

Living and Suffering

Scripture Reading — 1 Peter 2:18-25

*It is commendable if you bear up under the pain of unjust suffering because you are conscious of God.
1 Peter 2:19 —*

“The pain of unjust suffering” inflicted by “those who are harsh” is a common experience. It may be the pain of a difficult family relationship, bullying in the work place, or, as in Peter’s day, slavery. It may also be caused by lies and deception, gossip and slander, or neglect and self-interest.

How should the child of God respond? According to the Bible, Christ’s own experience of suffering is our example!

Jesus exercised integrity by refusing to answer evil with evil. Payback is really only a form of reverse injustice, so it only makes suffering worse. Jesus also exercised patient hope by entrusting himself “to him who judges justly.” Finally, Jesus exercised grace by bearing the punishment for human sin in order to make forgiveness available for all. The truth is that justice without grace is legalism void of hope.

The Christian faith is realistic: “In this world you will have trouble” (John 16:33). But as we deal with suffering and seek justice for all, we guard against either promoting ourselves or pitying ourselves. Whatever we do, it should bring honor and glory to God (1 Corinthians 10:31; Colossians 3:17).

No one has suffered greater injustice than Jesus. That is why he is also our only hope.

Prayer

Lord, forgive me for the sins I have committed against others, and help me to endure unjust suffering by following the example of Christ, my Lord and my hope. In his name, Amen.

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