

RELATED SCRIPTURES

STUDY FOR SERMON FROM 5.21.23

Ephesians 5:6-9 | Philippians 2:5-11 | Ecclesiastes 7:2-4

SUMMARY

After the apostle Peter lays the groundwork on the subject of authority, that being, all earthly authority rests with God and those to whom he delegates it, he continues to apply it to specific situations. After speaking about submission to the civil magistrates, he moves into the topic of servants being subject to their masters. Submission in the servant-master relationship is a complex topic, as mistreatment of servants from masters was prevalent during this time and often worse throughout the progression of history. So why would the apostle Peter ask Christians to submit to someone who mistreats their subjects? It only makes sense if the Christian understands God's ultimate objective in the believer's life—to make them like his son, Jesus Christ. If we know we are walking in his footsteps with the end result of being made like him, then when those in authority over us mistreat us, we understand that what befalls us isn't just a random byproduct of the fall. If the earthly authorities mistreated Christ, and in the process, Jesus glorified his Father, and if God is making us like his son, then mistreatment will have the same end result—we will glorify God. However, beyond following the example of Christ, why does God use mistreatment—or suffering—to conform us to Christ; why did it have to be suffering? Because there is a healing nature in suffering. Pain, sorrow, and grief can turn the believer's eyes to the Father in a way that blessing and abundance cannot. Only in our deficiency can we begin to contemplate and appreciate the holy nature of God and the miracle of having him bring us near to himself through his son, Jesus Christ.

GROUP QUESTIONS

From the sermon or your direct reading of 1 Peter 2:18-25, share something that surprises, encourages, or troubles you.

When you are going through trials or mistreatment, in what ways does it provide you comfort that Jesus Christ "also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps"? Are there times when you don't find consolation in this?

Can you relate to the idea of drawing closer to God in difficulty in such a way that you might not have experienced absent of difficulty? What did you learn about God through that experience?

If there's one thing Jesus would want you to walk away believing and receiving as a result of this portion of Scripture, what is that thing?

CLOSE IN PRAYER

As you pray, be sure to include today's themes in what you bring before God.