

The Call to Suffer

1 Peter 2:18-25

“Central features that distinguish 1st century slavery from that later practiced in the New World are the following: racial factors played no role; education was greatly encouraged (some slaves were better educated than their owners) and enhanced a slave’s value; many slaves carried out highly responsible social functions;

(next slide) slaves could own property (including other slaves!); their religious and cultural traditions were the same as those of the freeborn; and (perhaps above all) the majority of urban and domestic slaves could legitimately anticipate being emancipated by the age of 30.” Dr. Scott Bartchy (Harvard, UCLA)

1 Timothy 1:8-10 “We know that the law is good if one uses it properly. We also know that the law is made not for the righteous but for lawbreakers and rebels, the ungodly and sinful, the unholy and irreligious, for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers, for the sexually immoral, for those practicing homosexuality, for slave traders and liars and perjurers.”

“It is crucial to note that the New Testament nowhere commends slavery as a social structure...The New Testament regulates the institution of slavery as it exists in society, but it does not commend it per se. Hence, Peter’s words on slavery should not be interpreted as an endorsement for the system.” Dr. Thomas R. Schreiner

Submit in love, even if suffering unjustly (verses 18-20)

The slave needed to understand that greater issues were more important than the immediate injustice: the name of Jesus was at stake, as well as the possible salvation of his unreasonable master, who was the slave of sin.

Those who suffer in such a way will receive a reward (“charis,” grace) from God and that the reward in context is their future inheritance

Suffer like Jesus (verses 21-23)

Peter wanted Jesus to avoid suffering (Matthew 16:22), but he would go on to witness firsthand all of his suffering.

John 21:17-19 “Jesus said [to Peter], ‘Feed my sheep. 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!’”

Live righteously and freely (verses 24-25)

The purpose of Christ’s death was not only to provide forgiveness but to empower his people to “live for righteousness.”

Peter's main concern here is how to act when you are being persecuted, not about securing justice for the oppressed.

"By patiently enduring unmerited abuse they show the opposite of a servile attitude. They demonstrate their freedom...If the Christian responds in kind—good for good, evil for evil—he becomes merely a victim when he is treated unjustly. In burning resentment he seeks an opportunity to repay the evil.

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But if he bears the evil patiently he has broken the chain of bondage in the power of the Lord...His master cannot enslave him, for he is Christ's slave; he cannot humiliate him, for he has humbled himself in willing submission." Edmund Clowney

"The way of suffering is the divinely intended manner of bringing the greatest victory of God into the world." Scot McKnight

How do we follow Jesus in his suffering? We spend time with Jesus. We study his humility and gentleness and love.

The secret to Honnold's success: Through hundreds of hours roped up, practicing the route over the ten years before his free soloing attempt, Honnold became intimately familiar with every step of his climb.

To this you were called...follow in his steps.