


# TALKINGPOINTS WALKINGPOINTS

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**Talk** together about the glory of God's kingdom. *—Psalm 145:11*  
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. *—Joshua 22:5*

## Questions for Reflection

- What from Sunday's message interested you? ...made sense to you? ...confused you? ...intrigued you? ...upset you? ...encouraged you? ...and **why?**
- Today schools and workplaces are aiming to **gain diversity**. Paul's aim among the churches was to **gain love, humility, and respect** within an already-diverse population of believers. **Why?**
- 1 Peter 2:18-25 is addressed to "slaves". The Greek word for "grace" occurs twice in this passage (once each in v. 19 & 20)—but that's probably **not** how your Bible translates it. Instead, look for and circle the word "commendable" (NIV) or "favor" (NASB) or "gracious thing" (ESV). We all like receiving grace from God—according to this passage, **what must we do** in order to make sure we receive it?

Tell about a time when you "endured suffering as a result of doing what is right".

Verse 19 speaks of doing so "for the sake of conscience toward God". What does that mean?

God promises to give us grace when we do so. Tell about how you experienced God's grace in it.

We all want to discover our "purpose in life"—and v. 21-23 gives it to us in black & white! What is it?

Complete these phrases from v. 23:

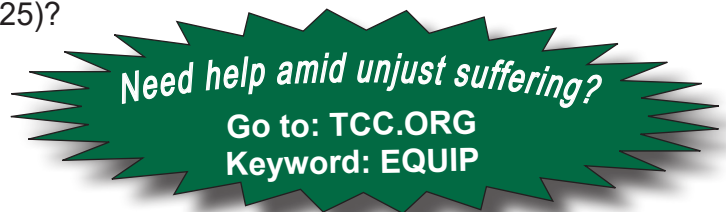
"while being \_\_\_\_\_, Jesus didn't \_\_\_\_\_ in return"

"while \_\_\_\_\_, Jesus uttered no \_\_\_\_\_"

What did Jesus do instead (v. 23c)? How do we know that this wasn't just God's plan for Jesus (v. 21)?

What good (redemptive) outcome resulted (v. 24-25)?

Would you be willing to suffer if it achieved that same outcome for others? Why or why not?



## Application-Challenge

- Open doors for the gospel at work by working hard and treating others with respect.
- Pray for God to "open a door for the Word", then you "speak forth the mystery of Christ"! (Colossians 4:2-4)

**Take One Step:** What is one small, concrete step of obedience you will put into practice this week?



## Sermon Summary

Paul has previously given Pastor Timothy instructions about the treatment of widows and church leaders. In the opening verses of Chapter 6, he turns his attention to how slaves should relate to their masters. Paul's chief concern in addressing the issue of slavery in the Roman Empire was that God be glorified and the gospel continue to advance. Paul was exercising Biblical wisdom. He knew how deeply embedded slavery was in Graeco-Roman society. All well-to-do people had slaves, and very wealthy people had several hundred. Slaves were essential to the economy. They served as domestic servants, farm laborers, clerks, craftsmen, teachers, soldiers and managers. Any signs of a slave revolt would be put down with ruthless brutality.

But what Paul did was brilliant. He enunciated principles which undermined the concept of slavery and eventually led to its abolition. And as the gospel went forth and these principles were embraced and lived out in the church, society began to change. History bears testimony to the fact that where Christianity took root, slavery was uprooted. Paul's approach to human slavery has proven itself to be wise. Paul knew that by treating their masters respectfully, Christian slaves would glorify God and advance the gospel (6:1). Something powerful happens when you treat people with respect and kindness. It is difficult not to like people who seem to like you. It is especially powerful when you treat with respect and kindness those who mistreat you (Matthew 5:44-47).

But there is another reason we should treat people kindly. It has to do with the fact that we have been created in God's image. That means that we are to imitate God in how he deals with us. God causes the sun to rise and the rain to fall on both the evil and the good. In other words, He is gracious to us, whether we deserve it or not. Paul knew that if Christian slaves would treat their masters with respect, it would advance the gospel, because soon their masters would link their slave's respectful behavior and gracious service to their faith in Christ. As a result, the Christian faith would become more attractive. And that is exactly what happened in the early church. Slaves were often the human instruments God used to bring their masters to faith.

Paul goes on to address a slightly different slave-master dynamic. Whereas in verse one, Paul addresses Christian slaves with non-Christian masters, in verse two, Paul addresses Christian slaves who have Christian masters (6:2). Here, Paul is saying that Christian slaves with Christian masters should be especially respectful and hardworking, knowing that their labor benefits a fellow believer. Paul adds another reason why slaves of Christian slave owners should work hard and treat their owners with respect. It is because in this scenario, they are brothers in Christ. They are family. We should treat beloved family members with an extra dose of respect. Elsewhere in Scripture, Paul discusses what obligations Christian slave owners have towards their servants (Ephesians 6:9, Colossians 4:1). Paul advocates that slaves and owners treat one another with kindness and respect, with justice and fairness. When this dynamic is applied, the slave-master relationship begins to look quite like the employee-employer relationship.

And it is in the workplace that these principles find their application today. My application-challenge would be something like this: Open doors for the gospel at your place of employment by working hard and treating others with respect. One of the most meaningful ways you can represent Jesus in the workplace is by being the very best worker that you can be. That means you don't just work hard when the boss is watching; rather, you always seek to do your best because you know God is watching. You work hard and you treat others at work with respect, because you know that that is how God wants you to respond. And by doing so, you are positively representing the God whom you serve.

## ***Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time***

***Perhaps nobody has worked in more adverse circumstances than Joseph—a dungeon!  
Let's see what we can learn from his faithfulness as a slave...***

### ***Monday***—Read Genesis 37

From today's text, how do you see Joseph...

1. ...serving others?
2. ...meeting his own needs and/or those of his family?
3. ...earning so as to have something to share with others?
4. ...loving God through right action and right motives?

### ***Tuesday***—Read Genesis 39

From today's text, how do you see Joseph...

1. ...serving others?
2. ...meeting his own needs and/or those of his family?
3. ...earning so as to have something to share with others?
4. ...loving God through right action and right motives?

### ***Wednesday***—Read Genesis 40

From today's text, how do you see Joseph...

1. ...serving others?
2. ...meeting his own needs and/or those of his family?
3. ...earning so as to have something to share with others?
4. ...loving God through right action and right motives?

### ***Thursday***—Read Genesis 41

From today's text, how do you see Joseph...

1. ...serving others?
2. ...meeting his own needs and/or those of his family?
3. ...earning so as to have something to share with others?
4. ...loving God through right action and right motives?

### ***Friday***—Read Genesis 45

From today's text, how do you see Joseph...

1. ...serving others?
2. ...meeting his own needs and/or those of his family?
3. ...earning so as to have something to share with others?
4. ...loving God through right action and right motives?

### ***Saturday***—Read Genesis 47

From today's text, how do you see Joseph...

1. ...serving others?
2. ...meeting his own needs and/or those of his family?
3. ...earning so as to have something to share with others?
4. ...loving God through right action and right motives?