

1 Peter 2:11-3:7
Feilding Baptist
28.6.26

[Call to Worship](#)

Welcome to worship with Feilding Baptist Church!

There's a heat wave in Europe at the moment. Glad we're not travelling there eh?! Is this the first heat wave they've ever experienced? Eight hundred years ago, Francis of Assisi, was sheltering in a small reed hut, during an unusually hot summer. He was suffering from a severe eye disease, and was undergoing periods of blindness. Yet, he penned a poem, of which All Creatures of our God and King are the English translation. In it we can see that Francis recognised the pain and sorrow that Jesus went through for us. And he was prepared to accept that things were not always going to be easy for us.

Father, thank you for those, who have responded to the prompt of the Holy Spirit, to write words that encourage us, strengthen us, and give us hope. Thank you for these words of Francis. Thank you too for this time to gather. And I pray that we might be encouraged and strengthened by this time together. May our hope be reinforced from this time here this morning.

In that vein, let's say together the prayer that Jesus taught His disciples;

Our Father in heaven...

[Message - Freedom, yes, but...](#)

Our primary loyalty is to Jesus, and as such we are called to excel in behaviour and righteousness, as the light filled people of God.

Tui was a wood pigeon. Silly name for a wood pigeon, but there we are. I have some relatives who have a fox terrier named Tui, so perhaps it isn't so silly for a wood pigeon? Tui was born in an aviary, and had always lived in an aviary. Tui had been extraordinarily well cared for, had been provided food and drink whenever it was needed. Quite recently Tui was on the tallest tree in the aviary, and thought, though couldn't be sure, that another wood pigeon flew past, outside the aviary. That was interesting, was there life on the outside? What was this cage thing?

Well, as does happen, even in Feilding, laws changed, and the aviary was no longer compliant. Tui's aviary had to close. And it was decided that as Tui was a particularly healthy (fat) young wood pigeon, that Tui would be released into the world.

The big day arrived and Tui was carefully captured, and taken outside. After an appropriate ceremony, Tui was released, and flew higher than had ever been possible. Tui was amazed with what could be seen. Then Tui turned and swooped back towards the aviary, and what do you think happened next?

On the bonnet of the head ranger's car, Tui did the biggest poop!

Here in these verses, Peter is saying, don't be a Tui! These verses are about us, firstly in our communities, then in our workplaces, and finally in our homes.

Let's read

1 Peter 2:11-3:7 (NIV - UK)
Living godly lives in a pagan society

[11 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, honour the emperor.

18 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.'^[a]

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,'^[b] but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

1 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 behaviour 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 jewellery 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.

Footnotes

1 Peter 2:22 Isaiah 53:9

1 Peter 2:25 Isaiah 53:4,5,6 (see Septuagint)

May God bless these words to our hearts and minds.

v11-17 Living in Society

As a man, I don't find too much to get upset about here! Let's unpack and see what God might be saying to us.

As a foreigner and stranger, Tui entered a new world. But Tui was still in the same home town. Peter writes, 'Dear friends, as strangers and foreigners.' These recipients of this letter, were also in their home towns. They are not on a visit to another place. Instead something radical has changed for these people to become effectively lepers in their own home towns.

They had heard about Jesus, and come to know Jesus, and had made Jesus Lord of their lives. Jesus made sense to them. His life, death, resurrection and ascension, and promise to return. And the pouring out of the Holy Spirit they had experienced. They had been changed. Ah, they were changing. They are now they are seen as visitors, with a loyalty to Jesus, rather than the things of the past.

That difference, despite being as foreigners and strangers, Peter is wanting to build hope. He has talked about these people being like living stones, part of a new building, that is the church. Peter has described having a living faith. And now he explains that with this new faith, this new loyalty to Jesus, this is how we are to live; 'abstain from sinful desires'. Well, what do you think Peter was referring to here?

See what other translations have in English;

NIV sinful desires

NLT worldly desires

NASB fleshly lusts

When we think of lust, we think of beautiful bodies and fantasies. Not here. The lusts here are better qualified as 'worldly'. So they include the lust for money, the lust for work, for power, and of course for sex. Abstain from worldly distractions which wage war against your souls, is how I would put it. Keep your heart, mind, and eyes fixed on being loyal to Jesus.

Instead of worldly desires, v12, live such good lives in your communities, among the pagans (unbelievers), that while they may accuse you of all sorts of things, they will, on the day Jesus returns, glorify God. We live good lives, not for our glory, but for the glory of God. It's part of our testimony.

One way of living good lives is, v13, to submit yourselves to every human authority. Hang on, does it say that? No! For the Lord's sake, we are to submit to every human authority. Does this mean we can challenge authority? Yes, but how do we challenge authority?

How did Jesus challenge authority?

Verse 16 is wonderful, live as free people! But we must read the rest of the verse. But don't use your freedom as a cover for evil, live as God's slaves! We are to be loyal, firstly, and primarily to God, to Jesus. And then live in response to that. Peter is showing that it is possible to do this, but we might be treated as foreigners, and strangers, but this is what God expects of us.

And then Peter wraps up this section about society, about how we're to be in our communities, with four commands, v17

[17 Show proper respect to everyone,](#)
[love the family of believers,](#)
[fear God,](#)
[honour the emperor.](#)

It is this new way of living that Peter is wanting to highlight here, that we're to be different in our communities, in our workplaces, and in our homes. Even if it is costly. We are to live, not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. We are to live in the grace of God, not with human efforts towards religious achievement (doctrine of works).

[v18-25 Living in the Workplace](#)

That was society, how does this work out in the workplace? See v18, how does it go, 'Slaves, submit yourselves to your masters...' Does it? No! 'Slaves, in reverent fear of God, submit yourselves...' Once again, loyalty to God is to come first. But because of that loyalty, we can submit, we can be loyal also to our masters. It's getting things in the right order.

And that's what was causing trouble here, because slaves were revelling in their freedom that Jesus provides. And disrespecting their masters. No, says Peter, that's being a Tui! Because of your loyalty to Jesus, work hard, work with integrity, serve your masters well. And keep your mouths shut!

And yes, sometimes things won't work out, and we will be accused of things we don't deserve. A trifling example this week. But the injustice of what Jesus suffered by being loyal is our model here. How unjust Jesus' suffering was! It couldn't have been more unjust. And it was for us!

Peter uses a series of quotes from Isaiah 53, the passage that talks about the suffering servant. We always think of Jesus when we read it. But Peter is the only New Testament author who links Jesus so strongly. Jesus was as a slave, fully devoted to the Father, treated with injustice like no one ever has.

Injustice could also happen to us. But, remember, v23, that God is a righteous judge, sorry, a judge who judges justly. Sometimes we won't receive justice on earth. But God knows, and the perpetrators won't just get away with it.

Stop. Let's be clear here, if our injustice is legally wrong, you should not put up with it. Get the Police or unions, or Workplace Safety involved. If your injustice is abusive, don't put up with that either.

Before we move on, v24, with some quotes from Isaiah 53.

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.'

Here is the word righteousness that we keep bumping into. The definition we looked at a few months ago fits so well;

Righteousness is about...
the power of God making right
what has been made wrong

Jesus came to earth to make right what was made wrong in the Garden of Eden, when sin and suffering came into the world. For us to live for righteousness is about seeing where we can make a difference, where in our workplaces can we make right what has been wrong. This is Peter's challenge, don't be a Tui, don't bring wrong into your workplaces, make things right.

v1-7 Living at Home

There has been a lot of talk about women in church leadership this year. The head of the Anglican Church in England is now a woman. The Southern Baptists last week confirmed that there are to be no women leading or preaching in their churches. In response Chris Chamberlain, our New Zealand national Baptist leader confirmed that we are not aligned to the Southern Baptist denomination, and that women are very much to be a part of our leadership and preaching teams in this country. And rightly so.

From society, to workplace, chapter three, we get to the home. And what appears a hideous few verses actually are not. Wives, submit to your husbands. Is that what it says? No, Wives, in the same way...' What has gone before, is the context for these verses. And let's not forget ch3 v7, that also has, in the same way, for example, v18, in reverent fear of God.

Now, was marriage that same back then as it is for us now? No. Was marriage in Jewish areas the same in these Greek and Roman provinces? No. For the people to who Peter was writing, women would have had status above slaves, they would have been in charge of the household slaves, and the children of the house. But the man was still the master of the household. That was their culture.

The problem was, as with workplaces, the new religion of Christianity challenges culture, and gives honour and value to women, giving freedom to women. Peter is saying to the women here, don't be a Tui! Yes, you are loyal 100% to Jesus, and yes, that is so different, so counter cultural. But you are to use your freedom with respect to your husbands. Stay loyal to them too.

How we are to be is outlined in the previous 15 verses. This is in line with the verses that have come further back about our living faith, about us as living stones, part of a building, a building that is now the world wide church.

Finally, Peter says, hey husbands, don't treat women poorly. You are legally, physically, and socially stronger (in that culture). Don't abuse that power. Treat your wife with gentleness and respect. For you are firstly loyal to Jesus. And this is what Jesus expects.

So in summary;

Our primary loyalty is to Jesus, and as such we are called to excel in behaviour and righteousness, as the light filled people of God.

Benediction

Go out, and be doers of the Word.
Cleanse your hearts of all pollution,
be quick to listen and learn,
welcome the Word that God implants in us,
and bring it to birth in acts of righteousness and compassion.

And may God pour grace upon us and bless us forever;
May Christ Jesus reveal to us the truth of God's ways;
and may the Holy Spirit fill our lives with passion and love.

We go in peace to love and serve the Lord,
In the name of Jesus. Amen.

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