

**1<sup>ST</sup> & 2<sup>ND</sup> PETER**  
**STUDY GUIDE**  
**LESSON FOUR – 1 PETER 2:11-25**

*Linda Pringle*

The second half of 1 Peter chapter 2 begins a long section on how to “*proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light*” (1 Peter 2:9 NKJV) in very practical ways. From Lesson One, we remember that Peter probably wrote from Rome where Nero was the Emperor. Christians were thought to be a strange group of people and were persecuted to varying degrees throughout the Roman Empire. Yet, because of Peter’s love for the unsaved, he encouraged Christians to behave in a way that would bring glory to God even though they lived under an ungodly government, may have worked under an ungodly master, and may have even been married to an unbelieving or spiritually immature spouse.

Over the next couple of weeks we will be looking at how to be submissive to those whom God has placed in authority over us, even when they are ungodly and mistreat us. We will learn what submission is...and what it isn’t. This week’s lesson and next week’s lesson (which includes submission to husbands even when they are disobedient to the word) are intricately woven together and set the tone for the rest of the book. As our heart cries out to love other sinners, we will begin to understand what it means to share in the sufferings of Christ while we rejoice at the revelation of His glory in the lives of others.

1) **Read 1 Peter 2:11-12**

- a) Peter calls his readers “beloved” or “dear friends” (NIV) and then urges them to do what in verse 11? What words does he use to describe the battle? Do you think Peter could have expressed the battle this way if he hadn’t experienced it?
  
- b) Look back at 1 Peter 2:9-10. In light of those verses, what do you think it means to be an alien and stranger (or sojourners and pilgrims in NKJV)?
  
- c) In verse 12, why are we to keep our behavior excellent in front of unbelievers? (Gentiles or pagans refer to unsaved people.)

Note: Commentators differ on the meaning of “the day of visitation.” Some speculate it to mean the second coming of the Lord when every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord. Some believe it refers to judgment when Jerusalem is destroyed in 70 A.D. Others believe it is the day when the Spirit of Christ visits lost sinners and saves them by His grace. Looking at the context, I believe it is the day a lost sinner is saved and glorifies God.
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2) **Read 1 Peter 2:13-17**

a) What is the purpose of government?

b) From verses 13 and 15, why are we to submit to every human institution?

i) Think of a historical event or a news story that would be an example of Christians not submitting to government and therefore being a poor witness of Christ.

c) Read Romans 13:1-10. Who establishes government? From verse 4, how is government a minister or servant of God? From verses 8-10, what word is the fulfillment of the law?

Note: Since submission is the theme for the next two weeks of Bible study and sets the tone for the rest of 1 Peter, it would be good to define what it means. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines the word submit as, “to yield oneself to the authority or will of another.” This is not, however, blind obedience or a doormat mentality in either the biblical context or the dictionary definition. Here are a few synonyms of submission: compliance, conformity, subordination, abidance, agreeable, teachable, easily led, yielding, dutiful, humble, meek, modest, surrendered, ordered, or disciplined.

To further clarify, here are a few antonyms: balkiness (e.g. the employee balked every time she was asked to do something), contrariness, stubbornness, defiance, disobedience, insubordination, unmanageable, noncompliance, self-willed, unruliness, or obstinate.

Submission is more of an attitude than it is a position of servitude. Warren Wiersbe writes, “*It is possible to submit to the institutions and still disobey the laws. For example, when Daniel and his three friends refused to obey the king's dietary regulations, they disobeyed the law; but the way that they did it proved that they honored the king and respected the authorities (Dan 1). They were not rebels; they were careful not to embarrass the official in charge or get him into trouble; and yet they stood their ground. They glorified God and, at the same time, honored the authority of the king.*” (from The Bible Exposition Commentary. Copyright © 1989 by Chariot Victor Publishing, and imprint of Cook Communication Ministries. All rights reserved. Used by permission.)

d) Read Acts 4:17-20 and Acts 5:27-29. How are these passages good examples of Peter and John having submissive attitudes towards the government while at the same time fearing and glorifying God?

e) Verse 16 refers to the fact that we have freedom in Christ and are no longer bound to the Old Testament laws. How can we abuse the freedom we have in Christ? Because the God of love rules our hearts, love should always govern our actions. To whom are we a servant or bond slave?

f) Write out the four commands in verse 17 and next to each one write a way that you can apply this to your life this week. The first one is done for you as an example.

--- Honor all people – I can show honor and respect to people even when I disagree with them or they sin against me.

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3) **Read 1 Peter 2:18-20**

a) Many of the Christians in the first century were slaves. While we don't have slavery in the United States today, we can apply these principals to the employee/employer relationship. What is the main teaching of this passage?

b) Look up the following passages. What other important lessons do you learn from each one regarding our attitudes at work?

i) Ephesians 6:5-9

ii) 1 Timothy 6:1-2

iii) Titus 2:9-10

c) Our jobs can often be the most stressful aspect of our lives. We can be stressed by anything from a boss who is a poor leader or who is overly harsh, to office politics, to trying to climb the pay scale, to sheer exhaustion over the workload or hours. Think of a time when you were unfairly treated in the work place. What was your response? Was it respectful to your employer and honoring to God? Were you more concerned for your own welfare or for the salvation of the person you were dealing with? Do you trust God for your employment situation? I encourage you to share in your group but please keep specific names and employers anonymous.

4) **Read 1 Peter 2:21-25**

a) These verses contain the steps of submission and the power to live it! Whether we are called to submit to an immoral government, a boss who may seem unreasonable at times, or, as we will study next week, a husband who may be difficult or even ungodly at times, we can follow in Christ's steps of submission and find the power to do so at the cross. The six steps are listed below with a bit of explanation. These steps are a great resource for self-counseling. Think of the last situation you were in where you were called to submit to someone who you thought was treating you unfairly. Next to each step, write a thought about how you handled the situation.

**Step 1: He committed no sin** – Think of sin as your self-centered motives where you put your desires ahead of honoring God and loving others.

**Step 2: No deceit was found in His mouth** – Jesus didn't lie.

**Step 3: While being reviled, He did not revile in return** – Revile means to insult. When insulted, Jesus didn't insult back.

**Step 4: While suffering, He uttered no threats** – Jesus didn't threaten to get even for what was being done to Him. In fact, He asked the Father to forgive those who nailed Him to the cross.

**Step 5: He entrusted Himself to Him who judges righteously** – Jesus trusted God to righteously judge those who mistreated Him.

**Step 6: He bore our sins in His body on the cross** – Only Christ could die for the sins of the world since He is the holy Lamb of God. However, we are encouraged to die to our passions and desires so we can minister in love to those around us (more on this next week). Consider Galatians 5:24-6:2 - *Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. 26 Let us not become boastful, challenging one another, envying one another.*

*6:1 Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted. 2 Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ.*

- b) Looking forward to next week's teaching on wives being submissive to husbands, please read the story of Abigail and Nabal in 1 Samuel 25:1-38. In this situation, do you think that Abigail was a submissive wife to Nabal? Why or why not? Be prepared to discuss your thoughts during group time. I will be teaching on this next week as we continue to think about submission.

