

“Anchored” *The Book of 1 Peter*
Class Notes
Session 16

1 Peter 2.18-20 The life of faith in difficult times is not easy...but it is possible! It is possible because of the Holy Spirit's work in our lives.

“To submit to employers who are good and gentle is not difficult, but verse 18 also instructs us to submit to masters who are harsh. To be whipped or beaten into submission is one thing, but to submit by one's own free will to a harsh master is quite improbable or even impossible without the Lord's help. However, Peter is not talking about the natural; he is counseling us to enjoy and to practice the life of the Spirit—the supernatural...We endure grief and suffer because our deepest commitment is to Jesus Christ, and the ultimate purpose of our work is to please Him—to do all to His glory (1 Cor. 10:31).”¹

1 Peter 2.21-25 As in all of our attitudes and actions as Christians, our ultimate motivation is to live as Jesus lived.

While we cannot duplicate historical circumstances and we are not Jesus...we can, and should, reflect Jesus' attitudes and actions as we encounter similar circumstances in our world today.

Chapter 2 closes with this emphasis on Jesus as our Shepherd and overseer of our souls.

This imagery of shepherd and sheep would resonate with Peter.

Peter had heard Jesus teach about the *Good Shepherd* (*John 10*)...Jesus Himself commanded Peter to *tend His sheep* (*John 21*).

Finally, the word for “overseer” ... ἐπίσκοπος (*episkopos*)... “Watcher” “Protector” ... is the word used for “Bishop” (Pastor)

In other words, Jesus finds and saves us as a shepherd would do for his sheep, and then Jesus continues watch over us and guard us through the calling of a Bishop/Pastor in their congregation.

“Peter has filled this chapter with striking images of the believer. We are babes feeding on His Word; stones in the temple; priests at the altar; a chosen generation; a purchased people; a holy nation; the people of God; strangers and pilgrims; disciples following the example of the Lord; and sheep cared for by the shepherd. The Christian life is so rich and full that it takes these comparisons and many more to show how wonderful it is.”²

1 Peter 3.1-6 Peter now addresses the wives of *non*-Christian husbands. “Likewise” The believer's submission...servanthood...is to be practiced in the home!

“Subject” ... ὑποτάσσομαι (*hypotassomai*)... “To bring under control”

To be “subject” to a husband meant to *willingly* submit to the husband's authority or leadership in the marriage.

Wives in the ancient world were expected to adhere to the religion of their husbands.

However...Christianity was viewed as subversive because it called women to commit to Jesus whether or not their husbands approved.

¹ P.A. Cedar and L.J. Ogilvie. *James / 1 & 2 Peter / Jude* (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson Inc., 1984).

² Ibid

Peter is concerned with the issue of salvation!

(vs.3-4): Peter now offers examples... Often, men in the Greco-Roman world displayed their wealth and social status in the dress of their wives.

Possibly...“External adornment“ could be a manner of submission....Still better...

...A gentle and quiet spirit...

“‘Gentle’ means an amiable friendliness in contrast to roughness, bad temper, or brusqueness. These virtues were also valued in women by pagan writers. “Quiet” (also appearing in the NT in 1 Tim. 2:2) is the opposite of restless, rebellious, or insubordinate. Thus up to this point Peter has not said anything that a pagan moralist might not have said. He is advising women to live up to the best common morality of their day. It is only when he mentions the worth of this virtue “in God’s sight” and goes on to refer to ‘the holy women of the past,’ meaning Hebrew and Jewish heroines of the faith, that Peter gives a motivation that goes beyond the best of pagan ethics. Christians live up to the best of their culture, but for better reasons.”³

(vs.5-6): More motivation...Examples of holy women...

Sarah (Abraham’s wife) honored and obeyed Abraham and called him her “lord”... A title of respect...

Genesis 18.12 So Sarah laughed to herself, saying, “After I am worn out, and my lord is old, shall I have pleasure?”

The common virtues of Sarah and all holy women is their hope and trust in God!

Peter ends his encouragement to wives by telling them not to fear anything!

“To the moral characteristics of Sarah Peter adds ‘do not fear any intimidation,’ perhaps from Prov. 3:25...Here is the other side of subordination. These women’s husbands surely did not like their going to Christian meetings and refusing to worship the family gods. All types of intimidation—physical, emotional, social—would be used to force them back in line with the husband’s religious beliefs. While calling for gentleness and inner tranquility overall and subordination to their husbands in all areas indifferent to their Christian faith, he encourages them to stand firm in the light of their hope in the coming Christ and quietly refuse to bow to the threats and punishments of their husbands...their subordination is revolutionary in that they are subordinate not out of fear or desire for social position or other human advantage but out of obedience to Christ, who treats them as full persons and allows them to rise above the threats and fears of this age.”⁴

Going Forward...

- “As believers submit to civil authorities (2:13–17) and servants submit to masters (2:18–25)...God’s order of creation...should be a delight, not an affliction. Though sin has corrupted that order, in Christ there is sanctity and forgiveness in marriage. Here submission aids Christian witness...Behavior of Christian wives demonstrates their faith through sanctified living; they gently proclaim Christ in all they do.”⁵
- In your relationships this week, how can you show *submission* to others?

³ C.E. Arnold. *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: Hebrews to Revelation*. (Zondervan, 2000).

⁴ P.H. Davids. *The First Epistle of Peter* (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1990).

⁵ *The Lutheran Study Bible* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2009).