

Submitting to Workplace Authority

1 Peter 2:13-17

Series: Exiles in the World

1. Introduction

- a. Today's postmodern culture seems to cling to only one basic moral obligation, the sacred duty to provide equal rights for everyone. No one any longer speaks of sacrifice or privilege—only rights, such as ethnic rights, reproductive rights, immigrant rights, homosexual rights, and work-place rights.
 - b. However, believers are to be concerned instead with obedience and submission to God's will. When they obey and submit to their superiors, as God commands, they prove that their real hope is in the world to come.
 - c. The bible never advocates that subordinates should rise up against their superiors.
 - d. Since the workforce in the roman world consisted of slaves, today we will explore the practical application of what is being said here in the context of an employer/boss to worker relationship.
2. Verse 18 – ***The Mandate to Submit*** – Servants, be subject to your masters with all respect, not only to the good and gentle but also to the unjust.
- a. Terms –
 - i. Servants – slaves
 - ii. Masters – (despots) owners
 - iii. Subject – submitted
 - b. Slaves be subject to your masters
 - i. Submissive (to line up in order under an authority)
 - ii. The owner was in complete control over the slave.
 - c. With all respect
 - i. Without bitterness or negativity, but with an attitude of gracious honor. That was a way to show respect to God himself.
 - ii. Not just doing but doing without emotional negativity.
 1. How – consider the owner – his actions show his heart.
 - d. Not only to the good and gentle
 - i. Good – One that is upright, beneficial and satisfactory
 - ii. Gentle – considerate, reasonable and fair
 - e. But also to the unjust
 - i. Unjust – curved or crooked and metaphorically means perverse or dishonest.

- ii. **1 Samuel 24:4-7** And the men of David said to him, “Here is the day of which the LORD said to you, ‘Behold, I will give your enemy into your hand, and you shall do to him as it shall seem good to you.’” Then David arose and stealthily cut off a corner of Saul's robe. (5) And afterward David's heart struck him, because he had cut off a corner of Saul's robe. (6) He said to his men, “The LORD forbid that I should do this thing to my lord, the LORD's anointed, to put out my hand against him, seeing he is the LORD's anointed.” (7) So David persuaded his men with these words and did not permit them to attack Saul. And Saul rose up and left the cave and went on his way.
- 3. Verse 19 – ***The Motive for Submission*** – For this is a gracious thing, when, mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly.
 - a. For this is a gracious thing,
 - i. Literally this is grace
 - ii. It demonstrates to all around and the unjust owner/employer that God truly resides in you.
 - 1. It is natural to retaliate—it is according to human nature.
 - b. When, mindful of God,
 - i. To endure during these difficult times is to be mindful of God:
 - 1. It keeps in mind that God is sovereign
 - 2. He sees all
 - 3. Will require an account of all
 - 4. Will reward the faithful and the true.
 - c. One endures sorrows while suffering unjustly
 - i. Endures – bears physical, emotional
 - 1. **Acts 17:28** for “In him we live and move and have our being...
 - 2. **Romans 8:28** And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.
- 4. Verses 20 – For what credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure? But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God.
 - a. For what credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure?
 - i. Believers who sin deserve chastening.
 - b. But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God.

- i. Those that are be punished undeservedly find much grace in our Lord because it always pleases Him to see believers faithfully accept and deal with any adversity.
 - ii. **1 Corinthians 4:11-13** To the present hour we hunger and thirst, we are poorly dressed and buffeted and homeless, (12) and we labor, working with our own hands. When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; (13) when slandered, we entreat. We have become, and are still, like the scum of the world, the refuse of all things.
 - iii. **James 1:12** Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him.

- 5. Verse 21a – For to this you have been called,
 - a. The efficacious call of salvation comes with the upfront warning that believers will suffer just like their master did. As soon as we are transported from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light, we become enemies of this world. We become targets of unjust and unfair attacks.
 - i. **John 16:33** I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”
 - ii. **Philippians 1:29** For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake,
 - iii. **2 Timothy 3:12** Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,

- 6. Conclusion – it is more important to God for believer to uphold the credibility of gospel power than to obtain a raise or promotion in their vocation. It is more important to demonstrate submission to His sovereignty in every area of life than for any Christian workers to protest against problems at their workplace.

- 7. Benediction
 - a. **Colossians 3:22-24** Bondservants, obey in everything those who are your earthly masters, not by way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord. (23) Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, (24) knowing that

from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.