

1 Peter 2:18-25  
Our Suffering Sin-Bearer

<sup>18</sup> **(A)** Servants, be subject to your masters with all respect, not only to the good and gentle but also to the unjust. <sup>19</sup> For this is a gracious thing, when, **(B)** mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly. <sup>20</sup> For what credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure? But **(C)** if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God. <sup>21</sup> For **(D)** to this you have been called, **(E)** because Christ also suffered for you, **(F)** leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. <sup>22</sup> **(G)** He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. <sup>23</sup> **(H)** When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, **(I)** but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. <sup>24</sup> **(J)** He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we **(K)** might die to sin and **(L)** live to righteousness. **(M)** By his wounds you have been healed. <sup>25</sup> For **(N)** you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to **(O)** the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Prayer:

Gracious heavenly Father, you have set before us today holy and awesome truth in this passage of scripture. Open it up, we pray, to our understanding, so that we can know better what the Lord Jesus has done in our behalf, and how he would have us to follow his example of enduring unjust suffering – in Christ's name we pray. Amen.

The Lord Jesus Christ is our great model and example of how we should live the Christian life. Sound theology leads to a fruitful Christian life. To know Jesus better is know better the kind of people we should be.

You may remember in Philippians chapter 2 how the Apostle Paul was exhorting the believers to be humble toward one another. Phil. 2:4 says, ***in <sup>(H)</sup> humility count others more significant than yourselves.*** What was the teaching strategy he used?

He pointed them to the example of the Lord Jesus, who though he lived in the beauty and glory of heaven, left that to come to earth and be humbled as a human being and die the death on the cross. Since he did that for us, we, too, need to give up our rights and humbly and lovingly serve one another.

You may remember from last week's study that Peter was teaching us that we need to be submissive to earthly rulers and governors out of reverence for God, who ordains these positions for the good of human society. So by being good citizens we become examples of people who have good, not bad behavior, and thus glorify God and our integrity of conduct silences those who would falsely say bad things about Christians.

This theme of submission to people continues here, but it is a **submission** that is grounded in the sovereignty and rulership of God over all human affairs and relationships. We are in our station and position in life by the sovereign direction of God,

even as governors and mayors and chiefs of police are in their positions by the sovereign direction of God.

Today's passage deals with slaves and masters. This was a much bigger issue in the culture of the first century Roman empire than it is in our 21<sup>st</sup> century America. Back then slavery was a common part of human society. Foreign nations were conquered by the Roman armies and slaves were taken as booty. The word here refers to household servants/slaves – many of whom might be well-educated and hold responsible positions in their owner's estate.

In the Roman empire human beings were bought and sold to provide service to those who could afford them. So Peter in these verses is addressing a very common institution in those days – that of slavery. It was woven into the very heart of the fabric of society. When a person became a Christian, though their spiritual status before God may have changed, their status in society probably did not change. They were still a slave, but a slave with a new heart, a new power, a new motivation inside – that of the indwelling Holy Spirit.

The question is, how should slaves who had become Christians, now act and behave toward their masters? Should their behavior be any different than it was before? Should their attitudes be different? Should they be less argumentative? More trustworthy? More hardworking? The answer to all these questions is "yes." They should have become more submissive and less argumentative, they should have become more trustworthy and ceased pilfering things, stealing from their masters. Yes, they should have put aside laziness and slackness in their work and become more diligent and hardworking.

Yet the fact of the matter is, that even if a slave was behaving well and serving their master well, their master was probably not a Christian. Some masters were kind and reasonable and some were harsh and cruel. Sometimes a cruel would unjustly and harshly punish one of his servants. So how should a Christian slave respond? Should they kick and rebel, or submit to the punishment? This situation led to the first principle I want us to see today:

## **I. The Christian calling to bear unjust suffering**

### **<sup>18</sup> Servants,... (or slaves)**

**This whole issue is addressed several times in the NT, so it was an important issue in those days.**

The Apostle Paul spoke of this in...

***Eph. 6:5-8***, <sup>5</sup> (D) Bondservants, <sup>[a]</sup> obey your earthly masters <sup>[b]</sup> with fear and trembling, <sup>(E)</sup> with a sincere heart, <sup>(E)</sup> as you would Christ, <sup>6</sup> not by the way of eye-service, as <sup>(G)</sup> people-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, <sup>7</sup> rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man, <sup>8</sup> <sup>(H)</sup> knowing that

whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, <sup>(L)</sup>whether he is a bondservant or is free.

Paul said similar things in Colossians and 1 Timothy. But here the Apostle Peter says in 1 Peter 2:18:

**...be subject [to submit to] to your masters with all respect [literally, “fear”], not only to the good and gentle but also to the unjust.**

The “respect or fear” here is probably a reference primarily to God, then to the master. “In the fear of God submit to your master.”

**<sup>19</sup> For this is a gracious thing, when,**

“Gracious” here means “it takes the grace of God” to for the slave to maintain this behavior. But at the same time it reveals the grace of God active in the life of the Christian slave.

**B) mindful of God,**

Literally, *conscious of God...*

Stibbs: “the whole phrase means prompted by a conscious awareness of God’s presence and will. Such a [person] knows that God sees, and knows what God expects. His [or her] concern is to please him .” (cf. Eph. 6:7

**one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly. <sup>20</sup> For what credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure? But <sup>(C)</sup>if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God.**

So, Peter is saying to the Christian slave – if you have done wrong to your master and he punishes you, maybe beats you with his fists or whips you – and you endure that – well, there’s nothing so great about that – you got what you deserved.

But, on the other hand, if you do good and are punished, you are punished undeservedly – maybe your master accuses you of stealing from him, but you didn’t do it – maybe some other slave did – but you get punished, you get beaten or whipped – then if you take the punishment, and you submit to it... then, as he says in verse 20, **“this is a gracious thing in the sight of God.”** God sees this and it pleases him. God sees the heart of the slave.

After all, it is the “sight of God” which should concern us most, not the sight of people. God sees all and knows all, he knows our thoughts before we think them. Our actions should be conducted with a view that he sees them all – and our desire should be to please him.

**<sup>21</sup> For <sup>(D)</sup>to this you have been called,**

**[Stibbs]:** In whatever circumstances you are in when Christ calls you to himself, we must begin to behave as Christians in those circumstance. If we are a slave; we must begin to act as Christian slaves – serving our Master sincerely from the heart, as we are serving really serving Christ. P. 116

**(E)because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps.**

Some Examples of how we might suffer because we're following in Christ's steps:

Employee who is pressured by his or her boss to falsify records but he refuses and loses out on a promotion.

Student who refuses to cheat on a test and is therefore shunned by fellow students.

Sub-contractor who is pressured by construction company to use inferior materials in a house but refuses and is fired.

An employee who is invited, to attend an after-hours wild drinking party and he declines and is thus made fun of the next day by his co-workers.

A prisoner for Christ in a communist country who is sent to solitary confinement because he refuses to quit singing Christian songs in his jail cell.

## **I. The Christian calling is to bear unjust suffering**

## **II. Christ is our Example of the Gracious Sufferer**

[Stibbs:] Christ taught his disciples 3 things about suffering:

1) That he must suffer because he was the Messiah.  
See 1 Pet. 1:11 - **when he [the Spirit of Christ working in the lives of the prophets] predicted (E)the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories.**

2) His suffering was a ransom providing for the forgiveness of the sins of his people.

3) All who follow Christ must be prepared to suffer. p. 116

Peter did not know all this at first, but he came to understand this in time, to teach it, and prepare his people for this. Maybe you didn't know it either, but it is true. Often we have to suffer in this life because we are Christians. The world does not like us because we don't join in with them in their sinful behavior. The people of the world may hate us when we speak the Gospel to them – it exposes their sin and calls them to repent. The apostle Paul wrote to Timothy these words in 2 Timothy 3:12: **Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,**

Peter writes at the end of v. 21: **so that you might follow in his steps.**

-“follow” here has meaning “to follow closely upon “(Stibbs) – to stay in step with the Master. Like we’re in a parade and following the lead of the band leader. When he takes 5 steps forward, we take 5 steps forward. When he stops; we stop. When he takes 10 steps slowly; we take 10 steps slowly.

As we come to verses 22-25 we see that there are no less than 5 quotations or echoes of Isaiah 53: Peter knew his Bible, he knew the OT, he knew the Book of Isaiah, and he knew how it applied to Jesus. Let’s look at these 5 references in Isaiah 53 to the Messiah, to the Lord Jesus

**[first example]:**

<sup>22</sup> (C) **He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth.**

**Isa. 53:9 - And they made his grave with the wicked  
(A)and with a rich man in his death,  
although (B)he had done no violence,  
and there was no deceit in his mouth.**

Peter has walked beside Jesus for 3 years and testified that he never saw Jesus commit any sin or heard Jesus speak deceitfully to anyone.

If you were to hang out with me or any of us for one hour you would likely observe sin, maybe even deceit, in our lives.

But Because Jesus had no sins he was qualified to bear the sins of others.

**“Lord Jesus, you had no sin and therefore can carry my sins”**

Let’s speak those words together to the Lord Jesus:

**“Lord Jesus, you had no sin and therefore can carry my sins.”**

2 Cor. 5:21

<sup>21</sup> (A) For our sake he made him to be sin (B) who knew no sin, so that in him we might become (C) the righteousness of God.

**The second example** of a quote from Isa. 53 is what we see in verse 23:

<sup>23</sup> (H) **When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, ....**

**Isa. 53:7 - He was oppressed, and he was afflicted,  
(A) yet he opened not his mouth;  
(B) like a (C) lamb that is led to the slaughter,**

and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent,  
so he opened not his mouth.

### Examples of this in Jesus' life:

#### Matt. 26:27-31

<sup>27</sup> (AK) Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the (AL) governor's headquarters, (d) and they gathered the whole (AM) battalion (e) before him. <sup>28</sup> And they stripped him and put (AN) a scarlet robe on him, <sup>29</sup> and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on his head and put a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him, they (AO) mocked him, saying, "Hail, (AP) King of the Jews!" <sup>30</sup> And (AQ) they spit on him and took the reed and struck him on the head. <sup>31</sup> And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him and (AR) led him away to crucify him.

Matt. 26:39-44:

<sup>39</sup> And (BD) those who passed by (BE) derided him, (BF) wagging their heads <sup>40</sup> and saying, (BG) "You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself! (BH) If you are (BI) the Son of God, come down from the cross." <sup>41</sup> So also the chief priests, with the scribes and elders, mocked him, saying, <sup>42</sup> (BJ) "He saved others; (BK) he cannot save himself. (BL) He is the King of Israel; let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him." <sup>43</sup> (BM) He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he desires him. For he said, "I am the Son of God." <sup>44</sup> (BN) And the robbers who were crucified with him also reviled him in the same way.

#### Contrast this with Paul's reaction in Acts 23:2-3:

<sup>2</sup> And the high priest (A) Ananias commanded those who stood by him (B) to strike him on the mouth. <sup>3</sup> Then Paul said to him, "God is going to strike you, you (C) whitewashed (D) wall! Are you sitting to judge me according to the law, and yet (E) contrary to the law you (F) order me to be struck?"

**1 Pet. 3:9** - <sup>9</sup> (A) Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, (B) bless, for (C) to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing.

**Heb. 12:3** - <sup>3</sup> (A) Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or (B) fainthearted.

<sup>46</sup> **Luke 23:46** - *Then Jesus, (A) calling out with a loud voice, said, "Father, (B) into your hands I (C) commit my spirit!" And having said this (D) he breathed his last.*

Verse 23 continues:

... **he did not threaten but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.**

-“entrusting” here could be also translated “committing himself” or “delivering himself”...**to him who judges justly.**

Stibbs: We see here "...Christ's willing, uncomplaining submission to unjust suffering. He acknowledged above his earthly circumstances and oppressors the sovereignty and the righteous judgment of God, and He committed Himself and His causes into God's hands. By doing so He provided in principle and in spirit an example to be followed by all who, in following Him, find that they, too, have to suffer unjustly and "commit their souls in well-doing unto a faithful Creator (4:19)."

<sup>24</sup> (U) **He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree,**

**I. The Christian calling is to bear unjust suffering**

**II. Christ is our Example of the Gracious Sufferer**

**III. Christ is the Bearer of Our Sins**

He paid its penalty

He broke its power

He set in motion Righteous Living

His Suffering brought us healing

**[Third example]**

Isa. 53:11 ***Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see<sup>[a]</sup> and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall (A) the righteous one, my servant, (B) make many to be accounted righteous, (C) and he shall bear their iniquities.***

**Isa. 53:12 - )yet he bore the sin of many,**

[As Stibbs points out,] This exact prophecy in OT is meant to help us today understand the work of Christ in bearing our sins in his own body on the cross and paying the price we owed God by taking in himself punishment we deserve for our sins.

Isa. 53 is clear about this.

Jewish people today usually say this chapter refers to the people, the nation of Israel, not a specific individual, not the Messiah. So they avoid having to deal with this clear description of the Messiah's suffering and what his suffering accomplished.

The New Testament declares over and over again that Christ's death was the purchase price, the payment for the sins of God's people.

Heb. 9:28 - <sup>28</sup> so Christ, having been offered once (A) to bear the sins of (B) many, will appear (C) a second time, (D) not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly (E) waiting for him.

1 Pet. 3:18 - <sup>18</sup> For Christ also (A) suffered<sup>[a]</sup> (B) once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, (C) that he might bring us to God, being put to death (D) in the flesh but made alive (E) in the spirit,

Rom. 4:25 - <sup>25</sup> (A) who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised (B) for our justification.

**Rom. 5:6** - <sup>6</sup> For (A) while we were still weak, at the right time (B) Christ died for the ungodly.

Rom. 5:8 - <sup>8</sup> but (A) God shows his love for us in that (B) while we were still sinners, Christ died for us

Rom. 5:10 - <sup>10</sup> For if (A) while we were enemies (B) we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by (C) his life.

Eph. 2:13 - <sup>13</sup> But now in Christ Jesus you who once were (A) far off have been brought near (B) by the blood of Christ.

Jesus bore our sins, he carried our sins, ...**that we (K) might die to sin**

**Stibbs:** "The idea is that, Christ having died for sins, and to sin, as...our substitute. ..results in our standing before God as those who have no more connection with our old sins, or with the life of sinning. Henceforth we are free, and are intended, to live unto righteousness (see Rom. 6:11-13)." P. 121

**Rom. 6:11** - <sup>11</sup> So you also must consider yourselves (A) dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

**...and (L) live to righteousness.**

Two great truths are laid out for us: two realities in v. 24:

Christ bore our sins so that we 1) might die to sin and 2) live to righteousness.

**Rom. 6:13** - <sup>13</sup> (A) Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but (B) present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness.

**[Fourth example]**

**(M) By his wounds you have been healed.**

**Isa. 53:5** - (A) But he was pierced for our transgressions;  
he was crushed for our iniquities;  
upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace,  
(B) and with his wounds we are healed.

<sup>25</sup> For (N) you were straying like sheep...

**[fifth example]:**



**Isa. 53:6** - <sup>(A)</sup>All we like sheep have gone astray;  
 we have turned—every one—to his own way;  
<sup>(B)</sup>and the Lord has laid on him  
 the iniquity of us all.

*OT descriptions of the lost, wandering people of God:*

Jer. 50:6 - <sup>6</sup> <sup>(A)</sup>“My people have been lost sheep. <sup>(B)</sup>Their shepherds have led them astray, turning them away on the mountains. From mountain to hill they have gone. They have forgotten their fold.

Ezek. 34:6 - <sup>6</sup> they wandered over all the mountains and on every high hill. My sheep were scattered over all the face of the earth, <sup>(A)</sup>with none to search or seek for them.

Jesus describes what the faithful shepherd will do:

Matt. 18:12-14 - )If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go in search of the one that went astray? <sup>13</sup> And if he finds it, truly, I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that never went astray. .

<sup>25</sup> For <sup>(N)</sup>you were straying like sheep.... **but have now returned to <sup>(O)</sup>the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.**

The wandering sheep have heard their shepherd’s voice and come home to him.  
 See John 10:2

John 10:11 - )I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd <sup>(L)</sup>lays down his life for the sheep.

**Isa. 40:11-** <sup>(A)</sup>He will tend his flock like a shepherd;  
<sup>(B)</sup>he will gather the lambs in his arms;  
<sup>(C)</sup>he will carry them in his bosom,  
 and gently lead those that are with young.

Ezek. 34:12 - <sup>12</sup> As a shepherd seeks out his flock when he is among his sheep that have been scattered, so will I seek out my sheep, and I will rescue them from all places where they have been scattered on <sup>(A)</sup>a day of clouds and <sup>(B)</sup>thick darkness.

Ezek. 34:23 - <sup>23</sup> And <sup>(A)</sup>I will set up over them one shepherd, <sup>(B)</sup>my servant David, and he shall feed them: he shall feed them and be their shepherd.  
 :24 - <sup>24</sup> “My servant <sup>(A)</sup>David <sup>(B)</sup>shall be king over them, and they shall all have <sup>(C)</sup>one shepherd. <sup>(D)</sup>They shall walk in my rules and be careful to obey my statutes.

John 10:11 - <sup>11</sup> <sup>(A)</sup>I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd <sup>(B)</sup>lays down his life for the sheep.

Today, we have seen...

### **I. The Christian calling to bear unjust suffering**

### **II. Christ, our Example of the Gracious Sufferer**

### **III. Christ Suffered as the Bearer of Our Sins**

His Suffering brought us healing

He paid its penalty

He broke its power over our lives and set us in motion for Righteous Living

Heb. 13:20 - <sup>20</sup> Now <sup>(A)</sup>may the God of peace <sup>(B)</sup>who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, <sup>(C)</sup>the great shepherd of the sheep, by <sup>(D)</sup>the blood of the eternal covenant, <sup>21</sup> <sup>(E)</sup>equip you with everything good that you may do his will, <sup>(E)</sup>working in us<sup>[a]</sup> that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, <sup>(G)</sup>to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

Prayer: Lord Jesus Christ, thank you that you were our Suffering Sin-Bearer, you bore unjust suffering in our behalf, even the humiliation and shame of the cross in order to save us and rescue us from our sins. Help us to follow in your steps, bearing with any unjust suffering that may come our way. We give you all the praise for your sacrificial love for us. Help us by your grace to live all-out committed lives for you and your kingdom. We pray in your name, Lord Jesus. Amen.

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