

N. Wilm. Bockrath Fellowship Group

June 28, 2002

1 Peter 2:18-25 (NIV) – *Suffering, as Christ, for Doing Good*

¹⁸Slaves, submit yourselves to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and considerate, but also to those who are harsh. ¹⁹For it is commendable if a man bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because he is conscious of God.

²⁰But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. ²¹To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.

²²"He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth."

²³When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. ²⁴He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. ²⁵For you were like sheep going astray, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

"If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." (Matt 16:24)

Questions for Discussion:

1. In v. 18, Peter's presentation of authorities (masters) allows for "harsh" or not "good" treatment of subordinates, somewhat contrasted to his generally positive view of government in vv. 13-14. What modern situations in your life resemble the ancient slave-master type relationship? What suffering is experienced in these cases? How do you respond?
2. In vv. 19-20 Peter addresses different circumstances of bearing pain / suffering, as well as our mindset. How should these comments from Peter address your own situation of bearing the pain of suffering?
3. In vv.21-22, Peter provides a supreme example for our patience in suffering, the "passion" (πάσχω) of Christ, who was sinless. In what specific ways did Christ respond to unfair suffering or persecution? How can this encourage us, the "called" ones?
4. In v. 23 Peter focuses on both verbal persecution from outside and our particularly harmful verbal responses. Why does he emphasize the verbal, when most of us focus on the physical? (eg. being nailed to the cross, or Peter's slashing of the ear) Instead of a negative response what does Peter instruct us to do? What comfort does his counsel provide?
5. How do vv. 24-25 add to the general instruction provided in this section?