



Chapter 2

Verse 9- *But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;*

darkness into His marvelous light- God has called us out of the darkness of a meaningless life into the light of salvation. Because we belong to Him, we belong in His light.

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Verse 10- *for you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.*

now you are the people of God- Peter is quoting Hosea 2:23:

"I will sow her for Myself in the land. I will also have compassion on her who had not obtained compassion, And I will say to those who were not My people, 'You are My people!' And they will say, 'You are my God!'"

The church used to belong to themselves, but now we belong to God, just like Hosea's wife, Gomer.

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Verse 10- *for you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.*

but now you have received mercy- In our life before surrendering to Jesus, we would not have received mercy (*ēleēmenoi*- aorist participle “having received mercy.”) There was a definite point in time when His mercy was applied- at our salvation, as we stood before Him in judgment. Now our life is marked by mercy and grace.

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Verse 11- *Beloved, I urge you as foreigners and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts, which wage war against the soul.*

foreigners and strangers- Peter is now changing his emphasis from our relationship with God to our relationship with the world. We are foreigners (*paroicous*-) and strangers (*parepidēmous*) in this world, which means three things:

1. Readers are residing in countries other than their country of citizenship.
2. Readers are living among non-Christians and are strangers to the pagan world.
3. Readers are strangers in this world since their real citizenship is in heaven.

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Verse 12- *Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God on the day of visitation.*

Keep your behavior excellent- This is a command. Even though we don't belong to this world, we are to obey its laws (Romans 13). Peter uses "Gentiles" here to denote non-Christians more than non-Jews.

behavior – (*anastrophe*- walk, manner of life, conduct) One of Peter's favorite words to describe how we should act in the world.

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Verse 12- *Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God on the day of visitation.*

they slander you- *katalalousin-* *kata* (against) + *lalos* (speak)
Living the Christian life can be a powerful witness to the world.

Matt 5:16: *Let your light so shine before men, **that they may see your good works**, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*

visitation- (*episkopēs*) verb- "bishop," noun- "visit" This probably refers to the day they are saved.

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Verse 13- *Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority,*

Even though believers are “foreigners and strangers” in this world, we are to obey its laws. God instituted the home (marriage), the government, and the church, in that order.

every human institution- God has created government to create order, even if those in positions of authority don't honor him. 1 Cor. 14:33- *“For God is not a God of confusion, but of peace.”*

The major authorities were emperors (kings) and governors.

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Verse 14- *or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right.*

governors- This term includes others- procurators (financial leaders), proconsuls (commanders of the military), and tax collectors.

the punishment of evildoers- Weren't those in government persecuting believers? Didn't they approve the unjust crucifixion of Jesus? Yes, but even so, the most oppressive governments hold evil in check, preventing society from collapsing into complete anarchy.

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Verse 15- *For such is the will of God, that by doing right you silence the ignorance of foolish people.*

silence- (“to close the mouth with a muzzle” - Wuest)

Don't be bothered when people lie to criticize you. The only taste of success some people have is when they take a bite out of you.” (Zig Ziglar)

the ignorance of foolish people- Criticism of Christians is often silenced by those living righteous lives. People want to know the will of God. Here it is: Obey government so foolish people will be silenced.

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Verse 16- *Act as free people, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil, but use it as bond-servants of God.*

Act as free people- Even though they are being persecuted, they are absolutely free- John 8:36 KJV-

“If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.”

We submit to human authority not out of loyalty to governments or men but out of obedience and loyalty to God. We shouldn't let our liberty be an excuse for license. We cannot say our heavenly citizenship exempts us from the laws and leaders of this world.

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Verse 17- *Honor all people, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king.*

In contrast to using Christian liberty as a cover, we should:

- Honor everyone. God's will is to give respect to every single person, whether they deserve it or not.
- Love other Christians. Jesus said that the world around us would know we are His disciples by our love for each other (John 13:35).
- Fear God. Hold God's power, majesty, and sovereignty in awe and wonder.
- Honor the emperor or king. There is no authority not established by God (Romans 13:1).