



## 4: Enduring Unjust Suffering (1 Peter 2:11-25)

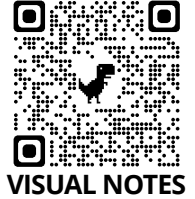
There isn't much more frustrating than being punished for doing what is right, but followers of Jesus better be ready to respond like Jesus did.

### teachingnotes

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\* Bible Translation: **NIV** (New International Version) & **NLT** (New Living Translation)



The apostle Peter's message to the 1st century Christians is a message we need to hear today too, since our culture continues to embrace what God says is evil while alienating those who speak up about what God says is good. For example...

- **Abortion** - Our nation is more likely to protect unborn turtles than unborn humans.
- **Sexual Impurity** - Our culture applauds sexual activity outside of the marriage relationship between a biological male and female. People choose their own genders & pro-nouns for whatever FLAVOR they like better.
- **Many ways to God?** Christians claiming Jesus is the ONLY way to God will face persecution.

Peter first referred his audience as "God's elect exiles" (1 Pet 1:1), God's HOUSE (1 Pet 2:5), God's people (1 Pet 2:9-10) those who have an inheritance awaiting that will not perish, spoil, or fade (1 Pet 1:3-5). These believers have *earthly homes*, but they have come to understand that they should be preparing for their *eternal home*, especially while facing persecution where they live.

### **Stiff-arm Sin**

#### **1 Peter 2:11** (NIV)

Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to **abstain from sinful desires**, which wage war against your soul.

Believers are to **abstain from sinful desires**. Here are some of the desires that includes:

**Galatians 5:19-21** (NLT) When you follow **the desires of your sinful nature**, the results are very clear: sexual immorality, impurity, lustful pleasures, idolatry, sorcery, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissension, division, envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other sins like these. Let me tell you again, as I have before, that **anyone living that sort of life will not inherit the Kingdom of God**.

Contrary to what our culture often says, we can actually control our behavior. Rather than being instinctual animals, human beings made in the image of God with the intellectual ability to override our **sinful desires**.

- This word translated "abstain" is from the *Greek term* meaning to be far away from.<sup>1</sup> The same term was used of the Prodigal whom the Father saw "while he was still a long way off" (Lk 15:20).
- ✗ Christians aren't to dabble or flirt with sin. The question shouldn't be, "How close can we get to sin and not sin?" Instead, we should keep the danger at a distance. These **sinful desires...wage war against your soul**. There is a CIVIL WAR going on inside of us. Our sinful desires are at war with our souls, where the Spirit of God lives.
- That's why living in sin separates us from real relationship with God and His people. Living in sin dilutes our confidence in Christ and our ability to impact others for Him. Followers of Jesus who **abstain from sinful desires** will experience purpose, hope, & a clean conscience.

### **TAKE SOME NOTES HERE!**

<sup>1</sup> Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 724-725.

## Do Good

### 1 Peter 2:12 (NIV)

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.

Peter no doubt remembers what Jesus said:

**Matthew 5:16 (NIV)** In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

Our LIVES are to overrule their LIES so that when Jesus returns - **the day He visits us** - they will glorify God because of our good deeds.

- There will be a day of judgement where those who mistreated and lied about us will be confronted by the truth and forced to glorify God - to confess that He is good & what He says is true.

❓ **Could some who used to persecute us be thankful to God for our faithful example?** Is it possible that some of our current enemies will become our brothers/sisters because our consistent obedience to God will lead them to turn from their sins and follow Him too. This has happened in the past. Go read Acts 16:25-34 for an example.

## Submit to Earthly Authorities

### 1 Peter 2:13-15 (NIV)

Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human authority: whether to the emperor, as the supreme authority, or to governors, who are sent by Him [the Lord] to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish people.

Believers are to submit to governing rulers for the Lord's sake because this honors Jesus. Jesus commands His disciples to submit to governing authorities as He did. **Jesus - God in skin - submitted to human authorities.**

- **Jesus told Pilate**, "You would have no authority over me at all,...if it hadn't been given you from above." (Jn 19:11).
- When asked about paying taxes Jesus answered with the now-famous words, "Give back to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's." (Mk 12:17) Jesus was teaching others to submit to human authority, but never forgetting to first submit to our ULTIMATE AUTHORITY.
- Jesus even paid the temple tax, despite being the Son of the Owner (God the Father). WHY? Jesus did not want to cause offense (Mt 17:24-27). No one could say that Jesus disobeyed the Roman authorities nor Jewish authorities. Jesus modeled what He expected Peter and rest of His disciples to do.

✓ **For the Lord's sake** we are to submit to every human authority (e.g. teachers, principles, police, IRS, governors, and the President). We don't disobey because we don't like RULES or RULERS. In submitting to THEM, we're submitting to the Lord.

Peter writes that these authorities **are sent by Him [the Lord] to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right.**

➡ The next time you see a governing authority...THANK THEM for protecting you.

## God's People Treat Other People With Respect

### 1 Peter 2:16-17 (NIV)

Live as free people, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as God's slaves [servants].

**Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the emperor.**

While Roman masters could treat their slaves brutally (branding and abusing them<sup>2</sup>, this was not always the case.

☀ **David Helm** "A closer modern-day parallel might be someone who received their college education for free in exchange for serving five years in the armed services upon graduation. Or medical school students and residents who receive a wage but are nonetheless "owned" by the institution who has agreed to pay for their training."<sup>3</sup>

This term is sometimes translated as "servants" (e.g. ESV) rather than "slaves". Peter writes that followers of Jesus are **to live as God's slaves** [servants].

✗ Some Christians might say, "We are servant-slaves of God, and have no need to submit to anyone else."

**Followers of Jesus are to respect everyone, love our faith family, and honor the governing leaders.** God's servants will obey what our Good Master commands - to treat others with value.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas R. Schreiner, 1, 2 Peter, Jude, vol. 37, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2003), 135.

<sup>3</sup> David R. Helm, 1 & 2 Peter and Jude: Sharing Christ's Sufferings, Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2008), 94-95.

## **How do we respond to earthly masters who aren't trustworthy and kind?**

### **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.

While **slavery** in the Roman world was typically “a temporary condition on the path to freedom”<sup>4</sup> until the person paid off the debt they owed or saved enough to purchase their citizenship (e.g. Acts 22:28), some slaves had masters who mistreated them.

🕒 Key to enduring unjust suffering: Be **conscious of God** - remembering that God sees it all - knowing that He is near and knowing that He knows the TRUTH. When we submit to God **in reverent fear** and know that God is always NEAR - we CAN endure **the pain of unjust suffering**.

### **What's that look like in our day?**

- Your boss mistreats you, yet you still show respect for his/her position, **this is commendable before God**.
- The judge makes a bad decision that impacts you. You appeal the judgement, but you don't disrespect the judge.

## **How Should We Respond if Mistreated for Our Faith?**

### **1 Peter 2:21-23** (NIV)

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.” [Isaiah 53:9] 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.

Peter once was one who retaliated cutting off the high priest's servant's ear Jesus was arrested. THAT GUY is - years later - writing what we are reading. After watching Jesus and remembering all that Jesus taught, Peter decided to follow His example instead. No more retaliation or threats. Peter would **entrust himself to God** and remember that Jesus did the same for us and He is WITH us when we suffer unjustly.

## **Responding to the Same Men Who Killed Jesus**

**Acts 5:28-29** (NIV) “We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name,” he said. “Yet you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and are determined to make us guilty of this man's blood.” Peter and the other apostles replied: “**We must obey God rather than human beings!**”

Disciples of Jesus are to submit to *earthly authorities*, but now their earthly authorities are telling them to disobey their *ETERNAL AUTHORITY*, so they disobey men in order to obey God. But, following the example of Jesus, they didn't retaliate. They didn't make any threats. Instead, they entrusted themselves to Him who judges justly (1 Peter 2:23). What happens next was foretold by Jesus way before it ever happened (Mark 13:9).

**Acts 5:40-42** (NIV) ...They called the apostles in and had them flogged. Then they ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. The apostles left the Sanhedrin, **rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name**. Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Messiah.

This **flogging** was not like the flogging of Jesus by the Romans, but neither was still very painful. Many scholars think this was likely the traditional 39 lashes (Deut. 25:3, 2 Cor 11:24). Later rabbinical sources explain the process<sup>5</sup>: The offender would be tied to a post or lie on the ground & receive lashes with a whip made of calf leather. 1/3 of the blows (13) would lash the chest and 2/3rds (26) lashes on the back.

The apostles were **rejoicing** over that beating, thankful for an opportunity to **suffer disgrace** for the One who suffered disgrace for them!

## **TAKE SOME NOTES HERE!**

<sup>4</sup> Scot McKnight, 1 Peter, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996), 165.

<sup>5</sup> Craig S. Keener, Acts: An Exegetical Commentary & 2: Introduction and 1:1-14:28, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2012-2013), 1242.

## **Thankful to Jesus!**

**1 Peter 2:24-25** (NIV)

**"He himself bore our sins" [Isaiah 53:11] in His body on the cross**, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; "by His wounds you have been healed." [Is 53:5] For "you were like sheep going astray," [Is 53:6] but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

\* Peter continues to point back to the 700 year old prophecy from Isaiah 53. Jesus has taken our sins on Himself and giving us His righteousness, so that we might **live for righteousness**. This thankfulness allows us to **Endure Unjust Suffering**. And that's exactly what the author of this writing - Peter - eventually did. Jesus foretold what would happen to Simon Peter. And years later, Peter would be crucified by the Romans under the reign of Emperor Nero - the same man he tells this audience to submit to.

**John 21:18-19** (NIV) Very truly I tell you, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go." Jesus said this to indicate **the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God**. Then he said to him, "Follow me!"

## **TAKE SOME NOTES HERE!**

### ***FEET OF FAITH***

✓ **Submit to Jesus:** Stiff-arm sinful desires & live in purity.

✓ **PRAY FOR and SUBMIT TO** the **authorities** in our lives, in honor of our Lord Jesus.

## **heretoserveyou**

Have questions and need some help? ...real soon...how about now? Please **call** or **text** us soon!

\* Contact **Jackie** (850-673-1582), **Justin** (704-618-6144), **Christy** (850-673-9764), or another follower of Jesus soon!

\* Or call our **deacons & wives:** Alan & Christy Androski (850-464-1428), Steve & Debbie Bass (850-673-7952), Tim & Joni Hughey (850-464-1156), Mark & Dot Mancil (850-253-5405), Boss & Amelia Mulkey (850-464-6717), Jim & Derita Pinkard (850-464-6188), Fain & Linda Poppell (850-464-1282), or Tom & Martha Waddail (850-973-0011).

### ***DISCUSSION QUESTIONS***

1. What challenged/encouraged you most from today's teaching? Explain why that was most impactful to you.
2. **Read 1 Peter 2:11-12.** Explain how sinful desires wage war against your soul. Share a story of an enemy of Jesus and His followers ended up following Jesus because of the consistency of Christians. **Read Acts 16:25-34** for a Biblical example.
3. **Read 1 Peter 2:13-16** and share why it is difficult to submit to some authorities in our lives. How might we show respect for the person and position while disagreeing with their policies? (Give some practical examples of both.)
4. Based on what we studied, how might you respond differently the next time you are treated unjustly? How does it encourage you to know that God is near and aware of the truth in all situations?
5. **Read 1 Peter 2:21-25.** How does Jesus' response to unjust suffering challenge/encourage you?
6. Any other insights or questions that we need to discuss?
7. Share your prayer needs and lift each other up to our God Who listens!