

“Witness While You Work!”
1 Peter 2:18-20

Introduction:

1. What Kind Of Reputation Do You Have?
 - Is It The Same, Wherever You Are?
 - Is It The Same: At Home / At Church / At Work?
 - Did You Know That Your Reputation Is One Of The Most Powerful Ways To Witness To Someone? Of What God Has Done For You?
 - Especially, When People See In You Something Different!
 - Different Reactions / Different Responses!
 - To Similar Situations / Circumstances In Your Lives!
 - We All Experience Suffering!
 - Believers & Unbelievers Alike! **IE:** Swine Flu!
 - But, How Do You Respond To Suffering?
 - Do You Have The Kind Of Reputation A Christian Should Have?
 - We All Experience Authority!
 - Believers & Unbelievers Alike! **IE:** Government! Bosses!
 - But, How Do You Respond To Authority?
 - Do You Have The Kind Of Reputation A Christian Should Have? Do You Submit?
2. In 1 Peter 2:12, Peter Told Us To Be: “Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation!”
 - Your Reputation Is One Of The Most Powerful Ways To Witness To Someone!
 - “Conversation Honest” - A Good / Noble Lifestyle!
 - Do You Want To See Your Life Really Count For Something? Then Let God Use Your Life To Bring Others To Jesus Christ! How Can You Do This?
 - This Is What Peter Is Looking At!
 - One Key To Having This Kind Of Christian Reputation / Character:
 - Submission To Authority!
 - Probably The Hardest Thing To Do! **IE:** The Hardest Substance Is The Most Valuable! Like A Diamond! From Greek “Adamas” - Unbreakable!
 - This Is What Makes Submission Such A Powerful Witness & Testimony!
 - Submission As Subjects - 2:13-17! “Submit Yourselves!”
 - Submission As Servants - 2:18-20!
 - Read Passage!
3. One Of The Best Ways For You To Witness At Work Is:
 - Through Submission To Authority!
 - It Is Not Just What You Say! (Though Important!)
 - But How You Serve! Through Submission!
 - This Isn’t Just For Those Who Serve At Work!
 - But For Anyone Who Serves Through Work!
 - Do You Want To Be An Effective Witness For Jesus Christ Wherever & Whenever You Work?
 - Do You Want To Have An Effective Testimony?

* There Is:

1. ***A Plea For Witnessing While You Work!***
 - 2:18 - “Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward!”
 - Peter Is Calling On All Servants To Submit To Their Masters, Whoever They Are & Whatever Kind They Are!
 - A Plea To Servants!
 - The “Servants” Peter Was Writing To Were Actually A Kind Of House-Hold Slave!
 - Someone Who Was An Involuntary Servant!
 - No Choice! For Their Master! For Their Work / Duty! For Their Length Of

- Service!
 - Not Like Us - Voluntary Service!
 - **IE:** “At Will” Employment - Can Quit Or Be Fired For Any Or No Reason At All!
 - So, Is Peter Writing To Us?
 - We May Not Be Slaves - But If Submission To Authority Was Expected Of Them - In The Worst Possible Circumstance We Could Imagine - How Much More Should We Use Our Freedom & Christian Liberty To Submit Willingly To The Authorities God Has Placed In Our Lives? Purpose!
- A Plea For Submission!
 - “Be Subject To Your Masters!”
 - Same Response To Authority Already Seen!
 - As Subjects! Now As Servants!
 - ***The Life Of A Christian Is A Life Of Submission!***
 - Who Were They Supposed To Submit To?
 - “Master” - Despot - “The Power Of The Master Was Absolute And Unquestioned, Even to The Arbitrary Infliction Of The Most Cruel Punishments, And Of Death Itself!” (Lillie)
 - How Can A Christian Be Expected To Submit To This Kind Of Person?
 - A Christian Does Not Now Live To / For Himself! But To Another / And For Others!
- A Plea With Sacrifice!
 - Paul Called Us To “Present Your Bodies A Living Sacrifice!” (Romans 12:1)
 - It Is A Sacrifice To Submit To The Authority Of Those We Work For! Especially In This Way:
 - “With All Fear!”
 - Not Just Submission In Actions / But Attitude Also!
 - “All” - An All-Encompassing Respect!
 - In Your Thoughts!
 - In Your Talk! To / About Your Employer!
 - In Your Treatment!
 - In Your Talents! Give Your Best!
 - In Your Time! All The Time! All Cases!
 - “Not Only To The Good & Gentle!” (Fair!)
 - The Ones We Like! And Deserve It!
 - This Is Easy! The Real Test Comes:
 - “But Also To The Froward!”
 - The Ones We Dislike! And Don’t Deserve It!
 - “Froward” - “Crooked” - “Mean & Nasty”
 - Is This How You Serve Where You Work? When You Work?
- You Will, When You Realize That One Of The Best Ways For You To Witness At Work Is:
 - Through Submission To Authority!
 - Their “Primary Goal Was Not Release From Slavery, But A Christ-Like Life!” / Their Focus Was Not On Their Rights, But Was On Their Responsibilities! As A Christian!

* There Is:

2. ***A Practice Of Witnessing While You Work!***

- 2:19 - “For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully!”
 - Peter Shows How A Christian Can Demonstrate This Submission In A Real-Life Practical Way!
- Practice For Approval!
 - God’s Approval! “For This Is Thankworthy!”
 - Or: “For This Is Grace!” (Charis)
 - If You Are Only Seeking Man’s Approval (Or Your Own):
 - You Cannot Have This Kind Of Response To Authority!
 - But If You Are Seeking After God’s Approval & Favor:
 - You Will Respond With Submission To Authority - Even The Worst Kind!

- If Your Relationship With God Is Right!
 - Then Your Relationship With Authority Can / Will Be Right!
- Practice With Awareness!
 - Of God! “For Conscience Toward God!”
 - Or A Consciousness / Full Awareness Of God!
 - You Can / Will Respond To Authority With Submission:
 - If You Are Fully Aware Of:
 - God’s Presence!
 - God’s Power!
 - God’s Providence!
 - God’s Purpose / Plan!
 - God’s Praise!
 - “When A Believer Is Conscious Of God – God Gives Him The Necessary Strength To Bear The Pain, Extends To Him Grace And Mercy, And Is Fully In Control Of Every Situation!” (Kistemaker)
 - Even If The Authority Does Not Deserve It!
- Practice Through Affliction!
 - Even When You: “Endure Grief, Suffering Wrongfully!”
 - When: “Bad Things Happen To Christian People”
 - And Those “Bad Things” Are Undeserved!
 - It Is An Opportunity For Your Testimony To Shine!
 - **IE:** The Brightest Ray Of Sun Comes Through The Darkest Clouds!
- Remember: One Of The Best Ways For You To Witness When You Are Working Is:
 - Through Submission To Authority!

* There Is:

3. ***A Purpose For Witnessing While You Work!***

- 2:20 - “For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God!”
 - Why Should We Respond With Submission To Authority – Especially When They Mistreat Us?
- The Purpose Of A Good Report!
 - “For What Glory Is It?”
 - Credit / Report!
 - What Kind Of “Report” Do You Have When You Work?
 - What Kind Of “Report” Do You Want?
 - **IE:** Annual / Quarterly Reviews! Goals!
 - In Order To Be An Effective Witness:
 - You Must Have A Good Report / Reputation!
 - This Is A Good Goal To Have! Not For The Praise Of Man / But Of God / And For Opportunity!
- The Purpose Of A Good Response!
 - You Will Never Have A “Good Report” & Testimony If You Do Not Have The Right Response!
 - “When Ye Be Buffeted For Your Faults!”
 - If You Are Derelict In Your Duties:
 - Then You Deserve Any Discipline You Receive!
 - And You Will Not Have The Kind Of Witness / Testimony That Is Necessary To Make A Difference!
 - You Need To Have A “Work-Ethic” That Is Different Than The World! And Is Worthy Of A Christian!
- The Purpose Of A Good Reward!
 - From The Lord!
 - “But If, When Ye Do Well, And Suffer For It, Ye Take It Patiently, This Is Acceptable With God!”
 - “Acceptable” - “Thankworthy” In 2:19 - “Grace!”
 - “This Is Grace Before God!”

- If Your Duty Is Difficult!
 - And Your Discipline Is Undeserved!
 - And You Endure It Patiently!
 - Then You Will Receive The Gift Of God's Grace!
 - "Find Grace To Help In Time Of Need!" (Hebrews 4:16)
- And You Will Receive His Approval!
 - Matthew 5:11-12 - "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. / Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven!"

Conclusion:

1. Even Though Peter Wrote This To Slaves:
 - It Still Applies To You!
 - What Kind Of Reputation Do You Have Where / When You Work?
 - What Kind Of Witness Are You / What Kind Of Testimony Do You Have?
 - Especially In Your Relationship With Your Boss / Leader / Employer?
2. How You Respond To Authority In Your Workplace:
 - Will Have A Great Impact On Your Credibility As A Christian!
 - Do You Want To Be An Effective Witness For Jesus Christ Whenever You Work?
 - Then: "Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward!"
 - Submissive Service:
 - Is The Best Way To Witness While You Work!

Grace Baptist Church
Stephen Elmer, Pastor
4245 North 200 West
Greenfield, Indiana 46140
317-326-2362
www.sermonaudio.com/wordofgrace
www.growatgrace.org
pastor-elmer@hotmail.com