



FOREIGNERS & EXILES

A PUBLIC FAITH

1 PETER 2:11-17

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Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul. 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.

Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human authority: whether to the emperor, as the supreme authority, or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish people. Live as free people, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as God's slaves. Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the emperor.

America's problem isn't too much religion, or too little of it. It's *bad* religion: the slow-motion collapse of traditional Christianity and the rise of a variety of destructive pseudo-Christianities in its place.

-Ross Douthat, *Bad Religion*

PURPOSE OF CHRISTIAN EXISTENCE

"...that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light."

1 Pet. 2:9

I believe in Christianity as I
believe that the sun has risen: not
only because I see it, but because
by it I see everything else.

-CS Lewis

OPTIONS UNDER HOSTILITY

We Resist

We Privatize

*Both options were a temptation to
Peter's audience...*

The apostle Peter says, "There are sinful desires inside you, and they wage war against your soul." Your soul is what integrates, what connects, what binds together your will, then your mind (those thoughts, feelings, and desires going on all the time), and then your body (with all of its appetites, habits, and behavior). God designed us so that our choices, our thoughts and desires, and our behavior would be in perfect harmony with each other and would be powered by an unbroken connection with God, in perfect harmony with him

and with all of his creation. That is a well-ordered soul. The soul is what connects all those innermost parts together, connects them with God, and was made for harmony all the way through. Notice how the psalmist writes, "Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me ." In other words , it is my soul that connects "all that is within me" and that cries out for integration, for wholeness, for oneness, for harmony. This can only happen when my soul – my whole life – is connected with God.

-John Ortberg, *Soul Keeping*