



Chapter 2

Verse 13- *Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority,*

Even though believers are “foreigners and strangers” in this world, we are to obey its laws. God instituted the home (marriage), the government, and the church, in that order.

every human institution- God has created government to create order, even if those in positions of authority don't honor him. 1 Cor. 14:33- *“For God is not a God of confusion, but of peace.”*

The major authorities were emperors (kings) and governors.

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Verse 14- *or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right.*

governors- This term includes others- procurators (financial leaders), proconsuls (commanders of the military), and tax collectors.

the punishment of evildoers- Weren't those in government persecuting believers? Didn't they approve of the unjust crucifixion of Jesus? Yes, but even so, the most oppressive governments hold evil in check, preventing society from collapsing into complete anarchy.

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Verse 15- *For such is the will of God, that by doing right you silence the ignorance of foolish people.*

silence- (“to close the mouth with a muzzle” - Wuest)

Don't be bothered when people lie to criticize you. The only taste of success some people have is when they take a bite out of you.” (Zig Ziglar)

the ignorance of foolish people- Criticism of Christians is often silenced by those living righteous lives. People want to know the will of God. Here it is: Obey the government so foolish people will be silenced.

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Verse 16- *Act as free people, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil, but use it as bond-servants of God.*

Act as free people- Even though they are being persecuted, they are absolutely free- John 8:36 KJV-

“If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.”

Colossians 3:23- *“And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;”*

We submit to human authority not out of loyalty to governments or men but out of obedience and loyalty to God. We shouldn't let our liberty be an excuse for license. We cannot say our heavenly citizenship exempts us from the laws and leaders of this world.

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Verse 17- *Honor all people, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king.*

In contrast to using Christian liberty as a cover, we should:

- Honor everyone. God's will is to give respect to every single person, whether they deserve it or not.
- Love other Christians. Jesus said that the world around us would know we are His disciples by our love for each other (John 13:35).
- Fear God. Hold God's power, majesty, and sovereignty in awe and wonder.
- Honor the emperor or king. There is no authority not established by God (Romans 13:1).

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Verse 18- *Servants, be subject to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are harsh.*

Servants- Of the two main words Peter could have used here, *doulos* (slave) and *oiketai*- (*oikos* is house- house servant). Both are used as synonyms, but *doulos* has a sense of being more servile (Trench).

be subject- (*hupotasso* from *hupó* = under + *tasso* = arrange in an orderly manner)

respect- (*phobos*) – This is the same fear (respect) due to God.

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Verse 18- *Servants, be subject to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are harsh.*

good and gentle... harsh- It is natural to respond to some who is kind with kindness, but what about someone who is harsh (*skoliois*- crooked)? Peter is leading their thinking to the topic of undeserved suffering.

This is not an endorsement of slavery, as some (Christians) have tried to make it. Owning someone created in the image of God has always been immoral. A similar but far greater example of this injustice today would be abortion. It is descriptive of our time.

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Verse 19- *For this finds favor, if for the sake of conscience toward God a person endures grief when suffering unjustly.*

For this finds favor- Probably, many of Peter's readers were slaves. Why should they repay kindness or cruelty with respect if they were subject to an immoral relationship (slavery)? The mistreatment wasn't a good thing, but their response to it was.

Remember what Jesus said at the Last Supper as he washed the disciples' feet? John 13:16:

Truly, truly I say to you, a slave is not greater than his master, nor is one who is sent greater than the one who sent him.

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Verse 20- *For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer for it you patiently endure it, this finds favor with God.*

Again, Peter is not supporting slavery or treating slaves who disobey harshly. He, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, is using an illustration his readers understand.

With Jesus as our example, Christians suffering for doing wrong is understandable. If they suffer for doing right, they always find favor (*charis*- grace) with God.

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Verse 21- *For you have been called for this purpose, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you would follow in His steps,*

Leaving you an example- *hypogrammon-* *hupo* (under) + *grammon*) writing. This is the only time this word is used in the New Testament. “Underwriting” is used in two ways. 1). A teacher who has written something for you to trace and learn (e.g., letters) or 2). An artist’s sketch for someone to color and complete (Arichea & Nida).

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Verse 21- *For you have been called for this purpose, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you would follow in His steps,*

Submitting to authority is the main topic of verses 18-20. The reason now is clear. If we as believers cannot submit to authority on earth, we cannot truly submit to God.

By submitting to those who mistreat us, we identify with Christ, who suffered in the same way and, even more so, died at the hands of the wicked. We follow in His steps. What a wonderful picture! He has traced out the pattern we are to follow.

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Verse 22- *He who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth;*

committed no sin- This reinforces the truth of the impeccability (Latin- *in-* not + *pecarre-* to sin) of Jesus (2 Cor 5:21; John 8:46; 1 John 3:5; Heb 7:26).

Peter quotes from Isaiah 53:9 (The Suffering Servant) to further his point:

*“And His grave was assigned with wicked men, Yet He was with a rich man in His death, Because He had done no violence, **Nor was there any deceit in His mouth.**”*

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Verse 23- *and while being abusively insulted, He did not insult in return; while suffering, He did not threaten, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously;*

entrusting- (*paredidou-* handing over) As insults and suffering came His way, Jesus handed the insults and those who insulted over to the Father. This adds to the wrath being stored up against them.

The sinless nature and sinless life of Jesus were not “attained” by living in solitude, away from people and life. He committed no sin even though he lived a life with abusive people.

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Verse 24- *and He Himself brought our sins in His body up on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live for righteousness; by His wounds you were healed.*

Again, Peter quotes Isaiah 53:4-6. This verse speaks to the substitutionary atonement of Jesus. He took our sins (past, present, future) on Himself for a purpose. He dies physically, so we can live (die to sin) and be restored in fellowship with Him.

by His wounds you were healed- In context, it is clear we are healed spiritually, not physically, by Jesus’ death on the cross.

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Verse 25- *For you were continually straying like sheep, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls.*

Peter is still using Isaiah 53 (verse 6) as he describes believers who were like sheep gone astray. The healing in verse 24 was for the wandering in verse 25:

All of us, like sheep, have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the Lord has caused the wrongdoing of us all To fall on Him.

you have returned- at the moment of their conversion.

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Verse 25- *For you were continually straying like sheep, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls.*

to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls- Jesus is both our Shepherd (Guide) and Overseer (Ruler). We were wandering away from the Shepherd when He gave His life for us. This allowed us to be in right relationship with Him as he guides and rules us.