

## Transformation of Neighbourhoods (2) –Transformation Series #4

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Text: 1 Peter 2:9-12

### NOTES:

#### A. Introduction.

1. In August 2016 Bishop Walter Harvey led his church in confronting riots in Milwaukee WI. Read the article: <http://tinyurl.com/ycblfxlv>; Watch the video: [https://youtu.be/DwNpxM\\_4jNo](https://youtu.be/DwNpxM_4jNo)
2. **Bishop Harvey:** “Obedience could not wait for the right time or the heat to die down. The choice was to lead, follow, or get out of the way... Fear did not leave but God’s grace was there ... The church has left the building.” **Pastor Derrick:** “We’re not the church because we come to church but because we go.”

#### B. Learning from Peter and the early church (1 Peter 2:9-12).

1. 1 Peter was written by Peter, Jesus’ rash fisherman follower who preached at Pentecost and was the spokesman and leader (with James) of the early Jerusalem church.
2. The culture: it misunderstood Christians. They were considered disloyal disruptors, accused of being cannibals, eventually blamed by Nero for burning Rome.
3. Peter wrote to the early church, dispersed by persecution in response to these things.

#### C. Who we are – 1 Peter 2:9-11:

1. “A chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God.” Our allegiance is to God, our passport is a heavenly one.
2. “Beloved,” or “Dear friends”: we are loved by God, embraced by Jesus, filled with the Holy Spirit. Children of God first.
3. “Foreigners, sojourners, pilgrims”: We get the sense that the world is hostile. We are in it but not of it. We are temporary and passing through. **Pastor Derrick:** “Don’t place all your hopes and expectations on the rights of this world. You are a foreigner with a different passport.”

#### D. Our distinctives – 1 Peter 2:11,12:

1. Like Quebec sees itself as a distinct society within Canada (distinct in language & culture) so the church is a distinct society.
2. **Pastor Derrick:** “We need to be detached from this world’s ethics but not detached from relationships.”
3. The early church’s society was confused and puzzled by the Christians and suspicious of them. But when the plague came, it was the Christians who went into the streets and showed mercy.

#### E. “Let them see your good deeds” – Peter 2:12:

1. Good deeds: how you love your spouse, raise your kids, your commitment to city and country, an imitator of Jesus.
  2. Pastor Derrick told of his West Kelowna neighbourhood, reaching out to neighbours, getting involved in coaching soccer, making his kids’ friends feel welcome in their home. **Pastor Derrick:** “Are we too busy to be neighbourly? Busyness is the disease of our time.”
  3. Jesus said “We are the salt of the earth” **Pastor Derrick:** “Salt needs to be up against the fish to preserve the fish.”
  4. Relationship leads to transformation: “They glorify God in the day of visitation” – 1 Peter 2:12.
  5. Steps in transformation: You get to know them, they get to know you. In response to your friendship & genuine love, strategic prayer, and your story, in their time of need they open their hearts to Jesus’ love.
- **BLESS acronym:**
    - a. **B: Begin** with prayer. Ask God how you can be a blessing in your neighbourhood.
    - b. **L: Listen** to their pain, hopes, dreams, desires.
    - c. **E: Eat.** Share coffee, Invite them over.
    - d. **S: Serve.** Ask the Holy Spirit how to serve your neighbours, to do something that is a blessing at a strategic moment.
    - e. **S: Story.** Share the story of how God has worked in your life.

### DISCUSSION:

1. How does Peter describe his readers (believers) in 1 Peter 2:9-12. Rephrase these Bible descriptions in modern words. List some reasons why the culture of Peter’s time was suspicious of and persecuted Christians. Discuss our culture’s opinion of Christians. Is it changing? In what ways? Discuss these changes and possible reasons for them.

2. What are our distinctives as Christians? Which of these distinctives does our society applaud? Which does it condemn. Discuss the statement: “We need to be detached from the world’s ethics but not detached from relationships.”

3. What would your neighbours conclude about your life if they saw only your actions? Pastor Derrick’s assignment re: a neighbour: 1] Find out first and last name; 2] Find out something about them (work, hopes, what’s important to them); 3] What is their spiritual background. How might our relationships with them lead to transformation? What actions are embedded in the acronym BLESS? How might you enact those actions this week?

### PRAYER:

Dear Father, like Peter’s readers we live in a society that is increasingly hostile to faith you You, Jesus and the Bible. Help us to stay the course, loving You and our neighbours in practical ways. Help us to pray, listen, eat, serve and share our stories as You open doors and we take opportunities. Thank You for Your Spirit that is at work in us and in our neighbourhoods, doing the real work of transformation. Amen.