

1 Peter 2 (Part 3):13-25 • For to This You Have Been Called

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So, right now, in 1 Peter 2 chapter 2, you'll remember that we ended with verse 12 last time. We're going to pick it up in 13 but let's begin with prayer first, shall we? Heavenly Father, as we dig into the scriptures this morning, we really need your grace and wisdom to really lay hold of what Peter is writing to us about because, Lord, this is from You. I mean, he was inspired by Your Holy Spirit and we want to take this seriously, and we want to open our hearts, and we want to learn, and we want, most of all, Lord, to apply this Word to our lives. So, we pray for wisdom and grace and insight and understanding. Lord, You're the source of all those things. And so, we ask You to pour them out on us today. In Jesus' name we pray, amen. Amen.

The reason I wanted to kind of give a little bit of an introduction as we get from verse 13 onward is because this is a very special place in Peter's first letter because he starts a kind of a new topic as he goes through here, and this is going to finish out chapter 2 and go on into chapter 3. And I want you to just notice a few things.

If you're the kind of person that underlines or highlights or circles things in your Bible, I'm going to have you circle and highlight and underline some things, okay? If you don't, just make a mental note or maybe on another piece of paper.

First of all, the first words of verse 13, look in your Bible. In the ESV, they are, "*Be subject...*," that's translated in other Bibles as "*Submit yourselves*" (NIV, KJV, NASB). It's the same thing essentially. If you skip down to verse 17, I want to show you what he's doing here. Verse 17, it says, "¹⁷*Honor everyone.*" In verse 18, he says, "¹⁸*Servants, be subject...*" and that's that same idea of submit to your masters.

Chapter 3, if you skipped in over to chapter 3, you'll notice that that begins with the words, "¹*Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands...*" That's that same word, "submit." And then, verse 7, if you skip down there of chapter 3, it says, "⁷*Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way...*" And then, just in the very next verse, verse 8, Peter writes, "⁸*Finally, all of you, have unity of mind...*"

And the reason I've asked you to highlight all those things is because you can kind of see where Peter is going. He's talking about getting along, getting along with one another. He's talking about getting along with...in various areas of life. And that's called living in harmony. In fact, this is kind of interesting. This word, this key word here, when he says in chapter 3, verse 8, I know I'm skipping you ahead a little bit here, but in 3 verse 8, where he says, "*Finally, all of you, have unity of mind...*" (ESV). That's actually translated in the NIV, which I used to teach from, as, "*Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another.*"

And that's actually a very good translation because the Greek word that is translated "unity" or "harmony" is "homophrone," and it is derived from a Greek root word, which is Harmas, which is where we get our word "harmony." And we know what harmony is. Well, you know, we usually apply harmony as it relates to music. And that's the way...when you look up a definition, in fact, let me show you. Here's the definition of harmony,

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Harmony (def.) noun

the combination of musical notes, set in such a way as to produce chords and chord progressions having a pleasing effect.

That is typically the way we think of harmony, in terms of musical notes and how they come together and harmonize in such a way that it's, as it says in the definition, it's a very pleasing thing. Harmony is very pleasing. When you listen to harmony, it's very, very cool. And it's funny, sometimes you have to learn harmony and sometimes there's some people who just, they just pick it up. They just sing and they start harmonizing.

I'm going to embarrass my daughter who's with us this morning But our youngest daughter, Alyssa, when she was like 7 years old, she'd be sitting back in the backseat, and we were driving along, we'd have music going in the car. And you know, we're singing along and we're hearing these harmonies coming from the backseat and it was the weirdest thing. And Sue and I kind of look at each other, and it's like, she's harmonizing, nobody taught her that. It was really pretty crazy. But it's always fun to listen to, it's very pleasing to listen to. But can I tell you something else? Harmony is also very pleasing when it refers to people and what's going on in our lives, what's happening between us. When things are harmonious, things are good. In a marriage, when things are harmonious, things are good.

The opposite of harmony is discordant. You know, when you hear a couple of notes on the piano that don't harmonize but they actually fight against one another. You listen to that sound and that can be an effective way of communicating, maybe a tense time in a movie score or something like that. But if you're sitting listening to a whole song of just discordant notes, it's going to be like (disgusted expression), it's going to grate on you after a while. Same thing in the home, same thing in the church, same thing among people everywhere. If there's discordant views, a lack of harmony, it's not going to be very pleasing at all.

And you can see, once again here, that as we just did a very brief look at what Peter is writing here in this section that extends through chapter 3, that he's talking here about how we ought to harmonize and he's going to, he's going to mention here how we ought to harmonize with our government, he's going to mention how husbands and wives should harmonize with one another, he's going to talk about masters and servants, and how you can best live in harmony with one another in that pleasing sort of a way.

Here's the deal about harmony, we love to harmonize. I remember back when I was learning harmony, I had to learn...I had to really practice hard to learn harmony. I mean hard. And I had to put in a lot of work to learn how to harmonize. Well, I've noticed that in marriage and other relationships, we often have to put in a lot of work to live in harmony. We all know that harmonizing relationally is a good and pleasing thing. It's not...we're not always, we're not always willing to pay the price for that harmony. And you know why? This is the part, because harmony often requires that key word that we looked at through the course of what Peter's writing here, and that is "submit," to submit or just submission. Again, the ESV renders it "¹³*Be subject...to*," but it is the word "submit." And for most people today that's the "S" word.

I mean, "submit" is a dirty word in a lot of people's understanding or, at the very least, a word that they feel compelled to avoid because it seems offensive. If we're going to talk about submission, we don't want to offend anybody. So, it's a good idea since Peter's going to use this term so many times through the course of this section here, of his letter, it behooves us to have a good biblical understanding of what submission really is, biblical submission.

First of all, you need to understand that, from a military standpoint, the word "submit" was used in the sense of arranging soldiers in such a way as to be under the command of their leader. When they would say, "submit to your leader," it was an arrangement by which they would become fundamentally

responsive to that leader. Now, when the word “submit” was used in a non-military scenario, it simply is defined as a voluntary attitude of cooperation.

Well, it didn't hurt too bad, did it? Well, I mean, think about that. From a non-military sense, submission is a voluntary attitude of cooperation. This idea from the world that “submit,” or “submission” is synonymous with “inequality” or “inferiority” or always has to have a connotation of some kind of a heavy handed, demanding, authoritarian leadership that says, “I say jump, you say how high” sort of a thing.

That's really not in keeping with the biblical idea of “submission.” And of course, that's not to say that submission and the authority that sometimes is over, that cannot be abused. It can and it has been. And that's one of the reasons people are so sensitive about the issue, about talking about submission and the idea of submitting because it has been abused.

But just because something's been abused, we don't throw it away. You don't throw the baby out with the bathwater, as they say. Listen, there's nothing in the world that hasn't been abused, okay? Everything's been abused in some way, shape or form, so, we can't just go around throwing things out because they've been abused.

We have to understand them from a true and biblical perspective and then apply them from that perspective in our lives. So, Peter is going to talk to us about submission and he's even going to talk about how we ought to respond in an attitude of submission when the person to whom we are submitting, or the group or organization, is being a jerk. You know, when whoever is over you is being that demanding individual, even perhaps cruel. And he's going to talk about that too because that was a reality for first century Christians, as it is a reality for us even today. So he'll talk about that.

All right, so let's look at the text beginning in verse 13, shall we? Have your Bibles there. It says in 13, *“¹³Be subject...”* Again, that's that word “submit” *“for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, ¹⁴or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good. ¹⁵For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people.”* (ESV).

So, stop there for a moment. This first area where we are to exercise, or we're encouraged to walk in harmony is with the governing authorities or our response to the governing authorities. You might, I'm sure you do, the apostle

Paul, you'll probably know, said this very same thing, very, very similar. It's in Romans chapter 13, let me put it on the screen for you. It says,

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Romans 13:1-2 (ESV)

Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore, whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment.

So, you can see here that Paul is in line with what Peter is saying, saying that, as believers, we are to submit or walk in harmony with the governing authorities in such a way that we follow the rules and don't respond rebelliously because, if we do, we're essentially rebelling against God who established these institutions among men. And they've been established to keep the peace and uphold morality, and so on and so forth.

But what you need to understand about what both Peter and Paul are saying, as it relates to this idea of living in harmony with the government, is they are forbidding lawlessness, okay? They're forbidding lawlessness and rebellion and defiance. Because that's inappropriate for believers. For us to be rebellious and defiant and lawless. I mean, that's being like the enemy, not like our Savior. Satan is referred to as the lawless one, and you're not to be like him, you're to be like your Lord who is meek and humble and that sort of thing. And this is a situation or a passage that is very important for us to see.

Here's the deal, I have to, as I talk about this, I have to address the elephant in the room. And that is the fact that, for the last two and a half years, these passages, both from Peter and from Romans, where Paul wrote in Romans, have been front and center in a lot of people's minds. And frankly, in a lot of very public debate that has gone on among Christians.

And what I'm talking about here, of course, is our response as believers and the world's response, for that matter, to all of the mandates and rules and regulations that have been handed down by the government during the pandemic as it relates, as it related to how...what things we ought to do to stay safe and whatever else they were wanting to accomplish.

And frankly, I watched over the last two and a half years as Christians were in a tremendous quandary over exactly how to go about this, and there was quite a division happening in the body of Christ. A lot of divisive conversation that

took place over social media, Christians at each other. It wasn't pretty all the time. I mean, there was some genuine debate that was good and appropriate, and even healthy. But there were also some conversations going on that were inappropriate for believers. And I think that there are, as I now reflect on this whole thing after the last two and a half years, I believe that there are some things that we've lost sight of.

And that's one of the reasons that we've got into some of these snarls with each other and as believers, which we should never do. We should never be snarling at each other in front of the world. That is just, I mean, if that's even a temptation for you, you're better off canceling your social media account. Just don't even go there because it's not worth it. It's not worth it to drag the name of Jesus through the mud just all in the name of being right.

Like I said, there's a place for healthy debate, and we should have healthy debate. Things should be debated. I'm not opposed to that at all. It's when it gets nasty, you know. But there are some things that we lost sight of. And the first thing I think that we lost sight of, is something I've already mentioned, is that the passages that were written here in 1 Peter, and the one that I put up on the screen from the apostle Paul in Romans, were written to address man's heart.

And what that means is both Peter and Paul understood that we, mankind, human beings, are so easily given to a rebellious attitude or a defiant attitude. These things spring from the heart, and these men are reminding us that these are inappropriate for born again believers. We shouldn't be doing it.

Here's what we lost sight of, it's God's job to judge the heart. You see, there were a lot of people who chose to speak out against and challenge the mandates that were being handed down. There were a lot of people who spoke up, but they did not do so out of a heart of rebellion, they did not do it out of a heart of lawlessness or defiance.

Many were and are, in fact, deeply law-abiding people. They're very concerned about maintaining law and order and yet, they felt strongly that they should oppose some of those mandates and it was up to them. Here's the problem, there were other Christians who lost sight of the fact that we, horizontally speaking, are not to judge one another on the intent of the heart, that is up to God.

I can't look into your heart and see what's there, nor can you look into my heart and see what's there. God sees our hearts like He's peering through a pane of glass. In fact, there's not even that standing between Him and the perfect understanding of what's in our hearts. He can judge. You can't, and here's the

problem, a lot of Christians who were sincere and whose hearts were right, were soundly and roundly criticized and told that they were being lawless, when in fact they were not.

And so, we have to be very careful when things like this come up because what we end up doing is we end up judging people by the letter of the law without understanding the spirit of the law behind it. And the spirit of the law, the spirit of the prohibition that both Peter and Paul gave is about your heart condition. Do not be lawless, do not be defiant, right? Do not be rebellious, okay? But that's for the individual to make that determination. "Lord, am I being defiant? Is my heart a heart of rebellion?" That's between me and the Lord. The Bible says, "who are you to judge your brother's actions? Who are you? You can't see. You can't know." So, let it alone, leave it alone.

The second thing that I think a lot of Christians forgot about during this whole debate, is the fact that both Peter and Paul, in their individual writings, were addressing believers who are living under a very different form of government than the one that we have today. I mean, the people living under Roman rule in the first century, they had no voice to change the law or to respond to unfair mandates or rules or something like that.

We, in the United States of America, live under a democratic form of government that is of the people, by the people, and we have the right to speak up, and influence decisions. I'll go further than that, we have an obligation under the democratic form of rule that we have in this country to speak out and oppose and even resist anything that we believe is unlawful or unconstitutional by the government.

By the way, just to let you know, for those of you who are new, this is the most political I'm ever going to get. I usually stay away from these things like the plague. But I'm dealing with it because it's here in 1 Peter, that's why. And it's something that we have to talk about.

My point about this is that our brand of democracy that we have here in the United States was totally unknown in the first century under Roman rule. When Paul and Peter wrote to the people they had no option to speak up. You had one option; obey. That was it. And if you chose not to obey, there was no democratic opportunity to voice your opinion, you were just simply seen as a rebellious person. And both Peter and Paul were saying, don't be seen as a rebellious person.

Well, you see, in this country we have the opportunity, we have the obligation to stand up, resist and protest something that the government says we have to do, and it doesn't necessarily mean we're being rebellious. It means we're simply exercising our constitutional right. We have that freedom in this country. They didn't have it. But for you and me to take what Paul and Peter are saying in these texts and apply the letter of the law under a constitutional idea is to embrace the letter of the law without understanding the spirit and to criticize when we don't know what's really going on in people's hearts.

And I want to be careful to say something else, don't misunderstand me. I'm not saying that what Peter has written here, or, frankly, what Paul said, I'm not saying that it's invalid at all. It is very valid, and it is reasonable to assume that believers are going to be law abiding citizens, who honor the system by which these rules, laws, and mandates are given. We honor that system because it's a democratic system, at least, it's supposed to be. And so, we want to honor that, and we want to be able to respond harmoniously to those things.

But there are times when we have to stand up against a law and it may not be an act of rebellion. I'm not saying that for everybody it wasn't an act of rebellion. I think some people were genuinely rebellious. I think some people were genuinely just being defiant, and that's wrong, but that's for God to judge. Let me say that again, that's for God to judge. That's not for me to judge. I'm just kind of guessing. Imagine, there were probably some people who didn't have the right heart attitude, but I didn't tell them that, and I wouldn't do it.

So, it's very important that we see this, we have some wonderful rights in this country and freedoms, and we ought to exercise them, with the proper heart attitude, right? With the proper heart attitude. Which is to understand that our submission to the government is given to us in the Word. And we are to do that.

Now, that's one of the reasons why Peter says in the very next verse, verse 16. Look with me in your Bible, *“¹⁶Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God.”*

I want you to understand something about the freedom that Peter's talking about here. In a sense of societal sense, these people were not free. Do you understand that? They were not free citizens, they had to do what the government said, no questions asked. So, what is he talking about when he says, *“¹⁶Live as people who are free...”*? He's talking about their freedom in Jesus.

What is our freedom in Jesus? What is that? Well, that's our freedom to answer to a higher authority. We answer to an authority that is above the authority of

the institutions of man. However, we are told to submit to the institutions of man. Right? But we still have a higher authority, we have a freedom to answer to a higher authority. That's why if the government were ever to tell us to do something that is clearly unbiblical, "You may not share the message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ."

We're going to have to do exactly what the disciples said to the Sanhedrin, "Well, sorry guys, but you're going to have to decide for yourselves whether it's right to obey God or you." (Acts 4:19). There is a place for that kind of civil disobedience related to obedience to God, but it's still not done out of a heart of rebellion or defiance. It's done out of a heart that loves God and puts obedience to God above all, right? That's the freedom that Peter's talking about.

Now, what is he saying? He says, "you who are free, I want you to live like you're really free. But listen, don't use that freedom as a coverup for evil." And what he's talking about there, or what he's warning us, is not to use our freedom as a means or a cloak to just really cover my rebellious attitude. I can say, "I have liberty in Jesus." But what's really going on in my heart, now, again, that's something only God can convict me of. But what's really going on in my heart is, "I don't like this law, I'm not going to do it, I'm not going to keep it." I'm being defiant and rebellious but I'm not going to say it that way. I'm just going to say, "I am free in Jesus, to follow Him first and foremost."

And that's just simply my way of thumbing my nose at you and saying, "You can't tell me what to do. You're not the boss of me." Right? Peter says, "Don't do that, don't that. That's using your freedom as a coverup. And God knows. God knows when your heart's not right."

So, he goes on in verse 17 to say, "¹⁷*Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood.*" The brotherhood means the family of God. Boy, we needed to keep that in mind when those debates were raging on social media, didn't we? We weren't loving the brotherhood very well. He says, "*Fear God. (Check this next one,) Honor the emperor.*" Peter's writing to the people living under Roman rule and saying, "*Honor the emperor.*" I don't know how many of you guys know your history very well but in the first century, the emperor was Nero. And if you know anything about the man, you know that he was the worst of the worst.

I mean, a reputation for he was a tyrannical, cruel, brutal, brutal man who hated Christians with a seething passion. He would dip them in tar, impale them, and set them on fire around his garden. And it was about that man, that Peter said, "*Honor the emperor.*" Puts it into perspective, doesn't it? For us, we think, "Well, I would honor our politicians if they were half decent." Listen, Nero

makes our politicians look like a Sunday school class. So, next, he moves on to “¹⁸Servants...” which, by the way, some Bible translations refer to as “slaves” (NIV, CSB). But the Greek word here is...was most often used to refer to a house servant. And he says in verse 18, “¹⁸*Servants, be subject to your masters with all respect, not only to the good and gentle but also to the unjust.*” Meaning those who don't treat you very nicely. “¹⁹*For this is a gracious thing, when, mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly.*”

Now, this is that place I told you about where Peter was going to talk about how we respond in a harmonious way when the person over you is a big, fat jerk and they do and say things that hurt your feelings, they offend you, they speak abusively to you, and they're just an unfair person.

I want you to read what he goes on to say in verse 20, “²⁰*For what credit is it (to you) if, when you (do something wrong, you) sin and (then you're punished, you) are beaten for it, (and) you endure (it).*” That's not anything that's commendable because you deserved it. But look what he says in the middle of verse 20,

“²⁰*But if when you do good (in other words, you didn't do anything to deserve punishment) and (then you) suffer for it (if) you endure (it), this is a gracious (or some Bibles say, “commendable”) thing in the sight of God.*”

And now, he's going to tell you why. Here's the reason why, you ready? Verse 21, and you might want to underline these words,

“²¹*For to this you have been called...*” That's it, isn't that great? People come to me all the time, “Pastor Paul, I just don't...I want to know what my calling is. Tell me what my calling is.”

“Well, let's go through the Word and let's find out. Says here that you've been called to endure suffering and abuse.”

“Oh, that's not the one I was referring to. I was hoping you'd tell me about the fun one. The one where people take notice of me and pat me on the back and say, ‘Good job.’”

“Well, you got to get through this one first.”

To this you were called. Why? Why were we called to that? He goes on to explain, “...*because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps.*”

Now, notice what Peter says, “²²*He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. ²³When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten (back and say, ‘I’m going to get you, guys’) but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.*” (ESV).

And that is what Peter is telling us to do. And as he writes about this, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he's telling us, “This is your calling, this is your calling. Your calling is to endure unfair and unjust treatment and not to revile back, not to pay people back, not to do something bad just because they did something bad to you.” And what he's saying here to you and me is that this is commendable because that's what Jesus did.

Jesus didn't fight back. He didn't kick and scream and pull hair. He endured, and to this we have been called. And that's why suffering, even at the hands of a cranky boss or whoever in your life, is something the Bible calls, “*commendable*,” because it's following His example.

And speaking of the suffering of Jesus, Peter ends the chapter by saying, “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. ²⁵For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.*” (ESV).

I might just take these last couple of verses and talk about them next week too. I don't know, we'll have to see. But they're just...they're so full, they're so rich and they're so powerful. But what Peter is saying here, he begins by saying, “²⁴*He himself bore our (emphasis on “our”) sins in his body.*” He did not die on the cross for His own sin, He bore our sins. And that's the emphasis that he wants to make there. He's reminding us that He is the fulfillment of the innocent Passover Lamb that gave Its life, the innocent for the guilty. And that's what Jesus did.

Now, by the way, there in verse 24, I want you to be careful not to be confused by the fact that Peter says that he bore our sins “...*in his body on the tree....*” Do you know that actually messes with some people? I had a person write to me in the last year and just said, “Pastor Paul got a question for you, did Jesus...was He crucified on a cross or on a tree? Which one was it? I wanted to know.”

And the reason this person was asking is because some people make a big deal of it when there's no big deal. There's no deal to even make big. The fact of the matter is He was crucified on a cross that was made of wood that came from a tree. But see, there's a special reason why he's actually using the word “tree”

here and not “cross” because it points back to a passage in the Old Testament, which the Apostle Paul actually quotes when he talks about Jesus dying for us. Let me show you this on the screen, from Galatians three, it says,

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Galatians 3:13 (ESV)

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us- for it is written, (And here's where he quotes Deuteronomy 21) "Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree"-

So, you see, Paul is pointing back to that passage in Deuteronomy and he's connecting it to Jesus. And so, you ask the question, was Jesus cursed on the cross? Yes. Whose curse was it? Yours and mine that He took. That's what he's saying in Galatians. He redeemed us from the curse by becoming that curse, He took that curse upon Himself, and we know that He was cursed because Deuteronomy tells us, "...Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree."

And then Peter gives the reason for our Lord's sacrifice. It goes on there to say, "*that we might die to sin and live to righteousness.*" We've talked actually quite a bit, in the last few weeks, here, in Peter, about dying to sin, but this is such a wonderful gift that we've been given through Jesus, you know? He not only paid our penalty. And that alone...I mean, if Jesus had just paid our penalty, but He also took the power of sin away. He took away the penalty of sin and He took away the power of sin. And we, by entering into His death, die to sin.

Have you ever seen one of those movies where they're being very dramatic and some adult child does something against their father's wishes and the father says, "That's it. I'm cutting you out of my will." They always have a will and a lot of money, but then they say something like, "You are dead to me now." And it's a very dramatic statement that makes us all go, "Oh! (shocked facial expression)." It's essentially the essence behind what we're reading here, that our sin...we're dead to our sin now by entering into the death of Jesus Christ so that sin might no longer dominate our lives or have control over us.

And then, the latter part of verse 24, he says, "*By his wounds, you have been healed.*" Some verses or some Bibles say "*stripes.*" (KJV, ASV) And then, verse 25, ²⁵*For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.*" And of course, all of what Peter is saying here in this last verse and a half points back to one of the most incredible prophecies in the Bible given to us in the book of Isaiah chapter 53. This is basically how it goes,

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Isaiah 53:5-6 (ESV)

But he was pierced for our transgressions; (700 years, you know? Before the birth of Christ, this was written.) he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Peter's reminding us that through the wounds of our Lord, we received the greatest healing that you could ever hope for. We think of healing as just physical, and we should because we live in physical bodies and we're all about the physical. I mean, I'm all about the physical. I was...my little grandson, Benjamin, he is a piece of work. Let me tell you, he's four years old. Benjamin got... he was over the other day, and he got a paper cut, he was helping his mom unwrap a gift because we gave her a gift. And so he's helping her rip the stuff off and he got a paper cut on his finger and you would've thought he was going to die. And Sue said, "Do you need a band aid? Grandpa will get you a band aid."

So I ran and got him a band aid. Now, looking at his little fingers, about the size of a toothpick, and I wrapped this thing about four times around his finger. And he went around the house the rest of the day, just kind of...he played the rest of the evening just like this (index finger pointing upward).

You know, he is playing with cars, he's got his finger up in the air because he's all about it. And he had to talk to me, we had to have several conversations about how long you should leave the band aid on. And he says,

"I think I probably should leave it on. What do you think, grandpa? About two days, you think?"

"Yeah, whatever you think. Two days sounds great."

And he's, "Okay."

And that's it. I look at little Benjamin and that's...it's us. We're all about the physical and so we look at this passage, it says "by (correction, *with*) his wounds, we've been healed."

And we just immediately go, "Oh, we're healed!" Listen, what the author is writing about here is the most incredible healing you can get. Jesus healed the

breach between God and mankind and that was something you needed far more than having your paper cut taken care of. He has taken the tension and the condemnation that we always sensed before we came to Christ that was between us and God, and He has resolved it. And He's made peace, and that peace, Christians, is the greatest healing you will ever receive.

Let me show you a passage from Romans chapter 1, we kind of close out with this. It says,

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Romans 5:1 (ESV)

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Do you know how significant that statement is? Do you understand the implications of that statement? We have peace with God. We read verses like that and we go, “Yeah, we have peace with God. Yeah. Yippy. Hallelujah. (Expression of little excitement)” Do you understand that the world, outside of Christ, is longing and searching for peace and not finding it, and they're looking everywhere they can?

And some of them think they can find it in money, and some think they can find it in pleasure, physical pleasure, some try to find it in drugs. And they look, and they look. And some think that if they just get into the lotus position and “hum” long enough that they'll find some semblance of peace. And they're looking for it desperately and they can't find it. And it is ours, it is ours. He earned it for us on the cross, and it's ours.

Jesus said this, He said, “Peace I give you not, as the world give you.” (John 14:27) How does the world give peace? It is very temporary. It's great, while you have it, but it goes away very quickly. It's kind of that peace you get when you go to the doctor and he says, “Well, your tests all turned out good.” And you go and you feel great until the next round of tests, right? Yeah. So it's very, very temporary.

God gives a peace that passes understanding and it's a peace that comes from knowing, I'm good with God. He loves me and He's never going to take that love away from me. Nothing can separate me from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus, and I can go to Him whenever I want, and he's there to receive me like a father, a loving father who cares and calls me the apple of His eye (Psalm 17:8).

I have peace with God, and I can go to bed at night and sleep in peace because, me and God, we're good because of what Jesus did. Not because I'm a good person, not because I lived my life perfectly today, but because of what Jesus did for me on the cross. I now have peace with God and so do you.

The reason sometimes we don't have that peace is because we're looking in the wrong place. We're looking to the world to give us peace and the world can't...it was never meant...it's a fallen thing, this world that we live in. And it can't give peace. God can give peace. He will give peace. If you look to Him and trust Him, put your hope in Him. Amen? Amen. Let's stand together.

We're going to have some folks down front here to pray with you if you need prayer this morning, so, take advantage of that if there's a need.

Father, we're so thankful for the Word that You've given us here in 1 Peter and these reminders that are so important for us to lay hold of, so important, Lord. Father God, we confess to You right here, right now today, that this command that You've given us to live harmoniously, is very challenging and the price is pretty high because it speaks of that mutual cooperation and an attitude of getting along that sometimes we just don't like to pay. But Father, we pray for good hearts that desire to live in unity, and harmony, and peace with one another. Not at odds, but lovingly, caring.

And Father, we look to You to do these things because we understand that in our human, fallen nature, we don't possess the goods to carry out these things that You've given us in your Word. It's only through Your Spirit, Lord, as You empower us, that we can do these things and we pray that You'd help us every single day to surrender to You and submit to You first and foremost.

And we thank You, Lord Jesus, for bringing peace between God and us. Help us, Lord, never to take for granted the peace that we now have with God. And I pray, my Father, that we would live in that peace and walk in that peace all the days of our lives. Being without peace will make you crazy, literally drive a person insane. But ours is the peace of God that literally passes understanding and we rejoice in it, Lord, because we rejoice in You and we thank You, and praise You, and worship You in the name of Jesus Christ. And all God's people said together, amen. God bless you. Have a good rest of your Sunday.