

1 Peter 2:18-25

Verse 18

Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect – *Servants* = house slaves. *Respect* is commonly translated as “fear” and here means “a healthy desire to avoid their displeasure”.

Good and gentle...unreasonable – “Equitable, fair, mild and gentle” contrasted with “crooked, perverse, wicked and unfair.”

Verse 19

For this find favor – Peter introduces the reason we should willingly submit.

For the sake of conscience toward God - God is pleased when His people trust Him in the midst of unjust suffering.

A man bears up under sorrows – The picture is of a weight placed on one’s shoulders (1 Corinthians 10:13).

Verse 20

For what credit is there – Suffering for sin, wrong done in a relationship, is a natural consequence. Wrongdoers often bear their punishment without complaint because they know they are getting what they deserve.

But if you do right and suffer – This is the area in which we struggle and in which Peter gives us encouragement.

If you patiently endure it, this finds favor with God – True faith is revealed when it comes under fire. When God sees us trusting Him in all circumstances he is pleased. Peter introduced this principle in 1:6-7 and restates it in 4:19.

Verse 21

For you have been called for this purpose – Part of our calling in Christ is suffering. Why is this the case?

Since Christ also suffered for you – Peter is emphasizing the suffering that led to the cross. It was Christ’s perfect obedience to God in the face of the cruelest of deaths that ultimately purchased our redemption.

Leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps – Some have wrongly interpreted this statement to mean we must follow Jesus’ lifestyle in order to be saved (justified). Romans 5 clearly refutes this idea. Verse 22 would also be impossible for anyone to fulfill.

Example – The word means “to write under” and is used of students learning to write or draw.

Verse 22

Who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth – In verses 22 – 25 Peter explains in detail the life of Christ and the pattern we are to follow. This verse is a quotation of Isaiah 53:9 and all four verses allude to Isaiah 53. Christ’s sinlessness is referred to often in the New Testament (2 Corinthians 5:21, Hebrews 4:15, 1 John 3:5).

Verse 23

While being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats – “Reviled” refers to insulting and abusive speech. This was especially intense during Jesus’ trial and crucifixion. Not only did Jesus not retaliate, He prayed “Father forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” (Luke 23:34).

But kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously – Isaiah 53:7 is in Peter’s mind. Jesus knew that His Father would be just and fair. He knew that God would either:

- 1) – Punish the wrongdoers justly.
- 2) – Forgive them because of His payment for their sin.

Verse 24

He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross – (Isaiah 53:6) This is the heart of the gospel. The sinless Son of God suffered unjustly and died on the cross as the perfect payment for our sin. The word “cross” is literally means “an object made of wood, or tree”. Peter is probably thinking of Deuteronomy 21:23. Note also Galatians 3:13.

That we might die to sin and live to righteousness – A better translation is “That we, having died to sin, might live to righteousness”. This is a parallel thought to Romans 6.

For by His wounds you were healed – (Isaiah 53:5) Not physical healing but spiritual healing. We are healed from the dominating sickness of sin.

Verse 25

For you were continually straying like sheep – (Isaiah 53:6) This is a picture of the lost sinner who is helpless and wanders in danger of destruction.

But now you have returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls – When we believe we are brought into the fold of God (John 10). We now enjoy fellowship and security.

We should submit because:

- Jesus is our example in His life, verses 22-23.
- Jesus is our Substitute in His death, verse 24.
- Jesus is our Shepherd in Heaven, verse 25.

Our fellowship and security in Christ gives us the power to submit even when we are treated unjustly.

“The unsaved world is watching us, but the Shepherd in heaven is also watching over us; so we have nothing to fear. We can submit to Him and know that He will work everything together for our good and His glory.”¹

Warren Wiersbe

¹ Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *The Bible exposition commentary* (Vol. 2, p. 407). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.