

Once for All

Sermon Delivered on April 17th, 2022
AM Service

By: Pastor Greg Hocson

Text:

1 Peter 3:8 Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: 9: Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing. 10: For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: 11: Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it. 12: For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil. 13: And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good? 14: But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled; 15: But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear: 16: Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ. 17: For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing. 18: For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

Introduction

The theme of First Peter is “**suffering that brings glory to God.**” Peter wrote much regarding suffering. In this epistle, Peter writes to believers dispersed throughout Asia Minor because they were being persecuted as followers of Jesus Christ. Listen to how he starts this epistle:

1 Peter 1:6 Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: 7: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

So, the apostle Peter is writing to believers who are **distressed because of all kinds of trials**, whose faith is being **severely tried through persecution**. He is writing to believers who are **suffering unjustly**. Their only “**crime**” is that they are faithful **believers and followers of Jesus Christ**. And so, one of the purposes of writing this letter is **to encourage these tried believers** scattered throughout Asia Minor. He writes them to encourage them as they endure persecution for Jesus Christ’s sake. These believers were suffering, and they needed encouragement, comfort, and hope.

So how would Peter encourage them to endure suffering for the glory of God? What Biblical truth would he use to encourage and comfort Christians who are hurting because of suffering? To encourage and comfort those who are hurting and unjustly suffering as Christians, Peter gives them these short and simple and yet rich statement about the suffering of Christ in ...

1 Peter 3:18 For Christ **also** hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

Peter pointed his readers to Christ who Himself suffered and died in the hands of His enemies. He brought their attention to Christ and His suffering. Jesus Christ is **the perfect example of one who suffered unjustly**. He is the perfect example of **One who suffered for doing what is right** according to the will of God. He is the perfect example of **One who suffered for righteousness' sake and for the glory of God**. So, Peter links the sufferings of Christians to the sufferings of Christ. Peter is convinced that this is a very helpful way to understand our suffering and **to help us endure suffering for the glory of God**.

This morning, I invite you to consider the suffering of Christ in three headings, namely, the **Character** of Christ's Suffering, the **Consequence** of Christ's Suffering, and the **Conquest** in Christ's Suffering.

I - The Character of His Suffering

1 Peter 3:18a For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust ...

Yes, Jesus Christ Himself suffered. This may be a **familiar truth** to you, **but this is still shocking and amazing**. The eternal Son of God, whom the Heavenly Father declared, **"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased"** (Mathew 3:17). If there is a person who knew what it means to suffer, it was our Lord Jesus Christ. The prophet Isaiah even describes Him in **Isaiah 53:3**, as **a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief**. Then he goes on to say in verses 4 and 5, **"Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."**

He bore our griefs, carried our sorrows, stricken, smitten of God and afflicted, wounded, bruised, oppressed and afflicted, falsely accused and tried, numbered with the transgressors, and poured His soul unto death. The One who knew no sin; the One who went about doing good, the One who delighted to do the will of God, the One who glorified the Father in all He did, yes, that One—suffered! **He suffered unjustly**. In fact, Jesus Christ while on earth **suffered perpetually**, meaning, all of His life was suffering—born in a stable, lived in poverty, tempted as we are, mocked and insulted, falsely accused, scourged, crucified, and buried in a borrowed tomb. Our Lord Jesus Christ suffered **greatly, willingly, and unjustly**.

But now I want to show you the characteristic or the nature of Christ's suffering, namely it is substitutionary, and it is sufficient.

1. Substitutionary

If Jesus Christ never sinned, **why then did He suffer?** Peter tells us in our text. **"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust."** First of all, the suffering and death of Christ

was substitutionary. Christ died for our sins, meaning, Christ died because of our sins, on account of our sins. He did not die for any sin He ever committed. No, He suffered and died for the sins of the unjust. Jesus did not die on the cross for good people or self-righteous religious people; He died on that cross for sinners, for the unrighteous who deserved nothing but the wrath and the judgment of God. His suffering and death was substitutionary—in the place of another.

2. Sufficient

1 Peter 3:18a For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust ...

This verse not only speaks of the substitutionary nature of Christ's suffering and death, but it also speaks of the sufficiency of Christ and His sacrifice. The word "**once**" means "**once, for all.**" He suffered once, **never to suffer again.** He died once, **never to die again.** At Calvary, when our Lord Jesus bowed His head and He cried out, "**It is finished!**" These words means **the payment is complete.** It is paid in full. **It is sufficient.** The suffering and death of Christ **paid in full the debt that believers owe.**

Paul declares this truth in the book of Hebrews in a fuller way.

Hebrews 9:24 For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: 25: Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; 26: For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: **but now once** in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. 27: And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: 28: **So Christ was once offered** to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

Then in Hebrews 10:12, Paul writes, "But this man, after he had **offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God.**"

One sacrifice for sins forever! Amen! After offering one sacrifice He sat down on the right hand of God. Why? Because His one-time sacrifice is sufficient. The blood of Jesus Christ paid in full the debt we owe and the debt we could not pay.

II - The Consequence of His Suffering

1 Peter 3:18b ... that he might bring us to God,

Here is the purpose of Christ's suffering and death. The perfect Righteous One suffered and died for unrighteous sinners like you and me, in order to bring us to God; **to bring us back to God.** Now, the fact that the purpose of Christ's suffering and death was to bring us to God **implies that we were separated or alienated from God.** You and I do not have access to the Holy God on our own.

The apostle Paul declares that we "**all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God**" (Romans 3:23). We are born dead in trespasses and sins. We have sinned against God in word, in thought, and in action. Then he goes on to say in Romans 6:23a, "**For the wages of sin is death...**" The re-

sult or consequence of our sin and sinfulness is death which is **separation from God**. Isaiah also declares the same truth about the consequence of sin in [Isaiah 59:1-2](#), “Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But **your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.**” We all have sinned and because of our sin we all alienated ourselves from the Holy God. Because of sin our relationship with God is broken, **but Christ went to that cross to reconcile us to God**. The purpose for the cross is **to restore a sinner's broken relationship with a holy God**. It is to bring us back to God.

As a result of His death in our place, believers in Christ have been "brought to God" and could now approach God and have access to Him. Paul explains that in [Ephesians 2:18](#), “For through him we both (believing Jews and Gentiles) have access by one Spirit unto the Father.” Also in [Romans 5:2-3](#) we read, “Therefore being justified by faith, **we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace** wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” Here Paul explains that because of the Lord Jesus Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, we are now justified by faith, reconciled to God, and have continual access to the God of grace. Believers may now come boldly to His throne of grace just as we read in [Hebrews 4:15-16](#), “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. **16: Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace**, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”

When a sinner believes on the Lord Jesus Christ as his substitute, as One who took his place upon the cross, God forgives him, reconciles him to God, brings him into a relationship with God. **The enmity is over!** The separation is removed! The believing sinner and God brought together to be separated no more. That is the consequence of Christ's suffering and death—to bring us to God. Amen!

III - The Conquest in His Suffering

[1 Peter 3:18c ... being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:](#)

Here we see the conquest, the triumph, the victory in Christ's suffering and death. In other words, the suffering and death of our Lord Jesus Christ **was not a waste**. It was **efficient**, it was **satisfactory**. It was a **success**. How do we know it was a success? We know the sacrificial death of our Saviour was not in vain because **the Father accepted it**. The Father was pleased and satisfied with His Son's sacrifice on the cross. And how do we know and assured of this?

Let's look at our text again.

[1 Peter 3:18c ... being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:](#)

This clearly points to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

[... being put to death in the flesh](#)

This speaks of the death of Christ. The word “**flesh**” highlights the humanity of Christ which is consistent with what the New Testament teaches about Christ’s true nature. The Bible teaches that Jesus is true God and true man, united in one person. The Deity and the Humanity of Jesus Christ are fundamental teachings in the Bible. Jesus Christ was born as a human being while still being completely divine. And the apostle Peter here, focuses on the humanity of our Saviour. He was the Word who was made flesh and dwelt among us ([John 1:14](#)). The One “[Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross \(Philippians 2:6-8\).](#)”

Some may ask, **why did Jesus Christ, the Son of God have to become a man** to bring about our redemption and reconciliation? Why was it necessary for Christ to take on a human nature? **Jesus Christ had to become a man to redeem mankind.** The only way you and I can be redeemed and be forgiven of our sins, is if Jesus dies in our place to pay the penalty for sin. And to do that **He had to have a body.**

[Hebrews 10:4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. 5: Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: 6: In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure.](#)

The penalty for sin requires suffering in body and soul and only a human can do this. And so, we read in [Hebrews 2:14](#), these words, “[Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.](#)”

“Jesus Christ, the perfect Lamb of God, sacrificed His human life and shed His human blood to cover the sins of all who would ever believe in Him. If He were not human, this would have been impossible” (Got Questions). In short, Jesus Christ had to be a man to pay the penalty for sin, but **He must be God to satisfy God’s perfect demands for sin.**

[... but quickened by the Spirit:](#)

I believe this refers to the resurrection of Jesus Christ. He was made alive by means of the Spirit of God, which the apostle Paul also specifically said in [Romans 8:11](#), “[But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.](#)”

In [Acts 2:27](#), which is a quote from [Psalm 16:10](#), Peter declares, “[Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell \(hades\), neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.](#)” God the Father and God the Spirit allowed Jesus’ spirit to go into Hades, which signifies the state of the dead, the separate state of souls after death, but did not abandon Him there. God made Him alive by

the Spirit. **Jesus Christ did not stay in the grave.** In other words, death was not the end of Jesus Christ. **He came back from the death and rose victoriously.**

Here is the **conquest**. He is the **triumph**. Here is the **victory**. This is how we know the suffering and death of Christ was not in vain. It was not wasted. The Father was pleased with His Son's sacrifice, and He accepted it and the proof of it is the resurrection of Jesus Christ. He was made alive, and **His resurrection certified that the Father received His suffering and death** upon a cross as full and sufficient atonement for the sins of the believing sinner. Amen!

Closing Thoughts

1 Peter 3:18 For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

On this Resurrection Sunday, let us be reminded that Jesus Christ, the perfect Righteous One willingly suffered and died for completely unrighteous being like you and me. He suffered and died once for all and in Christ, we now have complete access to the Father. There is no longer a veil separating us from our holy God. There is no more separation! Paul writes, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8:33-39) This is what we have in Christ Jesus. Halleluia! What a Saviour!

*My sin, O, the bliss of this glorious thought,
My sin, not in part but the whole,
Is nailed to the cross and I bear it no more,
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!*

Now the all-important question is, "have you been reconciled to God?" The God you and I have offended is calling us sinners to come and be reconciled to Him. As the apostle wrote, "... we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. (2 Corinthians 5:20c, 21). Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ who suffered and died and rose again so that sinners like you and me might be brought us back to God. Trust Christ, humble yourself before Him and ask Him to save you on the basis of Who Christ is and His sacrificial death on the cross and He will forgive you, grant you eternal life, make you His child, and take you to Heaven when you pass on from this life!

Christian, are you distressed because you are going through all kinds of trials? Is your faith being severely tried through persecution? Are you suffering unjustly? Remember these words... [1 Peter 3:18 For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:](#) Look to our Saviour Jesus Christ who knows what it means to suffer unjustly. May the sufferings of Christ help us to understand our suffering and help us us endure suffering for the glory of God.

AMEN!