

**Subject: *Our Savior's Suffering***

**Scripture: *1 Peter 2:18-25***

Peter is dealing with the subject of submission in verse 18 and that leads him to the subject of suffering in verse 19 and following. Peter is writing here to believers. As servants (employees, workers) Christians are to submit to their masters (employers), even if they are unkind and harsh. So Peter is first addressing the matter of suffering under a bad boss or work situation. In verse 20, Peter points out that if you suffer because of his own faults or bad judgment, that's not commendable. But on the other hand, if you do what's right and suffer for it, that is worthy of praise and even more important, it is "acceptable with God."

Then in verse 21, Peter states that this is what Christians are called to do. This is part of what it means to follow Christ, and from that point on focuses on the suffering of Christ. Peter tells us there are two reasons why Christ suffered. There is a primary reason and a secondary reason for Christ's suffering. The secondary reason for His suffering is found in vs. 21.

### **1. Christ suffered as our example (vs. 21)**

As we consider this we must keep in mind that Peter is writing to Christians, to people who are already saved, and he is telling them how to live as believers. He is not saying that we are saved by following Christ as our example. If that were possible then why did Christ suffer and die on the cross. We are saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone.

*Ephesians 2:8-9*<sup>8</sup> *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:*<sup>9</sup> *Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

Once we are saved we follow Christ. As Peter states, Christ has left us an example that we should follow his steps. The word used for "example" has the idea of a copybook that has perfect handwriting. We are to be like students seeking to copy the model letters carefully. Christ is our example of living and suffering and we are to copy Him. In the text Peter describes Christ's suffering that we must follow:

- A. He suffered wrongfully (vs 19, 22) – He was without sin. He had no deceit in His words. He always spoke the truth and lived perfectly in every way, yet He suffered.
- B. He suffered patiently (vs. 20) – The word patiently means to bear up under. He suffered unfairly and greatly, yet He endured it. *Hebrews 12:2-3*<sup>2</sup> *Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.*<sup>3</sup> *For consider him that endured such contradiction (hostility) of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.*
- C. He suffered humbly (vs. 23) – He suffered their insults and threats, but did not retaliate.
- D. He suffered faithfully (vs. 23) – He entrusted Himself to His Father the righteous judge. While Jesus was on earth He committed Himself to God, knowing that justice would prevail. Christ knew that all sin against Him would either be forgiven by His blood or punished in Hell.

Christ suffered as our example. This is a reminder that we will suffer. It is our calling.

**Matthew 16:24** Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. Taking up our cross means we must deny ourselves and suffer. **Philippians 1:29** For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake. Following Christ means suffering for His sake. We must suffer wrongfully (unfairly), patiently (with endurance), humbly (without retaliating), and faithfully (committing ourselves to Him that judges righteously). As Paul reminds us in **Romans 12:19** Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

## **2. Christ suffered as our substitute (vs. 24-25)**

The first part of verse 24 is the heart of the gospel. It is referred to as substitutionary atonement, which means Christ made atonement for our sins by taking our place on the cross. He had no sin to die for, so He was able and willing to die for our sins. He took the punishment for our sins. The cross is called the tree which reminds us that Christ died under the curse of sin and for the curse of sin. Peter preached this:

**Acts 5:30** The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree.

Paul wrote about it in **Galatians 3:13** Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.

He was quoting **Deuteronomy 21:22-23** <sup>22</sup> And if a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be to be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree: <sup>23</sup> His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged is accursed of God;) that thy land be not defiled, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.

Christ died in the place of sinners and suffered the wrath of God in our place. He was the great sin-bearer and took the curse of sin for us. Christ suffered more than just physical pain from the beating and scourging and crucifixion; He suffered more than just emotional and verbal abuse from the crowd; He suffered the full wrath of God against sin. He suffered that in our place.

This truth runs all through the Bible from cover to cover. In Genesis, we see the sacrifice of a lamb for a man. In Exodus, we see the sacrifice of a lamb for a family. In Leviticus, we see the sacrifice of a lamb for the Jewish people. In John, we see Christ introduced as “the lamb that takes away the sin of the world.” In Revelation, we see the great heavenly scene:

**Revelation 5:9** And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.

**Revelation 5:12** Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.

**1 Peter 3:18** For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. This verse tells us that Christ suffered for sins. He suffered once for all, and He suffered as the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God.

**2 Corinthians 5:21** 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.

We have sin. Christ has no sin. We have no righteousness of our own. Christ is perfectly righteous. Salvation involves a blessed transaction. Christ took our sin and paid our penalty so that we might have His righteousness.

As we come to the end of chapter, 2 Peter 2:24-25 mentions three blessings we have from Christ who suffered and died for our sins:

- A. We have spiritual life – We're no longer in bondage to sin, but we're able to live a life pleasing to God, a life of righteousness.
- B. We have spiritual healing – We are healed from the guilt and shame of sin and eventually healed from all misery and suffering.
- C. We have spiritual care – We once were astray, but now we have returned to the Shepherd and overseer of our soul. Christ is the Good Shepherd who laid down His life for His sheep. He sought us and bought us with His redeeming blood, and He brought us to Himself forever.