

**SOUTH GROVE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH LONDON**

**Good Friday Service**

**Easter**

**Date 29<sup>th</sup> March 2024.**

**Preacher Pastor Philip Knowles**

**Hymns 485, 103, Par 25v3-10, 15-16, 273.**

**Read: 1 Peter 3:17-18 Text: 1 Peter 3:18**

**Title Christ's Sufferings.**

The context of Peter's words in **verse 18**, find their basis in **verse 17**, where peter writes of believer's sufferings.

He said ***it is better if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing.***

Peter would have believers know their sufferings for the gospel came with a purpose, and victory, to strengthen them, and to praise and honour God.

For that reason, Peter takes their minds to consider the greatest sufferer Jesus Christ and the highest form of suffering ever endured and known to man, in that ***Christ suffered once for sins...being put to death in the flesh.***

Christ's sufferings was for the purpose to bring sinners to God.

Christ is the example for how believers endure suffering for righteousness' sake.

Jesus Christ is the suffering servant. He did nothing wrong, but He suffered.

He did the greatest good, yet He suffered.

In His sufferings Christ lived to the praise and honour of God.

And while we experience many forms of suffering in the Christian life, yet our sufferings are nothing compared to Christ's sufferings.

As Christ suffered on earth, and in body, so do we, but believer we will never suffer the wrath of God, Christ did.

He is the man of sorrow and acquainted with grief.

Therefore, men and woman as we gather on this good Friday service, let us look to Christ's suffering to learn the purpose of His sufferings, in that Christ suffered once for sins to bring us to God.

### **I FIRST THE CONDITION FOR CHRIST'S SUFFERINGS.**

The condition, for Christ's sufferings rests upon Himself, in His glorious person and perfections.

Notice, Peter said Christ died the JUST for the unjust.

**Peter didn't say the unjust for the unjust or the just for the just.**

Rather Peter makes the clear distinction that Christ died the Just for the unjust.

Therefore, the one who would die for sinners, and died for sinners, must be just, He must be perfect, He must be without sin.

The word **just** refers **to the just one, righteousness, doing right**. Christ is just and always does right in word, ways, and works among His creation, and He does right because He is just, He is the just one.

In fact, Peter used this same language in preaching, when he described Christ in **Acts 3:14** as ...**the Holy one and the just**...

John said of Christ in **1 John 2:1** **Jesus Christ the righteous**, or **the righteous one**.

Christ the Just one, Righteous one, met the condition to die for the unjust, the righteous for the unrighteous, the sinless for the sinful, and to be put to death in the flesh.

Peter is showing that one who suffers and dies to bring sinners to God must Himself be sinless to provide full salvation otherwise none can be brought to God in salvation.

That's the truth Peter brings out in the condition for Christ's sufferings.

Only one related to both God and man, can bring men to God.

Christ could suffer for sins, die the just for the unjust, be put to death in the flesh to bring sinners to God because He met the condition, as the Godman.

**Christ is related to God because He God**, Co-equal and co-eternal with the Father. Christ said in **John 10:30** "...**I am My Father are one.**

**Christ is related to man because He is man.**

Notice, Peter says He was **put to death in the flesh**, that is human flesh, a true humanity, bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh.

**Philippians 2:7** *But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men*

He took unto His divine nature and human nature yet without sin.

That means He is sinless in nature, as **1 John 3:5** *in Him is no sin.*

**Christ was just in all His WAYS**, His life is sinless, publicly and privately, as verified by God the father in **Matthew 3:17**, *this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased*, and also witnessed by the ungodly, as Pilate's wife, sent the message to

her husband, in **Matthew 27:19** *Have thou nothing to do with that just man.*

**Christ was just in all His WORDS**, Peter said in **1 Peter 2:22** *who did not sin, neither was guile found in His mouth.*

**Christ's WORKS were perfectly just before God**, as He said in **John 8:29** *for I do always those things that please Him.*

That's why it's no mistake that Peter uses the title Christ, because the title **Christ** means **the anointed one**.

The name Christ in the NT is the same meaning as *messiah in Hebrew*, **the anointed one**. One who is anointed is set part for a particular purpose.

In OT they looked toward the Cross, considering the one anointed by God, set part **to come** in the fulness of time to suffer for sins.

Whereas, all who lived after the cross, including ourselves look back to the cross, to consider the one anointed by God **who did come** to suffer for sins.

The cross remains the center of focus.

Christ is just, the sinless one, anointed by God, set apart by God, and on the cross, **Hebrews 9:14** tells Christ...*offered Himself without spot to God...to...purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.*

Believers rejoice, Christ is your perfect Saviour, who has provided for forgiveness of sins, acceptance with God, new life to live, entrance into heaven for you.

## **II SECOND THE CAUSE OF CHRIST'S SUFFERINGS.**

Notice the words two phrases, **suffered for SINS...the just for the UNJUST.**

The word **sins** refers **to the offence** as the cause of Christ's sufferings, whereas, the word **unjust** refers **to the offender** as the cause of Christ's sufferings.

The word **sins** is the standard Greek word for sin, **hamartia**, meaning **offence**.

However, as its in the plural, our many offences are in view, we keep offending God.

But what are our offences and who has been offended?

This word **sins** meaning **offence's**, also carries the idea **to miss the mark, to fall short**. It highlights a failure to meet a standard, a failure to hit a target, a failure to keep the law, therefore, causing offence.

The idea of this word is taken from the archer who seeks to hit target, or we can use the footballer who must hit the target, the net, but completely misses or doesn't even come close to hitting the target, you may even say the ball was nowhere near.

What is that standard and that target that has not been met, what is the law that has been broken, notice, **Romans 3:23 for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God**.

**The glory of God** is God's own Holy nature, and His righteous law, as His perfect standard by which He judges all men.

Therefore, we have fallen short of God's perfect standard, we have failed to hit the target of perfection, we have failed to keep His law, His commandment, and by doing so we have offended God.

Furthermore, the words **come sort** also mean that sinners continually, daily, offend God, sin against God.

Adam's fall into sin, and our fall with him, is called an **offence**, **Romans 5:15-18 for if through the offence of one many be**

**dead...For if by one man's *offence* death reigned by one...by the *offence* of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation.**

Peter states that Christ suffered for sins, that is many sins, big and small, public and private, known and unknown, physical and mental, as sinners by nature, **we are offenders, and our sin is offensive to God.**

As a result, we face the wages or payment, penalty and punishment of sins which is eternal death.

Our sins have separated us from God, Paul used the words **far off** in **Ephesians 2:13**

Our sins declare us a offenders, unjust ones.

Our offensive nature and deeds are called in **Romans 1:17** as **ungodliness**, and **unrighteousness**, **v24** **uncleanness**, and much more. Our offences to God many.

Paul says in **Roman 1:32** **they which commit such are worthy of death.**

Why was it needful for Christ to suffer in flesh because our offences were committed in the flesh, and offensive to God and are worthy of eternal death, and for that reason Christ takes our humanity, our flesh and blood, without sin, to suffer for those offences.

Therefore, Peter states the cause for Christ's sufferings is our sins. when we survey Christ's sufferings, we learn from Paul that Christ in **Romans 4:24** **was delivered for our offences.** Peter said in **1 Peter 2:24** **who His own self bare our sin on His own body on the Tree...** **1 John 3:5** says He "...**was manifested to take away our sins.**"

Believers rejoice it is well with your soul.

### **III THIRD THE CLIMAX OF CHRIST'S SUFFERINGS.**

**...Being put to death in the flesh.** Here are, the climax of Christ's sufferings.

You see Christ's sufferings did not begin at the cross or when He was arrested the day before the cross.

Rather Christ's sufferings began at His birth, termed as Christ's humiliation. His whole earthly life was one of suffering.

#### **He suffered in body by the works of men.**

When Christ was arrested, falsely accused, we learn, Remember, Pilate in **Matthew 27:26** he "**scourged Jesus.**" The word **scourge** means **to whip, to chastise.** The purpose was to inflict pain, in punishment.

This whip, it is believed has many strands, with bit of metal or broken bone.

Every time the Roman soldier whipped Christ's back with force, and pulled back the whip, the sharp metal and broken bone, would have dug into the skin and ripped the flesh of.

That why this whipping on His back is described as a field being ploughed, **Ps 129:3** says "**the plowers plowed upon my back, they made long their furrows.**"

**Matthew 27:29-30** <sup>29</sup> **And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon His head....And they spit upon Him, and took the reed, and smote Him on the head.**

**Isa 52:14** "**His visage was so marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men.**"

**Ps 22** prophesying about the Cross, wrote of Christ's physical suffering in **verse 14...** "**all my bones are out of joint...**" **verse 16** **they pierced my hands and my feet.** **verse 17** "**...all my bones they look and stare upon me.**"

He was tortured and beaten in body, His blood was shed.

**He suffered in soul by the wrath of God.**

During hours of darkness, **Isaiah 53:4** says He was "...**stricken, smitten of God and afflicted.**"

Such infinite suffering caused Christ to say upon the cross, about the ninth hour, in **Matthew 27:46** "...**Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say My God, My God why hast thou forsaken me?**"

Why was He forsaken, abandoned and separated by His father upon the cross.

To show How offensive our sin is to God, and what it meant for Christ to suffer, to be put to death in the flesh.

In suffering the wrath of God, all our iniquities, offences, were laid upon Christ. He bore the burden alone. He became a curse for us.

God's wrath, anger for sin burned upon Christ, just as a sword falling upon the guilty one.

**Isaiah 53:10** states "**it pleased to the Lord to bruise Him.**" The word **bruise** means **to crush hammer, beat.**

If anyone rejects the gospel, they will be eternally afflicted, by God's infinite wrath, and punishment due to your offence, which to be forsaken, abandoned, and separated by God for all eternity.

The offended died in the place of the offender to pay for the offence against God, and secure pardon.

Believer, through Christ's sufferings His wounds have paid our ransom.

**IV FOURTH, THE COMPLETION OF CHRIST'S SUFFERINGS.**

**Christ also hath once suffered for sins...being put to death.**

That word **once** is a message in itself.



All Christ's sufferings in His life and at His death, was a once and for all sacrifice. **Heb 9:28** *So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many...*

When He prayed on the Cross, **it is finished** as recorded in **John 19:30**, it meant my sufferings are is **completed, accomplished**, **Hebrews 10:26** *there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,*

**Heb 10:12** *But this man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God*

In other words, Christ will never suffer again for our sins, He will never be put to death again for our sin.

That means believer for you, when Christ bore the load of sin, there is no load for you.

He was forsaken by God that you will never be forsaken by God. The rod, sword and stroke of God's wrath fell on Christ, so it will never fall on you.

Just as the offence against God came by man, so pardon with God comes from Christ.

One day Christ will come again but to not to suffer, rather to gather all He was put to death for, and then sentence every sinner who remains an offender and offence to God.

Which means sinners, if you die in your sins you will never have an another opportunity have your sins forgiven. You only have now to be wise unto salvation.

Confess your offences and ask Him to forgive you.

**Would you be free from your burden of sin there's power in the blood,**

*come for a cleaning to calvary's tide there's wonderful power in the blood.*

## **V FIFTH THE CONQUEST OF CHRIST'S SUFFERINGS**

Peter gives the purpose, the aim, design the conquest of Christ's sufferings, ***that He might bring us to God.***

That words ***He might bring*** are one word in the original and it means ***to led to give access***, And so we can read it that way, ***He led us to God,***

Christ died the just for unjust ***that He might bring us, lead us, give access to God.*** He suffered for sins ***that He might bring us lead us, give access to God.*** He was put to death in the flesh ***that He might bring us lead us, give access to God.***

Here is the conquest of Christ's sufferings, He died to make salvation actual. He died to save all whom the Father had given Him within the everlasting covenant. He died to bring sinners into a relationship with God.

You cannot save yourself, you cannot bring yourself to God, you cannot pardon your own offence, only Christ can make a wretch His treasure.

Believer, we have access and acceptance with God by Christ's sufferings. His conquest has guaranteed many sons to glory.