

Fact Sheet for “Why?”  
**1 Peter 2:18-25**

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Today we will take a close look at 1 Peter 2:18-25, and how it fits in context of this whole letter. When you get a good handle on that then you can see what was in Peter’s heart when he wrote those words, and it will be much easier to apply them in your own life.

ESV <sup>18</sup> ¶ **Servants, be subject to your masters with all respect, not only to the good and gentle but also to the unjust.**

**Servants** - literally *members of the household*; more specifically *house slaves, domestic, servants*

Think about what some of these believers might have been experiencing!

<sup>19</sup> **For this is a gracious thing, when, mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly.** <sup>20</sup> **For what credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure? But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God.**

If you have experienced this you might have thought, “This surely doesn’t feel good!” You might also have gotten angry.

<sup>21</sup> **For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps.** <sup>22</sup> **He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth.** <sup>23</sup> **When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.** <sup>24</sup> **He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.**

The last sentence is a reference to Isaiah 53:5

<sup>25</sup> **For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.**

Now, I want to get at Peter’s heart in writing these words. *Why* did Peter use the words here that he used? *Why* did Peter choose this subject, and the other topics in this letter that he did? What was Peter’s purpose in this book... and what can we gain from it?

Peter does mention being subject to (being submissive to) those whom at times can be difficult... government (2:13-17)... masters (2:18-25)... and husbands who are disobedient to the word (3:1-6). Choosing the right path in instances like these can be challenging. However these appear to be related thoughts, but not the main purpose of Peter’s writing.

Likewise he mentions a couple of times holiness, as in 1:14-15. This would include not having an angered response to what we experience that is unjust.

He also mentions brotherly love, as in 1:22; 3:8; and 4:8. But these too seem to be related issues, not the main purpose of his writing.

I want to surface two Greek words that are used repeatedly throughout this whole book, *pas'-cho* (a verb) and *pa'-the-ma* (the noun form of that verb). They are translated by the English words "suffer" and "suffering".

Think for a moment about how this letter begins. He was writing to those who had been expelled because of their faith, and had settled throughout Asia Minor. He encourages them to remember the salvation that is theirs (1:3-5). Then he speaks of their circumstances.

**ESV 1 Peter 1:6-7** In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, <sup>7</sup> so that the tested genuineness of your faith-- more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire-- may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Peter is encouraging them, and reminding them to stay strong in their faith. He would go on to mention Christ suffering unjustly at the cross, as well as their own unjust suffering (1:11; 2:18-23; 3:14-15, 17-18; 4:1-2, 12-13, 16, 19; 5:1-3, 6-7, 8-10)

*Take a moment to read through these verses.*

You see, 1 Peter 2:18-25 is just one example of unjust suffering... domestic servants at the hands of their masters.

Peter's heart is to encourage them to stay strong in the Lord... to respond righteously as they bear under unjust suffering.

When God's people down through the ages found themselves discouraged they have found refuge in the Psalms.

If you find yourself suffering unjustly at the hands of family, or an employer, a co-worker, or a neighbor, then 1 Peter is a great go-to book for encouragement.

You can find refuge in Peter's words to those who had been scattered throughout Asia Minor.