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GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Life in Exile: Behaving Honorably Among the Gentiles (1 Peter 2:11-3:7)

TEACHING SUMMARY

Peter calls believers to live honorably among unbelievers while maintaining their identity as God's people. Good conduct can answer slander and draw attention to God. The teaching explains the household codes as instructions for faithful witness within the social conditions of Peter's audience.

Respect for civil authority is offered for the Lord's sake, so obedience to God remains primary. Believers should avoid unnecessary conflict without obeying commands that violate God's will. The Hebrew midwives illustrate a situation requiring resistance rather than compliance.

Peter addresses servants facing unjust treatment and points to Yeshua's refusal to retaliate. The teaching distinguishes guidance for people living within slavery from approval of slavery itself. It also says the ancient social structures are not institutions believers must recreate today.

The instructions to wives focus particularly on those with unbelieving husbands. Respectful conduct may win them to faith, but a wife's ultimate allegiance remains to Yeshua. The teaching emphasizes inward character and hope in God rather than excessive outward adornment or fear.

Husbands must act with understanding and honor their wives as fellow heirs of life. The teaching rejects interpreting weaker vessel as moral or intellectual inferiority. A husband's failure to honor his wife is serious enough to hinder his prayers.

The application draws on Jeremiah's counsel to exiles to seek their city's welfare. Believers can serve their communities and work for justice while recognizing that human society will remain imperfect. Their ultimate hope rests in Yeshua's coming kingdom.

SUMMARY POINTS

- Honorable conduct supports faithful witness among unbelievers.
- The household codes address the social setting of Peter's readers.
- Avoiding unnecessary offense does not require compromising obedience to God.
- Submission to human authority is secondary to allegiance to God.
- Yeshua provides the example of nonretaliation under injustice.
- Instructions to enslaved believers do not endorse or require recreating slavery.
- Believing wives are encouraged to witness through respectful conduct.
- Inner character receives priority over excessive outward adornment.
- Husbands must honor their wives as fellow heirs of God's grace.
- Exiles should seek their community's welfare while awaiting Messiah's kingdom.

FILL-IN-THE-BLANK

Basic

1. The teaching explains Gentiles here as _____.
2. Peter calls his readers sojourners and _____.
3. Believers submit to authorities for the _____ sake.
4. Peter points to _____ as the example of enduring injustice without retaliation.
5. Husbands should honor their wives as fellow _____ of the grace of life.
6. Jeremiah instructs exiles to seek the _____ of their city.

Challenging

1. The ethical instructions are described as household _____.
2. The Hebrew _____ refused the king of Egypt's command to kill newborn sons.
3. Peter names _____ as an example among the holy women.
4. Peter values the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet _____.
5. A husband's failure to honor his wife can hinder his _____.
6. The community application draws on Jeremiah chapter _____.

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How does the teaching connect honorable conduct with answering slander?
2. Why does submission for the Lord's sake place a limit on obedience to human authorities?
3. How does the teaching distinguish Peter's instructions to servants from endorsement of slavery?
4. How does ultimate allegiance to Yeshua qualify the instructions to wives with unbelieving husbands?
5. What responsibilities follow from recognizing wives as fellow heirs of the grace of life?
6. How can seeking a community's welfare be joined with hope in a kingdom human governments cannot create?

ANSWER KEY – GROUP GUIDE

Basic

1. unbelievers
2. exiles
3. Lord's
4. Yeshua
5. heirs
6. welfare

Challenging

1. codes
2. midwives
3. Sarah
4. spirit
5. prayers
6. 29