

***Saints who Suffered for Jesus***  
**John Chavis – 07**

*If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing well. But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it (James 2:8-10)*

**Introduction – Restitution, Reparations...What does the Bible teach?**

**Review** – Throughout the ages God’s people have suffered and will continue to suffer for many different reasons.

**I. John Chavis lived in the Old South from 1763-1838**

**A. His birthyear is somewhat uncertain but he was born a free man**

1. We do not know much about his early childhood, but his family had standing
2. His ancestors were property owners, educated, and respected by others
3. We think he worked for Virginia Attorney, James Milner beginning in 1773
4. It is believed Chavis had access to the Rev. William Willie’s personal library
5. He spent time under the esteemed Presbyterian minister Henry Patillo

**B. In 1780 he enlisted to fight in the Revolutionary War**

1. John Chavis’ family valued Christianity, education, and learning
2. Chavis enlisted at the age of seventeen and devoted three years of service
3. After the war he served as a Latin and Greek tutor
4. John Chavis was the first black American college graduate
5. John Chavis earned a noble reputation as an excellent educator and pastor

## **II. In 1831 Nate Turner led a slave revolt against Joseph Travis**

### **A. Some Southern states responded to this attack by adding new laws**

1. Chavis was the first black “ordained” Presbyterian minister (October 1800)
2. By 1805 he opened a classical school in Raleigh, North Carolina
3. Virginia and North Carolina passed laws making education for blacks a crime
4. North Carolina went further with laws against all blacks, slave or free
5. How much fear of slave insurrection was behind the making of these laws?
6. These laws divided people from their friendship and respect for one another

### **B. John Chavis suffered mistreatment as a pastor and educator in 1830s**

1. Chavis tutored the wealthiest families of North Carolina (1805-1830)
2. North Carolina’s new law brought an immediate halt to all his work
3. He appealed for help from his own Presbyterian denomination
4. He wrote to his good friend (and former student) Senator Mangum for help
5. Was John Chavis a victim of racism?
6. Did the Christians who did not help John Chavis sin against brotherly love?

**Conclusion** – John Chavis felt betrayed by some of his closest friends (many of them Christian). He never lived to see the laws he suffered under by his own state and even his denomination corrected. But John Chavis remained faithful to Jesus in the midst of unjust suffering. John Chavis spoke out against slavery during these years. His death in 1838 is shrouded in mystery (some believe foul play was involved). He never lived to experience justice in this life.