

## Sunday Morning Message

October 25, 2020

*1 Peter 2:11 – 25 – Following in Christ's Steps by God's Grace*

Series – 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter - *Experiencing God's Grace In the Midst of Suffering*

Text – 1 Peter 2:11 - 25

Congregational Reading – 1 Peter 2:11 - 12

### Introduction

Verses 11 and 12 are transitional verses that bring us from the discussion of what we are by the grace of God into what we can do by the grace of God.

*"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation." (1 Peter 2:11-12)*

According to these verses, we should resist the fleshly lusts – those sinful desires that war against what God is trying to do in our soul. Remember, our flesh lusts against the Spirit (Galatians 5:17). Our flesh and the Spirit of God are at war with each other. We need to surrender to the Spirit: to yield to what He wants us to do, and to what he wants to do in us.

And, we should be very careful to maintain a good testimony in front of the lost world. People expect more from Christians; there is a higher level of accountability for us. When we cross the line and do things that everybody else is doing, the world cries foul, even though they are doing the same thing and don't think anything is wrong with it.

We do not have the right to live any way we want to live as Christians.

We are certainly saved by the grace of God, completely apart from any works (Ephesians 2:8 and 9); but that same grace of God that saved us also teaches us to live lives that glorify Him:

*"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." (Titus 2:11-*

*"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."*

(Ephesians 2:8-10)

We can only serve and glorify God by His grace. Spurgeon said: "If we give God service it must be because He gives us grace. We work for Him because He works in us."

### I. **By God's Grace, We Should Be Good Citizens** (vs. 13 – 17)

This is getting to be a touchy subject in our country. Some people would agree that you should be a good citizen and obey the government only when you have a government that you agree with politically, but that is not what God says that we should do.

Keep in mind that Peter wrote it this during the time of Nero, the guy who hated Christians with a passion, and killed them by the thousands.

The only time that we are given permission by the Lord to disobey government is when government is mandating something that goes against God.

An illustration of this exception is found in the Book of Acts. Peter and John were preaching the gospel in the temple, and were arrested for doing so by the high priest and the Sadducees, but the Angel of the Lord released them from the jail. So, they went back out in the temple grounds and preached the gospel again. Why? Because God commanded them to. When the high priest found out that they were out preaching again, he had Peter and John brought back in before him:

*"Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them without violence: for they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned. And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them, Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, **We ought to obey God rather than men.**" (Acts*

*5:26-29)*

If the government tells you to do something that God tells you not to do, you need to obey God. If the government tells you not to do something that God commands you to do, you need to obey God. (Illustrate – not having services)

But, if you are going to disobey the government, you had better be sure that you are firmly standing on a solid biblical foundation.

I don't have to agree with the government, and I certainly have a right here in America to participate in the process in order to express my position and even possibly change things.

**Illustrate** – Seat Belts – I believe that they are unconstitutional. I would vote to abolish mandating seat belts. But as long as it is the law of the land to wear one – I should do it.

Paul taught this same principle of obedience to authorities in his letter to the Romans: (Turn to Romans 13:1 – 8)

*"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour. Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law." (Romans 13:1-8)*

Paul also told Titus to instruct the believers on the Isle of Crete:

*"Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work, To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men." (Titus 3:1-2)*

Paul also commands us to pray for our rulers:

*"I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in*

*the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." (1 Timothy 2:1-4)*

Notice in v. 16 that we are free, but Peter encourages us to use our freedom to serve God. Paul said:

*"Being then made free from sin (not "to sin"), ye became the servants of righteousness."  
(Romans 6:18)*

Verse seventeen sums this section up fairly well.

## **II. By God's Grace, We Should Be Good Servants (vs. 18 – 20)**

*"Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God: And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ. But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons." (Colossians 3:22-25)*

*"Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven." (Colossians 4:1)*

The word, "forward" (σκολιός – *skolios*) in verse 18, literally means "crooked." It carries with it the idea of being unfair or even wicked.

## **III. By God's Grace, We Should Be Good Sufferers (vs. 21 – 25)**

Christians will be treated unfairly in this world.

Christians will be cheated by people.

Christians will be persecuted emotionally and physically in this world; some will even be put to death.

The world operates by a completely different set of moral principles than we do.

Christians are not permitted to act in kind; to get back at those who mistreat them.

Jesus didn't. What did He do: He "*committed himself to him that judgeth righteously,*" meaning that He put it in the hands of God.

That is exactly what you and I need to do.

Jesus said:

*"Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away. Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."* (Matthew 5:38-48)

Paul said:

*"Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."* (Romans 12:17-21)

## Conclusion

By God's grace, we can show the world Christ, and this world desperately needs to get a glimpse of Him. We are Christ's ambassadors; the whole reason for our existence is to glorify Him in this world. We don't make Him look good when we act like everybody else. We make Him look good when we act like Him; like Christians.

Remember Christian – this world is not our home; we are only strangers and pilgrims here, and we are only here for a very short time. We ought to be willing to say, like Christ: *"nevertheless, not my will but thine be done."* Let's let Christ live out His will in and through our lives. Let's show this world: *"Christ in us, the hope of glory."* If we do, He will be glorified, and many people out there in this dark world will be drawn to Him.