

SHARE

"HOPE LIVES" 1 PETER 2:11-12

This Week's Core Competency

Humanity – I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior. John 3:16 *For God so loved the world that he gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.*

Are you an "adwatcher" or an "adskipper"? Advertisements have been part of media since the invention of the printing press. Ads in print, radio, and television have been a staple of our media consumption. It is difficult to imagine news or entertainment without having to endure advertising. But freedom is dawning! Now, with the advent of digital video recorders (DVRs) and streaming media, viewers can now skip the pesky nuisances of commercials. Watch a show that you like and use your DVR to fast-forward through the commercials, saving you time and distraction. Binge-watch your favorite series and let Netflix remove all the commercials for you. Technology is wonderful sometimes!

Advertisers and network executives are nervous. The Wall Street Journal recently reported (12/2014) that "viewership of traditional television dropped

When we develop a way of living that places a special emphasis on people, that demonstrates holiness and a dedicated obedience to God, we can't help but be an effective witness. Evangelism will flow from our lives instead of from memorized techniques.

- Rebecca Manley Pippert

nearly 4% last quarter, as online video streaming jumped 60%, according to a new report from Nielsen." Those who watch with DVRs are skipping upwards of 65% of paid advertisements on popular shows. Advertising to a captive audience is fading away. The audience is refusing to be held captive any longer.

One way advertisers have addressed this "adskipping" phenomenon is the creation of viral videos. People are sharing funny or touching videos with their social media friends. So advertisers are joining the fray with creatively humorous and heart-touching videos of their own. Viral advertising is more than just product description. To make a video go viral, the content and package of that video has to be attractive, inspiring and sharable. We all may skip a boring commercial on TV while simultaneously posting a hilarious or tear-jerking ad on our own social network.

Sharing the Gospel involves much more than just insightful advertising. But, do people "skip" our attempts at sharing Jesus with them? When we attempt to share Christ, do people feel obligated to listen? Is the method of our Gospel delivery turning people off? Is it getting harder to share the Gospel with a world that would rather skip our message than pay attention? How do we address the tendency of people today to ignore or "skip" the message we share?

The first century church occupied a world of many competing voices. Rome had its empire and emperors. Greece had its philosophies and epicurean pleasures. Judaism had its temple and traditions. Christians of that era would do well to get anyone to listen. But the early church succeeded tremendously

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in a world that had little time for a new message from a lowly carpenter. How did the first Christians compel a noisy world to pay attention to the message of Christ? Peter in his first epistle encourages followers of Christ to turn heads and capture the imagination of those set against the One True God. Getting a message-saturated world to listen to a new message often requires a compelling messenger and not just a catchy repackaging of the message. Consider Peter's challenge to go viral with the way you live as you present the Good News.

day **1** ENCOUNTER – read God's word to put yourself in touch with him.

1 Peter 2:11-12

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.

1 Peter 3:15-16

15 But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, 16 keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.

EXAMINE – what the passage says before you decide what it means.

- *Circle the word in 2:11 that shows deep affection.
- *Underline the word in 2:11 that provides a tone of concern and protection.
- *Double underline the word showing the primary action commanded in 2:11.
- *Circle the modifier of "desire" and draw a line from it to the word that is its direct opposite at the end of 2:11.
- *Underline "wage war" and draw an arrow from it to the focus of its attack.
- *Draw lines between repeated or similar words in 2:12.
- *Circle the words "they" in 2:12 and draw arrows back to the people "they" represent.
- *Draw a box around words in 2:11-12 and 3:15-16 that speak of internal characteristics of a believer.
- *Circle the word in 3:15 that shows when we are to be prepared to give an answer.
- *Underline the recipient of our answer as found in 3:15.
- *Bracket the word "this" in 3:15 and draw an arrow to its referent.
- *Underline the phrase that shows the purpose of keeping a clear conscience.

day 2

EXPLORE – the answer to these questions to better understand what the passage means.

Consult the explanation of the message and the notes to follow if you need help.

1. How important is the message of 1 Peter 2:11-12 to its author?
2. In what ways are Christians "foreigners and exiles"?
3. How does being a "foreigner and exile" help someone abstain from sinful desires?
4. How does a desire "wage war"?
5. What are some implications of living "among the pagans"?
6. What is the desired result of living "good lives"?
7. 1 Peter 3:15 begins with a contrast. What is being contrasted?
8. What are we to do with gentleness and respect according to 3:15?
9. Along with gentleness and respect, what should we be doing according to 3:16?
10. What similarities do you see between 1 Peter 2:11-12 and 1 Peter 3:15-16?

day 3

EXAMINE – an explanation of the message to better understand the meaning of the passage.

Peter lived in a world that opposed and oppressed him. Following Jesus cost him possessions, family, friendships and business (Mark 10:28-31). He was arrested multiple times in Jerusalem and beaten for his refusal to remain silent about Jesus (Acts 4-5). Peter's followers were equally terrorized. The purpose of Peter's first letter to the "aliens who were scattered" (1 Peter 1:1) was to encourage those suffering for Christ to endure. Numerous times in the book of 1 Peter, we are reminded to follow Jesus' example in suffering (1:3-9; 2:21-25; 3:13-18; 4:1-19; 5:6-11). Peter summarizes this encouragement in 1 Peter 4:12-13:

"Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation." (NASB)

Part of the price of following Jesus is suffering (Matthew 5:10-12; 10:22-25). This mistreatment by others does not go unnoticed; it is not in vain. God obviously sees and works to protect us (1 Peter 2:25). Others also see us while we experience injustice, ridicule and slander. Often, people do not hear what we have to say. Our words are just noise. But our Christ-like response to attack, mistreatment and slander may be the very tool God uses to break through barriers of unbelief.

Our passages for this study (1 Peter 2:11-12 and 3:15-16) both come after descriptions of suffering. We are encouraged to follow Jesus' example and live "good" lives even though others may dismiss us or defame us publicly. This "good" can be understood as something beautiful and trustworthy—something to be admired. The world around us may deny our message, but it becomes difficult to dismiss our faithfulness and goodness in suffering.

One commentator observes "These verses (2:11-12) offer the first clear articulation of a central image in 1 Peter. Christians are to practice virtues in the face of abuse. The syntax of 2: 12 will be repeated almost verbatim in 3:16. The idea of responding to abuse with good deeds will dominate much of the letter. In 2:19-23 Jesus himself models this behavior by refusing to return abuse for abuse, thus leaving for you a pattern, so that you might follow in his footsteps (2:21). While these followers of the pattern of Christ find themselves to be 'aliens and sojourners' in the midst of their Gentile neighbors, the behavior they practice connects to the values shared with these Gentiles. The Gentiles

themselves will recognize this alienating Christian behavior as 'beautiful'" (L. Donelson, *1 & 2 Peter and Jude*, 70).

We need to be ready to speak for Christ (1 Peter 3:15). Suffering and living well for Christ may be the only message that moves the heart of unbelievers around us. Hope in the face of suffering speaks volumes.

After Peter, believers in Jesus continued in a minority position for more than two centuries. Jews accused Christians of being polytheists because of their worship of Father, Son and Spirit. Romans accused Christians of being atheists. Both majorities persecuted the Christian minority.

Justin Martyr (AD 100-186) was a major contributor to the defense of Christians in the early days of the Church. He became a Greek philosopher and was skilled in logic and rhetoric. As a young man, he converted to Christianity. He then used his classical training to write a defense of his faith in Jesus. Many of his writings have been lost, but three major works have survived. Two are titled *First Apology* and *Second Apology*. In these writings, Justin addressed the current Roman Emperor, making a case for the end of persecution against Christians. In his third major work, *Dialog with Trypho*, Justin made the case to Trypho, a Jewish leader, for Christianity as the fulfillment of Jewish teaching and prophecy.

In writing to both Romans and Jews, Justin addressed questions and objections made by each party. Romans continually had Christians beaten, imprisoned and killed for being atheists. Romans observed that because Christians did not frequent polytheistic temples or make offerings to Caesars, they must not believe in gods and therefore were immoral, dangerous and subversive. Justin went to great lengths to explain the Christian belief in one God. Christians worshipped one God who is supreme and who is not given to the improprieties of a Jupiter or Venus.

In *Dialog with Trypho*, Justin unpacked many Old Testament passages and showed that God was knowable and that God had sent His Son as the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy. Trypho did his best to silence Justin with Old Testament quotations, but Justin repeatedly showed that the God of the Old Testament was pointing to the Messiah of the New Testament.

In both his *Apologies* and *Dialog*, Justin answered the many objections and misunderstandings of non-believers around him. Justin took the time to learn about the thoughts and teachings of other faiths and

demonstrated a solid understanding of Roman and Jewish thought. Perhaps most compelling in Justin's writings is his appeal to the changed life of believers. In his Apologies, Justin provided numerous examples of Christians who were responsible, moral, honorable and supportive of governors and Caesars. Justin cited Christians who loved their children, their spouses, their neighbors and their country. The basis of Justin's logic is strong—because Christians were so honorable in their lifestyle, even while suffering injustices, how could the Roman emperors justify the intense persecution they brought upon Christians?

In *Dialog*, Justin challenged Jewish thought by asking, how could non-Jews or pagans become honorable and respectable people without God moving in their lives? How could a pagan become more respectable than many Old Testament law keepers if God had not done the miraculous in their

lives through Jesus Christ? And even more challenging, how could pagans endure suffering while they believed and not revile, curse or attack those persecuting them? Trypho had no answer for this line of reasoning.

Like Peter, Justin's apologetic to both Romans and Jews included an appeal to the quality or beauty of a good life lived by hopeful Christians, willing to suffer. We would do well to make our lives part of our message to unbelievers around us.

The proclamation and defense of the Gospel involves more than just logic; it must also include lifestyle. A good grasp of history, philosophy, theology, logic and rhetoric have their place but they are not enough when encountering opposition to the Gospel. A life that is changed and that displays Jesus' teachings of humility, sacrifice and love is the most compelling argument we have for following Christ.

The Messages of the Passage

Inwardly, stop yielding to harmful desires, so that outwardly you can live with such integrity that even your worst enemy cannot help but praise the God you serve.

Love Christ so much that others cannot help but ask why you are so full of hope. Answer well with words and actions that silence slander.

day **4** **EMBRACE** – how God spoke to you in his word.

Our desire is to not be merely hearers of the word, but doers of the word as James suggests in James 1:22. Try some of the challenges below to apply what you have learned this week.

• **Journal your answers to the following *living* questions:**

–How is God making himself known to you?

–How does God want to change you?

–How is God calling you to change your world?

notes **N** STUDY – the commentaries to answer the questions.

- 2:11 **Dear Friends** More than just brothers and sisters. Other translations use "Beloved." Comes from the root word for "love," *agape* in the Greek. Peter here is encouraging persecuted believers as ones who are loved by God and loved by him as an apostle. Used in 1 Peter 4:12 as well when discussing persecution for believers. 2:11
- Urge** "The most frequent word with this meaning, literally denotes 'to call to one's side,' hence, 'to call to one's aid.' It is used for every kind of calling to a person which is meant to produce a particular effect, hence, with various meanings, such as 'comfort, exhort, desire, call for'" (W.E.Vine, *Expository Dictionary*, 571). Peter here is comforting his audience.
- 2:11 **foreigners and exiles** "Aliens [foreigners] have no rights in the land where they live. Strangers [exiles] are only temporary residents (cf. 1:17; Gen. 23:4; Ps. 39:12; Eph. 2:19; Heb. 13:14). Peter reminded his readers that, "This world is not my home, I'm just a passin' through." Note the dual *hendiadys* that form an *inclusio* for 2:11-25: 'aliens and strangers' (v. 11) and 'Shepherd and Guardian' (v. 25). A *hendiadys* is a figure of speech in which the writer expresses one complex idea by joining two substantives with "and." Here the meanings are "strangers who are aliens" and "the Shepherd who guards" (Thomas L. Constable, "Notes on 1 Peter," 2015 ed., 33, www.soniclight.com).
- 2:11 **sinful desires** "Sinful" often translated as "fleshly." These desires or appetites are not limited to sexual expressions only. They are to be avoided or abstained from because they are of the flesh.
- 2:11 **wage war** "Wage war is a strong term that generally means to carry out a long-term military campaign. It implies not just antagonism but a relentless, malicious aggression. Since it takes place in the soul, it is a kind of civil war. Joined with the concept of fleshly lusts, the image is of an army of lustful terrorists waging an internal search and destroy mission to conquer the soul of the believer" (J. MacArthur, *1 Peter*, 138).
- 2:12 **good** Honest, whole, with integrity, "applied by the Greeks to everything so distinguished in form, excellence, goodness, usefulness, as to be pleasing; hence (acc. to the context). . . beautiful, handsome, excellent, eminent, choice, surpassing, precious, useful, suitable, commendable, admirable; a. beautiful to look at, shapely, magnificent" (Thayer, 322). Also used in 2:12 to modify "deeds."
- 2:12 **pagans** Translated as "Gentiles" in other versions. *Ethnos* is the Greek word, meaning "people" or "nation." Those who were not Christians are labeled as a people or nation. Many of the Christians were technically "Gentiles" but now these Christians were called "foreigners and exiles" (2:11) living among these "pagans." Faith made Gentiles a new people with a new identity (1 Peter 2:9).
- 2:12 **doing wrong** "Literally 'they speak against you as doing evil.' 'Speak against you' may be interpreted legally, referring to the accusations against Christians before a court of law, but more probably in a non-legal way, referring the malicious talk and gossip of non-believers about Christians (compare Phps 'slander you'; Brc 'spread their malicious stories'; GECL 'speak all kinds of evil'). 'Doing evil' refers to the various accusations made against Christians" (*UBS New Testament Handbook*, 1 Peter 2:12).
- 2:12 **see** Beholding. "Used by Peter only, here and 1 Peter 3:2. The kindred noun *epoptees*, 'an eye-witness,' occurs only at 2 Peter 1:16. It is a technical word, meaning one who was admitted to the highest degree of initiation in the Eleusinian mysteries. Here it conveys the idea of 'personal witness;' behold 'with their own eyes'" (*Vincent's Word Studies in the New Testament*; 1 Peter 2:12 entry).
- 3:15 **revere** Set apart or sanctify 'to set apart.' It was used in the pagan Greek religions of the act of setting apart a building as a temple, thus designating it as religious in character, to be used for religious purposes . . . The exhortation is to set apart Christ as Lord in the heart. The word 'Lord' is the translation of *kurios*, here referring to Christ as the Jehovah of the Old Testament." (*Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament*, 1 Peter 3:15).
- 3:15 **answer** "While that is a legitimate application of this verse, the apostle Peter did not have in mind the professional or academic field of Christian apologetics. Nor does the term 'defense'[answer] (*apologia*) necessarily imply that the Christians to whom Peter writes are being tried in a court of law . . . Rather, Peter is concerned that Christian believers be able humbly and respectfully to defend their hope in Christ to anyone who might ask, even if legal charges are in view for some" (Jobes, 230).
- 3:15 **reason** *Logos*, an account, "answer or explanation in reference to judgment, to give or render an account" (Thayer, 381). A logical or coherent explanation of why you believe and have hope. The statement given by a witness.
- 3:15 **gentleness** Translated meekness in other translations.
- 3:16 **good behavior** The word for "behavior" is *anastrophe*. This is the same Greek word used in 1 Peter 2:12 for "lives." This behavior results in a lifestyle that is reliable and predictable. The older translations use the word "conversation." Literally the term means "your turning around." Good here is a term for wholeness or sturdiness.
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Family Time

Last week we brought our 5 year-olds, who will be starting Kindergarten this week, over to the MiniMix so they could see the new environment they will be in on Move-Up Sunday. Carey Moore, our MiniMix Coordinator, was explaining to the kids all the exciting things they will be doing this year as Kindergarteners. One thing she emphasized was the opportunity for them to begin completing the scrolls each week. "Does anyone know what the scrolls are?" she asked. One eager 5 year-old boy raised his hand. "Yes, they are those cute little furry animals!" Isn't that about how it goes? We try to have meaningful conversations with our kids and all they can think about are squirrels. In our new series, It's Time to Talk, we will be teaching kids to how to talk about and live out their faith. Our discipleship challenge for this series is a tool that will help kids write out their personal testimony. It will be a helpful conversation starter even for kids who haven't started their spiritual journey. They are available in the KidPix store. The first step in having meaningful conversations with your kids is planning to do it. Plan an ice cream date or a walk in the park. Use this week's text and ask your kids what they think it means to live a good life. Listening to them will set the stage for you to have conversations that matter.

What Does The Bible Say

Weekly Verse: Read 1 Peter 2:11-12; 1 Peter 3:15.

1. What does it look like to live a good life?
2. Why do you think others might accuse you of doing wrong?
3. Who gets the glory for your good deeds?

What Do You Think

1. What does it look like to live a good life?
2. Why do you think others might accuse you of doing wrong?

What R U Going To Do

For the next 3 weeks, we will be memorizing 1 Peter 3:15. Write it somewhere you will see it everyday! Why do you think it is important to be able to give an answer to anyone who asks you about your faith?

MEMORY TIME

Post the kid-friendly Core Competency and the Memory Verse throughout the house.

Core Comp

Humanity - I believe God loves everyone and we all need Jesus as our Savior.

Memory Verse

1 Peter 3:15 - *But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.*

KIDPIX COUPON

I memorized CC ____ and Verse _____. Family completed **Say** _____ **Think** _____ **Do** _____

Child's name _____ Grade ____ Parent's signature _____

Earn tokens by completing the Bible study portion of this page.
Questions: Kids@pantego.org

30 CORE COMPETENCIES

10 CORE BELIEFS

Trinity *2 Corinthians 13:14*

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Salvation By Grace *Ephesians 2:8-9*

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

Authority of the Bible *2 Timothy 3:16-17*

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Personal God *Psalms 121:1-2*

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Identity in Christ *John 1:12*

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Church *Ephesians 4:15-16*

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Humanity *John 3:16*

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Compassion *Psalms 82:3-4*

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

Eternity *John 14:1-4*

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

Stewardship *1 Timothy 6:17-19*

I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God.

10 CORE PRACTICES

Worship *Psalms 95:1-7*

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

Prayer *Psalms 66:16-20*

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Bible Study *Hebrews 4:12*

I read the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-mindedness *Matthew 6:33*

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts *Romans 12:4-6*

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Biblical Community *Acts 2:44-47*

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Giving Away My Time *Colossians 3:17*

I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Money

2 Corinthians 8:7

I give away my money to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Faith *Ephesians*

6:19-20

I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Life *Romans 12:1*

I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

10 CORE VIRTUES

Joy *John 15:11*

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace *Philippians 4:6-7*

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself, and others.

Faithfulness *Proverbs 3:3-4*

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Self-Control *Titus 2:11-13*

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Humility *Philippians 2:3, 4*

I choose to esteem others above myself.

Love *1 John 4:10-12*

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Patience *Proverbs 14:29*

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness *1 Thess. 5:15*

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

Gentleness *Philippians 4:5*

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Hope *Hebrews 6:19-20*

I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ.

About the Authors

Tom Bulick (M.A. in Educational Leadership, Eastern Michigan University, Th.M. in Old Testament, and Ph.D. in Bible Exposition, Dallas Theological Seminary). For more than forty years, Tom has served as pastor, faculty member, and administrator. Tom was Vice President for Student Life and Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Trinity Western University (Vancouver, B.C.) for twelve years before accepting the position of Spiritual Formation Pastor at Pantego Bible Church. He and his wife Ruth have been married forty-seven years and have one son, Zach.

Wendy Hollabaugh (B.S.W. University of Texas at Arlington) is the Children's Minister at Pantego Bible Church. Wendy has over ten years of experience in Children's Ministry. She has a passion for leading families to connect with God and each other. She enjoys creating compelling environments where kids fall in love with God and His Truth. Wendy and her husband, Greg, are also involved in their own personal youth ministry as they are training their three teenagers, Hannah, Aaron and Noah.

Eric Wright (Th.M. Dallas Theological Seminary) guest author.



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The mission of THE SCROLLS is to help you develop the beliefs, practices, and virtues of a follower of Jesus Christ called The 30 Core Competencies through your own active reading of the Bible. Send any questions or comments you may have about this lesson to Tom Bulick. His e-mail address is tbulick@pantego.org.