

# Follow the Footsteps of Christ 1 Peter 2v13-25

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[ 0 : 00 ] Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority instituted among men, whether to the King as the supreme authority, or to governors who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish men. Live as free men, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil. Live as servants of God. Show proper respect to everyone. Love the brotherhood of believers. Fear God. Honour the King. Slaves, submit yourselves to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and considerate, but also to those who are harsh.

For it is commendable if a man bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because he is conscious of God. But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it?

But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example that you should follow in his steps. He committed no sin and no deceit was found in his mouth. When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate. When he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. For you were like sheep going astray, but now you have returned to the shepherd and overseer of your souls.

Thanks, Chris. As we pray, keep your Bibles open to 1 Peter and just cast your eye back to 1 Peter chapter 1 verse 24 and 25. Let me read that as we pray together.

1 Peter chapter 1 verse 24. All of us are like grass and all our glory is like the flowers of the field.

[ 2 : 57 ] The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of the Lord stands forever.

Father, we recognize that we are fragile and weak and that the world we live in is so uncertain.

And so what we long for is something that is sure and certain, something that is strong, something that we can build our lives upon that will not shake, that will not move.

And so we come to you, the living word. Asking that your truth would be the foundation of our lives.

Asking for your spirit's help that we might build upon this foundation. That we may live lives that display Christ.

[ 4 : 04 ] And bring hope where we walk. Father, we are so desperate for your help. And we need it.

So help us, we pray. Amen. Amen. So are you a good living kind of person?

I don't mean have you signed up to the don't smoke, don't curse, don't drink brigade. What I mean is this. If you are a Christian, does the quality of your life display Christ?

Does the quality of your life display Christ when you walk into work, when you go to college, when you hang out with your friends?

Look at 1 Peter chapter 2, verse 12. Live such good lives among the pagans, among those who are not yet followers of Christ, that though they accuse you of doing wrong, though they don't like what you believe, don't like what you say, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.

[ 5 : 34 ] You see, if we are Christians, if we're followers of the Lord Jesus, our lives, look at verse 12 again, are to be among those who are not yet followers of Christ.

Rather than run from the world and hide in the comfort of our nice, safe, religious ghetto, we are to immerse ourselves in the world and we are to engage with the world.

We are to form friendships and we are to do good where we walk. You see, God's people, the church, has been called to attract the world to Christ through our actions and reflect Christ to the world through our deeds.

In other words, our good behaviour displays the beauty of Christ. And the reason for our good deeds is simply this, that our good deeds can soften hard hearts, can break stubborn minds, shatter disinterested souls, so that people want to hear the truth about Jesus Christ.

Our good behaviour, as we display the beauty of Christ, can soften hard hearts, break stubborn minds, shatter disinterested souls, so that people want to hear the truth of Jesus Christ.

[ 7 : 16 ] Christ. So, live such good lives. This morning, we're going to look at two things.

What this good living looks like and how we can live it. First, what good living looks like. Number one, what good living looks like in society, within our community.

Look at verse 13. Submit yourselves, for the Lord's sake, to every authority instituted among men, whether to the king, we don't have a king, but we have a Taoiseach and a government, as the supreme authority, or to governors, like the garda or the courts, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right.

Our good living means, verse 13, we are to submit to every authority. That means we're to obey our rulers and the laws that they put in place.

So if it's household tax or water charges, we pay it. If it's the income that we earn, we declare it. All of it.

[ 8 : 46 ] If it's about speed limits or driving restrictions, we follow it. We are to submit to our rulers and follow the laws that they put in place.

We say, why should we do that? Why be so picky about the way we live? Well, for two reasons. We submit to every authority.

Here's the first reason. Verse 13, submit yourselves for the Lord's sake. You see, the rulers that are in place, the government that is in office has ultimately been placed there by God.

Yes, we have voted. Yes, we live in a democracy. But every authority, every government that is in office has ultimately been placed there by God. You see, through the governing authorities, God maintains order and justice, which is good for society.

That's why he's put them in place, verse 14, to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. So when we obey the laws of the land, when we follow our rulers, we are simply pointing people towards our ultimate king who loves justice and order.

[ 10 : 08 ] When we obey our rulers, when we follow the laws of the land, it is an expression of our obedience to our true king, Jesus Christ.

So first, we submit for the Lord's sake. Second, we submit to every authority, look at verse 15, because it is God's will that by doing good, you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish people.

people. You see, your friends might mock you for what you believe about Jesus. Your work colleagues may laugh at you because of your views of the Bible, that you believe it's true.

You can be shut out, you can be pushed out, people might have no time for your Christian values. But what they will see as they look at your lives are people who love justice and love order and that, verse 15, will silence their ignorant talk.

Through our good living, people will see that we care about people's rights, that we're concerned for the protection of the vulnerable, that we want justice for those who are homeless, that we want order in society, that we don't want the guilty to get off scot-free, that we want evil people who do things that are wrong moved from society and others are protected.

[ 11 : 45 ] You see, when Christians lovingly submit to our ruling authorities, we are displaying the kind of world that one day God is going to establish in all its perfection.

By our obedience to our government, we are giving people a glimpse of what it's like to live under God's good and loving rule, rule, a rule that cares for people and wants things to be right and good and to be a blessing.

You see, it is through our good living that we can soften hard hearts, break stubborn minds, shatter disinterested souls so that people want to hear the truth about Jesus Christ.

Well, I'm sure you're all thinking, are we meant to obey everything the government does? What if I live in a country or what if we're in a situation where the government isn't right or fair?

Because there are some very bad and evil governments and dictators that live in the world. Well, Peter is mindful of that and the Christians that he was writing to basically lived in a dictatorship.

[ 13 : 09 ] So what does he have to say? Well, look at verse 16. There will be times when we do need to disobey. Verse 16, Live as free men but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil.

Live as servants of God. Sometimes the laws of our governments will be unjust and they will go against God's good order for society.

So if the government decides, along with the people, to repeal the Eighth Amendment, well, we don't support it. we stand against it.

We use the freedom that God has given us to stand for justice and order. Because God's kingdom is marked by justice and order and as people see us stand for what is right that we will not put up with injustice.

People will be attracted to the beauty and wonder of who God is. If we must disagree and if we must disobey our rulers, verse 17, show proper respect to everyone.

[ 14 : 24 ] Love the brotherhood of believers. Fear God because it is him who we will stand before as judge. But honour the government and the leaders.

Yes, we can disagree but we do so respectfully. we don't slag them off unmercifully. We don't shout out in hate. We stand firmly for what is right because God loves what is right.

God seeks to protect all life and watch over all life and at the forefront of all of this of good order and justice should be the Christian community as they live such good lives where they are.

Because it is through our good living that we soften hard hearts. We break the stubborn mind. We shatter disinterested souls so that people will want to hear the truth about Jesus Christ.

So we live good lives in society and we live good lives in work. Look at verse 18.

[ 15 : 44 ] Slaves, submit yourselves to your masters. Now let me make it absolutely clear that all slavery, all slavery is wrong.

Whether it was the slavery which involved the kidnapping and selling of black Africans to America and Britain or whether it's the slavery today of young girls and young boys being trafficked through the sex trade, it is a terrible evil.

Slavery is a great offence to God and it should be a great offence to us. So why is Peter telling slaves to submit to their masters?

Well we've got to understand that slavery in the first century in Roman world was different to how we might think about slavery today. It was a little bit more like the employer employee relationship that we have.

It wasn't perfect. Masters abused their position from time to time. However it was the kind of normal working relationship.

[ 16 : 59 ] So in this context as we read we could read it that verse 18 employees submit yourselves to your employers with all respect.

Not only to those who are good employers and those who are considerate but also to your boss who can be harsh.

So if you are an employee or if you are in any position where somebody is in authority over you how do you relate to them? How do you relate to your teachers to your lecturers?

How do you relate to your boss when you go in on Monday morning? Do you join in with the rest of the staff and slag and abuse the boss when they're not listening?

Do you pretend to look busy when the boss is walking around and when the boss has disappeared go back to playing Angry Birds on your phone? You see how we behave with our or among our work colleagues really matters.

[ 18 : 09 ] Verse 18 We are to submit with all respect not only to those who are good and kind and considerate who you love working for but also when they're harsh.

even in our workplace when we do nothing wrong and we work really hard and never get any thanks for it even when we do more than we ask and we never go home early or doss off but just get criticised by our boss even in those situations we are to show respect.

Now why would you do that? You're on a hiding to nothing. Nobody shows respect to their harsh boss, do they?

Well if we are Christians we do and here's the reason the first reason we respect our boss because look at verse 19 because it is commendable if a person bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because he is conscious of God or because he is mindful of God in other words as employees we work not to get praise from our boss but to please God.

We respect our employer because well we want to honour God because as Christians we are serving a greater master the Lord Jesus Christ we are conscious of God as we work we're mindful of him and we work to please him.

[ 19 : 55 ] Yeah your fellow workers might want to hear your beliefs but they're sure going to take notice of you when you are still respectful even when they mistreat you.

Colleagues will rubbish you over your views in the Bible but it is certainly going to stop them in their tracks when you speak kindly to your boss even though he has been unfair to you.

You see it's radical living through our good lives we soften the hardened heart we break the stubborn mind we shatter the disinterested soul so that people sit up and take notice and want to know the truth about Jesus Christ but there's another reason why we should respect our boss because look at verse 20 how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it if you go into work tomorrow morning and you're dossing around like everybody else and your boss takes you into the office and gives you a tell-and-off or fires you worse how is that going to be a witness you deserve it but verse 20 if you suffer for doing good and you endure it this is commendable before

God your boss might reward you for all the hard work you put in you may never get a pay rise or a promotion but God is watching your every work and all that you do and all that you say and he will commend you when you stand before God you will get the welcome well done good and faithful servant you see if we behave like the rest of the employees what's what's really different people never ask questions of those who behave like everyone else they ask questions of why are they so different through our good lives we speak into people's hard hearts we open up their minds we bring interest to them so that people are why are they like that they ask questions and we want to hear the truth about

Jesus Christ so we are called to live good lives in society in our community where we are in work as we go from here into college into school into our workplace amongst our friends and family you say that's well and good I get that but that's really hard that's really hard so how can we live good lives how are we actually going to do it well we've got some great help look at verse 21 to this you were called that is the call to live good lives in society and work this is our calling as Christians you were called to this because Christ suffered for you leaving you an example that you should follow in his steps when our kids were smaller we used to go climbing along the rocks and along the cliffs down at

[ 23 : 54 ] Roberts Cove and Rocky Bay I would lead and they would just simply follow behind and to make it possible I just kept saying this put your foot where my foot goes you watch where my foot goes you put your foot in the same place follow my steps and you'll be able to do it now Christ is calling us verse 21 to follow in his steps follow me he is saying to us follow me on my journey on my road to the cross as you follow me to the cross put your foot where my foot goes see how I walked in this world and in this life follow me on that same path and you will see how you can live such good lives four things we learn as we follow

Jesus as he walked towards the cross the first one is this Jesus walked where we now walk Jesus walked where we now walk look verse 22 it's telling us about Jesus life that he committed no sin and no deceit was found in his mouth Jesus was the perfect man he lived the perfect good life no charge could be found against him he never disobeyed the authorities he never disrespected those around him he was completely innocent but yet he suffered but when he suffered verse 23 when they hurled their insults at him when they abused him and threatened him he didn't retaliate when he suffered when he was flogged when he was beaten when they crushed the crown of thorns in his head he made not one single threat

Jesus has walked a path of innocent suffering he knows what it is to face a corrupt system failed leaders and unjust rulers who made up stories who told lies who in the face of what was true ignored it and crucified him so Jesus understands what it is like to walk in this world he understands when you walk into your workplace tomorrow he understands when you go to college or to school what it is to face a tough situation he knows what it's like to obey leaders and what it is to respect your boss even when it's hard he understands and he walks with you he walks with you as we walk to the cross the second thing we learn not only is

Jesus walking with us but that Jesus entrusted himself to the father let's read verse 23 again when they hurled their insults at him he didn't retaliate when he suffered he made no threats instead he entrusted himself to him his father who judges justly you see if anyone had the right to fight back it was Jesus if anybody deserved justice it was Jesus if anybody had the power to call down an army of angels and beat up the Roman authorities it was Jesus but Jesus didn't have to justify himself he didn't have to prove himself he didn't have to retaliate he simply end of verse 23 entrusted himself to him who judges justly so as we go into our workplace wherever we may go it's really not about our rights we don't need to be concerned about how we are treated

God the judge will put all things right he will correct every wrong he will set the record straight God will judge every leader and hold every boss accountable so if God will put everything right then like Jesus we do not need to retaliate we do not need to make threats we do not need to fight back or to take justice into our own hands do good and let God be judge back up to verse 20 the end of verse 20 if you suffer for doing good and you endure it this is commendable before God God will commend you the third thing we notice and it's slightly different to what's on the screen this is the title for the third one

[ 30 : 02 ] Jesus suffered to give us a new way to live Jesus suffered to give us a new way to live as we follow on the road to the cross this is what we see he suffered to give us a new way to live verse 24 he Jesus himself bore our sins in his body on the tree so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness by his wounds you have been healed as we follow Jesus as we follow in his footsteps we are to stop at the foot of the cross and we are to gaze at the cross because we can't go to the cross here is where Jesus has stepped in for us and here as we look at the cross we see that our life has been changed and transformed verse 24 he himself bore our sins in his body on the tree

Jesus the innocent one took the judgment of God for all my bad behavior all the times that I have disobeyed and disrespected my leaders and my boss every time I have misused the things the things Jesus has taken all my sin on himself and here's the reason look at verse 24 so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness he took all my bad sinful behavior and in place of that he has given me his good perfect life so that we might live such good lives in the world live for righteousness so that as we go about living our good lives we soften the hard hearts we break the stubborn minds we shatter the disinterested souls so that people want to hear and know who

Jesus is by his wounds we have been healed in Jesus as we gaze at the cross we see that our life has been transformed we have now been given a new way to live our past forgiven and the future to live for him but as we follow in his footsteps number four we see that Jesus is our protecting shepherd verse 25 for you were like sheep going astray but now you have returned to the shepherd and the overseer of your souls you see the reality is without Jesus we're wandering we're lost we're broken without Christ we've got no hope in this world and we've got no hope to bring to the world but as we trust him as we return to him as we walk with

Jesus as we follow in his steps we find a shepherd the overseer the protector of our lives this is one that we can trust in this broken and mad world look back at chapter 1 verse 5 here is a picture of our protecting shepherd chapter 1 verse 5 who through faith faith in our shepherd the Lord Jesus we are shielded by God's power until the coming of salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time authorities may fail you your boss may treat you unjustly but Jesus our shepherd will work will walk before you he will protect you he will bring you through this life and he will bring you into our eternal life as we walk with

Jesus as we follow in his footsteps we learn how to live such good lives through our good lives as we walk into the workplace as we go about the community we display the beauty of Christ we soften hard hearts we break stubborn minds we shatter disinterested souls so that people want to hear the truth about Jesus Christ walk the way of Jesus follow him let's pray God hope does y even a poet he who can speak a man he and why he worth a love you

[ 35 : 29 ] I why I like ...