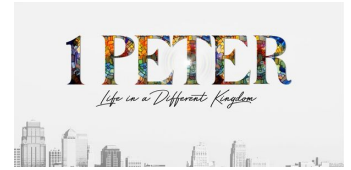


Ethics Part 1 – The importance of being honorable.

1 Peter 2:11-25

(Expanded Sermon Notes)



Don't sin. Do good for others. Respect authority. Honor those who are over you. Peter gives his audience these four commands in this first section of ethical instruction. The key here is that Peter isn't just encouraging them to be good citizens or good people just for the sake of goodness. He is teaching them that first, it flows out of their new identity that was established in Christ. And secondly, the way they act can lead others to glorify Jesus. Here Peter begins what is structurally the second half of the letter. Whereas the first part is primarily theological in focus with occasional application to life, this part is generally practical in emphasis, with shorter theological statements included at many important points. Whereas the first half contains general exhortations to holiness (1:15), love (1:22), and trust in God (related to hope in 1:13, and implied in 1:5, 7–9, 21; 2:7), this half gives very specific instructions showing how believers are to practice holiness and trust in God in actual life situations. Though it is an oversimplification, it may be said that 2:11–5:11 gives specific application to the general teaching of 1:1–2:10.¹

Remember, Peter is writing to believers who are facing social pressure, being mocked, and pressed out because of their faith. He doesn't tell them to wage a culture war or political campaigns (those would never have worked in Rome). Instead, he tells them to hold to a Christian worldview that was established by Christ Jesus himself and one that now defines them as exiles in this age. Their culture at large may never change. Things are going to get worse before they get better. But if they live out their faith through their worldview, Jesus will be glorified, and that is the most important thing (1 Pet. 2:12). Peter is reminding them of a very important truth, **the way I live matters now and for eternity.**

¹ Wayne A. Grudem, *1 Peter: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 17, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 122.

1. Sojourners - A new identity while living in the old digs. (v.11-12)

- a. Peter closed the opening section by reminding the group of Christians that he is writing to about their identity change.
 - i. **⁹ But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. ¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. (2:9-10)**
 - ii. Peter is writing to a group of people with pastoral authority to teach, encourage, and even correct them.
 1. **Peter writes to give these Christians hope, consolation, and encouragement by explaining their new identity in Christ and how even suffering is an integral part of that identity.** ²
 - iii. Who is he writing to? → Christians who are suffering for their allegiance to Christ.
 1. **Slander and malicious talk undermined their relationships with associates and family, threatened their honor in the community, and possibly jeopardized their livelihood.**
 2. The issues of how to maintain a vital Christian faith in such circumstances and how to respond to unjust treatment pressed upon them. ³
- b. As he begins the second section of his letter, he will move to the application phases of the idea he just unpacked in 1:1-2:10.
 - i. Though it is an oversimplification, it may be said that 2:11–5:11 gives specific application to the general teaching of 1:1–2:10. ⁴
 - ii. By using the word **beloved** Peter reminds his readers that though he exhorts them as an apostle he also cares for them as beloved brothers and sisters in the Lord's family. Although 'beloved' is a rather archaic word today, 'dear friends' (NIV) seems too weak. The Phillips paraphrase is probably best: 'I beg you, as those whom I love'.
 - iii. *I beseech you* is archaic language again, but 'I urge you' (NIV, NASB) is not forceful enough. **The word (*parakaleō*) has the sense 'I strongly urge you, I strongly appeal to you'.** ⁵
 1. The reality here is that Peter is not giving them wiggle room on this application. → This is an imperative... a command... a requirement.
 - a. We all have examples of the difference between "recommendations, strong recommendations, and requirements."
 - b. Growing up, it was recommended that I have a neat haircut.
 - c. Growing up, it was strongly recommended for me to be on time.
 - d. Growing up it was required that I would have a job as a teen.
 2. **Why? → Because they have a new identity and need to live like it.**
 - a. It is the same for the examples of my growing up years, the required thing was required because it was part of our family identity.

² Karen H. Jobes, *1 Peter*, ed. Robert W. Yarbrough and Joshua W. Jipp, Second Edition., Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic: A Division of Baker Publishing Group, 2022), 63.

³ Karen H. Jobes, *1 Peter*, ed. Robert W. Yarbrough and Joshua W. Jipp, Second Edition., Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic: A Division of Baker Publishing Group, 2022), 63.

⁴ Wayne A. Grudem, *1 Peter: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 17, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 122.

⁵ Wayne A. Grudem, *1 Peter: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 17, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 121–122.

- iv. **Because they are ‘aliens and exiles’ they should *abstain from the passions of the flesh*.**
These ‘passions’ or strong desires (see note on this word, *epithymia*, at 1:14) which are characteristic of the sinful nature are not appropriate to a Christian’s heavenly homeland. Examples of such desires are found in **Galatians 5:19–21 and 1 John 2:16 (the discussion of ‘the flesh’ as the sinful nature in Gal. 5:13–25 is a good commentary on this phrase), but in fact any desires for things contrary to God’s will are prohibited here.**⁶
- c. **V.11** - They are still living in this world, but they are no longer part of it. → So their new values are to be expressed through their conduct.
 - i. I.e., Belief must correspond in behavior. → If I think I am... I should act like it.
 - ii. Again, this was not out of a moral performance or legalism standpoint. Jesus had saved them and continues to save them and keeps their salvation secure. → Salvation was and will always be a gift of grace by God. (cf. Eph 2:8-9)
 - iii. **We must avoid the trap of legalism as much as they needed to.** → This is also what Paul writes to address in the Galatian church.
 - 1. ²¹**I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose. ¹O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified. ²Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith? ³Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh? (Gal. 2:21-3:3)**
- d. **V. 12** - **Living out our new identity is not merely about avoiding sin, but it is also about living in a honorable way among all people (especially those who don’t believe).**
 - i. No new sentence begins here in the Greek text, for this verse is the positive counterpart to verse 11: not only are the readers to abstain from sinful desires (v. 11), they are also to continue to ‘*Maintain good conduct among the Gentiles*’. **Conduct here refers to a day-by-day pattern of life (see note on this word at 1:15).** Peter calls unbelievers *Gentiles*, not because he thinks that his readers were all Jewish Christians, but because he once again assumes that Christians (both literal Jews and literal Gentiles within the body of Christ) are the ‘true Israel’. Therefore all who are not Christians (both literal Jews and literal Gentiles) are truly ‘Gentiles’ (cf. 4:3).⁷
 - ii. In the first century, Christians were called cannibals for eating the Lord’s Supper; they were called atheists for not worshipping the pagan gods; they were considered disruptors of society and rebels against the emperor.⁸
 - 1. **Our battle is not against the unbelieving people of the world; they are our mission field. It is against our own natural, sinful desires—and no amount of insulation from the world “out there” will leave behind our desires “in here.”**⁹
 - iii. One of the primary questions of living in an honorable way for the mature and maturing Christian is, **“How can I honor God in these circumstances or in this relationship?”**
 - 1. Christian maturity is not merely about avoiding sin... yes, that is important!
 - 2. We grow into Christian maturity as we begin to live more and more with the goal to glorify and honor God in all our circumstances.
 - a. We honor God in our relationships.

⁶ Wayne A. Grudem, *1 Peter: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 17, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 122.

⁷ Wayne A. Grudem, *1 Peter: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 17, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 123.

⁸ Juan R. Sanchez, *1 Peter for You*, ed. Carl Laferton, God’s Word for You (The Good Book Company, 2016), 96.

⁹ Juan R. Sanchez, *1 Peter for You*, ed. Carl Laferton, God’s Word for You (The Good Book Company, 2016), 95.

- b. We honor God in our grief and distress.
 - c. We honor God in our joy and celebration.
 - d. We honor God in our business, career, and scholastic pursuits.
 - e. Etc.
- 3. Why do we do this? → So that others will believe and experience abundant life in Jesus! (cf. v.12 / Jn. 10:10)

2. Honor un-honorable people. (vv. 13-17)

- a. One of the markers of being focused on honoring God is when we have to honor un-honorable people... especially the emperor / state.
 - i. Peter is not writing in a vacuum. → He is writing to those who are being pressed out for their faith in the Roman empire.
 - ii. Peter himself is living in Rome (likely under the rule of Nero) while writing this.
 - 1. Nero is known as one of the most treacherous and devious rulers of ancient Rome.
 - 2. We'll come back to Peter's command in v.13, but we need the lens he offers in v.17.
- b. v.17 – Honor everyone... really? Yes, everyone.
 - i. First, he commands that we “honor everyone.” → Why?
 - 1. Humans bear God's image, so they are to be honored.
 - 2. **To honor someone is to treat them as valuable, as a person of worth.**¹⁰
 - ii. Those who would live ‘as servants of God’ (v. 16) have differing obligations to all men generally, other Christians, God, and the emperor. The first phrase, *Honor all men*, may be taken as one command among four (RSV, NASB) or as a summary statement to be explained by the other three statements (NIV: ‘Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honor the king’; similarly NEB).¹¹
 - iii. It is better therefore to take this verse as four separate commands.
 - 1. **Honor all men** means ‘honor all people’; ‘men’ is not in the Greek text. ‘All’ (*pantas*) is common in reference to all people generally (cf. Matt. 10:22; Luke 2:3; John 1:7; Rom. 3:23; Jas 1:5). Consistent with their good conduct among unbelievers (vv. 12–16), Christians should be courteous and respectful to all people. This principle condemns much of man's treatment of his fellows both in the political and in the industrial world’ (Stibbs/Walls, p. 112).
 - 2. **Love the brotherhood** indicates a higher obligation to fellow Christians (note ‘brotherhood’ also in 5:9), not only to respect them but also to show strong, deep love to them (see note on *agapaō*, ‘love’, at 1:22).
 - 3. **Fear God** indicates a still higher obligation. Christians are not only to honor and love God (1:3, 8; 2:5, 9); they are also to fear him, something they should not do toward unbelievers (3:14) or toward other believers (see note at 1:17 on fear of God).
 - 4. Peter now returns to ‘honor’, the same word with which the verse began: **Honor the emperor**. In what is apparently mild irony Peter has put the emperor on the same level as ‘all people’.¹²
 - a. While positively affirming the obligation to honor the emperor (consistent with vv. 13–15), he also subtly implies that, contrary to the claims of Roman

¹⁰ Juan R. Sanchez, *1 Peter for You*, ed. Carl Laferton, God's Word for You (The Good Book Company, 2016), 105.

¹¹ Wayne A. Grudem, *1 Peter: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 17, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 129.

¹² Wayne A. Grudem, *1 Peter: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 17, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 130–131.

emperors to be divine, the emperor was by no means equal to God or worthy of the fear due to God alone. **Christians have obligations to the state, but their obligations to God and to the brotherhood of believers are higher.**¹³

c. A willingness to honor the un-honorable becomes a distinctive of a lived-out identity of exile.

i. Again, don't forget Peter's command in v.11... "Beloved I urge you..."

1. This is not a "if you feel like it" or "when you get around to it" type of command.
2. This is the reality of living in a distinctively different way that points to the spiritual reality that has taken place in you.
3. So, how do we honor those that are un-honorable in our lives?
 - a. Remember, it is easy to honor those that are worthy of honor.

ii. We honor the un-honorable by: (cf. 2:1)

1. **Put away malice** – We are not to have the intention to do someone ill will.

a. I.e., If you hate them, you have murdered them. – Jesus (Matt. 5:21-22 / 1 Jn. 3:15)

i. ²¹ **"You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.'** ²² **But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment.**

ii. ¹⁵ **Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.**

2. **Put away slander** – We don't create accusations or stories that are aimed at defaming and damaging a person's reputation.

a. I.e., They their actions and words speak for themselves.

3. **Put away deceit** – We don't try to twist the story or put spin on it.

a. I.e., Error on the side of giving the facts and facts only because that is what you would want for yourself.

4. **Give the benefit of the doubt** – If you don't truly know, you need to give the benefit of the doubt.

iii. **It can be easy to argue away the fact that we have done these very things, and as such we have not honored the "un-honorable."**

1. How many of us have treated elected officials with malice, slander, or put spin on a story or a decision in the last 6 years?

2. How many of us do this in our personal relationships where we slander or put spin on a situation to make sure others know that we were wronged and paint an incomplete picture of what happened?

3. Peter tells us that there is no room for those things in our new identity.

iv. **What Peter does not mean when he tells us to honor everyone is that we have to agree with, endorse, or participate in un-Godly decrees or actions.**

1. But, he does tell us to submit to the state and to authority that God has placed over us.

d. Now, let's talk about submission to the State. → Again, there might not have been a more absurd call to submission than to Nero himself!

i. So, if Christians in the first century found a way to honor God by submitting to and honoring the emperor... You best believe that we should too.

¹³ Wayne A. Grudem, *1 Peter: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 17, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 131.

- ii. It is the “Nero test” – That is, if our leaders aren’t as bad as Nero, we should figure a way to do it, and to be grateful to God.
- e. What is the role of the State?
 - i. Almost any government is better than no government. Government is a gift of God’s common grace. **Lack of human authority combined with the human tendency to sin is never a recipe for peace or prosperity.**¹⁴
 - ii. *Be subject* means to be submissive to an authority, and this usually implies obedience to that authority (note this word in Luke 2:51; 10:17; Rom. 13:1; 1 Cor. 15:28; Eph. 5:24; Titus 2:9; Jas 4:7; 1 Pet. 2:18; 3:1, 5, 22; and see discussion at 1 Pet. 3:1, below). But there are occasions recorded in Scripture when God’s people have disobeyed a human government and have been approved by God for so doing (Exod. 1:17; Dan. 3:13–18; 6:10–24; Acts 4:18–20; 5:27–29; Heb. 11:23). **The principle to be drawn from these passages is ‘obey except when commanded to sin’. This is the Christian’s responsibility toward all forms of rightful human authority, whether the individual Christian agrees with all the policies of that authority or not.**¹⁵
 - iii. God has established such patterns of authority for the orderly functioning of human life, and it both pleases and honors him when we subject ourselves to them.
 - 1. **Nor should we think that the need for authority is only due to sin, for there is authority among sinless angels (1 Thess. 4:16; Jude 9), the redeemed in heaven (Luke 19:17, 19; cf. 1 Cor. 6:3), and even the members of the Trinity for all eternity (1 Cor. 11:3; 15:28).**¹⁶
 - iv. *Whether it be to the emperor as supreme* applies the general command to a specific office. The Roman emperor at the time Peter wrote was Nero (reigned AD 54–68), under whose persecution Peter himself would later be put to death (see Introduction, pp. 35–38). **God expects Christians to be subject even to human authorities who are neither believers nor morally upright.**¹⁷
 - 1. In fact, Peter is making a nuanced and crucial point about the nature of authority. In his day, the Roman emperor—the authority—was an object of worship. Thomas Schreiner explains Peter’s point in using the word “creature”:
 “The emperor cult was popular in Asia Minor, and Christians doubtless felt social pressure to participate. Peter reminded his readers at the outset that rulers are merely creatures, created by God and existing under his lordship.”¹⁸

3. Jesus is our example. (vv. 21-25)

- a. **One of the core truths of revealed in the NT is that Jesus is our example.** I.e., He is the one that we are to imitate, follow, and strive to be like.
 - i. Paul to the Philippians – “Have the mind of Christ about you.” (Phil. 2:5-8)
 - 1. ⁵**Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus,** ⁶**who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped,** ⁷**but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of**

¹⁴ Juan R. Sanchez, *1 Peter for You*, ed. Carl Laferton, God’s Word for You (The Good Book Company, 2016), 99.

¹⁵ Wayne A. Grudem, *1 Peter: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 17, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 125.

¹⁶ Wayne A. Grudem, *1 Peter: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 17, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 126.

¹⁷ Wayne A. Grudem, *1 Peter: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 17, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 127.

¹⁸ Juan R. Sanchez, *1 Peter for You*, ed. Carl Laferton, God’s Word for You (The Good Book Company, 2016), 100.

- men. ⁸ And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.
- ii. John to a group of Christians in Ephesus – “Walk as Jesus walked.” (1 Jn 2:6)
 - 1. **By this we may know that we are in him: ⁶ whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.**
 - iii. Paul to the Corinthians – “Follow me as I follow Jesus” (1 Cor. 1:11)
 - 1. **“Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.”**
 - iv. Paul to the Galatians – Be like Jesus! (Gal. 3:27)
 - 1. **For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.**
 - v. Jesus says it to the disciples – “Do what I do.” (Jn. 14:12)¹⁹
 - 1. **Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father.**
 - 2. What works? → Jesus is speaking to his disciples here as a Rabbi. In that, the disciples would have understood this to mean that they are to literally live as Jesus lived as apprentices. This was a normal invitation of a Rabbi in the first-century.
 - vi. Peter to this group of Christians in Asia Minor – Follow Jesus in how footsteps. (v.21)
 - 1. ²¹ **For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps.**
 - b. We may not like the call to suffer or to submission, but it is our assignment in Christ.
 - i. ***For to this you have been called* indicates the situation into which Christians have been summoned by God at conversion.**²⁰
 - ii. The New Testament elsewhere affirms that Christians can expect to be treated unjustly (**1 Pet. 5:9; John 15:18–20; 16:33; Acts 14:22; 1 Thess. 3:3; 2 Tim. 3:12; cf. Ps. 34:19**). But why are we called to suffer? Because such suffering was part of the life of Christ, which we have been called to imitate: *because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.*²¹
 - iii. **All four verses in this section are dependent on Isaiah 53.** Verse 22 quotes Isaiah 53:9, and verse 23 apparently alludes to Isaiah 53:7. Verse 25 echoes Isaiah 53:6 (‘All we like sheep have gone astray’). Similarly, verse 24 includes not exact quotations but words and phrases drawn unmistakably from Isaiah 53:12 (‘he bore the sin [LXX: “sins”] of many’; cf. Isa. 53:4, 11) and 53:5 (‘with his stripes we are healed’).²²
 - iv. What words of exhortation and encouragement for the Asian Christians facing threat from a world that would grow increasingly hostile to Christianity! Peter lets Isaiah speak directly to their situation. **Don’t be afraid of the unjust suffering you are experiencing. It is not evidence that God has forsaken you; to the contrary, it is evidence that God has chosen you. Do not wander off from Christ, for God will strengthen you to face life as a Christian.**

¹⁹ Note on Jn. 14:12 – What is meant by greater works? – we might say that the disciples’ works were greater than his because they had the privilege of testifying by word and deed to the finished work of Christ, and the fuller coming of the kingdom that it ushered in, whereas Jesus’ ministry prior to his death and resurrection only foreshadowed these things. (Colin G. Kruse, *John: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 4, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (InterVarsity Press, 2003), 297.)

²⁰ Wayne A. Grudem, *1 Peter: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 17, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 136.

²¹ Wayne A. Grudem, *1 Peter: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 17, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 136.

²² Wayne A. Grudem, *1 Peter: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 17, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 137.

God has made you secure because Jesus has suffered the ultimate injustice and yet he lives. You have been born again into that living hope.²³

c. **V.24 – The very reality is that our indestructible hope was brought about through Jesus' willingness to suffer on our behalf!**

- i. Here is an explicit statement of the heart of the gospel: *He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree. The fact that Christ bore our sins means that God the Father counted our sins against Christ and, in a way not fully understood by us, 'laid on him the iniquity of us all' (Isa. 53:6).*
- ii. The Father thought of our sins as belonging to Christ; he 'made him to be sin who knew no sin' (2 Cor. 5:21), and then punished him with that anger against sin, separation from God, and consequent death which we deserved. In this way Christ was a substitute for his people, one who stood in their place.²⁴
 1. To say that I should not suffer for the witness of Jesus in this life as an exile, is a declaration of great hubris. Why? Because I am saying that what was needed for my salvation and was willingly done by Jesus, is not something that I don't have to do.
 2. Yes, you do not need to suffer to earn your salvation. No, God is not making you suffer because Jesus suffered for you.
 3. **If Jesus is our model and he was willing to suffer for our good, we should imitate him and be willing to suffer for his glory.**

4. Live with the goal to honor Jesus in all things. (vv.18-20)

- a. **All of this comes back to the central point, the way that I live matter now and in eternity.**
 - i. **Why? → Because the way I live now bears witness to the hope that is inside of me.**
 - ii. When I live with anxious presence in all of the commotion, injustice, confusion, hurt, and disappointment of this age, I show that there isn't something better ahead.
 - iii. Instead, when I seek to honor even the un-honorable and live with non-anxious presence, I demonstrate the unshakable and incorruptible hope that is offered to all people through Jesus.
 1. That means that my witness through my lived experience matters now because it testifies to Jesus, and is eternally important because Jesus will work through it to rescue those around me. (v.19)
- b. To help us understand this, Peter makes it clear even for servants (slaves) to honor and submit to the authority of their masters. (This is a picture that is very uncomfortable for us as moderns.)
 - i. **We do not like the idea of submission in any way as Americans.**
 - ii. **We do not like the idea of authority or hierarchy or limitation as moderns.**
 1. Yet, we are called to submit to God and be under his authority. (Luke 6:46)
 2. Believers are to submit to overseers in the church. (Heb. 13:17)
 - a. ¹⁷ Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.
 3. Believers are called to submit to each other. (Matt. 18:17; 1 Cor. 5:4-5)

²³ Karen H. Jobes, *1 Peter*, ed. Robert W. Yarbrough and Joshua W. Jipp, Second Edition., Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic: A Division of Baker Publishing Group, 2022), 201.

²⁴ Wayne A. Grudem, *1 Peter: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 17, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 139.

4. Even in the Trinity we see submission – Jesus submits to the Father and the Spirit submits to Jesus. (Phil. 2 / Jn. 14:16)²⁵
- c. How are we to understand the nature of slavery in Peter’s context?
 - i. Peter addresses *servants*, using a less common word, *oiketēs*. The term is nearly synonymous to *doulos*, the common New Testament word for ‘servant’ (TDNT 2, p. 261), but *oiketēs* suggests a nuance of service within a household (LSJ, p. 1202). Both terms have also been translated ‘slave’ (NIV), but the horrible degradation of slaves in 19th-century America gives the word ‘slave’ a far worse connotation than is accurate for most of the society to which Peter was writing. Although mistreatment of slaves could occur then too, it must be remembered that 1st-century slaves were generally well treated and were not only unskilled laborer’s but often managers, overseers, and trained members of the various professions (doctors, nurses, teachers, musicians, skilled artisans). **There was extensive Roman legislation regulating the treatment of slaves.** They were normally paid for their services and could expect eventually to purchase their freedom (OCD, p. 995; also p. 793, art. ‘peculium’).²⁶
 - ii. Peter points to the slave, who was most vulnerable in Greco-Roman society, as a paradigm for the Christian believer who follows Jesus Christ. **Because of their Christian commitment, Peter’s readers may have been facing a loss of status and empowerment in their society.** The slave had a low social status and little personal power and so is a fitting role model for this situation. Moreover, regardless of their standing in society, as Christians, they are to live as slaves to God, obeying him in every aspect of life (2:16).²⁷
 - d. As Christians, we are ultimately called not to vindication in this life, but to honor Jesus in all things.
 - i. **Our battle is not against the unbelieving people of the world; they are our mission field. It is against our own natural, sinful desires—and no amount of insulation from the world “out there” will leave behind our desires “in here.”**²⁸
 - ii. One of the primary questions of living in an honorable way for the mature and maturing Christian is, **“How can I honor God in these circumstances or in this relationship?”**
 1. Christian maturity is not merely about avoiding sin... yes, that is important!
 2. We grow into Christian maturity as we begin to live more and more with the goal to glorify and honor God in all our circumstances.
 - a. We honor God in our relationships.
 - b. We honor God in our grief and distress.
 - c. We honor God in our joy and celebration.
 - d. We honor God in our business, career, and scholastic pursuits.
 - e. Etc.
 3. Why do we do this? → So that others will believe and experience abundant life in Jesus! (cf. v.12 / Jn. 10:10)
 - iii. Let us continue to grow in our asking, **“How can I honor God in these circumstances or in this relationship?”**

²⁵ Note – Submission in the Trinity does not mean that the Son or the Spirit are lesser in any way than the Father. Instead, it is a willing submission even as they are all almighty. “The Father almighty, the Son almighty, the Spirit almighty... they are not three Almighties, but one Almighty.” – The Athanasian Creed

²⁶ Wayne A. Grudem, *1 Peter: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 17, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 131–132.

²⁷ Karen H. Jobes, *1 Peter*, ed. Robert W. Yarbrough and Joshua W. Jipp, Second Edition., Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic: A Division of Baker Publishing Group, 2022), 180.

²⁸ Juan R. Sanchez, *1 Peter for You*, ed. Carl Laferton, God’s Word for You (The Good Book Company, 2016), 95.