

## **BEGIN**

1 Peter 2.9-17

**<sup>9</sup> But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. <sup>10</sup> Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.**

**<sup>11</sup> Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul. <sup>12</sup> 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.**

**<sup>13</sup> Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority instituted among men: whether to the king, as the supreme authority, <sup>14</sup> or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. <sup>15</sup> For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish men. <sup>16</sup> Live as free men, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as servants of God. <sup>17</sup> Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honor the king.**

As Christians we are citizens of heaven, and our permanent residence is there, but we live temporarily on earth. The way we live down here as citizens, recognizing the political and economic and sociological structures of the society in which we live, is very important. We're not just spiritual people living in a spiritual vacuum; our true spirituality is demonstrated as we live in the midst of the world in which we find ourselves.

When God created man and woman, he gave them the same task that a baby almost immediately undertakes with the raw materials of her vocal cords, lungs and mouth – the same thing that all humans have undertaken since the beginning of time. They go to work (even in the Garden before the fall), forming and reshaping the world they find themselves in. They begin “making something of the world – **Culture.**”

Here is a statement that distills what “culture” means and why culture matters:

***Culture is what we make of the world.***

According to Christ, Peter, and really God himself, we are to seek to change culture with the counterculture of Christ. We are to challenge people to set aside some set of existing cultural goods for our new proposal. There are a number of possible strategies, none of which, by themselves, will have any effect on culture at all.

- Condemning Culture
  
- Critiquing Culture
  
- Copying Culture
  
- Consuming Culture

With any of these postures toward culture there is clearly something missing. However, there are two postures that have been least explored by Christians in the last century that may fill in what is missing. They are found in the very beginning of human history, according to Genesis: Like our first parents we are to be...

- **Creators**
  
- **Cultivators**