

**Family Talk**  
**I Peter 2:11-20**

**Who Am I?**  
**I Peter 2:12**

We live in an age where the righteousness of Christians is often laughed at and considered backwoods and simple. It is why how we live matters so much. Peter knew that the Christians of his time were also living in hostile territory. They would be looked at as either heretics or as foolish for their beliefs. As much as society calls our beliefs foolish, how we live and act matters. How we live either proves or disproves our faith. If God is gracious to us regardless of our mistakes, why does harping on our lifestyles matter so much? When we undermine our own faith with our actions we justify the disbelief of nonbelievers. Peter is clear that we have a responsibility to the lost around us. We are to live honorably before them. The day of visitation could mean either the day when the Holy Spirit prompts their hearts to believe or the day when Jesus returns. It really doesn't matter which one is true, what matters is that the end result is people giving God glory. This is the point of our existence, our relationships, our life; to glorify God. He deserves it. He is worthy of all glory because of His holiness, not to mention all that He has done for us. Pray now for your lifestyle asking God to help you live in such a way that honors your faith in Him. Also find time to evaluate your actions, reactions, and your daily agenda to make see where you need to seek forgiveness, make corrections, or continue your faithfulness.

**Respecting Authority**  
**Matthew 22:19-22**

Any parent has heard the phrase, "It's not fair." Let's be honest we have all thought it or said it at least once. What do I have to do or should I do is what is behind the challenge to Jesus in this passage. Jesus is very clear, we respect authority over us, regardless of our thoughts about it. The question is not about fairness of the expectations from authority. The question is not about whether they liked or respected the authority over them, they were to be faithful in what was expected of them. Paul carried this principle to other relationships, like when he charged slaves to be faithful to masters. Just like the last devotion, we see that how we live matters. Here he is specifically talking about responding to governmental authority. We all live under authority, whether we agree with it or not. Have you ever been speeding with a group of cars and you were the one pulled over? You think, that's not fair, we were all going the same speed. This has never happened to me of course...but I have heard stories... Regardless of your feelings, the officer has the authority to issue you a ticket. God is our ultimate authority and He has given us the example of submission to all authority in our lives, regardless of how difficult that can be. When we respect the authority placed over us, we show that we have learned to live under the authority of our God. Faithfulness shows respect and appreciation for leadership and it changes our relationship to it. Ask God to help you respect and respond appropriately to the leadership in your life, even if it is as simple as something like a dress code!

## **Free to Be**

### **I Peter 2:16-17**

There is a common misunderstanding within Christianity. The belief is that a person can live however they want because of grace and forgiveness. Christ does not put legal constraints on us rather He sets us free. Peter is clear that our freedom should not be used to cover for an ungodly lifestyle. Peter actually suggests the exact opposite. Our freedom is the very thing that allows us to live as we are called to. Freed from the constraints of sin we can give patience, forgiveness, compassion, and honor regardless of the circumstances because the source of these, God, never changes. Peter says we should give honor despite disgrace, love despite disappointment, faith despite doubt, and honor despite a leaders obvious failings. That is freedom; living differently from the rest of the world because of what Christ has done for you. Today, who do you need to give forgiveness to? What is it in your life that needs more faith? Often we need to doubt our doubts and have faith in our faith, not the other way around! Who needs your love today even though they have disappointed you? God has called you to be different because of your freedom. Use that freedom to change your life and the life of others!

## **The Will of God**

### **I Peter 2:15**

This passage is one of four places that Peter uses the phrase, "Will of God." I have heard it from people of all ages, "I wonder what God's will is," or the statement, "I am just trying to seek God's will." Usually this is in response to a career move or a relationship they are seeking. When Peter uses the phrase in 3:17 and 4:9 it is to suffer for doing good. In 4:2 he is clear that we should reject evil human desires. In this passage he also references doing good, but this time it is to silence the foolish and the ignorant. The ignorant are those who have closed their minds to the things of God. The foolish is a reference to those who know the things of God but are being willfully disobedient. God's will is for you to live a life that shows both of these groups that there is a better way! Our lifestyle can silence the biggest critic. It isn't about a good argument, a zinger of a discussion point, but rather showing the truth by how we live. While we seek God's will over whether we should be an engineer or an architect or if we should date Suzie or Sally, God seems to be clearly more worried about who you are in your career and how you treat whoever you date. Let's be really honest, we spend more time praying over what to buy or the answers on a test than how we treat the people we interact with on a daily basis. If we read scripture we quickly learn that God's will for us is less about us and more about how we respond to a world with godliness on a regular basis! Ask God to help you see minor things for what they are and the most important things as the most important things. People, relationships, integrity, and grace will always outweigh any project we are struggling with. Live out God's will for you!