



EVERYDAY CHURCH
(2) Everyday community
1 Peter 1.13 - end

Opening up! Connecting with each other.

If a story comes to mind, share a time of good or bad communication with someone when you couldn't understand one another's language.

You might like also to share whether last week's study has had an effect on your thinking or living during the past week.

Listening in!

Read 1 Peter 1.13 – end

- Living as a diplomat

We cannot expect the world to be like us as we live in a post Christendom world. Instead we might consider that we live in a mission field. We are like those to whom Peter wrote, exiles or foreigners in our own land. As foreigners, Christians are to treat their host culture with respect, and honour those in authority, just like a diplomat, whose ultimate allegiance is to their homeland. But they pursue the cause of their homeland by showing meticulous respect for the culture and people of the culture they have been assigned to, despite being in a hostile environment.

- Loving the culture

Peter's readers may have responded to the hostility of the world around them by retreating into a ghetto, or by adapting to make themselves acceptable. Peter charts a third route – responding to hostility by doing good (2.12,15,20,24). It is an echo of Jeremiah's call to the exiles (Jeremiah 29.7)

Peter also encourages them to be distinctive (1.14,15; 2.11). He quotes Leviticus, addressing the church as the new Israel: 'Be holy, because I am holy.' This was not just about what people did in the place of worship, but in the market place as well. Likewise we are to be distinctive by living gospel-shaped lives.

The key distinction is love (1.22). We are to be distinctive by our brotherly and sisterly love, being reborn into a new family.

Looking out!

- What does it mean in everyday life to be holy? (1 Peter 1.15) Peter had seen holiness being lived out day by day by Jesus, which obviously made Peter want to be like Him.
- Looking at the passage:
 - a) On the negative side, what things need to be got rid of to live a holy life? You might like to share some things you find difficult to be rid of.
 - b) On the positive side, what things help us to grow in holiness?
 - c) The passage speaks of loving each other deeply (1 Peter 1:22). How can we grow in love, especially when we don't feel it?

If you haven't already answered this, how do your answers to these questions apply to your own life?

How do your answers encourage you on your frontline?

How do they challenge you?

Looking up!

Pray for yourselves and the church to be a holy and loving community, living gospel-shared lives that make a difference to everyday life in the church and outside. You may wish to offer to God, those things that you find difficult to be rid of and ask that He works in you to transform you and draw you closer to holiness. Perhaps you may choose to share your journey with a prayer partner in the week ahead, as God works in you and through you on your frontline.