



Old Testament: Isaiah 53:1-12
New Testament: 1 Peter 2:11-25

A Living Hope – Preparing for Persecution

“Suffering For Christ’s Sake”

1 Peter 2:18-21

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The Apostle Peter wrote this epistle in AD 64-65, just after the city of Rome burned.

- Roman Emperor Nero blamed the Christians for the fire, and the Christians had to flee to the neighboring cities to avoid severe persecution.
- Peter challenged these new believers to live victoriously, even amid severe hostility:
- Without losing hope –
- Without becoming bitter –
- Without compromising their testimony –

- Peter said their response to those persecuting them would be their evangelistic witness to them.
- He challenged them to suffer for Christ's sake – to prove the substance and the strength of their faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord.

The “Call of Christ” to follow Him is a call to victory and a call to glory...through the pathway of suffering!”

Peter said the believer's spiritual maturity is measured by the way they handle spiritual conflict, and Jesus Christ is the model that spiritual maturity.

- That spiritual conflict began in Genesis 3:15 between the “seed” of the Woman (The Promise of a Savior) and Satan.
- From that day forward, that spiritual conflict surfaced between God's people and those demonic forces that followed Satan in his rebellion against God.
- That conflict of the ages was made clear when Jesus came to earth. Having failed to destroy the “seed,” Satan tried to destroy the “Savior.”
- At the Lord's resurrection, God declared victory over Satan, even though his defeat will not be complete until the end of the millennium.
- All Satan has left in his arsenal today is “deception”!
- Deception of false doctrine –
- Deception of vain philosophy –
- Deception of the deceitfulness of sin –
- The children of God will always be defending themselves against the children of the devil, because true Christians are a threat to the evil systems of the world.
- Even though it appears that our battle is with the actions and attitudes of human beings, in reality, we wrestle with fallen demons and fallen angels – Eph. 6:12

“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ!”

2 Corinthians 10:3-5

In 1st Peter 2:11-25, the Apostle Peter said, as Christians, we are to live above the fray of the wicked world:

- Unbelievers live on the natural plane of the world –
- Believers live on the supernatural plane of the world –
- Christians are to live as:
- **“Aliens”** – Vs. 11 – this world is not our home
- **“Citizens”** – Vs. 13 – as ambassadors for Christ
- **“Servants”** – Vs. 18 – submissive to those in authority

1. **The Mandate for Submission – Vs. 18 – “*Servants, be submissive to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the harsh.*”**

In the day this epistle was written, there were more than 60 million slaves in the Roman Empire.

- Many slaves accepted Jesus Christ as their Savior.
- Once they were free from the bondage of their sin, they thought they should also be free from their slavery.
- Peter said being set free from the penalty of sin does not free a person from being under submission to their earthly authority.

Becoming a Christian does not alter the employer-employee relationship, other than opening up an opportunity for the believer to bear witness to the transforming power of Christ.

- God designed the social structure in our society.
- Christians are to respond to those in authority over them, “as unto the Lord.”
- God will use the believer’s submission to touch the heart of those in authority or punish them for failing to accept the witness He sent to them.
- No believer has a secular job – every believer is on mission wherever God has placed them.
- God will use the fiery trials of that place of employment to prove and improve our faith, and to reveal it to others.

2. **The Motive of Submission – Vs. 19 – “*For this is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully.*”**

Why would God require His children to submit to unworthy authorities?

- Verse 19 – For this is commendable before God.
- Verse 21 – For it is to such suffering we have been called.

If a believer endures unjust suffering, i.e., they accept it with humility and patience, trusting in God alone, God takes that trust to mean the believer is aware of His presence in their lives.

- There is the call of salvation – 1 Peter 2:9
- There is the call of suffering – Matthew 5:10-12, 1 Corinthians 4:11-13, 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

3. **The Model of Submission – Vs. 21 – “*For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow His steps.*”**

Peter identified three purposes behind the Lord’s suffering:

- Verse 21 – **“Christ suffered for us.”** – our Substitute
- The Greek Word translated as “for” is “huper”, which means “in our place”, “in our stead”, or “as our substitute!” (Eph 5:2, John 10:11, Isaiah 53:45, 1 Peter 2:24)
- Verse 21 – **“Leaving us an example!”** – our Standard

- Jesus was the only perfect Person to ever live, yet He was treated more unjustly than anyone.
- Jesus gave us the pattern to follow when we are called to “Deny ourselves”, “Take up our Cross”, and “Follow Him.”
- Verse 25 – ***“To the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.”*** – Psalm 23 – ***“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me!”***