Introduction: Reality vs. Perception

The early Church was slandered – Christians were accused of:

b. Being cannibals.
c. Being sexually permissive.
d. Being non-patriotic and subversive.

The Church today is being slandered – Christians are accused of:

a. Being narrow and bigoted because we believe in absolutes.
b. Being Bible – thumping anti-intellectuals.
c. Being hypocrites.
d. Being a weak-willed and passive bunch of wimps.
1. **The Appeal:**

I’m your brother and we live in a **hostile** world.

2. **A Negative Command:**

Maintain personal **purity** to silence the critics.

a. Galatians 5:13-21

b. Perpetual practice of the flesh is evidence that the Spirit of God is **not at work** in your life.

c. Attitudes of the **heart**.

d. 1 John 2:15-16 – “The world”

   - The lust of the **flesh**.
   - The lust of the **eyes**.
   - The boastful **pride** of life.

Matthew 4 – How did Satan tempt Jesus?

Jesus’ answer: The Word of God – to distinguish Reality vs. Perception
3. **A Positive Command:**

Live with such excellent behavior, that your life so reflects Christ, that those who criticize will be silenced.

How we live, the way we behave, is on trial.

What do we do? Submit to:

- **Government**
- **Boss**
- **Wife/husband**
- **Relationships**

4. **The Reason:**

“…that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day He visits us.”

**Key Words:**

- **Aliens** – to have one’s home alongside of.
- **Stranger** – to settle down alongside a pagan.
- **Abstain** – hold yourself back from fleshly lusts.
- **War** – the act of carrying on a military campaign.
- **Slander** – speak against; literally, to “speak down.”
- **Observe** – to view carefully as a personal witness.
- **Visitation** – to observe, to inspect, to oversee.
Introduction: From 1 Peter 2:11-12, what does “this good life” look like that will turn our critics into Christians?

The text and its structure:

The Command: 1 Peter 2:13

“Submit yourselves (for the Lord’s sake) to every authority instituted by men…”

The Motive: 1 Peter 2:13

“…for the Lord’s sake…”

The Scope of the Command: 1 Peter 2:14

“…to the king (emperor), as the supreme authority, or to governors who are sent by him…”

The Purpose of Civil Authorities: 1 Peter 2:14

“…to punish those who do wrong and commend those who do right.”

The Reason for the Command: 1 Peter 2:15

“For it is God’s will…”

The Result of Obedience: 1 Peter 2:15

“…that by doing good, you should silence (muzzle) the ignorant talk of foolish men.”
The burning questions this command raises:

What about our freedom in Christ? Why should we obey man’s rules?

The Answer: 1 Peter 2:16

“As free men you should never use your freedom as a ‘cover up’ (cloak or excuse) for doing evil; but you are at all times servants of God.”

The Summary: (2 couplets, 4 commands) 1 Peter 2:17

“Respect (honor) all men (everyone);”
“Love the brotherhood of believers,”
“Fear God,”
“Honor the king.”

The Main Idea: “A good Christian will be a good citizen.”

Personal Application:

Submit – A Greek military term meaning “to arrange (troop divisions) in military fashion under the command of a leader.” In non-military use, it was a “voluntary attitude of giving in, cooperating, assuming responsibility, and carrying a burden.”
Discussion Questions:

1. What concept or truth from this message and/or passage was most helpful to you personally? Why?

2. How does this passage (2:13-17) relate to last week's passage concerning "enhancing our image." (I Peter 2:11-12)?

3. What is the believer’s motive for submitting to authorities from v. 13 and from v. 15? How could this “help us” in situations where submission is difficult?

4. Is there any authority (law, etc.) set up by men that you have a difficult time submitting to? List the reasons that are hard for you to comply with this authority (or law); then list how God might be able to enhance His reputation through your submission.

5. Are there ever times when as a Christian you should not submit to human authority? Develop if you can, some basic guidelines that a new Christian could understand in knowing then and when not to submit to human authority.

6. How should the fact that we are “free men” affect how and when we submit to others (and/or rules and regulations established by men)?


8. Is there any area of your life with regard to the state, laws, or human authority that you need to either submit (with regard to behavior) or submit (with a more gracious attitude) in order to “silence” the accusations of critics against the Lord and His church?
Introduction: Getting the bigger picture

1. A very difficult command

   • In Peter’s day

   • In our day

2. The explanation for such a command

   1 Peter 2:19-20
3. The reason and purpose of this command

- Our calling

- Christ’s example

- The principle at work

4. The how and why for “Christ’s reputation”

- We must follow His example in unjust suffering.
Discussion Questions:

1. Imagine yourself as a slave (non-person, piece of property) in Peter’s day. Why would this command to submission be difficult for you?

2. Discuss in your group the whole concept of “our rights” as individuals and relate how this passage addresses that concept in certain situations.

3. When, according to this passage, is it not commendable to endure suffering (v.2:20)?

4. What is the primary motivation in this passage to endure unjust suffering? How does the example of Christ move you to endure what is unfair in some area of your life?

5. Jesus endured because He focused on the goal of His suffering (Hebrews 12:2 and 1 Peter 1:13). What was the goal of Jesus’ suffering?

6. This passage has been misapplied in some situations and done immeasurable harm.

   Answer the True and False statements by examining the listed passages to keep a clear balance on this teaching of “enduring suffering.”


   T  F  God intends any suffering you experience and does not want you to pray for or seek escape from it. (Psalm 109:21-31; 116:1-11; Matthew 26:39, 41.)

   T  F  You may always seek to know what purpose God might have for your suffering. (Proverbs 16:4; John 15:15.)

   T  F  There is no such thing as unjust suffering; you are a sinner, so you deserve your suffering. (Matthew 2:16, Luke 13:1-5, John 15:18-19, 2 Timothy 3:13.)

7. What would “obedience/trusting God” look like if you were enduring some unjust suffering with some authority figure in your life?
Introduction:

**Question 1:** What one thing would you like to change?

- The pious response –
- The “grocery list” response –
- The hope of salvation response -

**Question 2:** What one thing would be written about you?

- What the women may have written –
- What the men may have written -
The premise: If my partner would only change, THEN we’d have a quality relationship.

The games we play to manipulate the change:

- Leave the book out and open -
- The silent treatment -
- Witholding affection -
- The bribes and presents -

The conclusion: We have very little, if any, power to change our mate.

For the women:

1 In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives,

2 as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior.

1 Peter 3:1-2 NASB

- The Jewish wife –
- The Greek wife –
- The Roman wife –
3 Your adornment must not be merely external—braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses;

4 but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God.

1 Peter 3:3-4 NASB

- What it doesn’t mean -

- What does it mean -

The battle is in the heart.

5 For in this way in former times the holy women also, who hoped in God, used to adorn themselves, being submissive to their own husbands;

6 just as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear.

1 Peter 3:5-6 NASB

Hope in God.

Reference: Beloved Unbeliever by Jo Berry
For the men:

7 You husbands in the same way, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered.

1 Peter 3:5-6 NASB

- Living with her in an understanding way.
  
The woman is physically weaker and more sensitive.

- Grant her honor as a fellow heir and equal of the grace of God.
  
  God truly liberated women from bondage.

If you don’t, God will put you on hold when you pray.

The Conference: (Rules – no interruptions, no problem-solving)

1. What are you concerned about?

2. What do you wish?

3. What are you willing to do?
Discussion Questions:

1. What does the phrase “in the same” or “likewise” (v. 1,7) shed on marital relations?

2. What reasons does Peter give for a wife to submit to her husband? (Define submission Biblically, what does it mean?)

3. What does submission “look like” in everyday life for a woman in marriage? (i.e. attitudes, actions, etc.) How and why could God use this type of behavior to change a man’s heart?

4. Discuss the concept of “fear” brought out in v. 6. What are some common fears a woman (or you) might have in obeying this command to submit? Why? (Women) Share how you’ve learned to obey this in some area of your marital life and share the results with your group.

5. What two things does God command of men in v. 7? Why do you think these two things are specifically outlined? Why is it so important for a man to obey this command?

6. Describe what an “understanding” man looks like in everyday life. (i.e. attitudes, actions, etc.) What steps would a man have to take to become understanding?

7. Much is written about self-esteem in our day. According to this passage, what is one of the primary sources of a woman’s self-esteem? Wives, tell your husband three things that make you feel honored.

8. What specific step of faith would make you a more submissive wife / understanding husband?
Introduction: What we pursue for fulfillment

Three essentials of happiness:

#1: Contentment

Personal peace - with God and with yourself.

#2: Community

Enriching relationships where mutual love is exchanged.

#3: A Cause

A significant reason to get up every morning.

Happiness is the byproduct of:

- A relationship with God that brings personal peace.
- Mutual enriching relationships where love is exchanged.
- Working and sacrificing your life for something that has meaning.

The Context: How believer’s have a positive reputation in the midst of adversity.
The Text:

Five Commands – How to live in Christian relationships

8 To sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit;

1 Peter 3:8 NASB

Two Commands – How to live with those who are difficult

9 not returning evil for evil or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead…

1 Peter 3:9a NASB

The Reason

…for you were called for the very purpose …

1 Peter 3:9b NASB

The Purpose

… that you might inherit a blessing.

1 Peter 3:9c NASB

The Justification

10 For, “The one who desires life, to love and see good days,

1 Peter 3:10a NASB

Three Conditions

1. … must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit.
2. He must turn away from evil and do good;
3. he must seek peace and pursue it.

1 Peter 3:10b-11 NASB

The Reason

12 For the eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous, and His ears attend to their prayer,

1 Peter 3:12a NASB

The Flip-Side

…but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.”

1 Peter 3:12b NASB

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How to be a Bessor:

Chiastic Structure:

Harmony         Sympathetic         Brotherly         Compassionate         Humble

Love in Action

Feeling

Thinking

How to be a Bessor when it’s difficult:

Don’t repay evil with evil or insult with insult. 

see Romans 12:14-21

The Three Conditions: 1 Peter 3:10b-11

#1: Look at your speech:

➢ Purity of heart is a pre-requisite for happiness.

#2 Turn from evil and do good.

➢ Repentance is a pre-requisite for happiness.

#3 Seek peace and pursue it.

➢ Reconciliation is a pre-requisite for happiness.
**Two buckets that are always full:**

![People Bucket](image1.png) ![God's Word Bucket](image2.png)

**Three Questions that all begin with Christ:**

1. **Are you happy?**
   - It begins with **contentment** – Do you have peace with God?
   - Starts with FAITH

2. **Do you have friendship that is deep?**
   - It begins with **community** – Become a bessor.
   - Starts with LOVE

3. **Is there still something missing?**
   - It begins with taking up the **cause** – Become a player.
   - Starts with HOPE
Discussion Questions:

1. To warm up, share one of the happiest times in your life with the group. What was it about you or that time that made it so positive?

2. Peter lists five commands in 1 Peter 3, verse 8 to outline how believers are to treat one another. Which of these characteristics is most attractive to you? Why? Which is the hardest for you to live by?

3. Verse 9 tells us to “bless those who insult us” and commands us not to pay back evil for evil. Read Romans 12:14-21 and explain why this counsel is not as foolish as it first appears. Also read Matthew 5:38-48 – Jesus’ example.

4. How does the teaching of this passage (1 Peter 3:8-12) “fit in” with the overall theme of this section (1 Peter 2:11-3:12) with regard to Christians’ reputation in society?

5. What are some conditions found in 1 Peter 3:10-12 that must be met if we are to receive this promised blessing of “good days” and “love life”?

6. What have you learned from this portion of God’s word that you could immediately put into practice to become a “happier” more blessed person? When will you do it?