



8/21/25

At the core of everything Peter is about to say in today's passage is something he learned the hard way... humility. I find it so mind blowing and reassuring that the three disciples Jesus had as His core of the 12 were Peter, James, and John. James and John were known as "Sons of Thunder" because of their massive pride, and Peter's pride oozed from his mouth almost every time he spoke during the 3 years he was with Jesus.

I find it mind blowing that these three were Jesus' core because... Why would Jesus pick such messed up people as His closest friends??? He KNEW their hearts better than they did! I find it reassuring because Jesus knows MY heart and He still chooses me!!! I heard a friend say recently, "God is not a weights and measures God." The more I read of scripture, the more I see how true that is!

*Blessings,
Jonna*

1 Peter 2:11-25 ~

As I jump in to see what God wants to teach me from today's passage, I also want to look just a few verses before it to see the reason for humility... Because of Jesus and through Jesus, I am "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy." Why humble myself before Him? I WAS nothing. He chose me and made me holy and royal. I WAS in darkness. He delivered me. I WAS not anyone's person. He made me HIS own person. I WAS without hope because of my

sin. He gave me mercy.

In light of that...

Vs. 11 ~ "Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul." This world is not my home. Peter, who has so massively changed through the power of the Holy Spirit, URGES me, someone whose new citizenship is in heaven, to abstain... to distance myself from... the passions of my flesh. Why? Nothing good comes from my flesh passions. They are what cause this constant battle going on within my soul! They are the reason Paul said, "Nothing good dwells in my flesh. My flesh keeps me from doing the good I want to do" (Romans 7:18).

Let me not miss this... Peter starts this verse with the word, "Beloved." He is not trying to shame me into obedience. He's calling me to obedience because I am loved... and when you love someone, you want the absolute best for them. The absolute best is that I rid myself of the passions of my flesh and cling to a pure passion for Christ.

Vs. 12 ~ What will my life look like when I'm distancing myself from my selfish passions? My conduct even among those who don't know Jesus, who speak against me and accuse me of doing evil for doing what pleases the Lord, will see that I truly am doing what pleases Him. Then, when Jesus returns for me, they will glorify Him whether by falling at His feet in worship or by being put to shame as Peter will say in 1 Peter 3:16.

My goal is to live the culture of my citizenship no matter where I am. Proverbs 25:26 says, "If the godly give in to the wicked, it's like polluting a fountain or muddying a spring." And John 12:42-43 says, "Nevertheless, many even of the authorities believed in Jesus, but for fear of the Pharisees they did not confess it, so that they would not be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the glory that comes from man more than the glory that comes from God." O Lord, please help me never to live a chameleon life... shifting colors depending on who I'm with. Help me to be the same person whether I'm alone with You or when I'm with others... doing what pleases You by the strength You supply.

Vs. 13-15 ~ "Be subject for the Lord's sake 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. For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people." This is INCREDIBLE. It would seem by what Peter is saying I should trust my government because they lead with true justice. Maybe Peter's government wasn't corrupt, but I see corruption all over the place in our world! But NERO was the Roman emperor when Peter wrote this. He was HORRIBLE! He persecuted Christians in the most horrific ways! How could Peter tell me to submit to their authority??? I will see the answer to this in vs. 23, but until then let me see what this is saying... "By doing good, I will put to silence the ignorance of foolish people." My anger and judgment will not silence fools, even fools in government. My humility and goodness before God will.

That doesn't mean that I sin when government tells me to sin. My loyalty always has to be for the Lord before anyone else. Peter knew this, too. In Acts 5, he was charged by the courts not to preach the gospel anymore... OR ELSE. Peter and the other disciples with him responded, "We must obey God rather than men."

This tells me something REALLY IMPORTANT. Peter was not fighting for his personal rights and freedoms. His whole goal was to honor the Lord and do what pleases Him. When Peter's rights were trampled on, he got under the authority of the government. When the gospel was trampled on, he said no. To be fair, he was under a different kind of government. In our government, I'm given the right to vote and to speak out for what I believe in. I can work within the confines of our constitution. But either way... I pray that my focus will not be on MY kingdom, MY rights, and MY concerns... but on GOD'S Kingdom, HIS rights, and HIS concerns.

By seeking the will of God and what pleases Him, I will silence the ignorance of foolish people. This does NOT mean I should judge them or think I'm superior. I can't do what pleases God by acting in pride... I will only do what pleases God when I do it from a heart of humility.

Vs. 16-17 ~ "Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God." In my natural mind, this does not make sense. Isn't freedom being able to do whatever I want? No... that's just veiled evil. How did Jesus use His freedom??? He served ME! To the point of DEATH!

Humble freedom does not look like the world's definition of freedom. In Galatians 5:13, Paul said, "For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your

freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another." To truly be free, I will be so secure in my relationship with the Lord that I will be free to love others and serve them, rather than trying to self-protect or sit in judgment over them. Pride feels powerful... but it destroys.

How do I live as a free servant of God??? First, let me see that the Greek word for "servant" used here is "doulos" which means "servant by choice." I SERVE someone by choice at all times. I either serve the domain of darkness... the prison from which Jesus liberated me... or I serve Jesus, and experience hope, peace, righteousness, and love. Any other kind of freedom bites, devours, and consumes... because that is all the devil knows how to do, and when I serve SELF, I serve him.

So... in humility, freely serve by...

- Honoring everyone... the more secure I am in Christ, the more I will honor even those who don't honor me... because Jesus is my example, and He honored even those who nailed His hands and feet to the cross.*
- Loving the brotherhood... sacrificially love all believers by the overflowing love I have received from God.*
- Fearing God... this is an awe for Him and worship of Him, not being afraid of Him... He's worthy of my worship.*
- Honoring government... Don't decide the law for myself... what I deem okay and what I reject. That's pride. Honor any law that does not set itself up against the heart of God... and handle any law that does in a God honoring way.*

Vs. 18-20 ~ Paul now turns to "servants" to tell them how to treat their masters. This is a different Greek word than what he used for believers. This is not "doulos" but "oiketes", which is like an employee. In today's terms, this is speaking of how employees should treat their employers. Treat them with ALL respect... behind their backs and to their faces... Peter says to treat them with respect not only if they're good to you and gentle in the way they treat you. But... EVEN IF they're unjust toward you, STILL treat them with honor. Whoa! This can be so hard!!! I have had harsh and unfair bosses in my past (not now, thankfully). I'm called to treat them respectfully as a FREE person??? Yes... The most secure people are usually the kindest people because they have no need to prove themselves. And

even if I need to confront an issue with a boss, as a free person, I will be able to approach him with a humble, gentle heart... open to the fact that I may not understand the whole picture.

The truth is, when, out of reverence for God, I endure sorrows while suffering unjustly, God sees it... and He calls it a gracious thing. Why? Because I'm showing that I love Him so much that He's worth suffering for. If I sin and endure the consequences... I get no credit. But if I do good and endure suffering for it, God calls it a gracious thing. He says this TWICE. It's a big deal to endure sorrows for unjust suffering out of reverence for Christ.

This is NOT my natural mindset!!! My natural mindset is to fight back... to retaliate and justify my anger. But the next verses will tell me WHY it's better to endure through the suffering...

Vs. 21-25 ~ I have been called to ENDURANCE. Why? Because Jesus endured sorrows while suffering unjustly so that I could be set free from the domain of darkness. He also endured sorrows while suffering unjustly so that I could have an example to follow. My constant call is to walk in the footsteps of Jesus. Follow His example. The more I focus on Jesus and the gospel, the more I'll understand how to walk and why to walk there.

Jesus committed no sin... so He wants me to flee from sin.

Jesus spoke no deceit... so He wants me to speak the truth in love.

Jesus never reviled others even when they reviled Him... so He wants me to refrain from retaliating when I'm reviled.

Jesus never threatened those who were causing His suffering... so He wants me not to threaten those who cause mine.

Here's the most important part... Jesus CONTINUED entrusting Himself to Him who judges justly. He never stopped handing Himself over to the Father. The only way I will be able to not retaliate and threaten is by humbly handing myself over to the Lord because I trust Him... He judges justly. Whatever is done unjustly, He will handle in His time. I have to trust that... or I will never follow Jesus' example.

Who had to trust the Father the most? Jesus. He had to trust that the Father would raise Him from the dead. If He was so trustworthy for Jesus... and in all He's ever promised throughout history... He will be trustworthy for me.

Jesus entrusted Himself to the Father even when He bore our sins in His own body. Can I trust the Father like that?

What was the purpose of Jesus' sacrifice? Was it just to set me free from sin? No... it was also to help me live to righteousness. You can't take one thing away unless you replace it with something else... otherwise, there will just be a hole there... to be filled by more yucky stuff. Jesus wants me to fill the hole that was left behind from sin with the beautiful peaceful fruit of righteousness. By HIS wounds, I have been healed.

Why should I humble myself before the Lord, entrust myself to Him, and live for righteousness? Because I was dead in my sin... I was a sheep grazing in the wrong field... The Shepherd and Overseer of my soul called me back to Himself. He gave me an example to follow in Jesus, who bore my sins and the payment for my sins in His perfect body. The question is... Why WOULDN'T I humble myself before Him???