

**21S21 1st Peter 2:11-12**

Hello everyone. Thank you for joining me today @ the PUNLA Coffee Table. I hope everyone is doing well. Today we are continuing our series on 1<sup>st</sup> Peter with 1 Peter 2:11-12.

The author of this letter is the Apostle Peter. Most scholars believe this letter was written sometime in AD60-64. The main theme of 1<sup>st</sup> Peter is “Where does our Hope come from?” for those suffering persecution. This letter was written to Christians living in the Roman Empire and facing persecution because they follow Jesus.

I’m reading from the International Children’s Bible (ICB) today, I like the plain English in this translation.

Let’s read 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 2:11-12 (ICB) <sup>11</sup> *Dear friends, you are like visitors and strangers in this world. So I beg you to stay away from the evil things your bodies want to do. These things fight against your soul.* <sup>12</sup> *People who do not believe are living all around you. They might say that you are doing wrong. So live good lives. Then they will see the good things you do, and they will give glory to God on the day when Christ comes again.*

I know it’s only two verses but there is a lot in here to look at closer. Let’s take a closer look at the first part of Verse 11. <sup>11a</sup> *Dear friends, you are like visitors and strangers in this world.* (1<sup>st</sup> Peter 2:11a ICB)

Other translations use slightly different words, like, the NKJV *Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims...* (1 Peter 2:11a NKJV) and the NLT *Dear friends, I warn you as “temporary residents and foreigners”...* (1 Peter 2:11a NLT) or Amplified Bible *Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers [in this world]...* (1 Peter 2:11a AMP)

This is why, I like to read multiple translations sometimes. When you see all the words that could be used it helps us to better understand what Peter was trying to tell us. We are sojourners, aliens, foreigners, strangers, temporary residents in this world. I like the word sojourner or sojourn because it means to stay in a place temporarily. As Christians this is not our permanent home. We are foreigners or strangers because our true home is the Kingdom of God. Earlier in 1<sup>st</sup> Peter, Peter referred to the Christians he was writing to as Exiles. But I think what Peter is really trying to tell us is, if we live lives modeled after Jesus, the people we live around see us as different. Strange strangers. Crazy Christians is another way we are often talked about. But they notice and talk about us.

The second part of verse 11 talks to some of the ways we are to be different. *So I beg you to stay away from the evil things your bodies want to do. These things fight against your soul.* (1<sup>st</sup> Peter 2:11b ICB) Or again from the NKJV it is said this way, *...abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul,* (1 Peter 2:11b NKJV) but I think I like the way the

NLT puts it the best... *to keep away from worldly desires that wage war against your very souls.* (1 Peter 2:11b NLT)

Peter is literally begging us as Christians to resist our worldly desires that our culture says are good and fun but are really destructive to us and all around us. That is why Peter says it is against our soul. These things hurt us. They hurt others. And they pain our Lord God. Remember God wants what is best for us. He is not a cosmic “killjoy” or big bummer in the sky. God truly wants the best for us and unfortunately, we humans typically do not choose well on our own. We need God to guide us so we will make better choices which build us up and those around us.

Verse 12 continues this theme with why it is so important. Verse 12 *People who do not believe are living all around you. They might say that you are doing wrong. So live good lives. Then they will see the good things you do, and they will give glory to God on the day when Christ comes again.* 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 2: 12 (ICB)

I really like the way the Amplified Bible puts it. *Keep your behavior excellent among the [unsaved] Gentiles [conduct yourself honorably, with graciousness and integrity], so that for whatever reason they may slander you as evildoers, yet by observing your good deeds they may [instead come to] glorify God in the day of visitation [when He looks upon them with mercy].* 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 2: 12 (AMP)

Some translations use the word witness. We need to live good lives because people are watching us. They want to see how we conduct ourselves so they can call us frauds or hypocrites. But we need to be prepared that behaving well does not always gain us friends. In fact, Peter warns that those we are living around will try to slander us. That means they will say false things about us. But if we live the way Jesus wants us to live, our life becomes a testimony about Jesus. Our good deeds will cause even the people that say bad things about us to glorify God. And more importantly the way we live may actually reach those around us and cause them to look into what is this Crazy Christian thing all about.

This reminds me of a story I heard about Alexander the Great. The story goes that one night Alexander the Great could not sleep so he decided to go out and check the guard posts. He came upon a young soldier who was sleeping instead of keeping watch. In the Greek army falling asleep on duty was punished by death. Alexander the Great woke the soldier saying, “what is your name soldier!?”. The young soldier caught off guard said, “alexander sir”. Alexander the Great said again, “what is your name soldier!?”. Confused further the young soldier said, “Alexander sir”. Alexander the Great asked a third time, “ what is your name soldier?!”. The young soldier responded, “sir, I told you my name was Alexander”. Alexander the Great then said, “Change your name or change your conduct”.

If we are professing to be Christian, then we must be representing Jesus in everything we do and how we live our lives. If we don't, I would say, change your name or change

your conduct. The world is watching. We have to think of others ahead of our earthly desires.

Review,

- 1) **Why are we Sojourners?** If we are Christian, we don't live in our true home. We understand we are only temporarily living here. Our true home is the Kingdom of God with our Savior and Lord, King Jesus
- 2) **Why does Peter tell us to resist our worldly desires?** How we live affects us, physically, emotionally, psychologically and yes spiritually. I've heard it said this way, "garbage in, garbage out". When we let our desires rule us, these behaviors affect us. They can damage us. Peter says these behaviors wage war on our souls.
- 3) **What do people say about you?** Peter tells us people are not going to treat us nicely but how we respond and how we live matters. People are watching and how we conduct ourselves is a witness to Jesus.
- 4) Let me leave you with this question. **Is your life a good witness for Jesus?** Or maybe let me leave you with this quote from Alexander the Great, "change your name or change your conduct"

**Let's Pray.**

**Father God in heaven, thank you for this time together studying your word the bible. Help us to live the lives you wish for us. Help us to be a good witness to the world through the way we live our lives. Thank you for guiding my steps, Lord. I trust you Lord with everything I have and everything I am. Use me to your glory.**

**In your Name Lord Jesus. Amen**

I hope you are enjoying our study of 1<sup>st</sup> Peter. I hope you will join me for the rest of this series

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