**A ROYAL PRIESTHOOD**

1 Peter 2:3-3:7

Key Verse 2:9

**“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.”**

**Introduction**

 Previously in lesson 1, we studied about our living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Since we received this new and living hope, we are now like new born babies. Peter exhorts us to crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it we would continue to grow up. Today in lesson 2, Peter helps us to have a clear identity as God’s chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and God’s special possession. Believers who had been scattered by persecution might have been confused due to the harsh reality that they faced. Their identity problem must have been an important issue for them. In a similar way our generation is unpredictable and it’s easy to lose our identity as God’s people. Out of fear, we may compromise with daily demands and our goal may become smaller and smaller. May the Lord help us to listen to what God is telling us through apostle Peter and resume a clear identity as His people and live accordingly. In questions 1 and 2, we will focus on our identity in Jesus. In questions 3 and 4, we will focus on how to live wisely in our practical lives, for sometimes it is still hard to live a holy life due to many challenges and difficulties. In short Jesus’ example is our answer!

1. Read verses 2:4-8. What does Peter call Jesus and those who come to Jesus? (4,5a) What is God’s plan for them? (5b) Why does Peter describe Jesus as a cornerstone? (6a) What two responses are there to this stone? What are the different outcomes to people’s responses? (6b-8)

1-1, Read verses 2:4-8.

 As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him—**5** you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Peter+2#fen-NIV-30405a)] to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. **6** For in Scripture it says: “See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame.” **7** Now to you who believe, this stone is precious. But to those who do not believe, “The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone,” **8** and, “A stone that causes people to stumble and a rock that makes them fall.” They stumble because they disobey the message—which is also what they were destined for.

1-2, What does Peter call Jesus and those who come to Jesus? (4, 5a)

 ***As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him—5 you also, like living stones,***

* Peter called Jesus the living Stone. He also called believers living stones.
* Let us first think about living stones. In the past we were like dead stones because of our sins.
* But when we came to Jesus, he breathed His life into us and we became alive. (Gen 2:7) If we know Jesus, we become living stones and can live a vibrant life.
* So Jesus is the life giving Spirit. (1 Cor 15:45) In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. (John 1:4).
* “As you come to him,” reminds us of God’s repeated invitation to his people to come to Jesus.
* We can come to God freely, anytime, anyplace and have a personal relationship with Him.
* We should not take this for granted, for Jesus paid the price once and for all on the cross.

Hebrew 10:14 reads,

 “For by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.”

Hebrew 10:19-22 reads,

 “Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, **20** by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, **21** and since we have a great priest over the house of God, **22** let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.”

 ***As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him—5 you also, like living stones,***

* Jesus was rejected by humans, but chosen by God and precious to him. This indicates the character of the living Stone: rejected by people, but chosen by God.
* However people did not want this kind of Messiah. What people wanted was a victorious champion who would feed them, make them secure, and give them military victory.
* When Jesus did not satisfy their demands, they rejected him. But God chose Jesus as the Messiah.
* Jesus was very precious to God because he obeyed God and fulfilled his salvation plan.
* Likewise when we are despised or unrecognized by people, we should not be discouraged. This is the best time to come to Jesus as His chosen people.

1-3, What is God’s plan for them? (5b)

 ***are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.***

* God uses them to build a spiritual house. “Spiritual house” is the dwelling place of God.

Ephesians 2:20-22 reads,

 “…built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.”

* We may feel useless and broken. But God placed us exactly where he wants us, to accomplish his own purpose.
* God is calling us and using us to build his invisible spiritual house.
* Jesus, the living Stone. He is the source of life for us. We are also living stones and he positions us where he wants us and relates us to one another.
* God is the great Architect and Builder who makes a beautiful spiritual house.
* We are precious and valuable to God and collectively we are God’s dwelling place.

 ***are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.***

* As a holy priesthood, we not only proclaim Jesus’ sacrifice, but each of us offers our own life to God as a living sacrifice.
* Though we may look insignificant in this world, we are very important people, because God is expanding his house and blessing in the world through us.

Romans 12:1-2 reads,

 “Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. **2** Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.”

1-4, Why does Peter describe Jesus as a cornerstone? (6a)

 ***For in Scripture it says: “See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone,***



* Psalms 118:22
* The cornerstone is the first stone set in a foundation. All other stones will be set based on this cornerstone. It will determine the position of all other stones included in the entire structure.

1-5, What two responses are there to this stone?

1-6, What are the different outcomes to people’s responses? (6b-8)

 ***and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame.” 7 Now to you who believe, this stone is precious. But to those who do not believe, “The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone,” 8 and, “A stone that causes people to stumble and a rock that makes them fall.” They stumble because they disobey the message—which is also what they were destined for.***

* There are two responses that one can have to Jesus, and each person will face a critical consequence as a result of their response.
* The word, “Trust” means “firm belief in the reliability, truth, ability, or strength of someone or something”, or as a legal term; “confidence placed in a person by making that person the nominal owner of property to be held or used for the benefit of one or more persons.
* To trust in Jesus means to accept him as the foundation of our life and the source of our security.
* It is to commit our life, our future, our family, all that we are and have to Jesus. It is to be “all in” with Jesus.
* Those who do this may look like they are losing at the beginning. But in the end they are never put to shame.
* The Almighty Creator God is faithful, and he keeps his promise to those who trust in Jesus.
* On the other hand, those who ignore Jesus and disobey his message will stumble and fall.
* To trust Jesus at a young age and give up one’s freedom to enjoy the world seems foolish, but it’s actually the only way to be sure that one doesn’t waste their life.

2. Read verse 2:9-10. Who are we in Jesus Christ and what does each title mean? (9a) Based on these titles, what is God’s purpose for us? (9b) Why is it important to remember God’s mercy? (10)

2-1, Read verse 2:9-10.

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. **10** Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

2-2, Who are we in Jesus Christ and what does each title mean? (9a)

 ***But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession,***

* Again Peter focused on our identity in God.
* Peter identified believers with four different names based on Exodus 19:5-6.
* Originally God wanted to bless the Israelites, and use them to bless the peoples of all nations.

***a chosen people***

* The things that once exclusively belonged to Israel are no longer the property of Israel alone. These are now the possession of every Christian.

Deuteronomy 7:6-9 reads,

 “For you are a people holy to the Lord your God. The Lord your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on the face of the earth to be his people, his treasured possession. **7** The Lord did not set his affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples. **8** But it was because the Lord loved you and kept the oath he swore to your ancestors that he brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the land of slavery, from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt. **9** Know therefore that the Lord your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commandments.”

* The Lord wants all of us to have the assurance that we are his chosen people.
* We have become the people of God through Jesus’ redemption and through God’s gracious choice.
* God declares that we are a people of God chosen by him. Therefore, we must be sure of his choice by the blood of Jesus and live as people of God.
* We are the citizens of the kingdom of God. We must have this confidence each day and live in this world as those worthy to be the people of God.

 ***“A Royal Priesthood”***

* Jesus is a priest and king after the order of Melchizedek. Melchizedek was the king who met Abraham after the battle of the kings.
* He received tithes from Abraham. So Jesus' priesthood is a royal priesthood. Because we belong to King Jesus, we are royal priests.
* The early Christians were ill-treated because of their faith. To people’s eyes they were nobodies. But to God’s eyes they were his royal family.
* God made each of us a royal priest regardless of our race or age. As members of the royal family we share in the ministry of our Father God.
* Also as God’s Royal Priesthood, we are privileged to pray for America and the whole world like Jesus who had prayed in John 17 as the High Priest.
* Often times we ended up despairing due to our sinful environment. However now is the best time for us to identify as God’s Royal Priesthood, praying all the more earnestly.

Revelation 5:10 says,

 You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth.”

***“A Holy Nation”***

* This title helps us to know which nation we belong to. Though we are living in this world, we Christians do not belong to this world. We belong to God’s kingdom.
* The Holy Spirit dwells in us. So we are called to reflect God’s holiness through our words, deeds, and lifestyle.
* As we do this together with other believers we form a holy nation. This nation is not geographical or territorial, but spiritual, as Jesus said before Pilate.
* To be a holy nation means to reveal God’s holy presence in a corrupted world.

***“God’s Special Possession”***

* When we have a special possession, like an iphone 6s plus, we treasure it and take special care of it.
* God bought us with the precious blood of Jesus. So we are God’s special possession.
* When we consider what God has done through UBF ministry for the last half a decade to pioneer 92 countries with 1800 missionaries, we undeniably give thanks to the Lord.
* It was possible when God blessed us to be His Special Possession. Now is up to us whether we just try to hold onto and enjoy this blessing for ourselves, or whether we pick up a new pioneering spirit for God.
* This is the reason Peter never missed the chance to describe God’s purpose for our receiving so many privileged titles from our God.

2-3, Based on these titles, what is God’s purpose for us? (9b)

 ***that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.***

* It is to declare His praises does not mean preaching at people; rather, it means to share with others the abundant grace we have received from God.
* This is the meaning of declaring the praises of him. When people are living in darkness, they don’t know who they are, where to go, why they live, or how to live.
* They need to hear about Jesus from people who have received his grace. Sharing our personal testimony is effective and contagious.
* Even though today’s situation is tough, we must actively teach the word of God to young students.
* The people in this generation worship idols as their gods. This generation ridicules the gospel and despises true believers.
* But we must have confidence in the gospel and boldly preach the life-giving gospel.
* Let’s pray that we may repent of our easy going life and renew our calling from the Lord.
* Let us remember that we are a royal priesthood and faithfully fulfill our responsibility.
* May we work harder in the upcoming years as a royal priesthood by giving thanks to the Lord who saved terrible sinners with the word of God and the Holy Spirit and who appointed us as a royal priesthood.
* Just as the Lord used Korea UBF as a kingdom of priests for the whole world, God will use North American and Los Angeles UBF coworkers as a kingdom of priests for the people in the world.
* May God bless us to raise many disciples of Jesus and to pioneer all campuses around us first.
* In DNC, a former president of the United States, Bill Clinton pointed out that his wife will be the one to make real change for America’s future.
* But we believe that real change does not depend on political leaders. Rather it relies on the history-makers of God. That is what we are!
* May God raise world changers through us and our growing children. May He call many American young people as a royal priesthood in this generation!

2-4, Why is it important to remember God’s mercy? (10)

 ***Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.***

* In order to share what God has done for us, we should always remember that once we were not his people, but now we are the people of God.
* Once we had not received mercy, but now we have received mercy.

3. Read verses 2:11-17. What did Peter urge the believers to do? (11, 12) What attitude should Christians have toward human authority, and why? (13-15) How should believers exercise their freedom? (16) What kind of relationship should believers have with people and with God? (17)

3-1, Read verses 2:11-17.

 Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul. **12** Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us. **13** Submit yourselves for the Lord’s sake to every human authority: whether to the emperor, as the supreme authority, **14** or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. **15** For it is God’s will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish people. **16** Live as free people, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as God’s slaves. **17** Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the emperor.

3-2, What did Peter urge the believers to do? (11, 12)

  ***Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul.***

* Peter called the believers, “dear friends.” He must have learned from Jesus who called him, “friend” (Jn 15:15).
* He also called them “foreigners and exiles.”
* In reality, though we are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and God’s special possession. We live in this world as foreigners and exiles.
* We are strangers to the people in this world because our language and lifestyle is different.

***“abstain from sinful desires”***

* Sinful desires have power to draw us back into the world by drifting from Jesus
* Sinful desires may include sexual immorality, greed, self-seeking, selfish ambition, self-glorification, and all manner of ego indulgence.
* These sinful desires wage war against our soul, weaken our spirituality, and hinder our pilgrimage to the kingdom of God.

 ***12 Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.***

* Also Peter exhorts us to live good lives among the pagans.

Matthew 5:16 reads,

 Jesus said, “Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven”

* When the light of God shines through us, it exposes the darkness in unbelievers, and provokes their reaction.
* So they accuse us of doing wrong and then try to dig out some basis for their accusations by finding a small mistake.
* When we hear their accusations, it is easy to be upset and begin fighting with them.

 But if we fight with them, we give them even more reasons to accuse us.

* Instead of doing this, we should focus on living a good life with a genuine motive of love, serving them sacrificially.
* Then, when they see our good deeds, they realize that their accusations are groundless and God is the source of our goodness.
* This may influence them to believe in God. Then they glorify God, not grudgingly, but willingly as recipients of his grace who can also live a good life.

3-3, What attitude should Christians have toward human authority, and why? (13-15)

 ***Submit yourselves for the Lord’s sake to every human authority: whether to the emperor, as the supreme authority, 14 or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. 15 For it is God’s will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish people.***

* Peter upholds the legitimacy of these authorities to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right.

Romans 13:1-5 reads,

 “Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. **2** Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. **3** For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and you will be commended. **4** For the one in authority is God’s servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for rulers do not bear the sword for no reason. They are God’s servants, agents of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. **5** Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also as a matter of conscience.”

* Peter reminds them that it was God’s will to do good. Here “doing good” is expressed by submission to authority.
* This would silence those who were making foolish accusations against them (15).

3-4, How should believers exercise their freedom? (16)

 ***Live as free people, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as God’s slaves.***

* We are warned against taking the **liberty** we have in Jesus as an excuse for sin.
* Instead we use our **liberty** in Jesus to show the kind of love and respect that Peter calls for.

3-5, What kind of relationship should believers have with people and with God? (17)

 ***Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the emperor.***

* Believers must use their freedom to live as God’s servants.
* The Message version of the Bible says, “Exercise your freedom by serving God, not by breaking the rules.”
* We should show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, and honor leaders.
* We need to learn submission to authority, respect for everyone, the fear of God, and to honor our leaders.

4. Read verses 2:18-3:7. How should believing employees serve their employers and why? (18-20) How can we obey this exhortation? (21-25) What does Peter encourage wives to do? (1-6) Likewise, what does he encourage husbands to do? (7)

4-1, Read verses 2:18-3:7.

Slaves, in reverent fear of God submit yourselves to your masters, not only to those who are good and considerate, but also to those who are harsh. **19** For it is commendable if someone bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because they are conscious of God. **20** But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. **21** To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. **22** “He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.” **23** When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats.Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. **24** “He himself bore our sins” in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; “by his wounds you have been healed.”**25** For “you were like sheep going astray,”[[f](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Peter+2#fen-NIV-30425f)] but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Wives, in the same way submit yourselves to your own husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, **2** when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. **3** Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as elaborate hairstyles and the wearing of gold jewelry or fine clothes. **4** Rather, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God’s sight.**5** For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to adorn themselves.They submitted themselves to their own husbands, **6** like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her lord. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear.

**7** Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

4-2, How should believing employees serve their employers and why? (18-20)

 ***Slaves, in reverent fear of God submit yourselves to your masters, not only to those who are good and considerate, but also to those who are harsh. 19 For it is commendable if someone bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because they are conscious of God. 20 But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God.***

* During those days, it was not unusual for a slave to be better educated than their master. Slaves included doctors, musicians, and other professionals.
* But still, they were under the control of their masters. They had no legal rights. Their masters could beat them and abuse them in many ways.
* It must have been hard to submit to one’s master, especially to those who were harsh.
* Likewise today, employees might have a hard time submitting to their employers.
* When we feel constricted like a slave, we naturally feel rebellious.

 ***Slaves, in reverent fear of God submit yourselves to your masters, not only to those who are good and considerate, but also to those who are harsh. 19 For it is commendable if someone bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because they are conscious of God.***

* When those who were slaves recognized God, who was there with them, they were able to endure.
* So Peter encouraged them to suffer for doing good instead of suffering for doing wrong. This is commendable before God.
* Sometimes, when we are in a hostile environment, we ask ourselves, “Where is God? Is God among us or not?”
* Then we doubt God’s love and power and fall into fatalism and confusion. But when we are aware that God is with us we can overcome all kinds of hardships.
* God is watching over us. We can be a good influence, and glorify God, regardless of our situation.

4-3, How can we obey this exhortation? (21-25)

  ***To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. 22 “He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.”***

* Suffering for doing good is a part of Christian life.

Philippians 1:29 reads,

 “For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him.”

* Jesus set a good example in suffering for doing good when he suffered for us. So when we suffer for doing good we are following in Jesus’ footsteps.
* Jesus had no reason to suffer, because he was without sin. Nevertheless, he suffered for us.
* When Jesus served his messianic ministry, he was often misunderstood, insulted and rejected.
* But he never used his power to retaliate for the wrongs that were done to him.

***23 When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.***

* It is very natural to retaliate against wrongdoing. But Jesus never retaliated; he made no threat, not even a gesture.
* It was because he fully entrusted himself to God who judges justly. In this way he broke the vicious cycle of retaliation and made peace.

Romans 12:19 says,

 “Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God’s wrath, for it is written: ‘It is mine to avenge; I will repay,’ says the Lord.”

 ***“He himself bore our sins” in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; “by his wounds you have been healed.” 25 For “you were like sheep going astray,” but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.***

* Jesus suffered. He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross. He paid the full penalty that our sins deserve to offer forgiveness to us freely.
* The chains of sin are very strong. So no one can break them by their own effort. But when we accept Jesus’ death, we die to sin.
* The power of sin is broken. We are set free to live for righteousness. Still, however, wounds may remain deep inside of us.

***“by his wounds you have been healed.” 25 For “you were like sheep going astray,” but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.***

* These wounds may be from long ago, through a bad experience in childhood.
* At the root of someone’s cynicism, sorrow, fatalism, or despair, there may be a wound.
* In order to live a good life we must be a healthy person both emotionally and spiritually. Our past wounds must be healed.
* Many think that only a professional counselor can heal them. Such people may be helpful, but they cannot really heal the wounds caused by sin.
* Only Jesus can heal these wounds. Peter quoted Isaiah 53:5 and said, “…by his wounds you have been healed.”
* Those who are healed by Jesus can live a good life and be a blessing to others.
* We were like sheep going astray, but now we have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of our souls.
* As we follow Jesus, he watches over us and cares for us. Let’s come to Jesus for healing so that we may live a good life.

4-4, What does Peter encourage wives to do? (1-6)

***Background)***

* The first 6 verses were about wives and the last one verse was about husbands.
* Peter must have seen the importance of the wife’s role in the family for change!
* In those times, the status of women was similar to that of slaves.
* One influential philosopher from those days, Aristotle, said that women were inferior to men, but a little better than slaves.
* Women were subject to their father before marriage and their husband after marriage.
* In such an environment, Jesus greatly valued women. He treated them with respect and dignity. So there were many women among his followers.
* After receiving his grace, they supported his ministry sacrificially and wholeheartedly out of their own means (Lk 8:2-3).
* Wherever the gospel spread, many women responded well. The book of Acts tells us that quite a few prominent Greek women believed (Ac 17:4,12).
* In many cases, the women believed, but their husbands did not. So naturally, conflicts arose between believing wives and unbelieving husbands.
* These believing wives needed practical instruction about how they should live out their gospel faith.

 ***Wives, in the same way submit yourselves to your own husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives,***

* To be sure, submitting to an unbelieving husband was not easy. Nevertheless, Peter exhorted such wives to submit to their husbands.
* Submission was the opportunity to learn of Jesus. Peter was telling them to be good wives who brought peace to their families for the Lord’s sake.
* Believing wives want to win their husbands over to Jesus. They love them and want what is best for them.
* They want their husbands to share the wonderful grace of Jesus which they have received. The question is how to go about it.
* Usually they want to use their words, but It doesn’t always work that way. Usually this wounds a husband’s pride.
* Thus Peter exhorted believing wives to submit to Jesus and learn of Him in dealing with their husbands in the way Jesus had showed them.

 ***2 when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. 3 Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as elaborate hairstyles and the wearing of gold jewelry or fine clothes. 4 Rather, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God’s sight.***

* The lives of believing wives are to be marked by moral purity that springs from reverence toward God.
* This comes when they accept their role as wives as God’s mission for them and devote themselves to caring for their husbands and children.
* Out of such purity springs compassion, diligence, wisdom, and a hardworking spirit by which they provide wonderfully for their families.

Proverbs 31:30 reads,

 Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting;

 but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.

 ***5 For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to adorn themselves. They submitted themselves to their own husbands, 6 like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her lord. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear.***

* It is common for wives to put their hope in their husbands, thinking their future largely depends on him.
* When he does well, they feel happy and secure. But when he does not do well, they become nervous and worry.
* So they demand him to improve by any means. However, their future does not depend on their husbands, but on God.
* God is Almighty and loving and absolutely trustworthy. God is the Sovereign Ruler who cares for those who trust him; he provides for them and protects them.
* He is the true source of security and the only worthy object of hope. When a believing wife puts her hope in God she can have peace and assurance.
* In the book of Genesis Leah realized this point and by faith she named her son as Judah, which means “praise the Lord God.” Judah became an ancestor of Jesus!
* Peter also mentioned Sarah. Sarah called Abraham “my lord” in Genesis 18:12. This reflected Sarah’s spiritual growth.
* After accepting God’s promise deeply she was able to put her hope in God all the more and grew spiritually.
* Her example shows us how a believing wife can grow by putting her hope in God and by submitting to her husband until she matures.
* Believing women can be Sarah’s daughters when they do what is right without fear, and trust God (6b).
* When we put our hope in God and live by faith, all kinds of fears will go away.

4-5, Likewise, what does he encourage husbands to do? (7)

 ***Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.***

* In those times husbands regarded their wives as their possessions. They were free to mistreat them or even divorce them over small matters.
* But Peter admonished believing husbands to regard their wives differently than worldly husbands did.
* The words **“in the same way”** refer back to the phrases: “for the Lord’s sake” (2:13a), “in reverent fear of God” (2:18a), and **“follow in Jesus’ steps”** (2:21b).
* Especially, following Jesus’ footsteps is significant in that Jesus valued women and treated them with respect and dignity, so should believing husbands.
* **“Considerate”** - The first thing husbands must know is that wives are different So husbands should not see their wives from their own point of view.
* Women are different from men in many ways: physically, emotionally, in their way of thinking, lifestyle, and desires.
* So husbands must try to understand them. This takes time. Usually, wives simply want to be understood by their husbands.
* But if they are not understood they become extremely frustrated. An understanding mind is essential for a Christian husband.
* Understanding is not enough. Christian husbands must treat their wives with respect as the weaker partner and heirs together of the gracious gift of life.
* Here **“weaker”** refers to physical strength and legal standing in the context of the times.
* Husbands should not misuse their physical strength or legal authority for selfish ends, but use it to respect and honor their wives.
* The word “partner” indicates a relationship of mutual respect and love. It is not hierarchical or simply dividing responsibilities and assets fifty-fifty.
* It means the two are one and they travel together side by side through their pilgrimage of life. They share their joy and sorrow, agonies and successes. They share everything.
* They have the same faith, hope, vision, goal, and direction. They walk together as friends and are heirs together of eternal life.
* Sometimes we argue due to different perspectives and opinions. At that time, it is good for us to affirm that we are essentially one in Christ.
* Husbands should know that their relationship with their wives affects their relationship with God.
* If they treat their wives disrespectfully, the Lord will pay no heed to their prayers. So it is good to repent quickly. Then God hears our prayers.
* Peter’s exhortation gave wives clear motivation to struggle, overcoming deep despair, and gave them hope to change their homes.
* It also enabled husbands to correct their hierarchical attitude toward their wives in order to form a beautiful family in Christ.
* In this way they could have hope and vision to serve the world with God’s love. And history attests that such Christian families did indeed impact future generations.

**Conclusion**

 Through this passage we can have vision and hope for all nations. Sometimes we are frustrated as we witness the decay of the individual, family, and society in our times. Broken families produce broken children who in turn damage others in a vicious cycle. But thank Jesus who set a perfect example to transform each person, each family, and each nation. Again the situation seems to be getting worse, and it’s hard to find hope in this age of terror. But through Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross, we are now a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and God’s precious possession. When we apply Jesus’ love and mercy, we will have hope for the future, a hope of changed homes, a changed society, and a changed world. The future of America also depends on holy believers, Christian wives and husbands. Let’s pray that God may give us His vision and hope for America, and raise 10,000 beautiful Christian families for his glorious purpose. 2:20b, 21 reads again "...but if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example that you should follow in his steps."

**One word: You are God’s chosen people**