

# WORTHY OF RESCUE

"Only conduct yourselves  
in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ  
so that whether I come and see you, or remain absent  
I will hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit,  
with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel"

Philippians 1:27

Beloved of God, called to show His glory in this land that can be hostile at times, and although they may criticize us as Christians, our lifestyle may be the very conduit that God uses to bring them to a saving knowledge of Christ.

The word "only" in the verse above from Philippians is specific as to what that behavior should be. The word "only" is *monon* in Greek, and it means there is only one kind of conduct that a believer should even consider having and that's the conduct becoming a follower of Jesus Christ. As one who belongs to God Almighty, who is righteous and holy, our conduct is also to be righteous and holy. Too often, we are content to belong to Him but straddle being in the world, with our behavior dictated by our desires rather than by His will.

**Can you think of a way you straddle between the two? Now would be a good time to take that to the Lord before you begin today's lesson in earnest.**

**As we begin, please read today's text: 1 Peter 2:13-15**

## 1 Peter - Week 4, Day 2

Peter is sharing with these sojourners how to conduct themselves in order to do business with those around them who are not believers. But this is more than a "To Do" list. The heart of the matter is that our behavior is to be a direct result of our relationship with Christ Jesus who died for us. It is for the Lord's sake that we are to behave in a way that represents Him with the worth He is due.

**In a few words, what makes Him "worthy" to you?**

**What do these verses say about being "worthy"?**

**Matthew 10:38**

**Ephesians 4:1-3**

**1 Thessalonians 2:11-13**

Holy conduct goes a long way in working in the world around us. Several of those characteristics - honesty, patience, kindness, gentleness, integrity, peacekeeper - are all things that the world is short on. If we live holy others will notice! As the old saying goes, we are to "let our actions speak louder than our words."

We saw yesterday that there is one who wages war against our soul. He wants nothing of our well-being, instead he is bent on the destruction of our lives. But there is One who is the guardian and shepherd of our souls, and He not only desires our good - He desires our best!

## 1 Peter - Week 4, Day 2

Have you ever noticed that the very things that are "best" for us are things we try to avoid?

**Can you name three things you avoid that would be in your best interest to do?**

We are a strange lot. I want the best for myself, don't you? Yet, we find it so difficult to do those very things that are for our best. Case in point, the Bible is pretty clear in this verse and others that it's totally in our best interest to submit, but that is one word we shy away from, or worse, rebel. From Eve until present, this word has gotten a bad rap as its been misused and abused. Ultimately, if we want what is best we will learn to die to self and submit to the One who actually knows what our true best is. Submission is to be the conduct that belongs to a believer, everything else is off the mark, it's sin. Of course, *what* we submit to is equally important. We must use wisdom and God's word to discern that.

First thing Peter wants these sojourners to know is that they are to obey the laws of the land. God has placed governing laws and people over the world system. He is a God of order.

**In 1 Peter 2:14, what two reasons are listed for why God ordained authorities:**

As believers, we are to submit to those God has placed in authority. Now, in America we don't have a king, but we do have a document brilliantly written by a group of men who feared God and asked His blessing on this nation. This document is called the Constitution.

## 1 Peter - Week 4, Day 2

Dr. Welch explains - *It must be observed that government in these United States of America is a government of the people, by the people and for the people. Ours is a government of law. The only authority over Americans is the constitution. Within the constitution there is provision for elected and appointed representatives to interpret and enforce the constitution. Therefore, our allegiance is to the law and not unto men. We should distinguish between our representatives and those who have authority over us. The abuse by elected representatives in the interpretation and enforcement of the law of the land - places Christians in jeopardy. Persecution of Christians has crept in to our society in a very methodical yet subtle way. Little by little elected and appointed representatives have put their own spin on interpreting the law of the land and God has been removed from the public arena. But, the constitution is the law of the land!*

Because Christ Jesus is Lord of our lives we are to submit to our constitutional law. When we don't, we walk as hypocrites, not living out who we are on the inside. In the process we also damage our witness, being no different than the fallen world around us. Our behavior should be markedly different because you and I have been born again to a living hope!

If you look back at v 12 it's clear that our behavior has to line up with Christ's character, with His righteousness, "so that in the thing which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God..." End game - God is to be glorified. The only possibility of that happening in us is that His Spirit is living and moving in us. We must submit to Him in helping us to submit to others.

## 1 Peter - Week 4, Day 2

Read 1 Peter 2:15 and answer below:

What is the will of God

What is the result

As our laws evolve and move further away from God's directives our "dual citizenship" comes into question - Which governing laws do we obey? Those of God's word, or those that are manmade? His word gives us clear examples of how to deal with those issues.

Read the following four passages and write how these situations were handled, what was the answer when allegiance came into question:

**Acts 4:13-22**

**Acts 4:29-31**

**Acts 5:17-29**

**Acts 5:38-42**

Boldness, testifying, suffering, prayer - all facets of living for Him, examples we would do well to learn from, for we, too, will be slandered, we, too, must submit to those in authority over us, but we, too, must remember that on the day we accepted God's grace and provision of a Savior we became citizens of His Kingdom. That covenant we entered into with Him must supersede all other relationships, all other kingdoms, all other authorities, for we no longer belong to ourselves but to Him.

## 1 Peter - Week 4, Day 2

**Take a look at 2 Timothy 3:10-12.** If we decide to live for Christ based on thinking life will be perfectly rosy, we will be rudely awakened, the Christian life is not easy. We are swimming against the flow of mankind in a sinful world. "Walking in a manner worthy" will require work, stamina, and cooperation, but thankfully, all the power and strength we need comes from the very Spirit of God. The disciples endured a lot of suffering, but the words at the end of v 11 say it all.

What are the final four words of 2 Timothy 3, v 11?

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Christ has rescued us, as well. Thinking us all worthy of rescue He called us out of the darkness and into His marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9). He issues the call to submit, first and foremost, to His Spirit being the guide and director of our lives, and then as those representing Him, to submit to those He's placed in authority over us.

It truly is in our best interest, so the question of the day is: Will we commit to submit?

## 1 Peter - Week 4, Day 2

### Review

- Text: 1 Peter 2:13-15
- Live worthy (Matthew 10:38; Ephesians 4:1-3; 1 Thessalonians 2:11-13)
- The excellent behavior of a Christian is to submit to those in authority. It's in our best interest, and for His glory. (1 Peter 2:13-14)
- Our citizenship and relationship with God supersedes any other allegiance (Acts 4:13-22; **4:29-31**; 5:17-29; 5:38-42)
- Christians will be persecuted, but the Lord will rescue (2 Timothy 3:10-12)
- Commit to submit