

Growth Group Questions – September 27, 2020

Introduction Questions:

- How are you doing?
 - [This question will always be here – it’s optional, but may help bring the passage back to mind if you meet later in the week] - If you heard the sermon this week, was there any part of the message or scripture passage that was particularly important or meaningful to you? If so, what?

Read: 1 Peter 2:9-25

Understanding Questions:

- For what purpose does Peter say God made the church into a holy nation?
- How does Peter refer to his readers? What are the different descriptions he refers to them as throughout the passage?
- What word does Peter use in the command for what the believer’s stance should be toward the following groups in 2:17:
 - A) _____ everyone
 - B) _____ the family of believers
 - C) _____ God
 - D) _____ the emperor
- What benefit does Peter say can come from respecting authorities? What does Peter say we should do with our new status as “a free people”?

Application Questions:

- What does it mean to you to think of the church as “a holy nation?” What does this look like in practice?
- Peter talks of Christians both as a “free people” and then also immediately uses the metaphor of slavery to describe our condition. How do you resolve the tension between these two concepts? What does it look like for you to live as both completely free and completely bound?

Additional Notes:

- The four honorific titles in in 2:9 are taken from Exodus 19:6 and Isaiah 43:20-21. What in the Old Testament describes Israel is here applied to the Christian community. Similarly, verse 2:10 is taken from Hosea 1.9, 2.23.
- Peter's address to his readers as "aliens and exiles" also finds similarity in Genesis 23.4 and Psalm 38.13. Peter draws a metaphor between the status of aliens and exiles in Greco-Roman society – which was a very low status – and that of Christians.
- In 2.17, the author differentiates the *fear* (reverent awe) due to *God* from the *honor* due to *everyone*, including the emperor. *Love* is again seen as a primary Christian virtue.
- The direct address to enslaved people is highly unusual in Greco-Roman ethical literature. It is a Jewish and Christian innovation.