

**TITLE: "Satisfaction in Suffering" (Part 2)**

**PASSAGE: 1 Peter 2:18-19**

**THEME: *Every believer is a servant who is to suffer patiently and justly even as Christ suffered patiently and justly for him.***

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## Read Passage

### A common theme . . .

Theme common to greater part of chapt. 2, as well as chapt. 3, & that's submission to authority.

We saw it in 2:13-17 {review}

Here: Submission of servants or slaves. Theme follows in 3:1 (wives).

We have a common theme of submission.

### Another common theme: suffering

In fact, both themes (S.S.) come together in 2:18-25.

### As I said last week,

it's a passage that broadens in application, v. by v. (almost w. by w.). Peter begins by addressing servants, household slaves of t/1st c. As he was moved along by t/inspiration of t/Spirit to write, it's as if t/audience he has in mind opens up & widens bit by bit so that, almost unperceptively, you find that he's addressing t/life of every believer: slave, free, 1<sup>st</sup>. c. 21<sup>st</sup>. c.

### As I said before,

some preconceived ideas I had about this p. have been proven wrong.

Confess, sev. wks. ago, I think it was back while we were in 2:13-17, I foolishly said that I had a basic outline all figured out for t/rest of chapt. 2, as well as chapt. 3. I was wrong (one of those few times!).

That's why (here's a note for you Bible students, teachers, preachers out there) it is essential that you study t/passagge B4 U o/l t/passagge. A good o/l is essential to good teaching (it's what keeps your listener from being confused). An o/l is only as good as your exegesis. IOW - you can't get a good/accurate o/l if you don't understand t/pssge accurately.

I trust I have a not only a good handle on this passage, but also a good o/l. Not only is a good o/l imp. So also is a main idea, a central point ==>

**We are slaves of the Suffering Servant who are to strive for satisfaction in our sufferings since He suffered for us.**

In a single sentence this captures t/essence of these 8 vv.

This paragraph begins w/a specific audience: Servants. So our outline will begin there, also.

Verse 18==>

### **I. Servants are to submit themselves to their masters (18)**

They are to obey // serve // heed those in authority over them. In so doing they are {repeat} JC.

**Servants, submit yourselves to your masters with all fear. Not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are perverse.**

#### **A. The Word οἰκετης (derived from the noun οἶκος)**

Refers most generally to household servants.

These are those who serve within a domestic framework. Cooked, cleaned, took care of t/children, ran errands.

### 1. This sort of slavery was sought after by many

An οἰκετης often had a higher economic/social status than a free peasant. We could call this one of t/top tiers of slavery & sometimes t/top tier of slavery was better than a lower tier of freedom.

#### a. There were several categories of slaves in the first c.

Lowest order were those who worked in t/mines (dangerous). These were segreg. from society at large & would not have had access to Peter's letter.

Middle order were field slaves who worked by t/1000s on massive estates as human tools of agriculture. And, as Craig Keener writes:

". . . they are probably not addressed here and at most are peripherally envisioned." [Keener, 714]

Highest social order of servants included those who worked as professionals (doctors, artists, secretaries) along w/those whom Peter addresses here: household servants.

### I. Servants are to submit themselves to their masters (18)

**Servants, submit yourselves to your masters with all fear. . . .**

There was always t/danger that slaves who became Xns misinterpret their freedom in X to mean freedom within their social order. You are free in X, that doesn't mean you are free from your physical circumstance.

We read about that last week in 1 Cor. 7 ==>

21 Were you called while a slave? Do not worry about it; but if you are able also to become free, rather do that. 22 For he who was called in the Lord while a slave, is the Lord's freedman; likewise he who was called while free, is Christ's slave.

## B. Just good masters?

Submit to them if they treat you well? // Like them? // They are godly?

... **Not only to those who are good and gentle** (ἐπιεικής - reasonable, kind), **but also to those who are perverse.**

### 1. Those who are σκολιός - crooked

Word that was used of rivers & roads, such as a winding road or a crooked river. Word used of t/locomotion of the snake as it meanders back & forth. We have a medical term today, "scoliosis" (curvature of t/spine) that comes from this word, σκολιός.

Used metaphorically, it means about the same thing that our word "crooked" means. Just as that word as a lit. & a fig. meaning (you can walk a crooked path, just don't walk it with a crooked person!) so does this word.

### 2. Obedience is unconditional

These servants were to obey regardless of t/circumstances. In His prov. God may have you serving under a reasonable master. On other hand. . .

Could be physical mistreatment, dishonesty regarding pay or benefits, working conditions, etc. Yet, the servant is commanded by God to obey. It's easy to submit to those who are good, kind, reasonable, etc. To submit to someone who is unreasonable, test of faith.

#### a. In fact the same principles apply that we saw from 2:13-17

{review}

#### (1) Were there any exceptions?

Of course, that's something we also saw in that previous section.

We may lawfully disobey any authority when that authority commands us to do something God forbids, or forbids us to do something God commands.

If an authority over us demands we do something God forbids us to do, we obey God. // forbids we do something God commands, we obey God.

### *I. Servants are to submit themselves to their masters (18)*

#### **C. This isn't the only place we find such instruction in the NT**

Ephesians 6:5-9 says that slaves are to be obedient to their masters w/fear & trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ; not by way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.

Colossians 3:22 says that slaves are to obey their masters in all things, not with external service, as those who merely please men, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord.

Titus 2:9-10 says that bondslaves are to be subject to their own masters in everything, to be well-pleasing, not argumentative,<sup>10</sup> not pilfering, but showing all good faith that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect.

1 Timothy 6:1-2 says that all who are under the yoke as slaves are to regard their masters as worthy of all honor so that the name of God and our doctrine may not be spoken against. And those who have believers as their masters are not to be disrespectful because they are brethren, but are to them serve them all the more.

Peter doesn't address "masters" in this letter. Prob. because he knew of none in t/areas to which he writes. Peter writes to Xn servants w/pagan masters (some who were reasonable, some who were not).

## D. The Reason For Godly Submission

### 1. Very simply: God is pleased (18a and 20b)

a. First of all, God is to be feared in all this (God alone is to be feared)

(1) I'm going to argue that the "fear" in v. 18 ("respect") is directed to God, not men

(a) Word that's used here is φόβος (noun)

Every instance where Peter uses the word φόβος in this epistle that fear is directed toward God, not men. Look at v. 17 - "fear God" - verb φοβέω. Basically t/same word.

I checked t/NASB // NIV // RSV & they all translate t/17 "fear" (fear God) & v. 18 "respect" (S. r. M.). Misleading! KJ translators are correct. . .

What we saw in v. 17 stands true here==>

**Honor all men; love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king.**

All men, those in authority & those not, are to be honored. Your God is to be feared. In that sense, men are not to be feared.

3:6, exhorts women to follow in t/footsteps of Sarah & not to be frightened by any fear.

3:14 tells us not to fear t/intimidation of mere men.

Within t/context of slave/master relationships, Colossians 3:22 exhorts slaves to all **"with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord."**

## D. The Reason For Godly Submission

## ***1. God is pleased (18a and 20b)***

### ***a. He alone is to be feared***

### ***b. He alone grants grace***

Verse 19==>

**For this [finds] favor** (lit. "For this is grace" / "favor" is t/Gk. noun χαρις) **if out of consciousness toward God, one endures pain when suffering unjustly.**

God is pleased, He is glorified in our obedience to Him when we recognize those in authority over us & we submit to that authority knowing that all auth. comes from God.

For slaves & servants, doing so was a way to ==>

". . . adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect."

1 Tim. 6, looking at it from the other side, says that it was a safeguard against unbelievers speaking against t/name of God and sound doctrine.

To sum up ==>

## ***1. Servants are to submit themselves to their masters (18)***

They are to render obedience unconditionally, it's ==>

**Not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are perverse.**

They are to do so knowing that God is pleased; He will bless. They are to do so fearing Him, knowing that they will find favor in His eyes.

That's for 1<sup>st</sup>. c. slaves & I suppose applicable to believers today in other lands that yet allow slavery.

## **E. There's a whole other issue here**

Pick up any popular Bible commentary & it will likely frame this section around today's employee-employer relationships.

As an example: MacArthur's commentary on 1 Peter "submission in the workplace." - common way to treat NT passages that address this issue. After all, we don't relate today to the slave/master thing, do we?

### **1. Can we really apply this that way? - No and Yes**

#### **a. Have to be careful**

This was referring to involuntary servitude. Contemporary employee-employer contracts are not involuntary (some may be servitude, not involuntary s.).

#### **b. For example**

If you have a superior who mistreats you there are almost always some sort of recourse avail. to you. Most companies have policies for grievances and if the superior is doing something that has been deemed unethical by the state, there's legal recourse as well.

&, of course, no one forces t/employee to stay; he can always quit & find another job (wasn't an option for these servants to whom Peter writes).

#### **c. Does this mean there is no application?**

There is if we are careful. Rem. master-servant arrangements were by far the most common employer-employee relationship in the 1<sup>st</sup> c. [Grudem, 124]

As far as skill levels and responsibilities were concerned, these servants were more like employees than they were slaves. They were generally educated and served in very important roles in society.



But they were still not free & that's an essential difference.

## F. Application to Contemporary Employee/Employer Relationships

Three basic principles for those of you who are employed . . .

### 1. Consider it all joy that your employment is a place of ministry

I hate to beat a dead horse (or be overly pedantic - word I used last week that sev. of you asked me about. Means, "narrowly, stodgily and often ostentatiously learned." - overkill of information). I've said it B4 - t/idea that every Xn is a minister wherever God has placed him/her was a truth recaptured for t/CH by t/16th c. Reformers. B4 that, there was a strong clergy/laity distinction upheld by Rom. Cath. Theol.

That difference is even seen in art. Listen to what one writer has to say =>  
"Another issue also held significance in the shaping of the different types of art. This issue was the division of the "sacred" and the "secular." Apparently the Protestants realized that this division was artificial.<sup>10</sup> God created people in His image, and all of our activities should be done to His glory. The Reformers recognized that God's calling to a "secular" vocation was no less legitimate or important than a call to be a missionary, and that an ordinary life could glorify God just as much as a life "in the ministry." By creating art with secular subjects, therefore, the Reformation artists could glorify God by portraying the natural beauty of His creation and by depicting people, who were created in His image. Many Protestants viewed this as the "pure and acceptable use" of art, which John Calvin sought. Catholics of the Counter-Reformation, however, did not share the Protestant view of art, as their paintings clearly revealed. For them art had to have religious or "sacred" content. It seems that this view may have sprung from the continuation of the monastic ideal (which was prevalent in the Middle Ages) of a life set apart and devoted to the "sacred," rather than from the Biblical view that all aspects of a Christian's life can glorify God. As a result, the Catholic artists produced radically different art than the Protestants."

[ <http://www.hyperhistory.net/apwh/essays/comp/cw20reformationart.htm>]

John Calvin said that t/seeming trivial matters of life are done to glory of God, just as much as sacred affairs ==>

"The devil has so blinded men that he has persuaded them to believe that in little things they do not have to worry whether God is honored or served: and this he accomplished on the pretext that such things are of the world. When a man works in his labor to earn his living, when a woman does her housework, and when a servant does his duty, one thinks that God does not pay attention to such things, and one says that they are secular affairs. Yes, it is true that such work is proper to this present and fleeting life; however, that does not mean that we must separate it from the service of God." [Sermon on 1 Corinthians 10:31-11:1]

Luther says the same ==>

"it looks like a great thing when a monk renounces everything and goes into a cloister, carries on a life of asceticism, fasts, watches, prays, etc. ... On the other hand, it looks like a small thing when a maid cooks and cleans and does other housework. But because God's command is there, even such a small work must be praised as a service of God far surpassing the holiness and asceticism of all monks and nuns."

### *1. Consider it all joy that your employment is a place of ministry*

With that in mind:

#### **a. serve joyfully**

You might wonder why God has you living in this or that neighborhood, attending this or that school, or working here or there. That is His prerogative. It is your joy to serve God where he has placed you by His design.

#### **b. Be a good worker**

In reality, Xns should be t/best employees. History has given us a phrase, "The Protestant Work Ethic" that reflected t/fact that Xns have contributed much to work as both employees, employers, and innovators. Punctual, respectful, hardworking, compliant, honest.

(1) You might notice in that regard that verse 19 begins and verse 20 ends with the same phrase "this finds favor"

This is called an "inclusio." It bookends an important idea. The word "favor" is the same word translated "grace" in NT.

Peter may be using it as an equivalent of the O.T. idiom  $\text{׀׀׀}$  ("to find favor," E.g. with God).  $\text{׀׀׀}$  used in Gen. 6:8 of Noah who "found favor" in God's eyes." Serve joyfully & w/integrity & you will find favor w/God.

### **c. Show proper respect to those over and under you**

Just as servants were to show proper respect in submitting to those over them, you do t/same – even if they are perverse or crooked as v. 18 says.

#### ***1. Consider it all joy that your employment is a place of ministry***

### **d. Make the most of every opportunity**

Colossians 4:5 **Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity.**

Let others see t/life of X in you. Pray for opportunities to tell t/lost & dying world in which you find yourself that He lives & that he has come to seek & save that which is lost. You work w/people who would never set foot inside a good CH. You may be t/only preacher they will ever hear

### **e. ADD: leave on good terms**

Give a proper notice; they should be saddened to see you go, not relieved that you went).

#### ***2. Consider it all joy that by God's design your employment may include trials and suffering***

You may be ostracized for your faith // slighted in a promotion // ridiculed. You may have an abusive co-worker or superior.

Remember what James said ==>

James 1:2ff. 2 Consider (ἐγχομαι) it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials,<sup>3</sup> knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. 4 And let endurance have its perfect result, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

## 2. Consider it all joy that by God's design your employment may include trials and suffering

You will have to be discerning. I'm not saying that there isn't a time to look for another job or take a stand against abuse. Depends on t/situation.

Imagine this conversation ==>

*"I'm miserable at work. Why? Well, I openly profess my faith in X & tell others about him whenever I can, and now half of t/people I work w/ridicule me. I think I'm going to look for another job."* Yes, and be sure to mark on your resume' that you can't work with those who are dead, depraved & hate t/light of t/gospel. Maybe you can get a job as a mannequin inspector. You can work hands on w/hundreds of dummies who will just smile at you and say nothing!

That's not a reason to find another job. That's a reason to rejoice! WDYM?

Matthew 5:11-12 "Blessed are you when men cast insults at you, and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely, on account of Me.<sup>12</sup> "Rejoice, and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

## 3. Consider it all joy that your employment fulfills God's purpose for humanity

### a. Let me ask you a question?

Is work a result of t/fall? Do we have to work because of sin's curse? No!

Part of what it means for men to be created in God's image is that they work. I'm not just talking about formal employment. It is always best for those who are married & have children for t/wife to stay home. That's her place of work; w/i t/home raising children in godliness.

Work is not part of t/curse. On t/seventh day God ceased from his work. John 17:4 ("I have accomplished t/work you have for me").

Difficulty in work is a result of t/curse

Gen. 3:19 - "by the sweat of your face you will eat bread until you return to the ground."

Even w/that, work fulfills God's purpose for humanity.

### **b. One of the greatest banes on our society today is Welfare**

Welfare is an oxymoron . Allowing people to be lazy isn't welfare. Men will be lazy if they are enabled in their laziness. That's what welfare does. Do we have a responsibility to care for those in need? Absolutely! That's a role for t/CH to fulfill & one that t/CH has fulfilled in t/past quite well.

So much of our society today is built upon t/false assumption that people are inherently good. That's not only bad theology, it's bad sociology as well.

My heart breaks for t/families of t/32 students ruthlessly murdered at VT last week. My thoughts naturally turned to Columbine where 8 years ago we saw a similar incident (was 8 years ago to t/day on Fri.).

Of course, people say, "Where was God" & t/first thing I want to say is "He wasn't allowed on campus" (being facetious).

I was listening to t/news after all this happened & they were replying excerpts of one of the services held on campus.

And I heard a woman say (paraphrase): *"I still believe that all men are inherently good and we have to regain our faith in humanity."*

That's 180 degrees wrong! No, all men are inherently depraved & capable of t/most heinous acts of evil if they are unrestrained. What restrains them? Certainly t/state has a role in restraining the evil acts of men. But t/state is totally impotent in this regard if something is missing. What's that? God. Specifically, the God of Xnty. The only true God. People will act like animals if that's all they think they are.

No, we need to come to understand, as a nation, that all men are inherently evil & we have to regain our faith, not in humanity, but in t/Creator of humanity.

Has to be responsibility // accountability.

### ***3. Consider it all joy that your employment fulfills God's purpose for humanity***

Bible assumes both responsibility and accountability.

1 Thessalonians 4:11-12 **11 and to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life and attend to your own business and work with your hands, just as we commanded you; 12 so that you may behave properly toward outsiders and not be in any need.**

2 Thessalonians 3:10-12 **10 For even when we were with you, we used to give you this order: if anyone will not work, neither let him eat. 11 For we hear that some among you are leading an undisciplined life, doing no work at all, but acting like busybodies. 12 Now such persons we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ (accountability) to work in quiet fashion and eat their own bread.**

One of t/ways in which we worship and serve JC is thru our work: at home, in employment, at school, in t/CH.

Here's where we turn a corner. I've got to admit, navigating my o/l thru this passage has been a bit σκολιός.

## G. Application for every Christian who is called to be a suffering servant (brings us to vv. 19-25)

We are slaves of the Suffering Servant who are to strive for satisfaction in our sufferings since He suffered for us.

## II. God blesses us when we suffer well (19-20)

True for 1<sup>st</sup> c. servants & for us who live in a free nation today.

### A. What it means to suffer well

Everyone suffers. Inescapable. Not everyone suffers well. Not every Christian suffers well. "Satisfaction in suffering."

We'll have to wait until next week.

Two themes that we have been balancing in teeter-totter fashion t/past 2 wks. ==> What it means to be a servant & what it means to suffer.

I want you to keep in mind that we have a God who knows how to do both. Sometimes we refer to Him as "The suffering servant."

He's t/one we see in Phil. 2 ==>

6 who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped,<sup>7</sup> but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.<sup>8</sup> And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

We are slaves of the Suffering Servant who are to strive for satisfaction in our sufferings since He suffered for us.

He's t/one we see in Mark 10:45 ==>

“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

We are slaves of the Suffering Servant who are to strive for satisfaction in our sufferings since He suffered for us.

He's the one we see in our own text, 1 Peter 2:21,24 {cite}

We are slaves of the Suffering Servant who are to strive for satisfaction in our sufferings since He suffered for us.

He suffered for us . . .

I came across a story that puts these two things in perspective, Christ the suffering servant. It's called "The Ragman."

I saw a strange sight. I stumbled upon a story most strange, like nothing my life, my street sense, my sly tongue had ever prepared me for.

Hush, child. Hush, now, and I will tell it to you.

Even before the dawn one Friday morning I noticed a young man, handsome and strong, walking the alleys of our City. He was pulling an old cart filled with clothes both bright and new, and he was calling in a clear, tenor voice: "Rags!" Ah, the air was foul and the first light filthy to be crossed by such sweet music.

"Rags! New rags for old! I take your tired rags! Rags!"

"Now, this is a wonder," I thought to myself, for the man stood six-feet-four, and his arms were like tree limbs, hard and muscular, and his eyes flashed intelligence. Could he find no better job than this, to be a ragman in the inner city?



I followed him. My curiosity drove me. And I wasn't disappointed.

Soon the Ragman saw a woman sitting on her back porch. She was sobbing into a handkerchief, sighing, and shedding a thousand tears. Her knees and elbows made a sad X. Her shoulders shook. Her heart was breaking.

The Ragman stopped his cart. Quietly, he walked to the woman, stepping round tin cans, dead toys, and diapers.

"Give me your rag," he said so gently, "and I'll give you another."

He slipped the handkerchief from her eyes. She looked up, and he laid across her palm a linen cloth so clean and new that it shined. She blinked from the gift to the giver.

Then, as he began to pull his cart again, the Ragman did a strange thing: he put her stained handkerchief to his own face; and then HE began to weep, to sob as grievously as she had done, his shoulders shaking. Yet she was left without a tear.

"This IS a wonder," I breathed to myself, and I followed the sobbing Ragman like a child who cannot turn away from mystery.

"Rags! Rags! New rags for old!"

In a little while, when the sky showed grey behind the rooftops and I could see the shredded curtains hanging out black windows, the Ragman came upon a girl whose head was wrapped in a bandage, whose eyes were empty. Blood soaked her bandage. A single line of blood ran down her cheek.

Now the tall Ragman looked upon this child with pity, and he drew a lovely yellow bonnet from his cart.

"Give me your rag," he said, tracing his own line on her cheek, "and I'll give you mine."

The child could only gaze at him while he loosened the bandage, removed it, and tied it to his own head. The bonnet he set on hers. And I gasped at what I saw: for with the bandage went the wound! Against his brow it ran a darker, more substantial blood - his own!

"Rags! Rags! I take old rags!" cried the sobbing, bleeding, strong, intelligent Ragman.

The sun hurt both the sky, now, and my eyes; the Ragman seemed more and more to hurry.

"Are you going to work?" he asked a man who leaned against a telephone pole. The man shook his head.

The Ragman pressed him: "Do you have a job?"

"Are you crazy?" sneered the other. He pulled away from the pole, revealing the right sleeve of his jacket - flat, the cuff stuffed into the pocket. He had no arm.

"So," said the Ragman. "Give me your jacket, and I'll give you mine."

Such quiet authority in his voice!

The one-armed man took off his jacket. So did the Ragman - and I trembled at what I saw: for the Ragman's arm stayed in its sleeve, and when the other put it on he had two good arms, thick as tree limbs; but the Ragman had only one.

"Go to work," he said.

After that he found a drunk, lying unconscious beneath an army blanket, and old man, hunched, wizened, and sick. He took that blanket and wrapped it round himself, but for the drunk he left new clothes.

And now I had to run to keep up with the Ragman. Though he was weeping uncontrollably, and bleeding freely at the forehead, pulling his cart with one arm, stumbling for drunkenness, falling again and again, exhausted, old, old, and sick, yet he went with terrible speed. On spider's legs he skittered through the alleys of the City, this mile and the next, until he came to its limits, and then he rushed beyond.

I wept to see the change in this man. I hurt to see his sorrow. And yet I needed to see where he was going in such haste, perhaps to know what drove him so.

The little old Ragman - he came to a landfill. He came to the garbage pits. And then I wanted to help him in what he did, but I hung back, hiding. He climbed

a hill. With tormented labor he cleared a little space on that hill. Then he sighed. He lay down. He pillowed his head on a handkerchief and a jacket. He covered his bones with an army blanket. And he died.

Oh, how I cried to witness that death! I slumped in a junked car and wailed and mourned as one who has no hope - because I had come to love the Ragman. Every other face had faded in the wonder of this man, and I cherished him; but he died. I sobbed myself to sleep.

I did not know - how could I know? - that I slept through Friday night and Saturday and its night, too.

But then, on Sunday morning, I was wakened by a violence.

Light - pure, hard, demanding light - slammed against my sour face, and I blinked, and I looked, and I saw the last and the first wonder of all. There was the Ragman, folding the blanket most carefully, a scar on his forehead, but alive! And, besides that, healthy! There was no sign of sorrow nor of age, and all the rags that he had gathered shined for cleanliness.

Well, then I lowered my head and trembling for all that I had seen, I myself walked up to the Ragman. I told him my name with shame, for I was a sorry figure next to him. Then I took off all my clothes in that place, and I said to him with dear yearning in my voice: "Dress me."

He dressed me. My Lord, he put new rags on me, and I am a wonder beside him. The Ragman, the Ragman, the Christ! [Walter Wangerin, Jr. taken from [www.ozsermonillustrations.com](http://www.ozsermonillustrations.com)]