

EXILES

"Make Room"

Sermon Recap

This week's message, "Exiles: Week 4," from 1 Peter 2:11-25, challenges us as followers of Jesus to live as "temporary residents and foreigners" in this world, understanding that it is not our ultimate home. Pastor Jared emphasized that our primary calling is **faithful endurance in the face of unjust suffering**, a countercultural and often difficult path. Peter urges us to "wage war on worldly desires," not worldly people, so that we don't miss out on what God is doing in the world today, which includes a significant spiritual awakening.

The core of this message centers on **biblical submission**, defined as willingly placing oneself under authority. This isn't forced obedience but a conscious choice, modeled perfectly by Jesus Christ. He lived a sinless life and, when insulted or suffering unjustly, "did not retaliate... nor threaten revenge," but "left his case in the hands of God, who always judges fairly" (1 Peter 2:23). This provides the example for us to follow.

Peter applies this principle to two specific areas: submission to human government and to unjust employers or masters. He reminds us that the first-century Christians receiving this letter were under the brutal rule of Emperor Nero, facing persecution, false accusations, and imprisonment—a far more severe context than most of us experience. While we are called to submit where we can, our ultimate authority is God. As Acts 5:29 states, "We must obey God rather than men." This means we do not submit to human authority if it demands we disobey God's commands, such as preaching the Gospel.

The purpose of living honorably and practicing biblical submission is profound: "It is God's will that your honorable lives should silence these ignorant people who make foolish accusations against you" (1 Peter 2:15). Our conduct, even in the face of unfair treatment, can be a powerful testimony that draws unbelievers to heaven. When we encounter unfair situations, whether in government, the workplace, or other areas of life, we are encouraged to "make room for God to move" by releasing our need to control or manipulate outcomes and instead trust God to fight for us, as He promised in Exodus 14:13-14: "The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still." This transformative process is not accomplished in our own strength, but through the Holy Spirit working in us.

One of our callings in this world is faithful endurance in the face of unjust suffering.

Discussion Questions

Living an Exemplary Life in a Critical World

The sermon highlights Peter's call to live "honorable lives" that "silence these ignorant people who make foolish accusations against you" (1 Peter 2:15). How can your daily conduct, especially in challenging situations, serve as a powerful testimony to unbelievers, drawing them closer to understanding Christ rather than pushing them away? This question encourages reflection on how our actions directly impact our witness. It's about demonstrating Christ-likeness, particularly when facing criticism or unfairness, to counter negative perceptions and potentially lead others to salvation, as Jesus hung out with sinners to draw them in.

The Choice of Biblical Submission

Pastor Jared explained that biblical submission is "unforced" and involves "willingly plac[ing] yourself under" authority. How does this understanding of submission as a conscious choice, rooted in trust and not compulsion, change your perspective on obeying difficult or seemingly unjust authorities (e.g., in government or work)? This prompts reflection on the internal shift required for true submission. It connects to the idea of releasing control to God and trusting His ultimate authority, even when human authority is flawed, making room for God to work in ways we cannot anticipate.

Enduring Unjust Suffering with God

The sermon identifies "faithful endurance in the face of unjust suffering" as a key calling for believers. What specific struggles do you encounter when faced with unfairness, and how can you actively "make room for God to move" (Exodus 14:13-14) by releasing your need to control or manipulate outcomes in those moments? This question invites personal vulnerability and practical application. It addresses our natural desire to take matters into our own hands and encourages trusting God to fight for us, finding stillness and allowing the Holy Spirit to work through our patient endurance.

Waging War on Desires, Not People

Peter instructs believers to "wage war on these worldly desires" but emphasizes *not* worldly people. What is the crucial distinction between these two, and how does maintaining "contact without contamination" as an "exile" (1 Peter 2:11) shape your daily interactions and mission in the world? This explores the tension of being in the world but not of it. It highlights the importance of internal spiritual battle against sin while actively engaging with unbelievers as ambassadors, demonstrating honorable behavior and drawing them toward heaven, rather than retreating into isolation.

Prayer 🙏

- May we, like Christ, find strength to patiently endure unjust suffering, trusting God's fair judgment and making room for His divine intervention.
- May we courageously wage war against worldly desires, not people, so that our honorable lives may silence false accusations and draw others toward the hope of heaven.

- May we embrace biblical submission as a willing act of placing ourselves under authority, releasing our need to control outcomes, and trusting God to fight for us.
- May we live as temporary residents, remembering this world is not our ultimate home, and steadfastly honor God as our supreme authority, aligning our lives with His will above all human pressures.