

LIVE LIKE THERE'S A DIFFERENCE

© 2014 Mark Beard

TEXT: 1 PETER 2:11-25 NIV

INTRODUCTION

The way we live our lives should provoke the question in the unbelieving of, “What is different about them?” If we, who know Christ, respond to adversity the same as those who do not know him, how can we expect them to see the reality of serving Christ? In our text, Peter gives us an understanding of *situations* in which our testimony of the reality of living for Christ can be seen by the world.

I. THE MESSAGE OF OUR LIVES IS UNDERSTOOD BETTER THAN OUR WORDS (vv.11-12).

11 Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to *abstain from sinful desires*, which wage war against your soul. **12** *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. *(Bold italics added)*

A. WE ARE NOT TO BE ASSIMILATED INTO THE CULTURE OF THIS WORLD (v.11).

B. WE ARE NOT TO GIVE OTHERS REASON TO JUSTLY ACCUSE US (v.12).

II. THE MESSAGE OF OUR LIVES SHOULD SPEAK LOUDER THAN THE CRITIC (vv.13-17).

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

A. ALL AUTHORITY STRUCTURE IS ORDAINED OF GOD-- EVEN IF THE AUTHORITY FIGURE IS NOT (v.13-14).

B. THE WAY WE LIVE IS OUR GREATEST MEANS OF INFLUENCE (v.15-17).

III. THE MESSAGE OF OUR LIVES SPEAKS EVEN IN DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES (vv.18-25).

18 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. **19** For it is commendable if someone bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because they are conscious of God. **20** 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. **21** To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.

22 “He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.”

23 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. **24** “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.” **25** For “you were like sheep going astray,” but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls. (***Bold italics added***)

A. MISTREATMENT IS NO EXCUSE FOR BEING UNCHRISTIAN (v.18-20).

B. JESUS SET US AN EXAMPLE FOR EVEN THE WORST OF TIMES (v.21-25).

CONCLUSION

Sometimes the best witness is living our lives in such a way that the difference in our outlook is noticed. This is usually the case when responding to adversity. As we face these *situations*, in which our testimony of the reality of living for Christ can be seen by the world, we must make sure our faith is real and clearly seen.