

The Gospel
1 Peter 2:24&25

The general principle (2:11&12)

¹¹Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul. ¹²Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us’.

Relationships with state officials (2:13-17)

¹³Submit yourselves for the Lord’s sake to every human authority: whether to the emperor, as the supreme authority, ¹⁴or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right.

Relationships in the workplace (2:18f)

¹⁸Slaves, in reverent fear of God submit yourselves to your masters, not only to those who are good and considerate, but also to those who are harsh.

In (18-20) he gives a strategy for the workplace

In (21-25) he gives an example for the workplace

²⁴‘He himself bore our sins’ in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; ‘by his wounds you have been healed.’ ²⁵For ‘you were like sheep going astray,’ but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Peter begins these verses with the theologically laden words, ‘he himself bore our sins in his body on the tree’. The he of (24) is the Christ of (21). And he did three things.

1. He bore our sins.
2. In his body.
3. On the cross.

Acts 5:30, ³⁰The God of our ancestors raised Jesus from the dead – whom you killed by hanging him on a cross (tree = xylon).

Acts 10:39 ³⁹‘We are witnesses of everything he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They killed him by hanging him on a cross (tree)’.

Deuteronomy 21

²²“And if a man has committed a crime punishable by death and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, ²³his body shall not remain all night on the tree, but you shall bury him the same day, for a hanged man is cursed by God. You shall not defile your land that the LORD your God is giving you for an inheritance.

‘All the ingredients for the doctrine of penal substitutionary atonement are to be found within these verses’ Angus Macleay

Peter then describes in brief the three benefits resulting from Christ's death

1. We have been released from sin's enslavement

'so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness'.

2. We have been restored to spiritual health

'by his wounds you have been healed'

Isaiah 53:5,

'But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed'.

3. We have been returned to our soul's protector

'For 'you were like sheep going astray,' but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls'.

Conclusion

- We were enslaved to sin: unable to free ourselves from its grip
- We were spiritually sick: infected with a disease that would kill us
- We were wandering astray: placed at risk by our own stupidity

But Christ's death on the cross means that now

We have been released from sin's captivity: freed to live for righteousness

We have been restored to spiritual health: growing in the mature likeness of Christ

We have been returned to our soul's protector: knowing he's got our back