

## **Group Study Guide**

First Baptist Church Merritt Island

*The Hidden War*

I Peter 2:11-12

April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2018

### **Main Point**

There is a war going on every moment of every day, but many people do not know it exists. It's a battle for our souls and God's glory. Today, we will discuss how we step into victory through Jesus.

### **Getting Started**

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

*Who in your life is a model for integrity? Share an example of a time when he or she demonstrated integrity in a situation where it would have been easy to compromise.*

*Who from the Bible stands out to you as an example of integrity?*

*What would you like for people to truthfully say about you after you die?*

It's been said that integrity is what we do, what we say, and what we say we do. The apostle Peter explains what integrity in the Christian life looks like to persecuted Christians struggling in their faith. He also reminds believers that our flesh battles against us. The deceitful desires of the flesh can tempt us to compromise our integrity in a variety of ways and to settle on less than God's best for us. Allow the truths of this passage to encourage you to stand firm against the deceitful desires of the flesh for God's glory and for the sake of a watching world who long to see men and women of integrity!

### **Observation**

Have a volunteer read 1 Peter 2:11-12.

*What does Peter call his readers in verse 11? Why do you think these titles are important for what he's urging them to do?*

*What does Peter urge the believers to avoid and why in verse 11?*

*What do you think Peter meant when he used the phrase 'passions of the flesh'?*

*What else does Peter urge them to do? What does he mean by honorable conduct or good deeds?*

*What impact might honorable conduct have on a watching world according to Peter?*

*What does Peter say that the Gentiles will say about believers? What evil might they speak against the church?*

*How can you live as beloved sojourners and exiles in the following areas: finances, marriage or singleness, parenting and work?*

*In what ways does the world tempt you to use these resources and relationships contrary to the way the Bible commands you to live?*

### **Application**

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

*In what way does seeing ourselves as temporary residents of this world help us avoid giving in to the deceitful desires of the flesh?*

*How can you resolve to live as beloved sojourners and exiles in the following areas: finances, marriage or singleness, parenting and work?*

*Do you have someone in your life who encourages you to wage war against sin? Who is that? If no one comes to mind, pray for God to bring someone into your life who encourages you, holds you accountable and prays for you.*

*Read Romans 6:1-11. What does this passage teach us about standing firm against sin in our lives? What provision has God made through Christ to help us wage war against the flesh?*

*Read these other passages that deal with fighting sin in our lives: 2 Corinthians 10:5-6, Ephesians 6:10-11, James 4:7 and Titus 2:11-12.*

*Think of believers in your life whom you know have resolved to maintain honorable conduct among unbelievers. Maybe they face persecution for their beliefs or for standing up for Jesus in their home or workplace. Pray for them and let them know that their lives encourage you.*

*When unbelievers ask about your honorable conduct or good deeds, do you give glory to God or take glory for yourself? Ask God to help you point people to Jesus who notice your good deeds. Ultimately, God deserves all the glory for any good people may see in us!*

### **Prayer**

Lord Jesus, please help me fight against the deceitful desires of the flesh. Those fleshly desires promise pleasure and fulfillment but only deliver death. Help me find life and satisfaction in You alone. I want my struggles against sin to remind me why I need you! And I want to fight the sins that so closely cling to me (Hebrews 12:1) for your glory and for my personal witness in a watching world. May unbelievers see the work you are

doing in my life and glorify You! Please never allow me to take credit for what you are doing in my life. Allow me always to point others to Jesus instead.

### **Commentary**

2:11 Beloved signals a major new section in this letter. Believers are sojourners and exiles, awaiting their end-time inheritance. The pleasures of the world are tempting and enticing, and Peter calls on believers to wage warfare against such desires. Believers should abstain from sinful passions, for they wage war against your soul. Harboring sinful desires brings personal harm.

2:12 Peter refers to unbelievers as Gentiles which is in keeping with his understanding of believers being a new Israel. Believers are to live godly lives even though they will often be criticized by unbelievers. When they do good deeds, some unbelievers will repent and believe and thus glorify God. On the day of visitation may refer to the initial conversion of the believer through the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, or it may refer to the way in which those who become believers will glorify God on the last day, the day of judgment. Hopefully, when unbelievers see the believers' good deeds, they will recognize God as the author of those works and glorify God.