

# THE FIRST LETTER OF PETER

## INTRODUCTION

- A. Introductory outline of 1 Peter
1. Greeting (1:1-2)
  2. The greatness of salvation (1:3-12)
  3. Characteristics of the Christian life (1:13-2:10)
  4. The importance of submission (2:11-3:12)
    - a. General principles on Christian conduct in the world (11-12)
- B. Review of 1 Peter 2:4-10
1. Thomas Constable, *Not only is Jesus Christ the source of the believer's spiritual sustenance, He is also our foundation. Peter not only changed his metaphor from growth to building, but he also changed it from an individual to a corporate focus.*
  2. Roger Raymer, *His readers, having purified themselves, were ready for the practice or ministry of holiness. No longer babies, they were to grow up together to offer spiritual sacrifices as a chosen "royal priesthood."*
  3. Edmund Clowney, *In the first chapter Peter showed the wonder of God's salvation through Jesus Christ. Now he wants to show the status that Christians have as the true people of God, so that he may encourage us to live before the world with that awareness.*
  4. Peter Davids, *This poem sums up the election theme of this section and gives comfort to a suffering and rejected people who are to see that their earthly rejection is only earthly. In truth they are the accepted ones of God.*
- C. Comments on 1 Peter 2:11-3:12
1. Roger Raymer, *How can Christians, as a people belonging to God, declare His praises before others? In this section Peter answered this question by suggesting specific ways Christians can behave differently before the world, as citizens, as slaves, and as wives and husbands. Even in familiar situations, their conduct should be different.*
  2. Wayne Grudem, *Here Peter begins what is structurally the second half of the letter. Whereas the first part is primarily theological in focus with occasional application to life, this part is generally practical in emphasis with shorter theological statements included at many important points.*
  3. Warren Wiersbe, *The central section of Peter's letter (1 Peter 2:11-3:12) emphasizes submission in the life of a believer. This is certainly not a popular topic in this day of lawlessness and the quest for "personal fulfillment," but it is an important one.*
  4. David Walls, *Becoming an advertisement for the excellent attributes of God includes not only a verbal testimony but also an active testimony of living day to day.*
  5. Peter Davids, *Having discussed their privileges as the elect of God, our author turns to discussing the place of these Christians in the world. If they are so exalted, should they even recognize societal institutions? And if, despite their best efforts to live peacefully, they are attacked, how should they deal with society?*
  6. Edmund Clowney, *Called as children of the light, Christians are free. Their freedom, however, binds them to their calling . . . They are free to love their fellow-Christians. The dark blindness of sinful selfishness is gone; they are free to love. They are also free to honour unbelievers as God's creatures, and to respect the role of authority given to each one.*

## 1 PETER 2:11-3:12, THE IMPORTANCE OF SUBMISSION

### 1 PETER 2:11-12, GENERAL PRINCIPLES ON CHRISTIAN CONDUCT IN THE WORLD

- A. Refrain from worldly desires (11), *Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul.*
1. *Beloved*
    - a. Peter expresses his love for the readers as he begins a new section of this letter.
    - b. Peter Davids, *The address, "beloved," marks off the beginning of a new section of the letter; it is a common formula in Christian letters, although relatively rare in other Greek letters (e.g., Rom. 12:9; 1 Cor. 15:58; 2 Cor. 7:1; 12:19; Phil. 2:12; 4:1; Heb. 6:9; Jas. 1:16, 19; 2:5; 2 Pet. 3:1, 8, 14, 17) . . . He has now shown why they must regard themselves as pilgrims: they are the people of God, a holy nation . . .*
    - c. Wayne Grudem, *By using the word beloved Peter reminds his readers that though he exhorts them as an apostle he also cares for them as beloved brothers and sisters in the Lord's family.*
    - d. J. Ramsey Michaels, *Its [Beloved] point is not only that Peter loves those to whom he writes but that God has loved them and made them his people (cf. 2 Thess 2:13).*

2. *sojourners and exiles*
  - a. Hebrews 11:13, *These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.*
  - b. J. Ramsey Michaels, *Peter's purpose is not to define his readers' actual legal or social status in the Roman Empire . . . but simply to further his standing analogy between them and the Jewish people . . .*
  - c. Thomas Constable, *Again Peter reminded his audience of their identity so they would respond naturally and appropriately (cf. 1:1–2, 17). Aliens have no rights in the land where they live. Strangers are only temporary residents (cf. 1:17; Gen. 23:4; Ps. 39:12; Eph. 2:19; Heb. 13:14).*
  - d. The real home of Christians is heaven.
  
3. *abstains from the passions of the flesh*
  - a. Romans 13:14, *But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.*
  - b. Galatians 5:24, *And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.*
  - c. Roger Raymer, *Abstain . . . is literally "hold oneself constantly back from.*
  - d. Thomas Constable, *In view of our status we should refuse the appeal of our desire to indulge in things that are contrary to God's will for us.*
  - e. Peter Davids, *The knowledge that they do not belong does not lead to withdrawal, but to their taking their standards of behavior, not from the culture in which they live, but from their 'home' culture of heaven, so that their life always fits the place they are headed to, rather than their temporary lodging in this world.*
  - f. David Walls, *A sense of urgency marks this section. It is important that we take very seriously our identity in Christ and begin to demonstrate spiritual growth through our daily lives.*
  - g. Warren Wiersbe, *Our real battle is not with people around us, but with passions within us. D.L. Moody said, "I have more trouble with D.L. Moody than with any man I know" . . . We do not win one battle, and the war is over! It is a constant warfare, and we must be on our guard.*
  - h. Wayne Grudem, *Such a command implies that inward desires are not uncontrollable but can be consciously nurtured or restrained—a needed rebuke to our modern society which takes feelings as a morally neutral 'given' and disparages any who would say that some feelings and desires are wrong.*
  
4. *which war against your soul*
  - a. Thomas Constable, *When we yield to the desires of the flesh that God's Word condemns, we become double-minded, somewhat schizophrenic. This Peter aptly described as war in the soul. The antagonists are the lusts or will of the flesh and the will of God.*
  - b. Roger Raymer, *In this real spiritual battle a demonic strategy is to attack believers at their weakest points.*
  - c. David Walls, *Some desires are not wrong or sinful in themselves. These become wrong when the believer attempts to satisfy those desires in ways that are contrary to God's Word. Other desires are wrong "out of the gate" and are to be avoided. (For a more detailed description of what these desires are, see 1 Pet. 4:3 and Gal. 5:19–21.)*
  - d. Wayne Grudem, *Though soul (psyche) can mean 'person' (as in 3:20), here it means 'the non-physical, spiritual part of a person' (see note at 1:22). To entertain such desires may appear momentarily attractive and entirely harmless, since the desires do not usually break forth into wrongful actions, but they are in reality enemies which inflict harm on the Christian's 'soul', making him spiritually weak and ineffective.*
  - e. Charles Spurgeon, *No men or women can ever commit an act of uncleanness of the body without grievously injuring the soul. It leaves a weakness, defilement, a wound, a scar upon the soul. May God graciously keep us from it altogether!*
  
5. *Comments*
  - a. David Walls, *Why should Christians abstain from such things? Because these actions mount a full military campaign against our spiritual vitality and growth. Consistently satisfying our desires in a manner contrary to the Word of God or consistently giving in to sinful desires will ultimately tear down the believer.*
  - b. Peter Davids, *Peter does not assume that these people are sinful, nor does he feel a need to describe the tension, but rather exhorts the readers to live out what they know they should, that is, not to yield to unbridled desire, for to do so would mean yielding to their enemy and allowing their very selves to be taken captive.*
  - c. J. Ramsey Michaels, *In light of the emphasis on suffering in the remainder of his epistle, it appears that the principal factors that Peter sees undermining a person's "life" are the "natural impulses" toward comfort, self-protection, and self-gratification.*

B. Do the right things to avoid slander (12a), **Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable,**

1. *conduct*

- a. Wayne Grudem, *Conduct here refers to a day-by-day pattern of life . . .*
- b. David Walls, *This verb refers to more than a casual observation of a person's behavior. It means "to watch over a long period of time." It suggests making mental notes and reviewing them.*

2. *Gentiles*

- a. Peter is using *Gentiles* to identify unbelievers.
- b. Warren Wiersbe, *The word "Gentiles" here has nothing to do with race, since it is a synonym for "unsaved people" (1 Cor. 5:1; 12:2; 3 John 7).*
- c. Thomas Constable, *Part of the suffering Peter's original readers were experiencing was due evidently to slander from unbelieving Gentile pagans. They appear to have been accusing them unjustly of doing evil. This has led some commentators to conclude that Peter wrote this epistle after A.D. 64 when Nero began an official persecution of Christians allegedly for burning Rome.*

3. *honorable*

- a. *Honorable means morally good, noble, praiseworthy.*
- b. Romans 12:17, *Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all.*
- c. 2 Corinthians 8:21, *for we aim at what is honorable not only in the Lord's sight but also in the sight of man.*
- d. Douglas Mangum, [*Honorable*] *Indicates an object that is intrinsically sound in a moral or ethical sense.*
- e. J. Ramsey Michaels, . . . *the emphasis here is on conduct that can be seen and appreciated as "good" even by fellow citizens who are not believers in Christ.*

C. Do good deeds because you are being watched (12b), **so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds**

1. *when they speak against you as evildoers*

- a. Peter encourages the readers to do what is right despite false accusations.
- b. Roger Raymer, *Christians are to abstain from sinful desires not only for their own spiritual well-being but also in order to maintain an effective testimony before unbelievers. Peter used the word good (kalos) twice in this verse to define both Christians' lives and their works. A "good" life is composed of good deeds (cf. Matt. 5:16; Eph. 2:10; Titus 3:8; James 2:18).*
- c. William Barclay, *The early Church was under fire. Slandorous charges were continually being made against them, and the only effective way to refute these charges was to live lives so lovely that the charges would be seen to be obviously untrue.*
- d. David Walls, *Christians were accused of being disloyal to the state, or Caesar. They were accused of purposely hurting the business enterprises of the city and of being godless people because they did not own idols. Peter advised them not to try to defend themselves or to argue with words against their accusers. Instead, they should take a positive approach and demonstrate a different quality of life that non-believers will observe.*
- e. Edmund Clowney, *Peter knows that the opposition of the Gentile world will not be limited to gossip, calumnies, and fantastic lies. Christians will be accused in the courts; false charges will lead to imprisonment and death. Peter had escaped the sword of Herod, but he would not escape the perverse hatred of Nero.*
- f. Warren Wiersbe, *Unsaved people are watching us, speaking against us (1 Peter 3:16; 4:4), and looking for excuses to reject the Gospel . . . There should be nothing in our conduct that will give the unsaved ammunition to attack Christ and the Gospel. Our good works must back up our good words. Jesus said this in Matthew 5:16, and the entire Bible echoes this truth.*
- g. Charles Swindoll, *Whether we like it or not, we are being observed. The world is watching. If they don't see us reflecting the unwavering love and hope they're longing for, they won't think much of our salvation . . . or our Savior.*

2. *they may see your good deeds*

- a. J. Ramsey Michaels on *see*, . . . *the context, both here and in 3:2, suggests an act of observing that leads to a change of mind or outlook, like having one's eyes opened to something not seen before.*
- b. Peter Davids, . . . *according to pagan standards Christians should be approved as living more moral lives than pagans.*
- c. Edmund Clowney, *When Peter tells his hearers to live good lives, he uses a word that can also mean 'beautiful' or 'attractive'. The high holiness of fellowship with God must also produce observable conduct, admirable in its consistency and integrity.*

- d. Vernon McGee, *You see that true Christian separation is not some pious position that is to be assumed. It is not simply refraining from doing worldly things. It is very positive action. It includes honesty and good works.*
- e. Warren Wiersbe, *In the summer of 1805, a number of Indian chiefs and warriors met in council at Buffalo Creek, New York, to hear a presentation of the Christian message by a Mr. Cram from the Boston Missionary Society. After the sermon, a response was given by Red Jacket, one of the leading chiefs. Among other things, the chief said: "Brother, we are told that you have been preaching to the white people in this place. These people are our neighbors. We are acquainted with them. We will wait a little while and see what effect your preaching has upon them. If we find it does them good, makes them honest and less disposed to cheat Indians, we will then consider again of what you have said."*

D. A Godly testimony can make an eternal difference (12c), **and glorify God on the day of visitation.**

1. *and glorify God*

- a. Matthew 5:16, *In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.*
- b. Wayne Grudem, *A Christian's good life even in the face of continuing slander and false accusation may still result in the unbeliever's salvation . . . They are converted and glorify God because of seeing your good deeds (cf. Matt. 5:16; 1 Pet. 3:15–16). Peter gives a specific example of this in 3:1–2, where he says that husbands may be converted when they see the good conduct of their Christian wives.*
- d. William Barclay, *It is by the loveliness of our daily life and conduct that we must commend Christianity to those who do not believe.*

2. *on the day of visitation*

- a. Some consider it the time of salvation note David Walls, *Peter's desire was for his readers to witness positively to nonbelievers through their lives, so it is more likely that the "day of visitation" refers to the time of their salvation, when God visits them with mercy and grace.*
- b. Some believe it is the time of judgment.
  - 1) Scot McKnight, . . . *while there is some evidence favoring the notion that Peter sees conversions of pagans taking place as a result of the good behavior of the Christians, it is more likely that he has the final day of judgment in view here, the day on which God will vindicate the good behavior of Christians and will drive the hostile accusers to see that they were wrong.*
  - 2) Thomas Constable, *The "day of visitation" is probably a reference to the day God will visit unbelievers and judge them (i.e., the great white throne judgment). This seems more likely than that it is the day when God will visit His people (i.e., the Rapture).*
  - 3) Edmund Clowney, *If the 'day of visitation' bears a positive sense here, it would mean the conviction and conversion of those who have seen Christian behaviour. However, in view of the emphasis that Peter puts on the coming of judgment in the day of the Lord, it seems more likely that Peter is describing the day when every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. God's searching judgment will then compel the acknowledgment, to his glory, of the faithful living of his true servants.*
- c. Some believe it could be either, note Wayne Grudem, *Peter's exact phrase does not appear anywhere else in the Old or New Testament, so it is unwise to assume it is a technical phrase for judgment: it is better to understand it simply to mean 'on a day when God visits' (whether to bring blessing or judgment must be determined from the remaining context).*

<b>CONCLUSION</b>
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- Wayne Grudem, . . . *Christians living in an unbelieving society must avoid sinful desires and continually maintain exemplary patterns of life, so that unbelievers will be saved and God glorified. There is no reason to doubt that such a strategy for evangelism would still work today.*
- J. Ramsey Michaels, *Peter starts with the assumption that the first and most immediate conflict is within the Christian believer. That is, between the "natural impulses" toward survival and acceptance in Roman society, and the "soul" or new life focused on God and the approaching "day of visitation." The resolution of this individual conflict is the key to the resolution of the social conflict between Christians and their detractors.*

## INTRODUCTION

- A. Introductory outline of 1 Peter
  1. Greeting (1:1-2)
  2. The greatness of salvation (1:3-12)
  3. Characteristics of the Christian life (1:13-2:10)
  4. The importance of submission (2:11-3:12)
    - a. General principles on Christian conduct in the world (11-12)
    - b. Civic responsibilities of Christians (13-17)
- B. Review of 1 Peter 2:11-12
  1. Wayne Grudem, . . . *Christians living in an unbelieving society must avoid sinful desires and continually maintain exemplary patterns of life, so that unbelievers will be saved and God glorified. There is no reason to doubt that such a strategy for evangelism would still work today.*
  2. J. Ramsey Michaels, *Peter starts with the assumption that the first and most immediate conflict is within the Christian believer. That is, between the “natural impulses” toward survival and acceptance in Roman society, and the “soul” or new life focused on God and the approaching “day of visitation.” The resolution of this individual conflict is the key to the resolution of the social conflict between Christians and their detractors.*
- C. Comments on 1 Peter 2:13-17
  1. Thomas Constable, *Peter continued to give directions concerning how the Christian should conduct himself or herself when dealing with the state since his readers faced suffering from this source.*
  2. Warren Wiersbe, *It is our responsibility to “advertise God’s virtues” (1 Peter 2:9, author’s translation). This is especially true when it comes to our relationship to government and people in authority.*
  3. Scot McKnight, *Peter’s comments about the Christian communities’ relationship to the Roman emperor and to local governors is his first application of the principle, enunciated in 2:11–12, of living a holy life regardless of the response they find in their social setting.*

## 1 PETER 2:13-17, CIVIC RESPONSIBILITIES OF CHRISTIANS

- A. Submit to governmental authorities (13-15)
  1. Subjection is universal (13a), ***Be subject for the Lord’s sake***
    - a. *Be subject*
      - 1) It means *to submit to the orders or directives of someone, to obey.*
      - 2) It had been primarily a military term, *to rank under.*
      - 3) Romans 13:1, *Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God.*
      - 4) Titus 3:1-2, *Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all people.*
      - 5) *Be subject* is Peter’s topic for the entire unit, 1 Peter, 2:11-3:12.
      - 6) Charles Swindoll, . . . *when Peter begins his God-honoring response to the unfair treatment with “Submit yourselves for the Lord’s sake to every human institution,” that doesn’t sound strange; it sounds radical! . . . It means a conscious, willing subjection to another person’s authority.*
    - b. *for the Lord’s sake*
      - 1) Thomas Constable, *We are to submit to the authority of government rulers by obeying them. We should do this not because these individuals are personally worthy of our submission necessarily, but because by submitting to them we honor God by obeying His Word.*
      - 2) Roger Raymer, *To honor God who ordained human government, Christians are to observe man-made laws carefully as long as those laws do not conflict with the clear teaching of Scripture (cf. Acts 4:19).*
      - 3) David Walls, *The believer is to obey except when commanded to sin. This is the Christian’s responsibility toward all forms of human authority.*

- 4) Peter Davids, *It is because Christ, not Caesar, is Lord that one submits. It is not that people such as rulers or masters have authority in themselves. On the contrary, they are only creatures of God. But the Lord gave an example of submission and the Lord wishes his teaching to be spoken well of (both of these reasons will be expounded by Peter later), and therefore for his sake one submits.*
  - 5) Edmund Clowney, *Because we are God's own possession, beloved of the Lord, we need not cherish our own dignity. Indeed, we may not. For the Lord's sake, for our fellow-Christians' sake, for the world's sake, we must be ready to subordinate ourselves to others . . . We submit ourselves for God's sake because we honour his image in our fellow-creatures, and because we respect his ordering of our lives, but especially because we gratefully seek to take up our cross and follow Jesus Christ.*
  - 6) Warren Wiersbe, *Of course, everything we do should be for the glory of the Lord and the good of His kingdom! But Peter was careful to point out that Christians in society are representatives of Jesus Christ.*
2. The purpose of governmental authorities (13b-14), ***to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good.***
- a. *to every human institution*
    - 1) Wayne Grudem, . . . *there are occasions recorded in Scripture when God's people have disobeyed a human government and have been approved by God for so doing (Exod. 1:17; Dan. 3:13-18; 6:10-24; Acts 4:18-20; 5:27-29; Heb. 11:23). The principle to be drawn from these passages is 'obey except when commanded to sin'. This is the Christian's responsibility toward all forms of rightful human authority, whether the individual Christian agrees with all the policies of that authority or not.*
    - 2) Edmund Clowney, *In spite of the claim of Caesar, he is only a human creature. Such a creature is not to be worshipped, but is to be shown honour; we are to be in submission to him.*
    - 3) Peter Davids, *Governors deserve submission because even the worst of them preserve some semblance of conformity to pagan standards of good, and that is better than chaos.*
    - 4) David Walls, *The believer is to obey except when commanded to sin. This is the Christian's responsibility toward all forms of human authority.*
    - 5) Warren Wiersbe, . . . *we must remind ourselves to respect the office even if we cannot respect the officer.*
3. Submission is doing God's will (15), ***For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people.***
- a. J. Ramsey Michaels, *The basic question Peter faces is the same as in 2:12; i.e., how should Christians respond to their enemies or false accusers? He supplies the answer—with submission or deference (however defined) and the doing of good.*
  - b. David Walls, *The apostle Peter wanted believers to submit willingly, but his words are not presented as an option, but as a command. We are to submit because that is God's desire for his people. He wants us to trust him because all governments and authorities are ultimately appointed and controlled by him.*
  - c. Peter Davids, . . . *the blameless behavior of Christians will indeed put them to silence, if not in the present age (although it might—should they become reflective enough), in "the day of visitation" (2:12).*
  - d. Wayne Grudem, *Since this sentence is the reason for verses 13 to 14, the specific kind of 'doing right' Peter has in mind is submission to human authorities—such a submission to authority will ultimately be used by God to silence slander.*
  - e. J. Ramsey Michaels, *There is nothing wrong with ignorance of a particular religious tradition, but on subjects of which one is ignorant one ought not to speak . . . Careless speech was what made it for Peter "the ignorance of the foolish."*
  - f. Charles Swindoll, *You see, baseless charges and rumors were flying around about Christians in those days. "They're loyal to a different king." "They're a rebellious sect." "They want to overthrow the government." "They're subversives!" By submitting voluntarily, by doing right before God and other people, they would muzzle the mouths of those spreading such vicious and erroneous rumors.*
  - g. Charles Spurgeon, *Men are ready enough to speak against our holy faith, and in Peter's day the charge was laid against Christians that they were the enemies of social order. Ignorance, you see, is a noisy thing. An empty drum makes a loud noise when it is beaten; and empty men, like empty vessels, often make the most sound. How then are we to silence this noisy ignorance? By argument? No, for it is not amenable to argument. Ignorance is to be silenced "by doing good."*
  - h. J. Vernon McGee, *When the Christian submits to government and to those who are in authority over his life, he is again revealing the praises of God through his life. I have never accepted joyfully a traffic ticket, but I pay my fine and try to be more careful to obey the laws. We are to be obedient to the law because we are giving a testimony.*

B. Submit to God's authority (16), ***Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God.***

1. *Live as people who are free*

- a. Thomas Constable, *Christians are free in the sense of being under no obligations to God to gain His acceptance. He has accepted us because of what Jesus Christ did for us. Also we are free from the tyranny of Satan. We are no longer his slaves.*
- b. David Walls, *The freedom of the New Testament is not political freedom but spiritual freedom. The great freedoms of the Christian life are: (1) freedom from the ruling power of sin in our lives; (2) freedom from guilt because our sins have been forgiven by God; and (3) freedom from the impossible obligation of attempting to earn favor with God through perfect obedience.*
- c. Roger Raymer, *Submission to lawful authority does not negate Christian liberty (cf. Gal. 5:1, 18). Civil laws should be freely obeyed, not out of fear but because doing so is God's will.*
- d. Peter Davids, *Christians are called to freedom, but it is not the political freedom of the Palestinian Zealots who "recognized God alone as their Lord and King" and therefore attacked the Roman occupation troops and Jews who cooperated, nor that of the Stoics who struggled for sovereign detachment from the pains and pleasures of life, nor the freedom of the antinomian who flouts social and moral rules to gratify his or her own impulses (e.g., the man of 1 Cor. 5), but the freedom of which Paul wrote so eloquently, a freedom from sin, the law, and the world that released one, not to independence, but to the service of God.*

2. *not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God*

- a. Paul A. Cedar, *Liberty misused is like a mighty river flooding its banks and bringing terrible destruction upon all in its path. Liberty used as service is like a mighty river flowing within its banks bringing life and refreshment to all who drink of its waters.*
- b. Roger Raymer, *Christian freedom is always conditioned by Christian responsibility (cf. Gal. 5:13) and must never be used as a cover-up . . . for evil. Christians enjoy true freedom when they obey God and live as servants . . . of God. Though living as free men, they should also live as God's slaves.*
- c. David Walls, *Christian freedom is always conditioned by Christian responsibility. Christian freedom does not mean being free to do only as we like; it means being free to do as we ought.*
- d. Peter Davids, *. . . freedom is not release from bondage to a state of autonomy, but release from bondage to become a slave of God. Only in God's joyful slavery is there true freedom.*
- e. Warren Wiersbe, *A true Christian submits himself to authority because he is first of all submitted to Christ. He uses his freedom as a tool to build with and not as a weapon to fight with. A good example of this attitude is Nehemiah, who willingly gave up his own rights that he might help his people and restore the walls of Jerusalem.*
- f. J. Ramsey Michaels, *Peter fears rather the possible assumption by some of his readers that because they are free from the ignorance and darkness of their pagan past, they are free also of their legitimate obligations to the pagan empire and household. Such an attitude would be disastrous because it would bring needless suffering on the Christian community, and yet ironically it would be suffering richly deserved (cf. 2:20; 4:15).*
- g. William Barclay, *The Christian is not an isolated unit; a Christian is a member of a community, and within that community individual freedom operates. Christian freedom, therefore, is the freedom to serve. Only in Christ are individuals so freed from self and sin that they can become as good as they ought to be. Freedom comes when people receive Christ as king of their hearts and Lord of their lives.*
- h. Charles Spurgeon, *Believers are the freest of men, but they know the difference between liberty and license. As servants of the Lord, they submit for peace's sake to man's laws because their Great Lawgiver so commands.*
- i. Martin Luther, *A Christian is a perfectly free lord of all, subject to none. A Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to all.*

C. Summary of social obligations of every Christian (17), ***Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor.***

1. *Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood.*

- a. Thomas Constable, *We should respect everyone, but we should love fellow believers . . . All people are worthy of honor if for no other reason than because they reflect the image of God. Our primary responsibility to other Christians is to show them love (cf. 1:22; John 13:35).*
- b. David Walls, *Respect for everyone indicates that we should love fellow believers . . . All people are worthy of honor if for no other reason than because they reflect the image of God. Our primary responsibility to other Christians is to show them love (cf. 1:22; John 13:35). We should see others as having value or honor. In the culture of that day, this could easily have been missed. The Roman Empire included sixty million slaves. Roman law considered slaves not as persons but as commodities with no rights. In effect, Peter calls us to "remember the rights of human personality and the dignity of every person. Don't treat people as objects."*

- c. Warren Wiersbe, *One way we show love to the brethren is by submitting to the authority of the “powers that be,” for we are bound together with one another in our Christian witness.*
  - d. Wayne Grudem, *Love the brotherhood indicates a higher obligation to fellow Christians (note ‘brotherhood’ also in 5:9), not only to respect them but also to show strong, deep love to them . . .*
  - e. Charles Swindoll, *We are to honor and respect all people, regardless of their faith in Christ, their godless lifestyles, or their attitudes toward Christians. At the same time, we must love the brotherhood of believers unconditionally.*
2. *Fear God. Honor the emperor.*
- a. Roger Raymer, *The verb “fear” . . . here does not mean to be in terror, but awe and reverence that leads to obedience . . .*
  - b. Thomas Constable, *God deserves fear whereas the emperor is worthy of respect . . . Our primary responsibility to God is to show Him fear (reverence, cf. 1:17). Peter added a final word about the king. He probably did so because his readers found it especially difficult to honor the Roman emperor who was evidently Nero when Peter wrote this epistle (cf. 1 Tim. 2:1–2).*
  - c. Peter Davids, *. . . while due appropriate honor and rightly to be prayed for, the Emperor was human and therefore neither to receive blanket approval nor ultimate reverence, both of which were reserved for God alone.*
  - d. Wayne Grudem, *Christians are not only to honour and love God (1:3, 8; 2:5, 9); they are also to fear him, something they should not do toward unbelievers (3:14) or toward other believers . . .*
  - e. Warren Wiersbe, *We honor the king because we do fear the Lord.*
  - f. Charles Swindoll, *God must always have our reverence, and we must treat His will as supreme. But we must also honor the king, who may in fact hate us, hate his own people, and hate God!*
3. *Comments*
- a. Thomas Constable, *These two pairs connect with Jesus’ teachings that we should love our enemies (Matt. 5:44; Luke 6:27, 35) and render to Caesar what is his and to God what is His (Matt. 22:21; Mark 12:17; Luke 20:25).*
  - b. J. Ramsey Michaels, *Just as he wants to distinguish between the kind of love appropriate to enemies and the kind appropriate to fellow believers, Peter also distinguishes the kind of fear or reverence due God from the kind due the emperor.*

<b>CONCLUSION</b>
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- Peter Davids, *Pagans would think them foolish for their obedience to law in general (which they often tried to avoid), and more foolish for their disobedience to the command to take part in a simple and relatively meaningless patriotic ceremony of worship [of Caesar]. But it was that balance that Peter felt best expressed the truth to which Christians bear witness.*
- Edmund Clowney, *We submit ourselves for the world’s sake so that our good deeds may be a witness to them or a testimony against them. We submit ourselves for our fellow-Christians’ sake out of sacrificial love for them. We submit ourselves for God’s sake because we honour his image in our fellow-creatures, and because we respect his ordering of our lives, but especially because we gratefully seek to take up our cross and follow Jesus Christ.*
- Warren Wiersbe, *As Christians, we must exercise discernment in our relationship to human government. There are times when the right thing is to set aside our own privileges, and there are other times when using our citizenship is the right thing. Paul was willing to suffer personally in Philippi (Acts 16:16–24), but he was unwilling to “sneak out of town” like a criminal (Acts 16:35–40). When he was arrested on false charges, Paul used his citizenship to protect himself (Acts 22:22–29) and to insist on a fair trial before Caesar (Acts 25:1–12).*
- J. Ramsey Michaels, *Peter lays the groundwork for coping with a quite different scenario—the distinct possibility of situations in which the demands of God and the emperor will pull Christians in different directions and in which suffering will be the result.*
- Scot McKnight, *In sum, Peter’s first application of the principle of holy living in the midst of persecution concerns how Christians ought to relate to governing authorities. Here for the first time he addresses the issue of the church and the state. But this theme is critical to the entire letter because it was this tense relationship that formed the context for everything he wrote to these beleaguered churches.*

## INTRODUCTION

- A. Introductory outline of 1 Peter
  1. Greeting (1:1-2)
  2. The greatness of salvation (1:3-12)
  3. Characteristics of the Christian life (1:13-2:10)
  4. The importance of submission (2:11-3:12)
    - a. General principles on Christian conduct in the world (11-12)
    - b. Civic responsibilities of Christians (13-17)
    - c. Christian submission to masters (18-25)
- B. Review of 1 Peter 2:13-17
  1. J. Ramsey Michaels, *Peter lays the groundwork for coping with a quite different scenario—the distinct possibility of situations in which the demands of God and the emperor will pull Christians in different directions and in which suffering will be the result.*
  2. Scot McKnight, *In sum, Peter’s first application of the principle of holy living in the midst of persecution concerns how Christians ought to relate to governing authorities. Here for the first time he addresses the issue of the church and the state. But this theme is critical to the entire letter because it was this tense relationship that formed the context for everything he wrote to these beleaguered churches.*
- C. Introductory comments on 1 Peter 2:18-25
  1. Charles Swindoll, *Leaving the larger issue of submission to government authority, Peter zooms in on a particular example of submission that was common in the first century: slavery.*
  2. William Barclay, *Here is the passage which would be relevant to by far the greatest number of the readers of this letter, for Peter writes to servants and slaves, and they formed by far the greatest part of the early Church.*
  3. J. Ramsey Michaels, *Peter evidently addressed servants but not masters because he addressed a social situation in which some of his readers were household servants but few, if any, were masters.*
  4. Roger Raymer, *Peter’s instruction to slaves included two reasons why they should patiently endure personal injustice. First, this found favor with God, and second, it faithfully followed Jesus Christ’s example.*

## 1 PETER 2:18-25, CHRISTIAN SUBMISSION TO MASTERS

- A. Servants are to submit to their masters (18-20)
  1. Peter’s exhortation (18), ***Servants, be subject to your masters with all respect, not only to the good and gentle but also to the unjust.***
    - a. *Servants*
      - 1) Peter does not use the word for slave but another word which means literally, *member of the household or domestic servant.*
      - 2) Luke 16:13, *No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.”*
      - 3) Romans 14:4, *Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand.*
      - 4) David Walls, *Many of them were well-educated and held responsible positions in their households. These “slaves” of the first century included doctors, teachers, musicians, and secretaries.*
      - 5) Wayne Grudem, *There was extensive Roman legislation regulating the treatment of slaves. They were normally paid for their services and could expect eventually to purchase their freedom . . . So a word stronger than ‘servant’ but weaker than ‘slave’ is needed—something meaning ‘semi-permanent employee without legal or economic freedom’.*
      - 6) H. D. M. Spence, *The frequent mention of slaves in the Epistles shows that many of the first Christians must have been in a condition of servitude (comp. 1 Cor. 7:21–23; Eph. 6:5–8; Col. 3:22; 1 Tim. 6:1, 2, etc.).*
    - b. *be subject to your masters with all respect*
      - 1) *Be subject means to be submissive, obey masters.*
      - 2) Luke 2:51, *And he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them. And his mother treasured up all these things in her heart.*
      - 3) Titus 2:9, *Bondservants are to be submissive to their own masters in everything; they are to be well-pleasing, not argumentative,*

- 4) *Respect means reverence due the position held by the master.*
  - 5) David Walls, *The slaves' attitude was to be one of fear or reverence for God as they worked. Their motivation for submission and service was not their respect for their master but their respect and reverence for God, who viewed their work as if it were done for him and whose character would be praised by their good behavior.*
- c. *not only to the good and gentle but also to the unjust*
- 1) Submission to one's master is based on the example of Christ not on the master's treatment.
  - 2) Roger Raymer, . . . *Peter challenged Christian slaves to a new behavior which required them to submit to and respect even those who are harsh.*
  - 3) Thomas Constable, *The master's personal character or conduct is not the reason for this behavior. We are to respond this way regardless of his or her actions (cf. Eph. 6:5–8).*
  - 4) H. D. M. Spence, *Servants must not make the character of their masters an excuse for disobedience;*
  - 5) David Walls, *The slave was to understand that greater issues were more important than the immediate injustice: the name of Jesus was at stake, as well as the possible salvation of his unreasonable master, who was the slave of sin.*
  - 6) William Barclay, *Peter was concerned that Christian slaves should demonstrate to the world that their Christianity did not make them disgruntled rebels but rather workers who had found a new inspiration to do an honest day's work. It will still often happen that, when some situation cannot at the time be changed, the Christian duty is to be Christian within that situation and to accept what cannot be changed until the leaven has worked.*
2. The motivation (19-20), ***For this is a gracious thing, when, mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly. 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 this is a gracious thing . . .*
- 1) A paraphrase by David Walls, *For this wins God's approval when, because he is conscious of God's presence, a person who is suffering unfairly bears his troubles patiently.*
  - 2) Wayne Grudem, *For introduces a reason for such submission, which Peter will explain in verses 19 to 25: God is pleased when his people trust him in the midst of unjust suffering, imitating the example of Christ . . . It is the confidence that God will ultimately right all wrongs which enables a Christian to submit to an unjust master without resentment, rebelliousness, self-pity, or despair.*
  - 3) Roger Raymer, *It is respectful submission to undeserved suffering that finds favor with God because such behavior demonstrates His grace.*
  - 4) Peter Davids, . . . *God is pleased with Christian slaves who bear up under unjust suffering, not because there is no other option or because of their optimistic character, but because they know this pleases God and conforms to the teaching of Jesus.*
  - 5) Edmund Clowney, *He is willing to serve his master for the Lord's sake, even to honour him for the Lord's sake. His master cannot enslave him, for he is Christ's slave; he cannot humiliate him, for he has humbled himself in willing subjection.*
  - 6) Charles Swindoll, *When we suffer unjustly at the hands of a cruel dictator or an unfair and overbearing boss, we participate in Christ's own ministry of unjust suffering on behalf of others. Christ suffered on our behalf. We suffer on behalf of unbelievers who need to see the gospel lived out in everyday lives.*
- b. *For what credit is it if . . .*
- 1) Thomas Constable, . . . *Peter hastened to distinguish between justifiable and unjustifiable suffering. He did not want his readers to rest comfortably if they were suffering for their own mistakes.*
  - 2) Scot McKnight, *What pleases God—if one is going to suffer—is suffering for doing good; God is displeased when his people suffer because they have acted in some rebellious or sinful manner.*
  - 3) Warren Wiersbe, *Of course, the human tendency is to fight back and to demand our rights. But that is the natural response of the unsaved person, and we must do much more than they do (Luke 6:32–34). Anybody can fight back; it takes a Spirit-filled Christian to submit and let God fight his battles (Rom. 12:16–21).*
  - 4) Wayne Grudem, *Patient endurance of justly deserved punishment is not remarkable or especially commendable—many wrongdoers know that they are getting what they deserve, and bear the punishment without complaint.*

3. Comments on the relationship of submission to “masters” today.
  - a. Thomas Constable, *In our culture Peter’s directions apply to how we behave in relation to those directly over us in society (employers, bosses, administrators, teachers, et al.)*.
  - b. Warren Wiersbe, *There are no Christian slaves today, at least in the New Testament sense; but what Peter wrote does have application to employees. We are to be submissive to those who are over us, whether they are kind or unkind to us. Christian employees must never take advantage of Christian employers. Each worker should do a good day’s work and honestly earn his pay.*
  - c. Wayne Grudem, . . . *even though there is no exact parallel to such ‘servant’ status in modern society, the fact that this was by far the most common kind of employee-employer relationship in the ancient world, and that it encompassed a broad range of degrees of functional and economic freedom, means that the application of Peter’s directives to ‘employees’ today is a very appropriate one.*
  - d. Charles Swindoll, *Many people have drawn an analogy between first-century slavery and today’s employer-employee relationship, suggesting they have enough similarities to warrant applying this passage to our modern-day work situation. In some ways this is appropriate, but in many fundamental ways the analogy breaks down. While the realm of our employment is the place to start, we must never forget that the vast majority of employment situations in the world today are voluntary, not compulsory.*

B. Servants are to follow the example of Jesus (21-25)

1. Christ is our example of suffering (21), ***For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps.***
  - a. *For to this you have been called*
    - 1) Peter emphasizes the point that Christians have been called to suffer for doing good. Note Acts 14:22, *strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.*
    - 2) Edmund Clowney, *But now Peter says, To this you were called. To what? To suffering, to unjust abuse, to patient endurance when they are beaten for doing right!*
    - 3) David Walls, *God not only calls the believer out of darkness into his wonderful light (2:9); he also calls the believer to endure suffering that is unjust and painful. The believer’s appropriate response to unjust suffering carries a powerful testimony to an unbelieving culture.*
    - 4) Peter Davids, *But as Christ did not receive the crown of glory without the crown of thorns, this call also means following the example of Christ in suffering.*
    - 5) Warren Wiersbe, *Jesus proved that a person could be in the will of God, be greatly loved by God, and still suffer unjustly. There is a shallow brand of popular theology today that claims that Christians will not suffer if they are in the will of God. Those who promote such ideas have not meditated much on the Cross.*
    - 6) Wayne Grudem, *Although the specific focus of Peter’s concern is ‘servants’, the general principles regarding suffering in verses 19 to 25 apply readily to all others under higher authority, whether in business, in marriage or family, in education, or in respect to government. Especially here in verses 21 to 25, the teachings are put in terms that apply to Christians generally.*
    - 7) Charles Spurgeon, *It is part of a true Christian’s calling to bear what is put upon him wrongfully.*
  - b. *because Christ also suffered for you*
    - 1) Thomas Constable, *Peter cited only His example here in view of his purpose, which was to encourage his readers to endure suffering with the proper spirit. They also needed to remember that their experience duplicated that of Jesus.*
    - 2) His suffering for us included his death on the cross as our substitute for sin.
    - 3) Edmund Clowney, *Christ’s suffering is our model because it is our salvation. It does not simply guide us; it is the root of all our motivation to follow.*
    - 4) Wayne Grudem, *Peter uses suffered (pascho) rather than ‘died’ in order to focus on Christ’s life of sufferings, and especially the sufferings leading up to his death, as a pattern for Christians.*
    - 5) Peter Davids, *Christ’s suffering was “on your behalf.” Thus suffering on account of others is part of the call to Christ, who is linked to them through his own undeserved suffering.*
  - c. *leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps*
    - 1) Warren Wiersbe, *We are not saved by following Christ’s example, because each of us would stumble over 1 Peter 2:22: “who did no sin.” Sinners need a Saviour, not an Example. But after a person is saved, he will want to “follow closely upon His steps” (literal translation) and imitate the example of Christ.*
    - 2) J. Vernon McGee, *In Nazareth during His first thirty years He suffered ridicule and misunderstanding, as Psalm 69 makes clear. Then, when He moved out in a public ministry, the gospel records tell us how He suffered for righteousness’ sake. When you and I suffer for our faith, we remember the example He left for us in that connection.*

- 3) H. D. M. Spence, *In the last clause the figure is changed to that of a guide along a difficult route, so difficult that those who follow must put their feet in his footprints. We should follow his steps, one by one, closely following him . . .*
  - 4) Thomas Constable, *The Greek word translated “example” (hypogrammon) refers to a writing or drawing that someone placed under another sheet of paper so he or she could trace on the upper sheet. In the next few verses Peter expounded on Jesus’ example at length.*
  - 5) Peter Davids, *The term for “example” is not simply that of a good example that one is exhorted to copy, but the pattern letters that a school child must carefully trace if he or she will ever learn to write. As if to underline this point Peter adds that we are to “follow in his footsteps.”*
  - 6) David Walls, *His life of suffering becomes an example for believers who follow him. We do not suffer the same agonies he endured, but we can follow Christ in the way in which he endured the suffering and responded to it.*
  - 7) Wayne Grudem, *Peter here emphasizes that Christ’s obedience through unjust suffering has left us an example to imitate, an example of the kind of life that is perfectly pleasing in God’s sight. When one is suffering unjustly, trust in God and obedience to him are not easy, but they are deepened through undeserved affliction, and God is thereby more fully glorified . . .*
2. Descriptions of Jesus’ example for us (22-25)
- a. He was innocent of wrongdoing (22), **He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth.**
    - 1) Peter applies to Jesus the prophecy of Isaiah 53:9, *And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth.*
    - 2) New Testament verses that affirm Jesus’ sinlessness.
      - a) 2 Corinthians 5:21, *For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*
      - b) Hebrews 4:15, *For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.*
      - c) 1 John 3:5, *You know that he appeared in order to take away sins, and in him there is no sin.*
    - 3) Thomas Constable, *This is quite a statement. Peter had lived with Jesus for more than three years and had observed Him closely, yet he could say that Jesus never sinned.*
    - 4) Wayne Grudem, *This verse provides noteworthy testimony to the complete sinlessness of Jesus by one who had been on the closest terms of intimacy with Him’ . . . God’s requirement of all people is perfect sinlessness even when under the most intense pressure to sin, a requirement which was fulfilled by Christ as an example and encouragement to us (cf. Heb. 12:3–4).*
    - 5) Roger Raymer, *He was completely innocent in both deed and word: no deceit (dolos; cf. 1 Peter 2:1) was found in His mouth.*
    - 6) David Walls, *It illustrates pointedly the undeserved nature of Christ’s suffering and how his response can become the believer’s response. He committed no sin involves wrong actions in general. No deceit was found in his mouth refers to his not sinning with words and speech.*
    - 7) Peter Davids, *This was not just an apparent sinlessness, for there was no deceit in Jesus (cf. 2:1; 3:10); he was perfect truth, without cover-up.*
  - b. He did not react but trusted God (23), **When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.**
    - 1) Jesus did not seek justice through His own actions.
      - a. Peter again looks to Isaiah. This time he pictures Isaiah 53:6-7, *All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth.*
      - b. Peter Davids, . . . *it is not just that Jesus suffered innocently that is the point of this tradition, but how he reacted to his suffering . . . Jesus in fact observed his own teaching about loving one’s enemies (Matt. 5:38–48; Luke 6:37–38) when he was insulted (Mark 14:65; 15:17–20, 29–32) and tortured (Luke 23:34).*
      - c. Thomas Constable, *Peter referred specifically to Jesus’ sufferings when He was on trial and during His crucifixion. Certainly Peter’s readers could find a strong example to follow there.*
      - d. Roger Raymer, **He did not retaliate . . . He made no threats** (cf. Rom. 12:19–20). *Humanly speaking, the provocation to retaliate during Christ’s arrest, trial, and crucifixion was extreme.*

- 2) Jesus entrusted justice to His Heavenly Father.
  - a. Thomas Constable, “*Reville*” means to heap abuse on someone. Often our threats are empty; we cannot follow through with them. However, Jesus could have followed through. Instead He trusted God to deal with His persecutors justly, as we should.
  - b. David Walls, *Christ’s example was to endure or bear up under the pain. He did so when he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. Jesus Christ entrusted himself and the entire situation to God the Father.*
  - c. Peter Davids, *That God judges justly is a truism of Scripture from Genesis (e.g., Gen. 18:25) to Revelation (Rev. 19:2); rather than take up one’s own cause, the believer commits his or her cause to this judge (Jer. 11:20; Rom. 12:17–20; 1 Thess. 5:15; Jas. 5:6–9; cf. Heb. 10:30).*
  - d. Edmund Clowney, *The meekness of Christ not only showed his submission to his Father’s will; it showed also his confidence in his Father’s righteous judgment . . . The very torture that Peter wanted Jesus at any cost to escape was the torture that Jesus came to endure. In Isaiah’s songs, the Servant is both identified with the people of God and distinguished from them. He suffers for them, stands in their place, and bears the judgment of their sins.*
  - e. Warren Wiersbe, *Our Lord’s humility and submission were not an evidence of weakness, but of power. Jesus could have summoned the armies of heaven to rescue Him! His words to Pilate in John 18:33–38 are proof that He was in complete command of the situation. It was Pilate who was on trial, not Jesus! Jesus had committed Himself to the Father, and the Father always judges righteously.*
  - f. Wayne Grudem, *When Peter calls God the one who judges justly it suggests that Jesus was conscious that God, as Judge, would either repay the wrongdoer justly (cf. 4:5), or would forgive because the punishment would be taken by Jesus himself on the cross (v. 24) . . . We thus seek for the wrongdoers not forgiveness without cost (which is impossible in God’s just universe) but forgiveness paid for by the great cost of the blood of Christ (1 Pet. 1:19).*
  - g. H. D. M. Spence, . . . *he left them to God, to God’s mercy, if it might be; to his, judgment, if it must be.*
- c. He bore our sins so we can follow His example (24-25), ***He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.***
  - 1) Redemption by Christ is to change one’s life for today and eternity.
    - a) Peter again refers to Isaiah. Here, we can look to Isaiah 53:4, *Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.*
    - b) Thomas Constable, *Jesus Christ’s death separated our sins from us. Consequently we can now live unto righteousness rather than unto sin . . . Some writers have cited the third part of this verse to support the non-biblical doctrine that Jesus by His death made healing from any physical ailment something that every Christian can claim in this life. This is the belief that there is “healing in the atonement.” The context of Isaiah 53 as well as the past tense “were healed” here implies spiritual healing from the fatal effects of sin rather than healing from present physical afflictions.*
    - c) Roger Raymer, *Christ’s suffering . . . and death accomplished “healing,” the salvation of every individual who trusts Him as his Savior.*
    - d) David Walls, *The ultimate illustration of unjust suffering and pain is seen in the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. Christ’s death was more than just an example of responding properly to unjust suffering. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree. Christ took the consequences of our sins upon himself, and by his sacrificial death made atonement for them.*
    - e) Peter Davids, *The salvation in Christ is not just a freedom from future judgment or from guilt, but a freedom from the life of sin and a freedom to live as God intends.*
    - f) Edmund Clowney, *He [Peter] makes Christ’s finished work the ground of his exhortations to live for righteousness. While he does not develop the theme of our union with Christ in the way that Paul does, he presents the same conviction from a different perspective, using particularly the Servant songs of Isaiah.*
    - g) Wayne Grudem, *Here is an explicit statement of the heart of the gospel: He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree. The fact that Christ bore our sins means that God the Father counted our sins against Christ and, in a way not fully understood by us, ‘laid on him the iniquity of us all’ (Isa. 53:6). The Father thought of our sins as belonging to Christ; he ‘made him to be sin who knew no sin’ (2 Cor. 5:21), and then punished him with that anger against sin, separation from God, and consequent death which we deserved.*
    - h) J. Ramsey Michaels, *The renunciation of sins is not an end in itself but is preliminary to the positive goal of living for what is right (i.e., for doing good as set forth in 2:12, 13–17, 18–20).*

- i) Charles Swindoll, *Dying in our place on the cross—the just for the unjust—He healed our souls so that we can live a new life of righteousness (2:24) . . . Christ entrusted Himself to “Him who judges righteously” and could therefore endure injustice with hope. Similarly, believers can entrust their souls to the Shepherd and Guardian of their souls (see 2:25). In short, by following the example of Christ, we can secure an unshakable hope in hurtful times.*
  - j) H. D. M. Spence, *Faith in the crucified Saviour lifts the Christian out of the sickness of sin into the health of righteousness.*
  - k) Joel Green, . . . *Peter interprets the suffering of Jesus in two ways, as exemplary (and thus to be modeled in the lives of Christians) and as atoning (and thus unique in providing the basis for Christian life).*
- 2) Life in Christ is a homecoming.
- a) Peter alludes to Isaiah 53:6, *All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.*
  - b) Roger Raymer, *Christ not only set the example and provides salvation, but He also gives guidance and protection to those who were headed away (like sheep going astray) from Him, but who then “turned about” (rather than returned) to the Shepherd and Overseer . . .souls. “Shepherd” and “Overseer” stress Christ’s matchless guidance and management of those who commit themselves to His care (cf. Ezek. 34:11–16).*
  - c) It appears that Peter is picturing Christians who improperly respond to unjust suffering and then return with a proper response focused on Jesus Christ who is the Shepherd and Overseer of our souls.
  - d) David Walls, *Peter reemphasized that Jesus Christ cares deeply for his people. He is their shepherd. Furthermore, he is the Overseer of their souls. He is the guardian, the bishop of their souls. Even throughout their pain and wandering away from the Lord, he remains their shepherd and overseer.*
  - e) Peter Davids, . . . *the dual title combines two pictures of the benevolent care of God . . . For slaves this was good news. They might be suffering; indeed, they might be suffering because of their faith. But they were not lost. Christ was with him, and they were under his care even if their present physical experiences were unpleasant.*
  - f) Edmund Clowney, *When he later followed from a distance, he had been prepared to swear that he never knew Jesus. What joy filled Peter’s heart to receive forgiveness and blessing from his risen Lord! Peter had returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of his soul. His own calling as an apostolic shepherd had come from the Lord, the good Shepherd, who had reclaimed Peter from his desertion.*
  - g) Warren Wiersbe, *We submit and obey, not only for the sake of lost souls and for the Lord’s sake, but also for our own sake, that we might grow spiritually and become more like Christ.*

<b>CONCLUSION</b>
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- David Walls, *Becoming a member of God’s family initiates a lifelong building program. Just as buildings under construction improve in appearance as they near completion, so too should the behavior and attitudes of believers improve as we draw closer to our eternal reward.*
- Warren Wiersbe, *The unsaved world is watching us, but the Shepherd in heaven is also watching over us; so we have nothing to fear. We can submit to Him and know that He will work everything together for our good and His glory.*
- J. Ramsey Michaels, *When he departed, Christ left behind an example for them to follow, an example of nonretaliation, whether in word or deed, and of quiet confidence in the righteous judgment of God. Those who have followed the way that he made for them will find that it leads back to Christ himself, now risen from the dead, the Shepherd and Guardian of their souls. . .*
- Scot McKnight, *This path of suffering injustice is not for the feeble or the weak-kneed; it is for those who are willing to pick up their cross daily and follow Jesus.*