



Old Testament Reading – Isaiah 10:1-4 – New Testament Reading – Ephesians 1:1-14

## **How Should We Then Live “That We May Glorify Him” 1 Peter 2:4-12**

Christians are facing some very difficult times ahead:

- The political events of this past week may have unleashed another level of violence against God's people.
- The election of the most radical, socialist's administration will bring about a fundamental change in the American society.
- The threat of war with Communist China continues to increase; an event that would change the world for generations to come.
- The rising cases of the Covid-19 virus, and the various issues regarding the vaccine are giving us cause for great concern.

- The rising hatred against Christianity, and the rising persecution of individual Christians is alarming.
- The fact that America has entered that final phase of dissolution as the Apostle Paul defined in Romans 1:18-31.

**“Seeing all these things... what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness.”**

**2 Peter 3:11**

Having done all we can to stand against these difficult issues that either have, or will affect our freedom to live according to the dictates of our own conscience, and according to our own understanding of the will of God, Christians must now trust these issues with the sovereignty of God, for He alone knows how they all fit into His eternal plan for our redemption.

- In the last 70-years, America has shifted from pro-God, and pro-Christ, to anti-God, and now anti-Christ, and Christians must discern how to live for God in this ungodly society.
- Should we withdraw from the battle, and just blend in with society, so as not to draw attention to ourselves?
- In Matthew 5:14, Jesus told His disciples: “Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.”
- When Christians testify to the world what God has done for us through Jesus Christ, we not only expose the power of evil that enslaved us, but we also proclaim the almighty power of God who delivered us from that evil.
- Just as God called the Apostle Paul to proclaim that gospel to the Gentiles, so He has called us to do the same with our lips and our lives.

**“To open the eyes of the lost, and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God; that they also may receive forgiveness of sins.”**

**Acts 26:18**

After Jesus ascended back into the heavens, the Apostles began proclaiming the gospel to the Gentiles.

- As the new Christians began to manifest their new life in Christ, and to share the gospel with others, they began to suffer severe persecution.
- The Apostle Peter wrote these two letters to some of them, in effect, telling them to get their minds off of those who were persecuting them and on to the One who had purchased them with His precious blood.
- In 1 Peter 2:21, Peter said, *“To this suffering you were called, because Christ suffered, leaving you an example, that you should follow in His steps.”*

## **1. Attitudes and Actions Christians Must Reject – 1 Peter 2:1-3.**

- Verse 3 – *“If indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.”*
- Verse 1 – you will *“Lay aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking.”*

- Verse 2 – you will “As newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the Word, that you may grow thereby.”
- Peter said, the evidence that a person has been truly born again – i.e., that Christ dwells within them, is that they will not manifest these fleshly attitudes and/or actions, even in the face of persecution.

## **2. Attitudes and Actions Christians Must Reject – 1 Peter 2:1-3.**

Expressions of anger toward those who persecute us is due to our failure to comprehend and embrace the manifold blessings God has given to us through Jesus Christ.

- In Ephesians 1:1ff, the Apostle Paul said believers were endowed with everything we need to live a godly life, even in an ungodly world, and they became ours the very instant we were born again.
- Peter enumerated those blessings as:
  - Our union with Christ – *“Coming to Him!”*
    - Becoming a Christian is to be united with Christ as a branch is grafted into the vine.
    - When we become “one” with Christ, we absorb His divine nature, we develop His character, and eventually, we are conformed to His image.
  - Our foundation in Christ – *“Coming to Him as a Living Stone!”*
    - “A Choice Stone,” – rejected by men, but chosen by God, which makes Him:
    - “A Precious Stone,” – a one-of-a-kind stone that meant He could be used as:
    - “The Chief Corner Stone,” – one upon whom our faith can be built with total security.

Note:

- All of our spiritual privileges are connected to, and derived from our personal, intimate relationship with God, which was made possible through Jesus Christ, our Savior.
- To access the blessings of God, we must be “in Christ,” and we must have “Christ in us,” the hope of glory.
- Peter said we are “living stones,” which means we derive our life from Christ, the Chief Corner Stone.
- Our affection for Christ – *“He is precious.”*
  - The irrefutable evidence of one’s Christian faith is the depth of their love for the Lord Jesus.
  - 1 Corinthians 16:22 – *“If any man loves not the Lord Jesus Christ, he is damned.”*
  - When Jesus tested Peter, He asked him the same question three times: *“Peter, lovest thou Me more than these?”*
- We are a “chosen generation,” – people from every tongue, tribe, nation and age, but members of the one family of God.

- We are a “royal priesthood,” – and one day soon, we will rule and reign with Him on this earth for 1,000 years, and in the new heaven and new earth forever, world without end.
- We are a “Holy nation – a people of God’s own possession,” – our heritage does not matter, for it is only temporary. Christians belong to God’s eternal family, which is why Peter referred to us as “aliens and strangers,” – this world is not our home.”

## **Why would God lavish such blessings upon us?**

- Verse 9 – *“That we may proclaim the praises of Him who called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.”*
  - We proclaim Him with our lips!
- Verse 12 – *“That when they speak against us as evildoers, they may, by our good works, which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.”*
  - We portray Him with our lives!