



## “Different Relationships”

### 1 Peter 2-3 Small Group Plan

“you do not belong to the world”  
— John 15:19 —

“they are not of this world”  
“they are not of this world”  
— John 17:14, 16 —

“our citizenship is in heaven”  
— Philippians 3:20 —

“foreigners and strangers on earth”  
— Hebrews 11:13 —

“as foreigners and exiles”  
— 1 Peter 2:11 —

Jesus started the thread and perhaps you have heard the modern slogan that has come from it — “in, but not of” — meaning, in the world, but not of the world. And this does capture a truth about Jesus’ followers. There is a very real sense in which we are “in” this world, but not “of” it. We live here, but we are not from here.

However, this does raise important questions. Are we to understand Jesus, Paul and Peter to be saying that Christians should move away from the world, out of the world? Are we to be insulated from the world, sheltered from world, isolated from the world? Look again at Jesus’ words in John 17. Notice the wider context.

<sup>14</sup> I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. <sup>15</sup> **My prayer is not that you take them out of the world** but that you protect them from the evil one. <sup>16</sup> They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. <sup>17</sup> Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. <sup>18</sup> **As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world.**

So, let’s revise our slogan. Let’s protect our mission. Let’s find our balance by understanding “in, but not of” to mean, “not of, but sent into.”

## OPEN IT / INTRODUCE IT ...

- How can we live in this world without adopting the values of this world?
- Describe the mindset that is clearly distinct from this world, but feels sent by God into this world?

## LOOK AT IT / STUDY IT ...

### — IN OUR WORLD —

“... glorify God ...”

**1 Peter 2:11-12**

<sup>11</sup> Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul. <sup>12</sup> Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.

- Why does Peter say Christians should live above the secular values of the world around them?
- How does the world “wage war against your soul”?
- How can “good deeds” be a witness for God?
- Read Matthew 6:2-4. How do Jesus’ words balance Peter’s words?

### — IN OUR COUNTRY —

“... for the Lord’s sake ...”

**1 Peter 2:13-17**

<sup>13</sup> Submit yourselves for the Lord’s sake to every human authority: whether to the emperor, as the supreme authority, <sup>14</sup> or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. <sup>15</sup> For it is God’s will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish people. <sup>16</sup> Live as free people, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as God’s slaves. <sup>17</sup> Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the emperor.

- Why are Christians to “submit” to the governing authority (v. 13)?
- In the context of verses 13-17, “human authority” “emperor” “governor” what is Peter referring to when he speaks of “doing good” (v. 15)?
- How can “doing good” silence criticism (v. 15)?
- How can freedom be abused (v. 16)?
- What is “proper respect” (v. 17)?

— IN OUR COMMUNITY —

“... conscious of God ...”

1 Peter 2:18-25

<sup>18</sup> Slaves, in reverent fear of God submit yourselves to your masters, not only to those who are good and considerate, but also to those who are harsh. <sup>19</sup> For it is commendable if someone bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because they are conscious of God. <sup>20</sup> But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. <sup>21</sup> To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. <sup>22</sup> “He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.” <sup>23</sup> When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. <sup>24</sup> “He himself bore our sins” in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; “by his wounds you have been healed.” <sup>25</sup> For “you were like sheep going astray,” but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

- Was Peter promoting slavery or was he writing to Christians who lived in a world of slavery? Explain the difference.
- As bad as it was, how was slavery a part of the work community system in that ancient time?
- How does Peter deal with the issue of an offensive or unkind master (v. 18)?
- How does he deal with the question of an abusive master (v. 20)?
- Explain the connection between the suffering of Jesus (vs. 21-23) and the Christian’s submission in a situation of slavery (vs. 18-20).

— IN OUR HOME —

“... who put their hope in God ...”

1 Peter 3:1-7

<sup>1</sup> Wives, in the same way submit yourselves to your own husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, <sup>2</sup> when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. <sup>3</sup> Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as elaborate hairstyles and the wearing of gold jewelry or fine clothes. <sup>4</sup> Rather, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God’s sight. <sup>5</sup> For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to adorn themselves. They submitted themselves to their own husbands, <sup>6</sup> like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her lord. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear. <sup>7</sup> Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

- What is Peter referring back to when he says, “*in the same way*” (v. 1)?
- In a society that valued wives barely above slaves, what do you see in Peter’s words that would sound “progressive” to his audience?
- In the context and culture that Peter is addressing, how do you understand the words “*submit*” (v. 1) and “*submitted*” (v. 5)?
- What reasons does Peter give for living by these marriage principles?
- How does Peter define “*beauty*” (vs. 3-6)?

### **USE IT / APPLY IT ...**

- The government is supposed to “*punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right*” (2:14). How should Christians respond if the government does not do this?
- Would it be difficult for you to “*honor*” (2:17) a brutal emperor like Nero? Explain.
- Do you have to agree with everything your government stands for before you can be a “good citizen”? Explain.
- Do you have to like your boss (employer) in order to give them your best work? Explain.
- Slowly read verses 24-25 substituting your own name for the appropriate pronouns.
- Do you have to see eye to eye with your spouse before you can live together in “*purity*” “*reverence*” (v. 2) and “*consideration*” (v. 7)? Explain.
- How does the suffering of Jesus motivate and empower us to live in all of our difficult relationships?
- How can God use the spouse of an unbeliever?
- Close with prayer, asking God for insight and courage to live in this world without living like this world.