

The Book of I Peter Part 7 – I Peter 2:13-23

The book of I Peter is not only a book that helps us to understand that we can have joy in tribulation and things that come into our lives. It's also an instruction booklet. It tells us how that we can do that and how that we are to conduct our lives as saved people. As we read on and on in these Scriptures, we see that God has not left us alone. He's not left us to wander about not knowing what to do, but He has actually given us, if you would, a roadmap, telling us how that we are to behave ourselves and conduct ourselves as children of God. We are to be submissive to Him and to do what he would have us to do.

I'd like to read verses 11 and 12 and 13-15 right now. It says, ¹¹*Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;* ¹²*Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.* ¹³*Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme;* ¹⁴*Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well.* ¹⁵*For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men:*

Now, we're not only to respect God and have a reverential fear of God, but we are also to submit ourselves to the ordinance of man. Now, once again, don't be confused to think, if the government tells you to do something wrong, that you have to do it, according to the Scripture. That's not what it's saying. We ought to obey God rather than man, but God has set forth human government in this world that we

are to be in subjection to that government. But at the same time, we do not do anything that goes contrary to what God has asked us to do and informed us to do and instructed us to do as Christians.

In verses 13-15, I see first of all in the first part of those verses that the Christian duty concerning the government is to submit to every ordinance. In other words, if it does not go against what God has proclaimed, if it is not sin, then we are to listen to what the government says. We are to, of course, pay taxes. None of us likes to do that. We don't like to pay out money for that, but the Bible teaches us that what is Caesar's we are to render that to Caesar, and the verses that we just read in I Peter chapter 2 talk about that, that we are to submit ourselves to the ordinance of man. Why? It says there in verse 13 for the Lord's sake, and we are to do this whether it be for the king as supreme or as governors or whatever. We are to do what God wants us to do, submit ourselves first of all to Him, and then to the government. Not to the point now, don't get me wrong, not to the point of going against what God has set down as right and wrong.

There comes a time when we have to take a stand and we have to say, "No, government, I'm not going to do this. I'm going to do what God wants me to do." And this means, of course, I'm not talking anarchy; I'm not talking about overthrowing the government; I'm talking about that we should not do anything as a Christian that interferes with our testimony with this world or anything that is a willful sin against God in submitting to government. We don't do that. We don't sin against God for any reason, according to the Scriptures.

We're to submit to every ordinance for the Lord's sake and that, by doing good, we might silence the ignorance of foolish men. In other words, we don't go around trying to cause trouble. We listen and people look at us and when it's talking about ignorance of foolish men, it's talking about the ignorance of being not knowing, not that the people are dumb as such, but they're foolish. They're ignorant. They don't understand the things of God because, once again, the Bible says that the spiritual things of God the natural man cannot receive. It's only for those people who have been born again.

And I remind you that the things that an unsaved person can understand is they're lost, they need a Savior, Jesus Christ is the Savior; that they can have eternal life by asking Him to come into their heart, by taking them and making them fit for Heaven. And one day after a person has done that, one day they'll wake up and they'll be with the Lord in glory, because they have trusted Him, they have asked Him to come into their heart, and then those people who have trusted Him, they can understand the spiritual things of God because they've been born again. Remember, the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God. That's the understanding of the Scriptures, but the person who is saved can understand that, because they are spiritually discerned.

In I Peter 2:16, it says, *As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.* Christians are not to use their freedom in Christ, first of all, to conceal immoral conduct. In other words, a cloak as a cover-up. "I'm saved. I can do whatever I want." That's the attitude of some Christians, but we are to conduct ourselves as bond servants of God. We are in His service. We are to do what God says, not what we please. And once again, we make mistakes as Christians, but we're not to have that attitude, "I can do

whatever I want to and I'm gonna go to Heaven." Well, of course, you're going to go to Heaven no matter what if you've trusted Jesus Christ as your Savior, but is that bringing honor and glory to the Lord when you say, "I can do anything I want and get away with it"? Well, it's not pleasing to God; it's not pleasing to those people around you. It's not a good testimony. So we're not to do that.

First Peter 2:17 says, *Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.* There are four admonitions to the Christian here. First, we're to respect all people. Don't look down upon people. Don't think you're better than them. You've heard the term "holier than thou." We're not to look down on people. We're to love each other. Christians, we're to love, and we've already read about unfeigned love, and that is a pretend love. We don't have to pretend, because we have the love of God within us.

We're to show reverence to God, a reverential fear. He's not our buddy. He's our God. He's our Savior. He's the Creator. He's the One who made it possible for us to have a Savior to go to Heaven. So, therefore, we need to have a reverential fear of God and we need to respect the king. And that, I believe, is not only speaking of the King of glory but that's talking about the people who have rule over us in this world. We are to respect the government that God has placed here. God placed the government here and we need to understand that.

First Peter 2:18: *Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.* Well, the duty of servants to their masters, first of all, is to be reverently submissive to the pleasant master. But then we see that there's a master who is not pleasant, but we are to be submissive to that person, as well, to the master who is difficult to

endure. You may be working in a job right now that you don't appreciate. Maybe your boss is a little stern or has done something to you that you don't think is right. Well, you need to really be submissive to that person. You need to respect that person. Once again, don't do something that is sinful. Don't give into the temptations that come along, but you're to be submissive to that person.

First Peter 2:19-20: ¹⁹*For this is thankworthy...* [verse 18m it talks about that; it's speaking of verse 18]... *For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.* ²⁰*For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? But if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.* Once again, He's given us instruction here. Things are not always a bed of roses, but He's telling us we can work through this. It is commendable before God, according to verses 19-20, to endure suffering, in other words, to suffer for Him. And we suffer. We're suffering for Him. We're not of this world; we're in this world. We will suffer in this world. Thank God, there's coming a day when we won't suffer. Old things are passed away. Behold, all things become new.

First Peter 2:21: *For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps.* We've been called to follow the example of Christ, and Christ suffered for us and left us an example. And once again, he's telling us here that things are not always going to be easy, that we need to try the best we can to do what is right in this life, to have a good testimony before this lost and dying world. Follow the example of Christ.

Verse 22, it talks about Christ here: *Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.* Jesus suffered wrongly and patiently, according

to verse 22. He never sinned. He said nothing dishonest or deceitfully, and we need to follow that admonition and that example of Christ.

Verse 23 says, *Who, when he was reviled...* [speaking of Christ...], *reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.* Did somebody ever do something to you and did you wrong? You say, "Well, I'm gonna get you. Payback is coming for you, pal." Did you ever think that way or feel that way? Well, I think we all felt that way occasionally and maybe you've even gotten even with somebody, but that's not what this verse is talking about. It tells us that we're to do the opposite. *Who, when he was reviled...* [that's Christ...], *reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.*

Turn it over to the Lord. Christ did not retaliate, and when abused verbally, He didn't retaliate. When He suffered, he didn't retaliate. He committed Himself to God who judges righteously. And that's what we need to do. We need to give our all to God. We need to turn our lives over to the Lord and let Him lead us, guide us, and direct us and help us in the paths that we should take. And I pray that you're doing that.

As a saved person, you need to be putting forth that testimony. You need to be happy today because Christ gave His life for you, and there's only bright things coming... there's only good things coming to you. You may not see a lot of it in this life, but it's coming one day and we're going to be with the Lord and He is going to be our God and our Savior. He is that right now if we've trusted Him, but one day is coming when our joy is going to be full, because we are going to be with the Lord, never to be separated from Him again.

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