

Explore the Bible: March 23

Our Witness • 1 Peter 2:11-17, 21-25

By Arthur Story



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As Christians, our behavior should be aligned with a clear understanding of who we are in Christ. Since we are not permanent residents of this world, our words and actions should bring glory to God and be in contrast to the norms of the world. 1 Peter 2:11 instructs us to “abstain from sinful desires that wage war against the soul” (CSB). We need to remember daily, and even minute by minute, that while we are in the world we live differently than the people of the world (John 17:9-19). As a result, we are to stay away from those things that our enemy would use to distract us, undermine our witness, and potentially enslave us to earthly desires. This instruction is not limited to sensual desires. This warning is about all desires, habits, and motivations that can be twisted and used to undermine our lives (Galatians 5:19-21). The enemy’s attacks are long-term, relentless, and strategically calculated to distract us and undermine our witness. Living faithful in these struggles is not in vane. In time, some will come to know Jesus as Savior as a result of the combination of our verbal witness and faithful living.

As Christians, we live in a manner that confuses the lost because we live free in our submission. Those without Christ view this as a contradiction. They see submission as a loss of freedom. Nothing could be further from the truth. Willful submission brings freedom for believers as we align our lives with God’s plan. Christian submission means that we focus on the things we’ve been entrusted with by God and we leave the rest to Him. This is true freedom! Growing up in my father’s household, I submitted to his authority. I carried groceries for my mother, mowed the yard, washed cars, etc. but my father provided everything I needed. I lived easily because I never had to worry about the bigger issues of the household. Christian submission is similar in the freedom it provides. All that we need is provided for us by God. He is

dealing with all of His creation and we are free to focus on that which He has entrusted to us. As a part of submitting to God we are instructed to take some specific actions. In 1 Peter 2:13-15, we are instructed to submit to human authority and the government (1 Peter 2:13-14; Romans 13:1-7). God will use our submission to the authorities that He has established to silence those who willfully reject truth. Continuing in 1 Peter 2:16-17, we are called to use our freedom in submission to value (“honor”) others, to love fellow believers (John 13:34-35, 1 John 5:1), and to fear God (Proverbs 9:10).

As Christians we are to live by following Christ’s example of a sinless life. In all the accusations and attempts to undermine Jesus, no sin could be found in the words He spoke or in His deeds (2 Peter 2:22; Luke 23:4). He also did not respond in kind with those who insulted Him, nor did He threaten them. Instead, He entrusted himself to the Father (Luke 22:42) and even prayed for the forgiveness of those who crucified Him (Luke 23:34). He willingly died a horrific and humiliating death that He did not deserve in order to redeem us. His is an impossible example to live up to on our own. Thankfully, in Christ, we can live a righteous life. We can turn from sin rather than pursue it. In our relationships with others, we can acknowledge our sins, confess, repent, seek reconciliation, and when needed, make proper restitution. In addition, we can refrain from defending ourselves in every situation and entrust these situations to God. Lastly, we can willingly live our lives not for ourselves, but for the benefit of those around us.

Ask God to identify specific ways you can live for His glory in your behavior, freedom, and example as you prayerfully engage in this week’s study of 2 Peter.

Story is a member of First Ridgeland Church, Ridgeland.