

## 1 Peter 2:13 – 3:7

### Week 4 - There's No Shortcut Home

#### 1 Peter 2:13-25 (NIV)

<sup>13</sup> Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human authority: whether to the emperor, as the supreme authority, <sup>14</sup> or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. <sup>15</sup> For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish people. <sup>16</sup> Live as free people, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as God's slaves. <sup>17</sup> Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the emperor.

<sup>18</sup> Slaves, in reverent fear of God submit yourselves to your masters, not only to those who are good and considerate, but also to those who are harsh. <sup>19</sup> For it is commendable if someone bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because they are conscious of God. <sup>20</sup> But 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. <sup>21</sup> To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.

<sup>22</sup> "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth."

<sup>23</sup> When 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. <sup>24</sup> "He himself bore our sins" in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; "by his wounds you have been healed." <sup>25</sup> For "you were like sheep going astray," but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

? What authority figures are identified in this passage, and why does Peter highlight the reader's need for submission and obedience?

? Verse 16 says, "Do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil." Can you think of examples of how some Christians might do this today?

? How do you react when you disagree with an authority figure? How does verse 20 say that you should act?

Deuteronomy 17:15 commanded the Jews to appoint one of their own as ruler: "Be sure to appoint over you a king the Lord your God chooses. He must be from among your fellow Israelites. Do not place a foreigner over you, one who is not an Israelite." Jews of the time had taken this to mean that they did not have to obey any ruler except for one of their own. Peter, in contrast, writes that it is the will of God to follow governmental leaders - emperors, magistrates, etc.

? How does Christ approach submitting to God's authority in verse 23?

? What conflicts have you faced between authority, and your beliefs? Does submitting to authority feel like taking the easy way out?

### 1 Peter 3:1-7 (NIV)

<sup>1</sup> Wives, in the same way submit yourselves to your own husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, <sup>2</sup> when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. <sup>3</sup> Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as elaborate hairstyles and the wearing of gold jewelry or fine clothes. <sup>4</sup> Rather, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight. <sup>5</sup> For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to adorn themselves. They submitted themselves to their own husbands, <sup>6</sup> like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her lord. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear. <sup>7</sup> Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

? In this context - a believing wife and an unbelieving husband - what does Peter say that "submission" looks like?

? How does Peter's reference to wives as "heirs with you of the gracious gift of life" in verse 7 affect how husbands should view the "submission" that Peter mentions in verses 1-6?

? Which is easier to use to convince people - outward adornment, or inner beauty? Why?

Some other translations will translate "weaker partner" (verse 7) as "weaker vessel." In some ways, "vessel" - as in a container, the body - might be a better translation, as it helps make Peter's meaning more clear. Peter is only referring to women's physical strength, which is generally less than that of men; he's certainly not noting that they are less worthy because of this, as he's quick to call them "co-heirs." Instead, it's a call to husbands to protect their wives, as one might protect a valuable and rare but fragile container.

? What would the current cultural response be, regarding the issues of this passage (the value of the inner self and of submission for women, and the value of respect and consideration for men)? How do we as Christians struggle with these prevalent attitudes?

#### **For Discussion and Accountability**

? Do you ever want to take the easy way out in your Christian walk? What does it look like to live out the teaching in this passage instead?

? How do you live up to Christ's example in your own life, when faced with authority that disagrees with you?