



CULTURE WARS

THROUGH THE BOOK OF 1 PETER

Overview:

In this series we'll study the book of 1 Peter and learn strategies for living as "foreigners" in an increasingly secular culture.

Lessons:

1. The Truth About Trials
2. "Be This" In the Culture Wars
3. Misinformation On the Family
4. Five Steps to Winning the War Within
5. Final Battle Instructions for the Culture Wars



THE TRUTH ABOUT TRIALS

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TALKING POINTS

There's good news for followers of Jesus, even when you're at war with the culture.

- Truth #1 - Trials are _____ for us and this was true in Peter's day. 1 Peter 1:6
- Truth #2 - Trials _____ your faith. The bigger the trial, the bigger the test. 1 Peter 1:7
- Truth #3 - Trials take _____. We need to get both the mind and the will ready for battle. 1 Peter 1:13
- Truth #4 - Trials _____ you backward. The pull of sin gets stronger as life gets harder. 1 Peter 1:14
- Truth # 5 - Trials are _____. Something far better lies ahead! 1 Peter 1:17

DISCUSSION

1. *How has social media impacted your life for good and bad?*
2. *Review the statistics from Barna. Why do you think church attendance has decreased as the use of social media has increased?*
3. *Read 1 Peter 1:6-7. Does it surprise you to know that trials are part of the Christian experience? Explain. How has a trial in your life strengthened your faith? Share a time a trial weakened your faith.*
4. *Read 1 Peter 1:13. How can we prepare our minds for battle? In that trial that weakened your faith, what do you wish you would've done to move toward God, not away from Him?*
5. *Read 1 Peter 1:14. What are some examples of "old thinking" that derailed your pursuit of God in the past? Why do you think sin becomes more enticing when faced with trials?*
6. *Read 1 Peter 1:3-5. What is our future hope in Christ? With that eternal hope, how will you stand with God against our culture?*

"BE THIS" IN THE CULTURE WARS

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TALKING POINTS

More than what we believe, how should Christians actually be in a secular world? Peter gives us four answers in 1 Peter 2.

- Christians should be defined by _____ kingdom. The foundation for everything we do in life is our identity in Christ. 1 Peter 2:4,10
- Christians should be a _____ to their neighbors. Even when they slander you because you don't follow their beliefs and values. 1 Peter 2:9,11-12,15
- Christians should be _____ to human authority. Not because we trust the government to be righteous, but for the Lord's sake. 1 Peter 2:13-14, Acts 5:28-29
- Christians should be _____ to God's people. Many Christians today aren't navigating the clash of cultures very well because they have isolated themselves from the community of faith. 1 Peter 2:17

DISCUSSION

1. *Up to now, where have you found your identity most?*
2. *Read 1 Peter 2:4,10. What does it look like to be defined by God, not culture? Why does Peter highlight that Jesus was rejected?*
3. *Reflect on this statement: "Christians have "come" to Christ in salvation, but their continual "coming" is also required." How have you changed over time as you've learned to walk with God?*
4. *Read 1 Peter 2:9-12. How do these verses challenge you? What are some honorable things Christians should be doing?*
5. *How have you seen Christians blow it by being a bad representative of Jesus?*
6. *Read 1 Peter 2:13-14 and Acts 5:28-29. What are the issues where Christians should submit to government authority? What should be the driving force behind those decisions?*
7. *Read 1 Peter 2:17. What does it look like to respect everyone even if you disagree on issues?*

MISINFORMATION ON THE FAMILY

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TALKING POINTS

Misinformation abounds in our world today, but nothing is more destructive than what our culture teaches about the family. 1 Peter 3 offers a better way.

- Our culture says “I’m the boss of me.” The Bible says “_____ to authority.” 1 Peter 3:1-2
 - Our culture says “Beauty is skin deep.” The Bible says “Beauty comes from _____.” 1 Peter 3:3-4
 - Our culture says “Patriarchy is evil.” The Bible says “_____ men exist.” 1 Peter 3:7
 - Our culture says “Men and women are the same.” The Bible says “Men and women are _____.” 1 Peter 3:7
- Our culture says “Christians are divided.” The Bible says “Christians, _____!” 1 Peter 3:8

DISCUSSION

1. *How does our culture promote the “my way” attitude and how has that affected society?*
2. *Read 1 Peter 2:13 and 1 Peter 3:1-2. What happens when submission or respect are present in society and in the family? What happens when there aren't clear roles in place?*
3. *How have you seen the submission principle abused in marriages? How have you seen submission work beautifully in a marriage?*
4. *Read 1 Peter 3:3-4. What's the spirit behind Peter's words here? How does this issue express itself in today's society? What's a good balance to strike?*
5. *Read 1 Peter 3:7. What does it look like for a husband to honor his wife? What does an equal partnership in Christ look like?*
6. *Read 1 Peter 3:8. What does it look like to sympathize with someone with whom you don't agree? How can you improve in the way you respond?*

FIVE STEPS TO WINNING THE WAR WITHIN

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TALKING POINTS

The culture war isn't just a battle we fight on the outside; there's a character war we first need to win on the inside.

1. Chase _____.
2. Don't _____ into destruction.
3. Sharpen your _____.
4. Show _____ in practical ways.
5. Use your spiritual _____.

DISCUSSION

1. *Before you came to Christ, how did you determine what was right or wrong for you? How have you changed since you met Jesus?*
2. *Read 1 Peter 4:2. What are some of the worldly desires people, even Christians, are chasing after today? What does it look like to chase God and His will instead?*
3. *Read 1 Peter 4:3-4. Are there things from your "old life" that you are still holding on to today? What are some boundaries you need to put in place to not go back to those things?*
4. *Peter warns in verse 7 that the end is near. Why do you think he emphasized that? How do you currently use prayer in your life?*
5. *Read 1 Peter 4:8-9. What do you think Peter means that love covers a multitude of sins? How have you done at working to restore broken relationships? How does hospitality fit into the conversation?*
6. *Read 1 Peter 4:10-11. What is your spiritual gift? How can you use this gift more to bless others in your life? In your church?*

FINAL BATTLE INSTRUCTIONS

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TALKING POINTS

Peter reminds the church that the battle with our culture is not a losing effort. Thirty years earlier Jesus was the one reminding Peter of the same thing.

- Approach the battle with _____. Jesus gave this instruction at the last supper, washing the feet of his disciples (Luke 22:24-26). Peter echoed those instructions 30 years later as an old man. 1 Peter 5:5-6
- _____ is the real enemy, not culture. Jesus told his disciples that Satan wanted to test their faith with trials (Luke 22:31-32). Peter passed the test after 30 years of ups and downs 1 Peter 5:8-9, Ephesians 6:12
- Trust God for ultimate _____. Jesus promised his disciples a place in his Kingdom (Luke 22:28-30). Peter remembered those words 30 years later and would soon live them out in his martyrdom. 1 Peter 5:10-11

DISCUSSION

1. How do you see posturing for who is the greatest in Christian circles today?
2. Read Luke 22:21-27. Describe all that happens in this passage. How had Jesus proven his servant heart to the disciples up to this point? Do you think the disciples understood the ultimate act of service Jesus was about to do for them? Explain.
3. Read 1 Peter 5:5-6. Evaluate your attitude at work, at home and with friends. Would others describe you as a servant? Explain.
4. Read 1 Peter 5:8-9 and Ephesians 6:12. How have you been surprised by the struggle to live for God in a secular world? What can you do to be more on guard against the spiritual attacks that will come?
5. Read Luke 22:28-30 and 1 Peter 5:10-11. What is Jesus referring to in the Luke passage? What do Peter's words mean to you knowing that he died for his faith not long after writing them?
6. How has this series challenged and inspired you? What will you do to stand for God in the future?

