SCATTERED · HEAR LEADER'S GUIDE · SESSION 4

1 Peter 2:11–25 Strangers who live honorably

45–60 MINUTES
ANY SMALL GROUP
ONLINE OR IN PERSON

The big idea. Peter calls scattered believers foreigners and exiles, and tells them how to live among people who don't share their faith: keep your conduct good, honor everyone, submit for the Lord's sake, and when you suffer for doing good, follow Christ, who did not retaliate but entrusted himself to God. Their good lives, not their arguments, are what the watching world will see.

Who this is for. Anyone leading a small group through this passage: a Discord voice channel, a Zoom room, a home group, a youth group. You don't need to be a pastor. Your job is to keep the group in the text and make room for everyone to speak.

Before you meet

- Read 1 Peter 2:11–25 twice this week, once out loud.
- Watch the moments from this week's session linked below, or the whole replay at https://thechurch.digital/scattered/ if you have time.
- Pray for each person by name. In an online group, check that everyone has the link and can unmute.

HEAR in one line each

- **Highlight**: the phrase that stops you.
- **Explain**: what it meant to its first readers.
- **Apply**: not taught; answer what people notice from the text.
- **Respond**: one thing you'll do, and a prayer.

· Open — 5 MIN

Welcome everyone. Ask each person to name a place, online or in person, where they feel like the outsider. Open in prayer, or ask someone ahead of time to pray.

· Read — 5 MIN

Read the passage aloud twice, with two different voices. If your group uses different translations, let them; hearing two wordings helps. Ask people to listen for the words about conduct and for what Jesus did when he suffered.

H Highlight — 10 MIN

Go around: which verse or phrase stood out to you, and why? Don't explain anything yet. Just collect the highlights.

1. Which phrase caught you, and what did you feel when you heard it?
2. Which part of this passage is hardest for you to hear this week?

Listen for: In this week's session people noticed the thread of conduct running through the whole passage, the call to submit and how hard it is after poor leadership, verse 16 (free, but not using freedom as a cover), verse 23 (he did not retaliate) and verse 25 (returned to the Shepherd). Any of these opens a good conversation.

WATCH Ian Kirk on the thread of conduct (16:00–16:43): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b8_DX2XlvBw&t=960s

E Explain — 10 MIN

Now ask what it meant to the people who first read it. Use the background below only as much as the group needs; this isn't a lecture.

1. Peter's readers lived under rulers who didn't share their faith, and some were household servants. Why would he tell them to honor and submit rather than resist?
2. Verses 21–23 describe Jesus under abuse. What did he do instead of retaliating, and what does verse 23 say he trusted?

WATCH Jeff Reed on refugees told to submit (34:25–35:01): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b8_DX2XlvBw&t=2065s

A Apply — 15 MIN

Don't teach the application. People will start to say what they notice for their own lives. When they do, respond by taking it back to the passage: "Where do you see that in these verses?" Read that verse again together and let Scripture confirm, sharpen or gently correct it. The text does the work, not the leader.

Respond

10 MIN

> Ask each person: what is God asking you to do with this? Keep it to one concrete thing for this week. Then pray for each other's responses, briefly and by name.
>
> 1. What is one thing you'll do this week because of this passage?
> 2. Where will you answer someone with good conduct instead of a comeback this week?

The passage

BSB

[11] Beloved, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from the desires of the flesh, which war against your soul. [12] Conduct yourselves with such honor among the Gentiles that, though they slander you as evildoers, 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 institution, whether to the king as the supreme authority, [14] or to governors as those sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to praise those who do right. [15] For it is God’s will that by doing good you should silence the ignorance of foolish men. [16] Live in freedom, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as servants of God. [17] Treat everyone with high regard: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honor the king. [18] Servants, submit yourselves to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but even to those who are unreasonable. [19] For if anyone endures the pain of unjust suffering because he is conscious of God, this is to be commended. [20] How is it to your credit if you are beaten for doing wrong and you endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. [21] For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in His footsteps: [22] “He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in His mouth.” [23] When they heaped abuse on Him, He did not retaliate; when He suffered, He made no threats, but entrusted Himself to Him who judges justly. [24] He Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. “By His stripes you are healed.” [25] For “you were like sheep going astray,” but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Going deeper

> But He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed. `Isaiah 53:5 (BSB)`

"By his wounds we are healed": the Suffering Servant line Peter echoes in verse 24.

> In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven. `Matthew 5:16 (BSB)`

Jesus on good works that lead others to glorify God, the same hope as verse 12.

> Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which is from God. The authorities that exist have been appointed by God. `Romans 13:1 (BSB)`

Paul on governing authorities, read alongside Peter's call to honor the emperor.

Notes for the leader

- Silence is fine. Count to ten before you fill it.
- In an online group, call on people by name, gently. Chat-only voices count: read their typed answers aloud.
- If someone shares something heavy, like grief, a crisis or thoughts of self-harm, pause the study and care for the person first. If anyone is in danger, contact local emergency services. In the US you can call or text 988. Outside the US, https://findahelpline.com lists local lines.
- Words about submitting and enduring can be heard as "stay where you're being hurt." Peter is not telling anyone to stay in danger. If someone in your group is being abused or controlled, help them get safe and connect them with people who can help, then come back to verse 23: Jesus entrusted himself to the one who judges justly.

Next week. 1 Peter 3:1–12, winning people without a word, and answering insult with a blessing. Find the next session at https://thechurch.digital/scattered/.