

1 Peter 2:18-25 How to Suffer Injustice

<https://youtu.be/njZx1MMAOSA?t=120>

Perhaps the most American of all holidays is the Kostanza family's celebration of Festivus on Seinfeld. If you remember Festivus, it begins with friends and family gathered around the table for the airing of grievances. This sketch became a favorite for many people because so many Americans can identify with a family celebration that is characterized by grievances.

A lot of people have noted how the United States is filled with people who are known by their grievances. This should not be surprising when our founding document, the Declaration of Independence, is itself a list of grievances against the king. Whether you are right-wing, left-wing, centrist, or completely apolitical, you probably identify with some person who has a narrative of things that they hate about life in the United States that should be changed.

While we often joke about the "first world problems" that people complain about, the exiled community in 1 Peter faced real problems that affected their real livelihoods. They probably could have aired some legitimate grievances with how they were being treated, and they would have had justice on their side.

Peter's response to suffering injustice, however, is the exact opposite of airing grievances about the things we hate. Listen to the words from 1 Peter 2:18-25.

¹⁸ Servants, be subject to your masters with all respect, not only to the good and gentle but also to the unjust. ¹⁹ For this is a gracious thing, when, mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly. ²⁰ 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. ²¹ 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. ²² He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. ²³ 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. ²⁴ 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. ²⁵ For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

One thing that is striking about the radical new orientation of a believer's life is that his own personal "rights" are no longer his primary concern. If the Christian suffers injustice for doing good in this world, he is somehow credited with grace from God (v. 20). We are not called to follow revolutionaries or "rights police." The whole orientation of our life now is to follow a savior who suffered the greatest injustice ever committed.

But we do not follow Jesus blindly. We trust that God judges justly (v. 23) that God has himself taken on the scourge of injustice (v. 24) and that he is leading us wherever we go (v. 25).

Discussion Questions

- **What are some of the funniest or most ridiculous airing of grievances that you have heard lately?**
- **Do you know of some legitimate grievances of injustice in the world?**
- **How do you differentiate between the ridiculous and the legitimate?**
- **Have you ever suffered because of your own sin? (v. 20a)**
- **Have you suffered for doing what is right? (v. 20b)**
- **How is suffering a part of our calling in Christ? (v. 21)**
- **Why is the necessity of suffering for the sake of goodness left out of the message of modern Christianity?**
- **How does your view of God affect the way you air grievances? (v. 23)**
- **Why did Jesus have to suffer? (v. 24)**
- **What gives the Gospel the right to demand that we put up with suffering?**
- **How will a more Christlike view of suffering injustice lead a change in your life?**