

Peter has written about Who We Are, What We Have, How To Live, and Who We are as The Church, now he shifts and begins to apply all of these realities to our everyday lives and he starts with our relationship to the governing authorities. In the opening portion of this passage he tells us that we have to submit to governing authorities for the Lord's sake. It's challenging for us to submit to these authorities when we don't agree with them. It's even more difficult to obey God in this way because he can feel much farther off then these earthly authorities which seem so close. All the same, we learn that our submission to these authorities is a litmus test for our trust in God – so we must submit (v.13-17). Peter goes on to say that we will certainly suffer while we submit but that God has grace to give us during this submission (v.18-20). Peter uses the final portion of this passage to encourage the reader by speaking of Christ's familiarity to the suffering that comes at the hands of unjust leaders. In his closing words Peter speaks of the grace we receive in suffering as Christ meets us in the moment and leads us into His green pastures.

1. Read 1 Peter 2:13-25.
 - This passage contains to imperatives. Where are they and how are they different?
 - Why did Peter need to command his readers in this way? Why might they be struggling to live this way?
 - How do you struggle in this way in your own life today?
2. In 1 Peter 2:16 Peter talks about the freedom we have and how we use it. Describe the freedom we have by answering the following questions:
 - How did we receive our freedom?
 - What are we now free from?
 - What are free to do that we couldn't do previously?
3. In 1 Peter 2:18-20 Peter writes about the implications that our submission has on us.
 - What are the implications of our submission? (v.18-19)
 - Can you think of a time when your suffering, at the hands of unjust leaders, led to receiving more grace from God? How did that impact you then and how has that shaped you today?
4. In 1 Peter 2:20 Peter says that our suffering is seen by God and that He extends grace to us in those moments.
 - What does this say about the character of God and how does that impact your perception of God?
 - Do you feel more comfortable trusting God or going to Him in prayer during difficult circumstances? Why or why not?
5. 1 Peter 2:21-24 has one primary goal – to invite us to join Jesus in our suffering as we submit to unjust leaders.
 - Reflect on the life of Jesus, can you name two or three times when he submitted himself to unjust leaders? How does this impact your view of Jesus and why?
6. 1 Peter 2:25 paints a beautiful picture of Jesus as our Shepherd (pathway to spiritual peace) and our Overseer (the one who see's into our souls). Does this concern you or comfort you? Why or why not?