

1 PETER: IDENTITY IN EXILE

The Pattern of the Suffering Christ

6 - When Righteous Suffering Becomes a Witness

1 Peter 2:18–25 (NIV)

Slaves, in reverent fear of God submit yourselves to your masters, not only to those who are good and considerate, but also to those who are harsh.

For it is commendable if someone bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because they are conscious of God.

But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it?

But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God.

To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.

“He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.”

When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.

“He himself bore our sins” in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; *“by his wounds you have been healed.”* For *“you were like sheep going astray,”* but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

- When believers suffer righteously, they are to look to Christ.

1. Not all suffering is the same.

1 Peter 2:18–20 (NIV)

Slaves, in reverent fear of God submit yourselves to your masters, not only to those who are good and considerate, but also to those who are harsh.

For it is commendable if someone bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because they are conscious of God. But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God.

- Don't confuse consequences for wrongdoing with suffering for doing right.

Before we claim that we are suffering for righteousness, we should ask:

- Did I act in love?
- Did I tell the truth?
- Did I carry myself with humility?

- Was I faithful?
- Was I honorable?
- Was I obedient to God?

- God isn't impressed by self-pity; He's moved by faithfulness.

- If the suffering comes from our own sin, the path to freedom and joy is repentance, not unconditional acceptance.

- If the suffering comes from doing good, the path is endurance with Godward trust.

2. There is grace in enduring unjust suffering while conscious of God.

1 Peter 2:19-20

For it is commendable if someone bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because they are conscious of God. But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God.

- When a believer is conscious of God, suffering becomes a witness and trust, not self-pity and fear.

- Faith doesn't erase pain; faith changes what pain produces.

Acts 5:41

The apostles left the council and were happy, because God had considered them worthy to suffer for the sake of Jesus.

- Faith doesn't make unjust suffering painless; it keeps it from owning you.

- When I'm conscious of God, I don't have to let pain decide who I become.

3. Jesus showed us how to suffer without sinning.

1 Peter 2:22-23

"He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth." When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.

- Jesus didn't let injustice turn Him into the image of His attackers.

- Entrusting yourself to God is not passivity; it's active faith.

4. Christ isn't only our example; He's first our substitute.

1 Peter 2:21-24

To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.

“He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.”

When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. “He himself bore our sins” in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; “by his wounds you have been healed.”

- Jesus isn't just a moral hero to imitate. He is the sin-bearing Savior who redeems.

24 “He himself bore our sins” in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; “by his wounds you have been healed.”

5. His wounds do more than forgive us; they call us into a new way of living.

- The wounds that save us are the wounds that shape us.
- Because of the cross, you do not have to become what your pain invites you to become.

6. The Shepherd who saved us is the Shepherd who keeps us.

1 Peter 2:25

For you were like sheep going astray, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

- The One who calls you to endure is the One who keeps your soul.
- Righteous suffering is not weakness. It's faith refusing to be ruled by injustice.