

INTRO

- If you weren't living in Toronto, what other city or country would you love to live in, and why?

READ

1 Peter 2:11-17

REFLECT & RESPOND

Engagement with our society takes discernment, but it is clear we are not to disengage from the people and society around us because of our faith. Our faith is personal but not meant to be private. So, Peter continues to encourage us to stand firm in our faith with helpful "rules of engagement" as Christians within society.

DUAL CITIZENS

For many of us in Toronto, we are dual citizens! In a similar way, as Christians, we are dual citizens with our primary citizenship in the kingdom of God, whilst we are also to be good earthly citizens. Sometimes those citizenships overlap well, and sometimes they conflict and challenge our allegiance. Nonetheless, we are to be mindful both of God's glory and how we live our lives before others. This is similar to what Peter says in vv11-12.

Qu: Who are the people close enough to watch your life like vv11-12 implies (family, friends, co-workers, neighbours)?

COMPELLING LIVES

When we understand our role as dual citizens and where our ultimate allegiance lies, it makes room for us to live compelling lives in our earthly capacity. Peter's exhortation is to give a winsome witness to a new way of life following Jesus, even if that means we encounter unjust suffering in doing so.

The cornerstone of Peter's motivation for this way of living is the example of Christ, the

Suffering Servant, whose unjust suffering benefitted us and fulfilled God's redemptive plan.

Qu: Is there an example of where you encountered persecution from others simply because you are a Christian?

Read 1 Peter 2:21-24.

Qu: When you read these verses, what personally impacts you the most about Jesus' example?

HOW NOW SHALL WE LIVE?

Finally, Peter offers very practical principles for us to engage with society in our various relational settings whether social, spiritual, or political:

Treat everyone you meet with dignity.
Love your spiritual family.
Revere God.
Respect the government.
(1 Peter 2:17 MSG)

Qu: For each one, can you share a practical way you can put that into action in the coming week?

RESPOND & PRAY

- Consider using breakout rooms for the prayer-time.
- Pray for God's grace, wisdom and strength to fulfill the answer to the last question.
- Take a moment to pray for our governing authorities who have to make decisions that affect millions in our country, province and city.