

CLASS: SS1
SUBJECT: CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS STUDIES
TOPIC: LIVING A LIFE OF WITNESSING TO CHRIST
WEEK: 2
TERM: THIRD TERM

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Introduction

Christians living in the community are the salt and light of the community. As salt prevents food from decay, so Christians are expected to prevent their community from moral decay, and the presence of light makes people see the right path in a dark environment. But if they fail to show these qualities, then they are of no use to the community morally. We are to preserve values like truthfulness, decent dressing, uprightness, respect for elders, hard work, etc. in our community or country.

Christian religion demands practical manifestation of the teaching of Jesus in the daily lives of the believers. Hence there is need to live in harmony with both Christians and non-Christian whose midst we found ourselves.

Peter's Message on Christian Living (1 Pet. 1:13-17; 2:9-25; 4:1-19)

St. Peter, in his message warn Christians to abstain from any form of social vices and maintain a high moral standard of living in order to stamp out false accusation level against them by non-Christians. He described Christians as a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, who are called out of darkness into the marvellous light of God.

Having acquired a new life in Jesus, Christians now has an obligation to demonstrate his new life in his community. Peter reminds Christians of the circumstances

surrounding their redemption as former enemies of God and slave to darkness who are doomed for destruction. They were now redeemed through God's mercy in Jesus Christ. The followings are some of the roles expected of Christians in the community.

The Roles of Christians in the Community

1. They are to be subject to every human institution such as the president, governors, principals, teachers and civil authorities.
2. God has set up government to punish evil doers and praise those who do right.
3. They are to abstain from such sins as licentiousness, evil passions and desires, drunkenness, revelling or partying, lawlessness, idolatry, rioting, strife, envying, pornography, gluttony, etc.
4. They are to love one another, since love covers a multitude of sins. They should practice hospitality without complaining.
5. They should maintain good conduct among unbelievers so that even if they speak against them as evil doers, they might see their good works and glorify God.
6. They should fulfil their civic responsibilities in the community. These include being law abiding, paying their taxes and refraining from crime.
7. As servants of God, we should honour all men and love the Christian brotherhood.
8. The servants are to submit themselves to their masters with all respect even when their masters are being harsh.

Paul's Statements on the Children of Light (Rom. 13:11-14)

Paul in his Epistle to the Romans enjoins Christians as Children of light should:

1. Cast off the works of darkness and put on the armour of light.
2. They should abstain from drunkenness.
3. They should abstain from licentiousness
4. They should abstain from jealousy.
5. They should abstain quarrelling.
6. They should not allow flesh to gratify its desires.

Social Vices and Witnessing to Christ

Social vices are defined as the negative tendencies, habits and practices carried out by citizens of a community. These vices work against the peace and progress of such community. Some of these social vices ranged from oppression, corruption, cheating,

drunkenness, injustice, greed, bribery and corruption, adultery, drug-abuse, stealing, immorality, and the latest called suicide bombings that become serious security challenges in Nigeria. The Bible says 'They sell their righteousness for silver and the poor for a pair of shoe'. (Amos 2:6) They trampled the head of the poor into the dust of the earth and turned aside the afflicted.

Meaning of Peaceful Co-existence

Peaceful co-existence means living together peacefully in one house, compound, village, town, state or one country. Without peaceful co-existence there cannot be a home, a compound, a village, a town, a state or a country.

Meaning of Tolerance

Tolerance simply means **peaceful coexistence** between people of different religion. As Christians, we live in the same community with people of other religions. In Nigeria there are three major religions, Christianity, Islam and African Traditional Religion. Therefore there is need for the three religions to tolerate each other and live peacefully together as one.

Civic Responsibilities (1 Pet. 2:13-17)

Meaning of Civic Responsibilities

Civics implies rights, obligations and duties of citizens in their respective societies. For a society to be orderly, the rights of the citizens must be guaranteed by law, just as the citizens have obligations to perform in spite of anyone's social status. Order is the prerequisite for peaceful co-existence.

Christianity is not a religion practised without regard to the government and the entire society. It is right for Christians to obey the ruling authorities, pay their taxes, show honour to whom honour is due and above all, live lives that will be worthy examples to others.

Examples of Civic Responsibilities

- Obeying the law of the land.
- Payment of taxes and dues.
- Subjected to the governing authorities.

- For it is God who appointed them to punish wrong doers and to reward those who do well.
- Respect for constituted authorities.
- Obeying road signs.
- Not vandalizing government properties.
- Refraining from bribery and corruption.
- Christians should put on good behaviour in order to put to shame the ignorance of foolish men.
- As men liberated from the curse of the Law, they should not use their freedom as pretext for evil.
- Reporting criminals to the police.
- Shunning cultism.
- Voting at election.

ASSIGNMENT

1. Enumerate other seven social vices and their consequences.
2. List other five roles of Christians in the community.