here and you don't know the Lord as your Savior. You heard all about Him, but you just kind of want to add Him on to your life.

But you don't really like some of the authority that He says. We have to submit to it. You have to come to a place in your life where you submit to God. Because one day you will. Every knee will bow and every tongue will confess.

Make sure that that's settled today. No matter what you need, here's what we all need to do. Come to Christ. Christ, He's the answer for a broken world. He's the hope for a culture that's falling apart.

[47:32] That's what you need to take to work tomorrow. To school tomorrow. To your neighborhood. To your home. Would we submit to Christ? Father, thank you.