



## The Original Questions

- **Who** are we as Christians?
- **How** do we live in this place?
- **Where** is our hope?
- **Why** do we suffer when we do good?

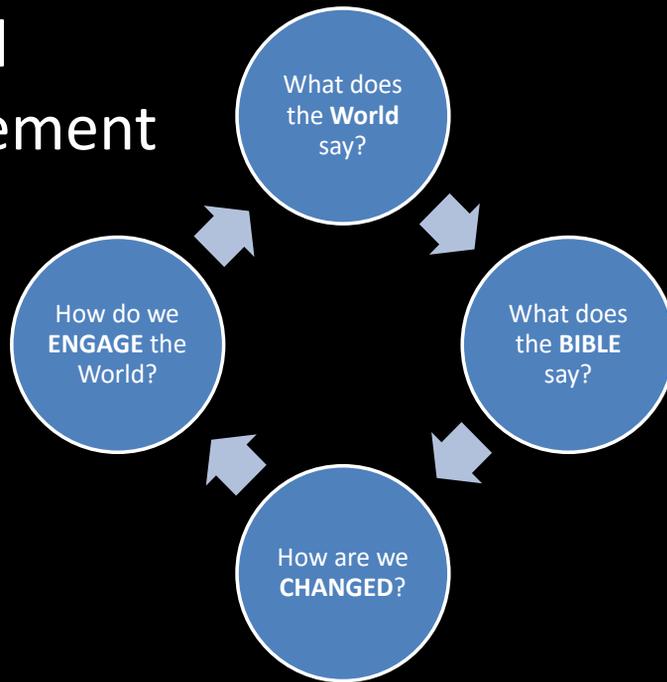
## Our Questions

- What does it mean to be “in the world, but not of it” in 21<sup>th</sup> century USA?
- How do we “speak into our culture”
- How do we respond to the changing cultural norms?
- What do we
  - Retain?
  - Reject?
  - Transform?

## 4 Distinctives of Christian Conduct

1. Christian conduct is based on the will of God
2. Jesus is the enabler and the exemplar
3. Christian conduct is an evangelical witness
4. Right conduct may include suffering

# Biblical Engagement



## 1 Peter 1- 2:12

- New **Identity** (Election) through New Birth
  - New **Calling** to Holiness based in New Hope
  - A New **Community** built up through Christ
- With
- New **Relationships** to the world around us

## Relationships According to the World

- How do we relate to God?
- How do we relate to the government officials?
- How do we treat those who work for us?
- How do we treat our fellow church members?
- How do we treat our spouses?
- How do we treat everyone?

## Called to New Relations

Read 1 Peter 2:1-12

In Small groups, answer:

- How should we relate to God?
- How should we relate to the government officials?
- How should we treat those who work for us?
- How should we treat our fellow church members?
- How should we treat our spouses?
- How should we treat everyone?

## The Household Codes

*Of household management we have seen that there are three parts—one is the rule of a master over slaves... another of a father, and the third of a husband. A husband and father rules over wife and children, both free, but the rule differs, the rule over his children being a royal, over his wife a constitutional rule. For although there may be exceptions to the order of nature, **the male is by nature fitter for command than the female**, just as the older and full-grown is superior to the younger and more immature...*

- Aristotle

## The Household Codes

*The freeman rules over the slave after another manner from that in which the male rules over the female, or the man over the child; **although the parts of the soul are present in all of them, they are present in different degrees**. For the slave has **no deliberative faculty at all**; the woman has, but it is without authority, and the child has, but it is immature. So it must necessarily be with the moral virtues also; all may be supposed to partake of them, but only in such manner and degree as is required by each for the fulfillment of his duty.*

- Aristotle

## The Household Codes

*The woman, says the Law, is in all things inferior to the man. Let her accordingly be submissive, not for her humiliation, but that she may be directed; for the authority has been given by God to the man.*

*- Josephus*

## Because Jesus...

- Jesus started not with the wealthy, the politically-connected, or the religious elite, but with the poor, the sick, the marginalized, the uneducated, slaves, women, and ethnic and religious minorities. He broke down social barriers, touching those who had been declared “untouchable,” teaching women as their rabbi, and eating and drinking with “sinners.”
- “Anyone who wants to be first must be the very last, and the servant of all.” Mark 9:35

## Because Jesus...

“You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. **It shall not be so among you.** But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many. “

- Mat 20:25-28 ESV

**No hierarchy! Only Submission.**

## A Word about “Submit”

- **ὑποτάσσω** – *to subject oneself, to submit*
  - A voluntary attitude of giving in, cooperating, assuming responsibility, and carrying a burden
  - (Can have compulsory sense (Luke 10:17))
- The connotation here is FREEDOM (v 16) to do GOOD by submitting to others
  - We have been freed from bondage to sin (Gal 5:13-14)
  - We are slaves to God
  - This submission is a voluntary action in imitation of Christ
- The exemplar is Jesus himself

## Christ the Exemplar

- Because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. (v 21)
- *Read Isaiah 52:13-53:12, The Suffering Servant (slave) Song*
- Christ suffered, though he did only good
- Christ submitted to all, even to the weight of sin
- Christ became a “slave of God”

## Christ the Exemplar

- No Sin, No Deceit
  - And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth. (Isa 53:9 ESV)
- Reviled, But not Reviling
- Suffering, but not Threatening
  - He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth. (Isa 53:7 ESV)
- Entrusted himself to God’s judgement (cf. Rom 12:19)
  - “Every sin ever committed will be covered by the blood of Christ, or repaid justly by God at the final judgment”

## So that..

We follow in Christ's footsteps:

- We are free to "Do Good"
  - This is public, more than expected (v 15)
- We are free to submit
  - To honor everyone, to love our enemies (v 17)
- We are "credited" if we suffer for doing good
  - It is gracious to suffer while doing good (v 20)
- We are free to Love our brothers (and sisters) in Christ
- We are free to fear God

## Engage the World

- New relationships
  - Fear God
  - Honor Everyone
  - Love the brothers and sisters in Christ
  - Honor the government representatives
  - Submit, with all respect, to your "boss"
  - Live as free people, freely choosing to submit, as Christ did
- How does this change how we interact with the World?

# The Homework

- Think about how you can do good, publicly, so that you can put to silence the charges against Christians.
- Then do it.