

- I. **Submission to authority is to be done with respect – based on our thoughtful awareness of our relationship and commitment to God, not the attitude of the authority whether good, gentle, or unreasonable as one anticipates the favor of God.** No one under authority should expect favor from God when suffering patiently as a result of sin (e.g. lack of submission to authority with respect as a result of not thinking about one’s relationship and commitment to God). (v18-v20)
 - A. Slaves were called to submit with respect to the gentle and reasonable masters as well as the unreasonable. “People became slaves by being captured in wars, kidnapped, or born into a slave household. Those facing economic hardships might choose to sell themselves into slavery in order to survive. Many slaves lived miserably, particularly those who served in the mines. Other slaves, however, served as doctors, teachers, managers, musicians, artisans, and could even own other slaves. It would not be unusual for a slave to be better educated than the master. Those who are familiar with slavery from the history of the United States must beware of imposing our historical experience on New Testament times since slavery in the Greco-Roman world was not based on race and American slave owners discouraged education of slaves. Still, slaves in the Greco-Roman world were under the control of their masters, and hence they had no independent existence. They could suffer brutal mistreatment at the hands of their owners, and children born in slavery belonged to masters rather than the parents who gave them birth. Slaves had no legal rights, and masters could beat them, brand them, and abuse them physically and sexually. J. A. Harrill remarks: ‘Despite claims of some NT scholars, ancient slavery was not more humane than modern slavery.’ Slaves could purchase their freedom in the Greco-Roman world with the help of their masters, a procedure called manumission. Manumission, however, was available mainly for urban slaves, and most slaves had no hope of being manumitted.”¹ Slavery was not part of God’s design order, just like polygamy or divorce was not part of God’s designed order. However, God allowed it and used it to accomplish His sovereign plan. If slaves could gain their freedom they were directed to do so, understanding that they are slaves of God no matter their condition. (1 Corinthians 7:21-22)
 - B. God’s gives favor to people who patiently suffer unjustly from respectful submission to authority, when they are submitting for the sake of their relationship and commitment to God.

¹ Thomas Robert Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2003), p.135.

C. There is no favor from God when people suffer harsh treatment with patience as a result of their own sin (refusing to submit to authority with respect).

II. Suffering for the sake of God is a calling for all Christians as we follow the pattern of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Our Lord respectfully submitted to those whom He created and suffered tremendously while not committing sin in words or deeds, but continuously entrusting Himself to God the Father who judges rightly. He suffered so we would no longer be sinners and live in sin, but so that we be made righteous as He is and live according to that righteousness. His suffering delivered us and leads us to protection and provision for our souls forever under God. (v21-v25)

A. Slaves (Christians by extension) had been called to suffer for the sake of God.

B. Christ suffered for us and left slaves (Christians by extension) as an example to follow in observing his respectful manner and mouth when suffering unjustly, as He entrusted Himself to God the Father who judges rightly in the process.

C. His suffering for us was so that we would be delivered from sin, made righteous and live by that righteousness. We have been delivered and directed back to God, being protected forever from the penalty of sin.

Key Points to Consider:

1. All of us will have to submit to authority that may be reasonable or unreasonable.
2. Our submission to authority must be done respectfully, based upon our thoughtful awareness of our relationship and commitment to God and not upon the attitude and actions of the authority to whom we are submitting.
3. We must submit to authority and respond to authority representing the righteousness of God in our mindset, mouth, and manner.
4. We must be prepared to suffer for the sake of God, anticipating the favor of God as we follow the model Christ gave us for suffering.