

Perseverance Under Pressure – Unjust Suffering - 1 Peter 2:18-25 – May 10, 2026

Happy Mother's Day | Perseverance Under Pressure – Unjust Suffering... Mom Day Joke

- We all believe in Just Suffering – Steal a Car...get arrested | Bully...gets what's deserved
 - Home Alone – Spikes in feet, set on fire, paint cans, smashed toolchest, shovel, arrested
 - As an audience...we love it! Why? Because the bad guys are getting what they deserve
- Have you ever done the right thing... and still have it go completely wrong?**
You showed respect—got insulted - You worked hard—got overlooked – undeserved pain

To understand the intersection of faith and suffering...not a glitch in the system

Instead view it as a deliberate thread in the fabric of spiritual growth

Why would God call His people not just to believe in Christ—but to suffer like Him?

Following Christ isn't only about *belief*...also about *imitation*, even when imitation is costly
Christ suffered unjustly...because this world is broken...the same will happen to us

Big Idea: When adversity strikes, Christ remains our pattern and our power

When hardship comes—injustice, pain, or persecution—Jesus gives us the model to follow

- **How to endure without sin** – He was reviled but did not revile in return
- **How to trust God's justice** – He “continued entrusting Himself” to the Father
- **How to respond with grace** – Even in suffering, He acted in love, not retaliation

Suffering is part of life and unjust suffering is something we have to learn to process – **Four**

1. **In unjust suffering, we: Respect God's order (v18)**

Servants, be subject to your masters with all respect, not only to the good and gentle but also to the unjust
The Greek word for servant is domestic slaves – Huge part of Roman world = 30%-40% City
Very different than the Atlantic Slave Trade we know today – Not racially motivated

- Became a Slave = War Captivity – Piracy – Debt – Birth – Criminal Punishment
 - Slaves = Households – Agriculture – Mining – Medical - Education – Government Admin
- One thing all slaves had common was they were owned by a master...Peter gives command
Servants, be subject to your masters with all respect, not only to the good and gentle but also to the unjust
Slaves, for God's sake, had to be submissive to both good & gentle as well as unjust masters

Now...we do not have slave masters...anyone? But we are submissive to unjust masters

Some of our greatest unjust suffering will be at the hands of unjust authority

Have you ever had just a terrible boss? Shawn Langan 'Make me \$\$\$ today / fire tomorrow'
Seen how some employers treat Christians? Losing promotion opportunities / Contracts

Two things we do when we encounter unjust suffering at the hands of an employer

- a. **Submit: servants be subject to your masters** Whatever instructed that is not sin, we do
- Their masters instructed them to do a task | Our employer instructs us we do the task

We must put excellence in our work as an act of worship

Colossians 3:23 - "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord."

- b. **With all respect: with all respect** - don't deserve it - What look like in workplace?

- i. **Honoring the position:** You acknowledge the authority & don't dismiss it
- ii. **Control your tongue:** No gossip, no slander, no tearing them down to others
- iii. **No retaliating:** when treated poorly trying to inflict equal or greater harm

David & Saul – Musician / Armor-Bearer / Champion (Goliath) / Military Commander / SIL

- Saul tried to kill David for most of a biblical book! 1 Samuel – A dozen times...kill him

Yet David refused revenge because he feared God more than Saul

David honored the position even when the person in the position acted dishonorably

Takeaway - Unjust Treatment Never Justifies Unrighteous Response

- Christians may endure difficult bosses, leaders, or authorities
- Not because those authorities deserve it, but because God sees faithful endurance

2. **In unjust suffering, we: Recenter on God's Grace (v19-20)**

.¹⁹ For this is a gracious thing, when, mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly. ²⁰ For what credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure? But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God.

Most people understand consequences they deserve: Drunk – Speed – Lazy – Acting mother

- What about consequences for things we didn't do anything to deserve | Frankie & Ron
- Take care of yourself...cancer | Love spouse...cheated on | Raise em right...kids go bonkers

This isn't new to our current cultural climate...bad things happen to good people!

- Joseph – betrayed brothers and falsely imprisoned despite integrity.
- Job – suffered catastrophic loss though described as upright
- Daniel – thrown into the lions' den for faithful prayer
- Jeremiah – persecuted for proclaiming God's truth
- Paul – beaten, imprisoned, and rejected for serving Christ | JESUS CHRIST – EXAMPLE

I want us to see two things from this text that help us recenter on God's grace

a. **Endure Suffering Consciously** (Endure Suffering Mindful of God)

¹⁹ For this is a gracious thing, when, *mindful of God*, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly.

- Peter gives the motivation for enduring unjust suffering: “mindful of God.”
- Christians do not grit teeth through hardship – **You suffers with an awareness that:**

God is sovereign - God is watching - God is just - God will reward faithfulness

Phrase “mindful of God” means living w/ God in view – **Viewing pain through lens of Truth**

When I was really sick...felt like I was gonna die...Wife & Dani = What is Truth?

You will get to a point in your suffering where you doubt the goodness of God - **recenter**

b. **Examine Suffering Carefully** (Why is this happening and what am I learning)

²⁰ For what credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure?

- Sometimes you can see a direct correlation between sin and suffering
- Careless – prideful – dishonest – harsh – irresponsible | **Friend lost job & almost family**

Am I actively doing something that is the cause or root of my suffering

But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in sight of God.

Here is Peter's emphasis: Doing good may still bring suffering

- Sometimes you suffer and there is no direct reason why...the world just is fallen

The believer's responsibility is not merely to do good when rewarded

but to continue doing good even when the world punishes you for it

Steadfast goodness in the face of mistreatment points to something supernatural

Joseph was tossed into a pit and then sold into slavery by his brothers | Pit – Slavery – Jail

Pit = Betrayal...humility | Slavery = servanthood...administration | Prison = patience

Genesis 50:20 'As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good'

Lord...is there something you want me actively learning during this time unjust suffering

Takeaway - View your suffering as an opportunity

Person mindful of God: Doesn't just ask: how do get thru? Ask: what is God going to do?

The greatest lessons you can learn in the world are on the darkest days on this world

3. **In unjust suffering, we: Reflect Christ under pressure (v21-23)**

²¹ For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps.

Christ not only suffered to save us—He suffered to show us how to endure unjust suffering

- Peter reminds suffering believers discipleship includes enduring hardship the way Christ
- Not: “Trust Christ so you can escape suffering.” - Is: Follow Christ even through suffering.”

If you are in Christ, unjust suffering is not a detour from God's plan for your life

Stephen's – 'Lord Jesus receive my spirit' | 'Lord do not hold this sin against them' | **PLAN**

C.S. Lewis - "Hardships often prepare ordinary people for an extraordinary destiny."

²² He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. ²³ When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.

Clearest signs spiritual maturity = Not life is easy...how they respond when things are hard

- Anyone = kind when appreciated – patient...respected - speak gently...spoken to gently
- What about = Falsely accused? Unfairly criticized? Betrayed by people you loved? **READ**

Jesus suffered unjustly w/o sinning...He calls His people respond to suffering the same way

How easy is it to justify sinful reactions when we feel wronged? – **Retaliate** - 'He started it'

- Jesus experienced greatest injustice in history w/o committing even one sin – **Pressure**
Suffering does not force us to sin; it reveals whether we will trust God in the suffering.

Takeaway - We don't get to follow Christ and avoid his pattern

Believers must guard their holiness especially when wounded

4. **In unjust suffering, we: Respond from redemption (v24-25)**

²⁴ He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. ²⁵ For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

- There are few passages in Scripture summarize gospel more beautifully than these 2
- Peter moves from the example of Christ's suffering to the purpose of Christ's suffering
Jesus did not merely suffer as a martyr or moral example. He suffered as a substitute

Cross: Guilty sinners...forgiveness - enslaved sinners...freedom - wounded sinners...healing

Christ bore our sins; we can leave our old life behind...live under care of the Good Shepherd

When suffering comes there are four things I want you to remember about Christ

a. **Christ Bore Our Sin Substitutionally** - He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree...

- *He Himself* — No one else could | *Bore our sins* — guilt and punishment we deserved
- *In His body* — the suffering was real, physical, and sacrificial
- *On the tree* — a reminder of the curse-bearing death of crucifixion

b. **Christ Freed Us from Sin's Dominion** - that we might die to sin and live to righteousness

- Before Christ: Sin ruled us - Sin defined us - Sin mastered us.
- Because Christ: Believers no longer slaves to sin - Righteousness becomes new direction
The gospel is not merely "Jesus forgives you." - The gospel is also "Jesus changes you."

c. **Christ Heals Our Deepest Wound** - By his wounds you have been healed – Isaiah 53

- The healing here is spiritual healing – As a surgeon heals your body...the Lord your soul
Have you been wounded by unjust suffering? Lean into Christ He will heal your wounds
"Sometimes God allows what He hates to accomplish what He loves." Joni Tada
God is sovereign and uses evil, suffering, and sin to bring about His good purposes

You're not abandoned! Not alone! Trust God is doing something miraculous...suffering!

Sins wounds deeply, but Christ's wounds heal completely

d. **Christ Restores Wandering Sheep**

²⁵ For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

- **Follow blindly** – No natural defense – Wander – Panic Easily – Led to water...this is us!
 - We need a shepherd = Jesus lovingly leads, feeds, protects, and rescues His people
 - John 10 presents Christ as the Good Shepherd who lays down His life for the sheep
- The Overseer of Your Souls - The word means guardian, protector, watcher

When unjust pain and suffering come...respond like you are saved | Shepherd / Protector

Takeaway - Grace received must be grace revealed | Suffer different than the world

Why would God call His people not just to believe in Christ—but suffer like Him? **Loves You**