



WEST HIGHLAND
BAPTIST CHURCH

Facilitators' Guide for Community Groups

Strangers & Exiles "Submission to Authority"

1 Peter 2:13-25
November 17

1. Welcome (an ice-breaker discussion to get everyone comfortable with sharing):

Share something from the baptism testimonies of a week ago that impacted you by way of encouragement or challenge. If you have been baptized, share the details of when and where and a statement or two of what that step of faith meant to you.

2. Worship (to draw our hearts to the Lord and invite Him into our discussion):

Scripture Reading This scripture reading is from Romans 8 and serves as a beautiful reminder of God's everlasting love for his children. It would serve well as an assurance of pardon that follows a prayer of confession.

Split your group in half, and read and respond to each other.

Group 1: What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?

Group 2: He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?

Group 1: Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.

Group 2: Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.

Group 1: Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?

Group 2: No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:31–35, 37–39 (ESV)

Sing "In Christ Alone", by Shane and Shane: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wfx-So7WcZ0>

Dozens of other worship songs are also available at www.westhighland.org/smallgroupsongs.

3. Word (to consider how the sermon applies to our lives, and to live out the "one anothers"):

Read together:

Sermon Summary

In 1 Peter 2:13-25, Peter encourages Christians to respect authority because it honors God, who is in control over all leaders. By choosing to respect authority, even when it's difficult, we show others that our faith changes how we live, helping silence any criticism about our beliefs. Peter also talks about the unique kind of freedom we have in Christ—while we're free from sin, we're called to use that freedom to serve and respect others, especially our fellow Christians. Peter then acknowledges that doing the right thing can sometimes bring unfair treatment or suffering. When that happens, he calls us to follow Jesus' example, who faced suffering without fighting back. Jesus trusted God to bring justice, and through His suffering, He brought healing and hope to us all. This teaches us to trust God, even when life seems unfair, and to stay close to Him, our good Shepherd, through all our ups and downs.

Sermon Questions

In verses 13-17, Peter talks about submitting to human authorities. Why do you think Peter encourages Christians to respect authorities, even if they are not Christian? What challenges might we face in doing this today?

Verse 15 says that by doing good, Christians can silence those who criticize them. What are some ways we, as Christians, can "do good" in our community and show others our faith through our actions?

Peter talks about suffering for doing good in verses 19-20. Is there a way in which you have suffered for doing good? How should we respond if we face criticism or teasing for our faith?

Verses 21-25 describe how Jesus suffered without retaliating or getting angry. What can we learn from Jesus' example? How can we apply this when we feel mistreated or misunderstood?

Is there an area in your life where you find it hard to submit or respect authority? How could understanding this passage help you respond differently in that situation?

4. Witness (joining Jesus in his mission):

November is traditionally the month where, along with Remembrance Day, the church also remembers and prays together specifically for our brothers and sisters around the world who are persecuted because of their faith. We would encourage you to do so together in your Community Group and below are some Scriptures and prayer points to help guide you.

In Ephesians 6:18, Paul says to be alert and pray for all of God's people.

- Pray that persecuted Christians would know the hope God gives (Ephesians 1:18).
- Pray that Christians facing persecution would rely on God, and not themselves (2 Corinthians 1:7-9).
- Pray that persecuted Christians would fearlessly tell others about Jesus (Ephesians 6:20).
- Pray that their witness would inspire those who plan to harm them (Acts 16:25, Luke 6:27-31).
- Pray that God would provide for the physical needs of persecuted Christians (3 John 2).

- Pray that they would experience God's peace, despite their weakness and current circumstances (2 Corinthians 12:9).
- Pray that God would protect them, according to His will (Matthew 26:39).
- Pray that God would ultimately rescue them out of dangerous circumstances (Psalm 91:15).
- Pray that persecuted Christians would feel deeply connected to Jesus in their suffering (John 15:19-20).
- Pray that they would be completely faithful and surrendered to God's will (Revelation 2:10-11).
- Pray that they would have wisdom and discernment for how to approach every situation (Matthew 10:16-18).
- Pray that as they share in Christ's sufferings, they would be able to rejoice in the hope God offers them (1 Peter 4:12-14).

Pray also with/for our WH team to Colombia as they serve alongside the church in Medellin, for their witness, and encouragement of our brothers and sisters there. The WH Team will be returning on November 18th.