

AP: God calls for the Christian household to be the picture of propriety. For one of the first things that the world would do was look at the family of the church's members: and if that family is broken due to lack of love and respect or submission, they'd naturally assume Christianity wasn't worth the breath it takes to say its name.

CS 3.18-19 ~ *Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. ¹⁹ Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them.*

BD4: Submit in the Church (1PT 3.8-12)

BKGRND: Think for a moment what Christianity must have seemed like to those outside of its doors. The people had started speaking of a new "**Kingdom**". This could have sounded the most terrible of all accusations. **To claim a new kingdom while inside the borders of Rome, Herself? Can one be blasphemous against a nation?** And yet, this would have seemed more and more intriguing to the people as they felt under-represented and under-served in a Roman empire that didn't seem too caring for the concerns of the normal citizen.

1PT 3.8-12 ~ *Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous; ⁹ not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing. ¹⁰ For "He who would love life And see good days, Let him refrain his tongue from evil, And his lips from speaking deceit. ¹¹ Let him turn away from evil and do good; Let him seek peace and pursue it. ¹² For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their prayers; But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil."*

EX: The final piece of advice Peter provides is simple: if we're going to preach another kingdom, make sure it's a kingdom people want to be a part of. Have compassion, love, tenderheartedness, and courtesy and grace towards one another—and people will be lining up for admission!

AP: But sadly, from the list, it's clear that this wasn't always the case in the churches in Asia Minor. Just as it's not always the case in our day and our country. But if we, instead, submit in the church—showing kindness, respect, and love to one another, we can make the church the exact kind of place that people want to be!

JN 13.34-35 ~ *A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. ³⁵ By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."*

CONCLUSION

ROME/The Plague of Antonine/Affect on Religion

In the Plague of Antonine, we see an example of Peter's calls for submission born out in real life. And as a result, countless people converted, and in this moment, we begin a shift in the view of Christianity by the Roman populace.

Today, we could see the same—without a plague. If we follow the example of Peter, showing submission to authorities, to masters, in the home, and in the church, we can see a change in perception and acceptance of Christ's kingdom! But it starts with us.

MT 5.14-16 ~ *"You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. ¹⁶ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven."*

INVITATION

#691 [EXP-NTGE][2.3]

01/17/2026

How to Reach the World

PC Pchd

1PT 2.11-3:12 (NKJV)

QUESTION: How are we to convince the world of Christianity's value?

TRN TO 2PT 2

INTRODUCTION

DISEASE/The Plague of Antonine/General Description

The disease ravaged the 2nd Century Roman empire—spreading quickly and widely across the kingdom. Its secondary name was due to some surviving historical writings by an ancient Greek physician, Galen.

DISEASE/The Plague of Antonine/Galen

Today, Smallpox is largely eliminated due to modern vaccines. However, before the vaccine was developed, it was a deadly and terrible disease: easily spread and with terrible affects on the population when spread. Naturally, at the time, everyone was asking one question: **where did it come from?**

DISEASE/The Plague of Antonine/Origin

It didn't take long for some to pick their favorite scapegoat: the church. Obviously, this was a judgment from the gods—and **who was out there convincing people to stop worshiping the Roman gods?** Christians! **What ever would the church do?**

BACKGROUND (1PT 2.11-12)

As Peter continues his letter to the church of Asia Minor, he continues with a common theme from the previous chapter: the struggles and sufferings of the early church. Specifically, the timing of the writing of the letter most likely places this right in the midst of an increase of Roman persecution. Under Nero, there was an assumption that all the pains of the Roman people were due to the church. And many of the people swallowed the line happily. **What ever would the church do?**

1PT 2.11-12 ~ *Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, ¹² having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.*

Interestingly, Peter's argument was not that the church should just be righteous for righteousness sake, but that their behavior should be performed in such a manner as to best affect the Gentiles. The Roman people were busy blaming the church for their state, and Peter's advice was to make sure that their conduct was honorable so that, just by nature of what they see the church doing and how they see Christians behaving, they'd give glory to God.

There are countless hours, dollars, and programs dedicated to trying to reach the world. For good reason—it's the mission of the church! But Peter provides us, here, with an interesting framework on **how to reach the world**: and he doesn't give a million programs, or describe just the right type of laser light show or drama program. He shows that there's a way we can **convince the world of Christianity's value**—and that's through the concept of submission.

People in the 21st century tend to bristle at the idea of submission. However, in truth, we all naturally seek and expect it in certain areas. And as we look at the rest of **1PT 2-3**, we'll see that it's through our submission that we can convince the world of the praiseworthiness of Christianity!

BD1: Submit to Authorities (1PT 2.13-17)

BKGRND: Think for a moment what Christianity must have seemed like to those outside of its doors. The people suddenly changed dramatically—fleeing from former associations and lifestyles, no longer frequenting the old temples, and speaking, endlessly, of a new “king”. To the uninitiated, this would have been strange—and potentially, concerning.

1PT 2.13-14 ~ *Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme, ¹⁴ or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good.*

EX: For that reason, Peter urged them to **Ὑποτάγητε ὅν πάσῃ ἀνθρωπίνῃ κτίσει** (hypotAHso soon PAhsay anthroPIHNay kTIHsay) “submit to every human institution”. The idea was, because of their refusal to submit to sin, they must be mindful of how they appear to the human governments around them. In this, his language is similar to that which Paul wrote to the same general audience in **RM 13**:

RM 13.1-2 ~ *Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. ² Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.*

ROME/Government/Asia Minor

In truth, while in honoring their local government, they honored the ones above them. And there was no one higher in that chain that God—who permitted and placed all authorities.

“But what about when the government does wicked things? It's easy for Peter and Paul to say, but look at how wicked some governmental figures are today!”

Brethren, the government Peter is writing to is likely the one put in place by Nero—and he was burning Christians at the stake! Still, Peter called for submission. **How? Why?**

1PT 2.15-17 ~ *For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men—¹⁶ as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God. ¹⁷ Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.*

AP: We are to show in **our submission to authorities** our submission to God—and in doing so, to put to silence all those who'd use our disrespect and disobedience against us. If we're all tied up in local politics and all we can talk about is all this temporal stuff, we shouldn't be surprised when people disregard or are disinterested in what we have to say. Peter could call for the church to **“honor the king”** when the king was Nero. I think I can do that for a **Democrat/Republican/Independent**.

TS 3.1-2 ~ *Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work, ² to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men.*

BD2: Submit to Masters (1PT 2.18-25)

BKGRND: Think for a moment what Christianity must have seemed like to those outside of its doors. The people suddenly changed dramatically—slaves and servants spoke of being free: of having a new, higher master above and beyond any other earthly one. To the uninitiated, this would have seemed dangerous—on the verge of rebellion.

1PT 2.18 ~ *Servants, be submissive to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the harsh.*

EX: Depending on your translation, this will show as **“servant”** or **“slave”**. The truth is, they're all translations of the same Greek work: **οἰκέτης**. To us, it sounds terrible to consider: encouraging slaves to submit even to wicked masters. But again: recall what was going on at the time. The church was a small minority, under direct opposition and scrutiny. And, also, the primary concern of the church has always been over matters of

spiritual slavery and freedom over temporal ones. Peter wanted to ensure the church would survive and not fall under additional pressures from without by giving the picture of a cultural and social rebellion. Instead, Peter wanted those undergoing such mistreatment to remember that, by serving submissively and honorably, they can build up both their and God's reputation.

1PT 2.19-25 ~ *For this is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully. ²⁰ For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God. ²¹ For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: ²² “Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth”; ²³ who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously; ²⁴ who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed. ²⁵ For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.*

AP: Blessedly, today we don't have any form of such slavery in our western lives. But the same principle would extend to how we act to our earthly masters and leaders in our physical lives: teachers, principles, managers, and bosses. By living and showing this Godly reputation, we are able to avoid unnecessary scandal and ensure that only the honor of our service reflects on the name of Christ:

EH 6.5-8 ~ *Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ; ⁶ not with eyerservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, ⁷ with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men, ⁸ knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free.*

BD3: Submit in the Home (1PT 3.1-7)

BKGRND: Think for a moment what Christianity must have seemed like to those outside of its doors. The people had started speaking of a new **“Father”** and **“Son”**. Talks of normal earthly family members were being replaced by those of Heavenly ones. At times, families would be split—Christian and non-Christian. And to those outside, it could seem like even the family structure was under the attack.

1PT 3.1-7 ~ *Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, ² when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear. ³ Do not let your adornment be merely outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel—⁴ rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God. ⁵ For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands, ⁶ as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror. ⁷ Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.*

EX: Peter called for the Christian's family to be a model of proper submission and godliness—to not allow the new freedoms and privileges offered in a Christian home where **there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female (GL 3.28)** to swing back and negatively impact the perception of the Church.