

Lesson 8: Members of two communities

Aims for each learner:

- Want to serve both their birth community and their new community in Christ.
- Be willing to submit to those in authority, for the Lord's sake.
- Memorize 1 Peter 2:17.

Cultural clues:

- BMBs and the Muslim community

Prepare: Paper, marker pens.

Opening

Pray together. Review last week's practical task: Did you meet with at least one follower of Christ? How did this help you? Did it give you spiritual strength?

Lesson 8 home study review:

Question 1: a) spiritual; b) earthly

Question 2: submit

Question 3: Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers (1 Peter 2:17)

Introduce today's topic: What different communities do we belong to? (eg. family, workplace, street, church). Ask everyone to share about their communities, write them down with a marker to refer to at the end. Today let's discuss how we can belong to two communities at the same time, and how we can try to serve both of them.

Discussion

Members of two communities

Read 1 Peter 2: 11-12: *Everyone should find the passage.*



- Why does verse 11 call us 'foreigners and exiles' or in another translation 'temporary residents'?
- Non-Christians watch our behaviour closely. How should we live among them, according to verse 12?

Because our true homeland is with Christ forever, see Q. 1.

Live such good lives that they recognise it even though they accuse of us of doing wrong.

Question 2: Read the first paragraph.

- In what two communities does God call us to serve him?
- If someone says, 'we don't need to serve our earthly community, all that matters is our spiritual community', what answer would you give?

The spiritual community of Christ's church, & the earthly community (or 'birth community') in which we live.

Discuss. According to 1 Peter chapter 2, God has called us to serve in both communities.

Question 4-5: Read question 4 b).

- What did you write here? Please share your experiences.
- According to what you wrote in Question 5, what is the best way to 'silence the ignorant talk of foolish people'?

Allow time for everyone to share if they want to.

Doing good.

Doing good (Questions 5-9)

Question 7: Read the first paragraph.

- Which answers did you tick here?
- Can you think of any other ways we could 'do good' for our community and nation?

Question 8: Read the second paragraph.

- What ideas did you write here?
- Out of all the ideas in questions 7 and 8, which ones can you put into practice?

Each learner should choose at least one action point which is relevant to their situation.

Submitting to our government (Questions 10-13)

Read 1 Peter 2:13-17: Ask a learner to read this text, once in each language if in mixed group.



- In verse 13, what does God command us to do? *'Submit to every human authority'*.
- For whose sake should we submit? *'For the Lord's sake'*.
- According to verse 16, does being free in Christ mean we can do whatever we like? *No, we are not free to do evil. Instead we are 'God's slaves'. We will learn more about this in Lesson 15.*

Question 13: Read the entire question.

- What did you write for this question?

Discuss. In such situations believers have to decide where they can compromise on minor issues and what are the essential issues where they 'must obey God rather than humans' (Acts 5:29).

- If you work in a shop and your boss tells you to cheat the customers, what would you do? Respond in the light of what we have just learned from the apostle Peter's example.

Discuss. This is hard! We don't want to disobey God but we don't want to lose our jobs either.

Submitting to our boss (Questions 14-20)

Read 1 Peter 2:18

- To whom is this verse written?
- In your opinion, what would be hard about working as a slave?
- Should the slaves in verse 18 submit just to the 'good and considerate' masters or also to the 'harsh' ones?
- If we have an unfair boss, or people who don't appreciate the work we do, what comfort and strength can we draw from 1 Peter 2?
- Do any of us have a situation where we find it hard to submit someone in authority over us? Please share.

Slaves.

E.g. you work very hard but receive no pay and no freedom.

Both.

We submit for the Lord's sake, (v.13 & 18), v.20: if we suffer for doing good it is commendable before God.

We will pray at the end for these situations.

Question 19: Look at the two men.

- Would you prefer your son to become an honest trash collector or a dishonest lecturer?
- What do you think the Lord would want?



Practice the memory verse, 1 Peter 2:17a: Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers.

- Who can recite 1 Peter 2:17a from memory? *Encourage everyone to say it once.*
- Which words tell us to play our part in our earthly community?
- Which words tell us to play our part in our spiritual community?

Conclusion

Obeying today's teaching: What difference will today's lesson make in your life? Did anyone already start to apply this lesson in their lives?

Read the practical task.

Encourage: Look at the list of communities you wrote at the start. How can you serve them? Go back to questions 7 and 8 and decide a task to do for one community in the next week, or else do one of the practical tasks suggested in the study book.

And keep going with the home study!

Pray together: Pray in pairs or groups if appropriate.

Pray for any group member in a situation where it's hard to submit to an unjust government or a harsh boss.

Ask God to help us find ways to serve our earthly and spiritual communities this week, and to submit to those in authority, for Christ's sake.