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Submission in the Workplace  
1 Peter 2: 18-23

### Introduction

Of late I have taken part in the exchange of Letters to the Editor in the local paper because there have been so many attacks against the local *Moms for Liberty* because they have questioned the trustworthiness of teachers and librarians in our local districts. I wrote another letter this week and have posted it in the foyer. We will see if it gets published or not. Why take the time to enter into such a public debate when even my youngest son finished schooling a decade ago and only one of them took one class for one year in the public school system? There are many reasons, but a primary one is to support parents who take seriously their identity as parents and the responsibilities that belong to them as parents. Frankly, the reason our public school systems are such a mess is that too few parents seriously involve themselves in the education of their children. It is simply a lot easier to send them off to public school with the mindset that is the teachers' responsibility since that is why you are paying taxes.

The wake up call for many parents was finding out what was being taught - and what was being ignored - when their children were forced into remote learning at home due to pandemic regulations and fears. It shocked many parents into action to challenge the anti-truth and anti-Christian ideologies that now pervade so many public school systems, and yes, that includes our local districts as well. What is making a difference are parents taking seriously their identity as parents and the responsibilities that come with that.

With as many people who are now confused about their identity, I want to quickly add here that knowing your identity, knowing who you are and where God has fit you into the world is crucial. Using myself as an example. First, I am an adult male. That means I am accountable to God for the responsibilities He has placed upon me as a man going back to the dominion mandate and including developing my character to match what He requires such as described in Psalm 15. I am a husband, so I am responsible to fulfill my God given role to my wife as described in Ephesians 5. I am a grandfather, so I am responsible to make sure I don't spend everything I earn so that I can leave an inheritance as described in Proverbs 13:22. I am an American, so I have responsibilities of citizenship in this nation in seeking my country's welfare and be a blessing to my fellow citizens. My name is Scott Lee Harris. That name is not only a means by which I can be distinguished from other people, but it also represents a family heritage I have received from my forefathers for which I am responsible to guard and protect and pass down favorably to my descendants. The same can be said as the son of my mother about my heritage from her side of the family. However, the most important aspect of my identity is that I am a Christian. Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior and a major purpose of my salvation is to be conformed into His image so that the manner in which I live my life reflects His indwelling and brings Him glory.

If you are Christian, the same is true for you. Peter has been making that point from the beginning of this letter for who you are in Jesus Christ determines the manner in which you will live your life and even your attitude toward your God given responsibilities. As a Christian, you are chosen by God, sanctified by the Spirit and cleansed by Jesus, the Son. You have been born again by God's mercy and redeemed by the Christ's blood. You are a "*living stone*" being built up as a spiritual house for you are part of a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation and a people for God's own possession. That makes you not only a slave of Jesus, but also an *alien and stranger* in this world. Your submission is always to be first and foremost to the Lord Jesus Christ and then extend from there to every other authority He has placed in your life.

That last part is extremely important as I pointed out last week in our study of 1 Peter 2:13-17 as we dealt with the subject of being in submission to “*every human institution.*” From a pragmatic point of view that enables there to be order in society instead of chaos, but as Christians, Peter points out specifically that we do it “*for the Lord’s sake.*” Our motivation is different from that of the world and so is our allegiance. Our primary allegiance is to the Lord whom we are to obey, and our motivation is to see the Lord’s will done here on earth as it is in heaven just as Jesus taught us to pray. Our allegiance and submission to civil authority is secondary to that in keeping with the Lord’s purposes for it. When a governmental authority moves away from God’s purpose for it in punishing evil doers and praising those who do right, we respectfully do not comply while declaring what God has said about the matter. That is the example given to us by the prophets in dealing with the kings. At the same time, because all that we do including our submission to civil authorities is “*for the Lord’s sake,*” we want to honor the Lord in our attitude and manner. We maintain a respectful demeanor toward the office of an authority even when the individual may be despicable. We pray for those in such positions “*so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity*” (1 Timothy 2:1-2).

As slaves of God we do what is right before Him and in that way show Him reverence. We value everyone which includes telling them the truth in love. We sacrificially love other Christians and we show respect to authorities. In doing these things you demonstrate that you are a follower of Jesus Christ.

In the next section of this passage, Peter applies these same principles in the work place. 1 Peter 2:18–20, <sup>18</sup> *Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable.* <sup>19</sup> *For this finds favor, if for the sake of conscience toward God a person bears up under sorrows when suffering unjustly.* <sup>20</sup> *For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer for it you patiently endure it, this finds favor with God.”* Peter then continues on in verses 21-23 to point to Jesus as the example for us in being submissive. <sup>21</sup> *For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps,* <sup>22</sup> *who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth;* <sup>23</sup> *and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously.”*

### **Slaves & Masters - 1 Peter 2:18**

The first thing to point out about this passage is that while the specific situation cited does not apply in the modern world in the same way as it did in the ancient world, the principle behind it still does. The term translated servant here, οἰκέτης / oiketās, actually means “*inmate of a house,*” “*house slave.*” The term for master here is δεσπότης / despotās which refers to the “*owner,*” “*possessor,*” “*the lord of the house*” and from which we get our English word, despot. It is a reference to an absolute ruler with unlimited power. The Greeks would use it to refer to barbarian rulers. It is used in the Septuagint in reference to God to emphasize His omnipotence and sovereignty. The reference here is to the master of the house who has unrestricted authority over his household.

I read one commentary that very ignorantly stated that slavery in the first century Roman world “*was not as bad as that practiced in America before the Civil War.*” No, it was much, much worse. Estimates range as high as 60 million slaves of all types in the Roman empire of that time. The Roman attitude was that as the masters over other nations by conquest, Roman citizens should live pampered lives and slaves should do all the work. That was not just physical labor and menial tasks, but also often included highly educated positions such as doctors, teachers, musicians, entertainers and stewards.

The despot master had absolute authority over the slave including life and death, and there were no restrictions on their treatment such as those given in the Mosaic Law. The only real protection of a slave was being a valuable piece of property for in Roman law a slave was a thing and not a person. The slave

was without any legal rights. They could not legally marry and children from any cohabiting slaves belonged to the master the same as would a foal or a calf.

The master's will or whim was the only law for the slave. Aristotle wrote, *"There can be no friendship nor justice towards inanimate things; indeed, not even towards a horse or an ox, nor yet towards a slave as a slave. For master and slave have nothing in common; a slave is a living tool, just as a tool is an inanimate slave."* Varro, a writer on Roman agriculture, divided the instruments of agriculture into three classes, *"the articulate comprising the slaves, the inarticulate comprising the cattle, and the mute comprising the vehicles."* The practical difference between a slave and a wagon or a mule was that the slave could speak.

This does not mean that slaves were always in wretched positions and treated cruelly, for most masters would recognize that a slave that was treated well would be more productive and be of more benefit to him. In addition, many slaves, especially household slaves who often lived among the family as personal servants, child-care givers, tutors, nurses, stewards and such, would become endeared to the family. The same could be true for children of slaves. Proverbs 29:21 even points out this normal characteristic of human interaction, *"He who pampers his slave from childhood will in the end find him to be a son."*

Slavery is a distant concept for most people in the modern world because there are very few countries, if any, in which slavery is openly legal. Even in those nations in which people are kidnaped and sold into slavery, the practice is not legal even if tolerated. There are also many situations in many countries in which slavery is the practical reality and that includes our own nation. One of the great tragedies about illegal immigration is that debt load and coercion are used to force people to work unwanted jobs for employers who exploit them. Because they are illegal, there is additional fear about reporting the situation to the authorities. This includes sex trafficking which is also a great danger for runaways. Even so, slavery remains a distant concept for most people in the modern world so some of the force of what Peter is writing here will be lost.

However, Peter's arguments should still be easily understood. If you were a slave and had a master who was good and gentle to you, it would not be difficult to submit to him. The same is true if you are working for such an employer. The word "good" in this verse is the general word for positive moral qualities that reflect God's goodness. The word translated "gentle" here (ἐπιεικής / epiekās) refers to what is "fitting, right, or equitable" with a sense of being gracious and forbearing. The LSB translates it as "considerate." Christian and non-Christian alike would find it easy to submit to and be respectful to such a boss.

But what if the master / the employer was not such a person but was in fact unreasonable. The word Peter uses here, σκολιός / skolios, means bent, crooked, twisted, and was used to describe rivers, roads and sticks. We use the transliteration of the word today - scoliosis - to describe a spine that is bent laterally out of shape. It was used metaphorically to describe a person that was ethically and socially perverse - crooked, dishonest, false. Such misconduct is based in ungodliness and unbelief.

This is where the difference between the Christian and non-Christian will become evident. The value system of the non-Christian is based on something other than the Creator God and therefore will respond to such ill treatment accordingly. It could be open rebellion and the quest for some form of revenge, or it could be the passive rebellion of doing the absolute minimum required as slowly as possible. In either extreme, there is not thought given to what would be good for the master because there is no desire for the master's good. There is a resistance to submission and proper respect is lacking.

The Christian has very different motivations because the primary goal is to live for Christ and His glory instead of self. In this case that will mean being submissive to the master and showing him proper fear (φόβος / phobos) which in this context refers to profound respect. This is not a passive yielding but rather an active compliance for the same reason there is submission to human institutions. All authority ultimately comes from God, so this is done primarily as a submission to God's will.

At this point there will be those that will be aghast that slavery could possibly be part of God's order. They have been ignorantly taught to believe that slavery, or at least antebellum American slavery, was one of the greatest evils ever. They are not taught about the near universal existence of slavery and its various practices throughout history or its existence today as mentioned earlier. And even in most churches, the many Scriptures that address the issue of slavery are ignored. In brief, the Mosaic Law allowed for it but restricted how slaves could be acquired, how they were to be treated, and set out how they could be redeemed. The New Testament teaching can be summed up in Paul's statement in 1 Corinthians 7:21–22, <sup>21</sup> *“Were you called while a slave? Do not worry about it; but if you are able also to become free, rather do that.”* <sup>22</sup> *“For he who was called in the Lord while a slave, is the Lord's freedman; likewise he who was called while free, is Christ's slave.”* Whatever your position, slave or free, or in the modern setting, employee or employer, is inconsequential in importance compared to your identity in Jesus Christ. This world is temporal and therefore so is your position within it. The Christian is to live in the present with eternity in view.

Paul's letter to Philemon concerning the runaway slave, Onesimus, makes it clear that while their mutual faith made them brothers in Christ and therefore directed how they should treat each other, that did not change their relationship as master and slave. It would be up to Philemon to decide what he would do with his returned slave which is why Paul appeals to him instead of make demands. Regardless of whatever pragmatic arguments theologians have come up with trying to explain or explain away the teachings of the apostles about slavery, the bottom line is this. God does not condemn slavery itself and He made allowances for it in the Mosaic law while also putting restrictions on it. Slavery outside those boundaries is contrary to God's stated will and therefore evil, but be very careful not to declare as evil what God Himself has not condemned. You are neither more righteous than God nor in a position by which you can judge Him.

Returning to 1 Peter and the point that all authority ultimately comes from God therefore a slave's submission is primarily a submission to God's will, that also means there are boundaries to what the master can require. Anything the master commands that is contrary to God's stated will must be respectfully disobeyed for obedience to God must always come first. And again, the principle that applies to a slave concerning his master applies to the employee to his employer. You cannot lie, misrepresent, cheat, steal, harm others, murder, seduce, be immoral, blaspheme God, join in idolatry, or practice any other sin regardless of any threat or enticement by your employer. The Christian is to follow Jesus' example which includes considering what is good for the master because Jesus commanded His followers to love their enemies and pray for those that persecuted them (Matthew 5:43-48). That is likely a command and passage that Peter has in mind as he gives these instructions in verses 19-20.

### **Endurance for Conscience Sake - 1 Peter 2:19**

Verse 19 is an expansion past just the case of house slaves who are treated in a wrong manner by their master to include anyone that suffers because they have been treated badly. The situation of slaves is a specific example of the general principle that is given here.

Peter begins with a statement that is variously translated as *“for this finds favor,”* *“for this is commendable,”* and *“for this is gracious.”* The noun here, χάρις / charis, is the term for grace with a broader meaning of having a favorable attitude toward something or someone. The action being done here - *bearing up under sorrows when treated unjustly* - is an act of grace that is reflective of Christ as Peter will point out in verse 21-23. Bearing up, ὑποφέρω / hupopherō, is to continue to put up with, endure despite the difficulty or suffering. The particular suffering here is the sorrow, λύπη / lupā, the mental pain of being treated unjustly contrary to what is right.

The motivation for doing this is for the sake of conscience toward God, or perhaps as stated in the ESV, *“when, mindful of God.”* The point here is not the conscience itself, for even pagans have a conscience, it is that the conscience of the Christian is mindful of God because His Spirit indwells him

so that he knows God's will and what pleases Him. There is a mental contrast here. The unjust treatment causes mental sorrow while being mindful of and doing God's will in enduring it as an act of graciousness will produce a mental peace if not joy. Why? Because God keeps in perfect peace those whose minds are stayed on Him because they trust Him (Isaiah 26:3), and doing this finds favor with God as Peter points out in verse 20.

### **Endurance for Favor with God - 1 Peter 2:20**

Peter sets a logical contrast here in verse 20 with a negative rhetorical question and positive statement. The rhetorical question - *For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience?* The answer is of course, none. There is no credit, κλέος / kleos, no gain of good reputation or honor in such a situation. Those who sin should expect to be punished for the wrong they have done. In this case the harsh treatment is being beaten with the fist (κολαφίζω / kolaphidzō). Physical punishment was meant to produce enough pain that the wrong behavior would not be repeated. Since that is what was deserved, the punishment is to be expected and so there is no honor in enduring it. As Paul points out in Galatians 6:7-8, *“do not be deceived, God is not mocked: whatever a man sows, this he will also reap.”*

The contrast is set in the statement that followed the question, *“But if when you do what is right and suffer for it you patiently endure it, this finds favor with God.”* There is honor and reward for the response in this situation for it is a demonstration of God at work in the individual. You would expect to be commended if not rewarded for doing what is right, so being treated instead in a way that causes painful suffering is an obvious injustice. The normal reaction to being treated so unjustly is going to be anger and actions that arise out of such anger. Being treated wrongly and reacting by continuing to bear up and endure can only be done if you are living for a purpose beyond yourself. That is exactly why the Christian can respond to suffering in such a different manner. We live for the glory of God and His kingdom instead of self and our own domain. We strive to follow the example of Jesus so that He might be seen living in us. Or as Peter puts it in 4:2, we strive *“to live the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for the lusts of men, but for the will of God.”* This finds favor with God.

This is a theme that Peter repeats throughout this letter. He already mentioned it in 1:6-7 that their rejoicing even though distressed by various trials was proof of their tested faith that would result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. In 1 Peter 3:17-18 the apostle states *“for it is better, if God should will it so, that you suffer for doing what is right than for doing what is wrong”* and he then again points to the example of Christ's suffering for the sins of the unjust so that He could bring us to God. In 1 Peter 4:19 he points out our hope, *“those also who suffer according to the will of God shall entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right.”*

Suffering for righteousness is a theme throughout the Scriptures. Jesus pointed this out in the last beatitude in the Sermon on the Mount,<sup>10</sup> *“Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”*<sup>11</sup> *“Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me.”*<sup>12</sup> *“Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you”* (Matthew 5:10-12). Jesus explained in John 15:18-21 that the world hated and persecuted Him because He was not of this world and it will hate His followers because He has chosen us out of this world so that we are no longer of it. Or to summarize Jesus' teaching in John 3:17-21, sinners hate the light - righteousness and those who do what is righteous - because it exposes their evil.

### **The Example of Jesus - 1 Peter 2:21-23**

Peter points to the example of Jesus in how to respond to such injustice in verses 21-23.<sup>21</sup> *“For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps,”*<sup>22</sup> *who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth;*<sup>23</sup> *and while being*

reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously.” I will expand on this whole section in a few weeks, but I want to point it out this morning as the practical example of how God wants us to live.

The purpose of our calling is to be conformed into the image of Christ as Paul points out in Romans 8:28-29. Philippians 1:6 gives us confidence this will happen for “*He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.*” That is also an expression of God’s great patience with us in the process. As a song writer put it, *He’s still working on me, to make me what I ought to be. It took Him just a week to make the moon and stars, the Sun, the Earth and Jupiter and Mars. How loving and patient He must be, cause He’s still working on me.*”

Peter then specifically points out that Christ’s suffering is an example for us. Example here, ὑπογραμμός / hupogrammos, literally means “to write under,” and referred to an alphabet chart a child would copy to learn his letters and write like his teacher. Its metaphorical use in this context means that Jesus’ life is the example we are to imitate in our own lives, and that example included how to respond to being treated unjustly.

Jesus was sinless and without any falsehood yet he was reviled and treated in ways to cause painful suffering, yet He did not respond in kind by answering with insult or reproach, nor did He make any threats against those who harmed Him. Instead, He kept entrusting Himself to God that judges righteously. There are two aspects to that. First, as Peter will point out specifically in 2 Peter 2:9, the Lord knows how to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment. While sinners may seem like they are getting away with their evil in this life, they will not escape justice in eternity. Asaph writes about this very truth in Psalm 73.

The second is that Jesus came to satisfy the requirements of justice by His own substitutionary sacrifice of His own life as the payment for sin so that sinners could be forgiven and made righteous just as Peter points out in verse 24. Jesus’ plea on behalf of those that were crucifying Him was, “*Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.*” Stephen, the first Christian martyr responded the same way concerning those who were stoning him, “*Lord, do not hold this sin against them.*”

Both of these are important for us in entrusting ourselves to God while patiently enduring unjust suffering in this life. First, you can be confident God is just and He will judge the unrepentant. That brings satisfaction to your own proper desire to see justice accomplished. Second, you can be compassionate toward those who sin against you knowing Jesus died to redeem them too, and Jesus is glorified when the sinner repents and is forgiven and converted to also be a child of God. A former enemy becomes a brother or sister in the Lord. Responding to injustice as Jesus did finds favor with God because it reflects Him living in you.

### **Practical Responses in the Workplace**

I want to close this morning with some practical advice from a few other passages about having a proper attitude and godly response in the workplace. Each of these speaks of slaves and masters, but the principles equally apply to employees and employers. My brother used to quip that his boss could not fire him because slaves had to be sold, but the blessed reality for all of you is that none of you are slaves and you live in the United States. That means: 1) You can take advantage of employment laws by which you can seek redress for grievances. 2) Quitting a job is always an option even if an unpleasant and disruptive one.

**Work to Adorn the Doctrine of God.** Titus 2:9–10,<sup>9</sup> “*Urge bondslaves to be subject to their own masters in everything, to be well-pleasing, not argumentative,<sup>10</sup> not pilfering, but showing all good faith so that they will adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect.*” Your attitude and behavior at work will be a reflection of your understanding of and submission to the teachings of God. You work for your boss which means doing things according to his instructions. It is fine to suggest a way that could

be better, but that is done respectfully without arguing. Pilfering is inappropriate use of company funds for personal benefit. It is a form of stealing. You are to show by your life and work ethic that the teachings of Christ are beautiful and beneficial. Do not be the self-professing Christian who brings shame on the name of Christ to non-Christian co-workers and the boss by your poor work ethic.

**Work as a Slave of Christ.** Ephesians 6:5–9, <sup>5</sup> *Slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ; <sup>6</sup> not by way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. <sup>7</sup> With good will render service, as to the Lord, and not to men, <sup>8</sup> knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free. <sup>9</sup> And masters, do the same things to them, and give up threatening, knowing that both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.*

This is a simple truth that applies to Christian employees and employers alike. Work as a slave of Christ for that is what you really are regardless of whatever position you hold or who signs the paycheck. This mindset goes a long way in being able to maintain a positive attitude and high work ethic toward both your boss and anyone under your authority.

**Work Heartily for the Lord.** Colossians 3:22–25, <sup>22</sup> *Slaves, in all things obey those who are your masters on earth, not with external service, as those who merely please men, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord. <sup>23</sup> Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, <sup>24</sup> knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve. <sup>25</sup> For he who does wrong will receive the consequences of the wrong which he has done, and that without partiality.*

This is essentially the same as Ephesians 6:5-9 with an emphasis that the work is to be done heartily - literally, *from the soul*, as for the Lord. That encompasses a strong inner drive to work in this manner as compared to just going through the motions and putting in your time. You want to go home with a sense that your work was pleasing to Christ.

**Be Respectful & Work Harder for a Christian.** 1 Timothy 6:1–3, <sup>1</sup> *All who are under the yoke as slaves are to regard their own masters as worthy of all honor so that the name of God and our doctrine will not be spoken against. <sup>2</sup> Those who have believers as their masters must not be disrespectful to them because they are brethren, but must serve them all the more, because those who partake of the benefit are believers and beloved. Teach and preach these principles.*

This passage addresses some dangers that occurs when a Christian works for another Christian. The first is treating the boss with less respect that his position deserves because of a wrong application of our equality in Christ (Gal. 3:28). The second is expecting special treatment from the boss so that they do not have to work as hard. Paul commands the Christian employee to be all the more diligent in their work for a Christian employer because it benefits a beloved fellow believer.

## Conclusions

The points made in this sermon can be summed up in a fairly simple statement. In whatever position you have in life or in the work place, live according to your identity in Jesus Christ. Proper submission, attitude and work ethic all arise from that. If you are a true Christian, then you are chosen by God, sanctified by the Spirit and cleansed by Jesus. You have been born again by God's mercy and redeemed by the Christ's blood. You are a "*living stone*" being built up as a spiritual house for you are part of a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation and a people for God's own possession. That makes you not only a slave of Jesus, but also an *alien and stranger* in this world. Your submission to human institutions and in the workplace is a reflection of your submission to God as the first and foremost

priority of life. The people you interact with, including those in the workplace, should recognize Christ living in you.

If you are not a Christian, then it is already past time to turn from being a slave to sin and selfishness to place your faith in the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. He makes all the difference in the world in changing your identity and how you live your life.



## **Introduction**

Parental Identity

Personal Identity

Christian Identity

Submission for the Lord's Sake

1 Peter 2:18–23

## **Slaves & Masters - 1 Peter 2:18**

Servant = οἰκέτης / oiketās, “*inmate of a house,*” “*house slave*”

Master = δεσπότης / despotās, the “*owner,*” “*possessor,*” “*the lord of the house,*” “*despot*”

Roman Slavery

Slaves as property

Slaves who were treated well

Modern slavery

A good & gentle master

A crooked master

Non-Christian value systems

Christian values & motivations

Biblical teaching about slavery

Philemon & Onesimus

Boundaries to human authority

## **Endurance for Conscience Sake - 1 Peter 2:19**

An act of grace

Bearing up, ὑποφέρω / hypopherō, continue to put up with, endure despite suffering (mental pain)

A conscience mindful of God

## **Endurance for Favor with God** - 1 Peter 2:20

Credit, κλέος / kleos, gain of good reputation or honor

Honor and reward for suffering for righteousness

1 Peter 1:6-7; 3:17-18; 4:19

Matthew 5:10-12; John 15:18-21; 3:17-21

## **The Example of Jesus** - 1 Peter 2:21-23

Purpose of our calling - Romans 8:28-29; Phil. 1:6

The example, ὑπογραμμός / hypogrammos, “to write under” - to imitate Jesus’ manner of life

Jesus’s response due to trusting God who judges righteously

God will bring sinners to justice - 2 Peter 2:9; Psalm 73

Jesus satisfied God’s justice so that sinners can be forgiven and made righteous

## **Practical Responses in the Workplace**

**Work to Adorn the Doctrine of God.** Titus 2:9–10

**Work as a Slave of Christ.** Ephesians 6:5–9

**Work Heartily for the Lord.** Colossians 3:22–25

**Be Respectful & Work Harder for a Christian.** 1 Timothy 6:1–3

## **Conclusions**

### ***KIDS KORNER***

Parents, you are responsible to apply God’s Word to your children’s lives. Here is some help.

**Young Children** - draw a picture about something you hear during the sermon. Explain your picture(s) to your parents at lunch. **Older Children** - Do one or more of the following: 1) Write down all the verses mentioned in the sermon and look them up later. 2) Count how many times the words “slave” or “slavery” is mentioned. Talk with your parents the identity of a Christian as a slave of God and how that should affect behavior.

### ***THINK ABOUT IT!***

Questions to consider in discussing the sermon with others. Why is knowing your identity so important? What is your identity in Christ? To whom is your primary allegiance? What was the authority of a master (despot) over his household in the Roman empire? What was Roman slavery like? What rights did a slave have? Why would most slaves be treated well? Why would some slave be treated with cruelty? What would be the normal reaction of a slave to a cruel master? How were Christian slaves to treat any master? Why? What does the Bible teach about slavery? How is that different from popular ideas in modern culture? What is the importance of enduring for conscience sake? How does such endurance find favor with God? What does the Bible teach about suffering for the sake of righteousness? What was Jesus’ example of suffering unjustly? How was He able to do this? What are the two aspects of God judging righteously? - To unrepentant sinners? To repentant sinners? How does trusting God for this enable a righteous response to unjust suffering? Examine the following passages and write down how the principles in them can be applied in the modern workplace? Which of these principles is a challenge to your own behavior in the workplace. Develop a plan on how to improve in your Christian example in the workplace.