

1 Peter

Part 7 – Sojourners and Exiles

1 Peter 2:11-12

Home. It is something we deeply long for which is why we get homesick when we are not home. Yet our greatest homesickness cannot and will not be cured on this side of heaven. For the people of God, as long as we are on this earth we are strangers and aliens here. Peter tells us in 1 Peter 2:11 that we are "sojourners and exiles." This is not our home.



As resident aliens, our lives should be different from that of those around us. Our values, priorities, desires, and behavior should be different from those of the world. We should be a people who "abstain from the passions of the flesh" (v. 11b). Our fleshly lusts are not what drive us. In our passion for Christ, we will fight against these passions of the flesh. And we will be a people whose "conduct is honorable" (v.12). We will live in such a way that God and others are honored as we gather for corporate worship, as we love each other in the body of Christ, as we grow in godly character, as we live our day to day lives, and as we love and serve all whom God has put around us.

When the people of God live in such a way, something beautiful happens...others will see our lives and give glory to God (v. 12b)! This is our calling as beloved sojourners and exiles.

Main Idea: As God's beloved people, our lives matter. God has called us to holiness. We are to be a people who fight against fleshly passions and live lives that honor and glorify God. As we do, God will use our lives to draw others to Himself.

1. "Beloved...sojourners and exiles..." (v. 11a)

- Before telling us what to do, Peter tells us who we are. We are "Beloved". We are "sojourners and exiles". He wants these fellow believers to know they are loved.
- Two of the main themes of this epistle are suffering and holiness. Neither theme is easy for the believer who wants to be faithful in the middle of them. Peter is saying, "Fellow believer, as you suffer, as you fight against sin and strive for holiness, know that you are loved. You are His, and you are loved."
- Christian, not only are you loved, you are also a sojourner and an exile. If you belong to Christ, this is not your home. Your citizenship is no longer of this world. You have been delivered from the "*domain of darkness and transferred to the kingdom of His beloved Son.*" (Colossians 1:13).
- We are strangers and aliens here. Our lives should be different. How we talk and what we talk about should be different. How we live and what we live for should be different. Our priorities, our goals, our values should be different. How we spend our time, how we raise our kids, how we spend our money should be different. We are sojourners and exiles.

- Application- The writer of Hebrews provides an application point for us....he drew a straight line between understanding our sojourner status and our ability to walk by faith. As he gives us that great list of saints who walked by faith in Hebrews 11, he tells us that they were able to walk by faith because “*they were seeking a homeland...they desired a better country, that is, a heavenly one.*”
- Application- What does your life say about your true home? Do you in any way live as an alien and a stranger or have you become comfortable in this world? Beloved, you are sojourners and exiles. This world is not your home.

2. “Abstain from the passions of the flesh...” (v. 11b)

- As the beloved of God, as sojourners and exiles, God calls us to “*abstain from the passions of the flesh.*” There are earthly and disordered desires of our hearts that need to be dealt with. The lusts Peter is talking about are not limited to the sexual.
- An emphasis on obedience is NOT legalism. We are made right with God by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. Period. However, this does not mean that obedience does not matter. True saving faith ALWAYS produces obedience in the life of the believer.
- We are to abstain from the passions of the flesh. How do we do that?
A few suggestions:
 - a. Pray. We need God to change our hearts, to change our desires. Until our hearts change, we will make little progress in our holiness.
 - b. Get violent. Did you notice Peter’s words... that these passions “*wage war against your soul*”? What is the end goal in war? → to kill. You will have to fight to kill them.
 - c. Get help. Sin grows best in the dark. Bring it to the light. Find a Christian brother/sister who will pray for you and speak truth to you.

3. “Keep your conduct honorable” (v.12)

Not only are we to abstain from fleshly passions but we are to live in a way that is honorable and glorifying to God. Not only do we not do (abstain) some things but we are to do other things. Our lives should be lives that honor God and honor others. How do we do that?

- Inward- If you are a follower of Christ, if His Spirit lives in you, this reality should be changing you to be made more and more into the image of Christ.
- Outward- If we are people who love Jesus, then we will also be a people who love as Jesus loved. Our orientation should go from a self-centered one to an others-centered one. We move from using others to truly loving others.
- Upward- As God’s beloved people, we ought to be a people growing in our love to God. We will be growing in the Word, growing in our devotion, growing in our service to Him, growing in our corporate worship.

Did you see the beautiful effect of living holy lives? → There will be some who do not yet know God who look on, see our good deeds, and give glory to God. Take this in.... God has ordained that He will use our lives to show others His glory. Amazing isn’t it??

- Application- As others look on at your life, would there be cause for giving glory to God in what they see? Do your words and actions point others to the glory and grace of God?