

THE VICTORY OF CHRIST'S SUFFERING  
1 Peter 3:17-22

### Introduction

This morning we come to a passage many commentators mark as “*one of the most difficult to interpret*” (Kistemaker). When I decided to preach through 1 Peter, this was a passage that made me hesitant to do so, yet as we now come to 1 Peter 3:17-22, I find it is not really all that difficult when studied in its context. There are a lot of various interpretations concerning what Peter is saying in these verses primarily because 1) Theologians have a tendency to force passages to fit into their pre-determined theology instead adjusting their theology to fit the Scriptures, and 2) these verses are too often interpreted apart from their context. Though we will only be examining verses 17-22 this morning, I want to read the 3:13-4:6 in order to set the context. Please follow along.

### 1 Peter 3:13–4:6

<sup>13</sup> *Who is there to harm you if you prove zealous for what is good?* <sup>14</sup> *But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed. And do not fear their intimidation, and do not be troubled,* <sup>15</sup> *but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence;* <sup>16</sup> *and keep a good conscience so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ will be put to shame.* <sup>17</sup> *For it is better, if God should will it so, that you suffer for doing what is right rather than for doing what is wrong.* <sup>18</sup> *For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit;* <sup>19</sup> *in which also He went and made proclamation to the spirits now in prison,* <sup>20</sup> *who once were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through the water.* <sup>21</sup> *Corresponding to that, baptism now saves you—not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,* <sup>22</sup> *who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him.*

<sup>1</sup> *Therefore, since Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same purpose, because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,* <sup>2</sup> *so as to live the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for the lusts of men, but for the will of God.* <sup>3</sup> *For the time already past is sufficient for you to have carried out the desire of the Gentiles, having pursued a course of sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, carousing, drinking parties and abominable idolatries.* <sup>4</sup> *In all this, they are surprised that you do not run with them into the same excesses of dissipation, and they malign you;* <sup>5</sup> *but they will give account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.* <sup>6</sup> *For the gospel has for this purpose been preached even to those who are dead, that though they are judged in the flesh as men, they may live in the spirit according to the will of God.*

### Context

In order to set the context, I will begin with a summary what Peter has written to this point. In 1 Peter 3:1:1-2:10 the apostle explains the Christian's identity in Jesus Christ as someone who is chosen by God, sanctified by the Spirit and cleansed by Jesus; born again by God's mercy and redeemed by Christ's blood; a “*living stone*” being built up as a spiritual house as part of a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation and a people for God's own possession which makes believers *aliens and*

*strangers* in this world and slaves of Jesus. 1 Peter 2:11-3:12 applies that identity in Christ in relationship to submission to God in practical ways to the lines of authority that extend from God to civil institutions, the workplace and the home. In summary, we submit to human authorities because we are in submission to God which in turn limits submission to human authorities to that which is in keeping with the commands, principles and precepts of God's Word.

Last week we began our study of the third section in this letter in which Peter addresses suffering that Peter knows can arise because the Christian's allegiance is to God over any human authority. As a Christian pursues righteousness, there can be a negative reaction to that by those who are worldly and / or evil. While that vast majority of people will treat you decently if you are zealous for what is good, there will be those who are of such evil character that they will harm you for doing what is right before God. We are not to fear them, be intimidated by them or allow ourselves to be agitated by them. We are to instead fear God by sanctifying Christ as Lord in our hearts. This is demonstrated by 1) giving a defense, a reasoned explanation of our hope and faith in Christ, in a gentle and respectful manner to anyone that may ask or question it, and 2) keeping a clear conscience in our good behavior. That should put to shame those who revile you for it. Starting in verse 17, Peter points to the superiority of suffering according to God's will for doing good with Jesus Christ as the example. That is the context of the passage we are examining this morning. The suffering of Christ was God's means of His victory over sin and death. If it is kept in mind that the subordinate clauses and sentences in this passage are related to that truth, then they are not as hard to properly interpret.

### **Suffering According to the Will of God - 1 Peter 1:17**

Peter states in verse 17, "*For it is better, if God should will it so, that you suffer for doing what is right rather than for doing what is wrong.*" This is a repeat of the point he made in 2:20 and which he will expand upon in 4:16, 19. It is better, it is superior, it is an advantage to suffer for doing good rather than doing bad. There is nothing commendable about suffering for doing wrong. That should be expected as part of justice. But suffering for doing right and responding in godliness and maintaining a good conscience is commendable because it demonstrates trust that God in His providence has a plan for what is happening. It could be within God's will as part of your spiritual growth and refinement as indicated in Romans 5:3-9 and James 1:2-4. It could be part of His condemnation of the sinner or the means of bringing an understanding of the gospel. The old adage that *the blood of the Martyrs is the seed of the church* is based on that. It could be for the purpose of exalting your righteousness as in the case of Job. Starting in verse 18, Peter uses Jesus as the example of this truth for His suffering was the means of His victory over sin and death and the subjection of His enemies.

### **Victory in the Suffering of Christ - 1 Peter 1:18**

<sup>18</sup> "*For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit.*" This verse covers Jesus suffering, its extent, its substitution, its purpose and its victory.

**His Suffering.** Peter points to Jesus' suffering for sins as the example for us to follow when we suffer for righteousness. (Note - while some manuscripts have the word for died, the better reading is suffer due to context and Peter's word usage). While being forsaken by God and His death were the culmination of Jesus' suffering (Matt. 27:46-50), it also includes everything leading up to that (Luke 22:15). This would include being betrayed, illegally arrested, forsaken by His friends, tried and physically abused (Matt. 26:48-75; John 18:12-19:12) and then insulted & crucified (Matt. 27:33-50; John 19:13-37). I would add that it includes His incarnation since Philippians 2:7 explains that required Jesus to "*empty Himself, by taking on the form of a slave, being born in the likeness of man.*" It also included dwelling among men who often proved to be unbelieving and perverted (Matthew 17:17). Jesus' suffering includes every aspect of what He went through in bringing salvation from sin to man.

**Its Extent.** Jesus' suffering brought about the atonement, the sacrificial payment that covered sin, and its extent was *"once for all."* The author of Hebrews places a major emphasis on this fact because it is such a contrast to the sacrificial system in which each sin required a blood sacrifice with none of those animal sacrifices being sufficient (Leviticus 4; Hebrews 10:4). By contrast Jesus *"does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the sins of the people, because this He did once for all when He offered up Himself"* (Hebrews 7:27). Even the sacrifice made on the Day of Atonement by the High Priest was insufficient because it had to be made year by year (Hebrews 9:25). By contrast Jesus, *"through His own blood, and not through the blood of goats and calves, entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption"* (Hebrews 9:12). This is what allows us to have such confidence that all our sins are paid for so that we can be forgiven and made righteous before God. Hebrews 10:10-13 explains, <sup>10</sup> *By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.* <sup>11</sup> *Every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins;* <sup>12</sup> *but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God,* <sup>13</sup> *waiting from that time onward until His enemies be made a footstool for His feet."*

**Its Substitution.** The substitution of Jesus' life, *"the just / righteous,"* for our own, *"the unjust / unrighteous,"* is an incomprehensible demonstration of God's love and justice. Jesus is the supreme example of suffering unjustly because He is the *"holy and righteous one"* (Acts 3:14) who is without sin though tempted in all things as we (Hebrews 4:15). Yet, as Paul describes it in 2 Corinthians 5:21, *"God made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."* This enabled Jesus to be *"the just and justifier of the one that has faith in Jesus"* (Romans 3:26). This substitution is, as Paul describes in Romans 5:8, God's *"demonstration of His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."* God did this because of His own character of mercy, grace and love and nothing good in us (Titus 3:4-7).

**Its Purpose.** The purpose of Jesus' atonement for our sin was *"so that He might bring us to God."* It is sin that blocks us from being able to be in God's presence as Peter already pointed out in his quote of Psalm 34:15 in 3:12, *"For the eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous, And His ears attend to their prayer, But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil."* Isaiah 59:2 is even more direct, *"But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, And your sins have hidden His face from you so that He does not hear."* That separation is overcome by God *"reconciling us to Himself"* through *"the blood of the cross"* by which Jesus substituted His own life for our lives in payment of the penalty of sin and then imputing to us His righteousness on the basis of faith (2 Cor. 5:18; Col. 1:20; Romans 4).

The verb used here for *"might bring,"* προσάγω / prosagō, means to *"lead before," "to bring into the presence of"* (Louw-Nida) and it has two relevant uses in the Scriptures. In the Septuagint (LXX) it was used with reference to bringing priests to the door of meeting at the Tabernacle (Exodus 29:4) for only the priests had the right of close access to God. Jesus brings all who believe in Him before God giving them close access to Him as stated in Hebrews 10:19, *"We have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus."* Second, in Greek usage the word referred to right of access with a noun form of this word referring to the "introducer" who decided who did and who did not have access to the King. It is by Jesus that the believer has access to the grace of the gospel (Rom. 5:2), access to the Father (Eph. 2:18), and a bold, confident access through faith to Christ which encourages our hearts even in the midst of tribulation (Eph. 3:12-13).

**Its Victory.** Finally, the sufferings of Jesus resulted in victory over death for though Jesus *"having been put to death indeed, in the flesh,"* He was *"made alive in spirit."* This is one more verse that unequivocally states Jesus died physically. The verb here, θανατώω / thanatōō, means *"to deprive a person of life, to kill, to execute"* (Louw-Nida). That is exactly what crucifixion does. The speculations of liberal scholars that Jesus did not die on the cross of Calvary is utter nonsense and foolishness being contrary to all evidence both Biblical and extra-Biblical.

The statement that He was “*made alive in spirit*” (no article) refers to the spirit of Jesus’ life and not a direct reference to the Holy Spirit since the contrast being made (μὲν ... δὲ) is to His physical life and it is in His spirit that Jesus makes proclamation in verse 19. However, please note that all three persons of the Triune Godhead are involved in Jesus’ resurrection from death to life. The proclamation that God raised Jesus from the dead was a central aspect of the gospel messages preached by Peter and Paul in Acts, 3, 4 and 13. Paul clarifies in Romans 6:4, Galatians 1:1 and Ephesians 1:20 that the resurrection is the work of the Father. Yet Paul also makes it clear in Romans 8:11 that the Holy Spirit was at work in raising Jesus from the dead. In addition, Jesus made clear His own authority to both lay down His life and take it up again and that He would do so (John 2:19; 10:18). Jesus’ suffering resulted in victory over sin and death.

### **Proclamation of Christ’s Victory - 1 Peter 3:19-20**

**Proclamation to the Spirits.** Peter then continues in verses 19-20 to emphasize this victory by revealing what Jesus did after He said “*It is finished! And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit*” (John 19:30). <sup>19</sup> *in which also He went and made proclamation to the spirits now in prison,* <sup>20</sup> *who once were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through the water.*

Jesus, in His spirit, went and made a proclamation, κηρύσσω / kārussō, a declaration of an event, with the immediate context indicating the proclamation is His victory over sin on the cross and victory over death by being made alive. Satan and his forces had worked hard to bring about Jesus’ crucifixion at Calvary, but it resulted in defeat for him and victory for Jesus.

Jesus makes His proclamation to “*the spirits now in prison.*” Who are these spirits? What is known is that they were disobedient during the days of Noah and their refusal to obey God’s commands was of such a nature that they were put in prison, φυλακή / phulakā, some place of confinement from which they could not escape as they await final judgment. After that it is somewhat speculative whether these are the spirits of especially heinous demons that have been imprisoned in Tartarus (2 Peter 2:4) or of very evil men imprisoned in the section of Hades which holds wicked people (Luke 16:22-26). There are good arguments pro and con for both views which I am not going to resolve in this sermon because those details are not Peter’s point which is that Jesus proclaimed to these spirits that His suffering resulted in victory over sin and death.

Note as well that Jesus’ proclamation of His victory was also a declaration of condemnation to these spirits and not some sort of additional chance for salvation. Demons cannot be redeemed, and Hebrews 9:27 is quite blunt about people - “*it is appointed for men to die once, and after this, judgment.*” The context here is already one of God’s great patience giving plenty of opportunity to repent and be saved. There are no more opportunities after death.

**Their Disobedience, God’s Patience, Noah’s Rescue.** Peter puts the time period of the disobedience of these spirits during the days of Noah. Genesis 6:5 describes the evil of those days - “*Then the Yahweh saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.*” That grieved Yahweh resulting in Him determining to destroy mankind with a flood. Yet, Yahweh extended grace to Noah and his family instructing them to build an ark in which they and a pair of all the kinds of land dwelling animals could survive.

From the reference in Genesis 6:3, it is generally accepted that it took one hundred and twenty years for the ark to be built, and during that time God was patient with evil man and also made Noah “*a preacher of righteousness*” (2 Peter 2:5). There was plenty of time for people to hear and heed the warnings of Noah, yet, when it came time to enter the ark, only Noah and his family, a total of eight people, did so. The rest of mankind refused, and once the door was shut it was too late. The flood came and washed away all of the ungodly.

Why does Peter bring up Noah? First, because it is during his days that these spirits committed their evils. Second, because he is another example of a righteous man who suffered according to the will of God and was blessed for it. Keep in mind that is the point Peter is making in this passage starting from verse 17.

### **Baptism & Salvation - 1 Peter 3:21**

In bringing up Noah and his family as a type of salvation in being brought safely through the water of the flood, Peter brings up Baptism as something that corresponds to it in salvation. There are wide ranging discussions in the commentaries on this. Some are very thoughtful and others quite speculative due to the reasons I stated at the beginning of the sermon. They try to force the text into their theology or they try to interpret it out of its context. Again, the context here is that is better to suffer for righteousness according to the will of God instead of suffering for evil.

The term corresponding here is ἀντίτυπος / antitypos which is transliterated as antitype. It is properly the impression or mark left by a type such as the impression in wax made by the seal, or as used in Hebrews 9:24 which refers to the holy place in the temple which is a copy of the one in heaven. Peter uses God's salvation of Noah and his family via the ark from the waters as the flood as the type and baptism as the antitype. Or to put it another way, Peter uses God's salvation of Noah as an example of salvation in baptism. What then is the relationship between baptism and salvation?

I will take some time to answer this question because there are many erroneous ideas about baptism and a wrong belief can be the difference between spending eternity in heaven or eternity in Hell. There are many religious groups that seek to make physical baptism the means of salvation and in doing so pervert the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ from being saved by God's grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone into salvation by a religious work of righteousness. That is contrary to many scriptures that are very direct that salvation from sin is not the result of any human work (Romans 3:20, 27-28; 11:6; Eph. 2:8-9; 2 Timothy 1:9; Titus 3:3-5).

Many of you were baptized as babies in a liturgical religion such as Roman Catholicism as a means of salvation. Some of these religions teach that baptism removes original sin so that you can be good enough to earn your salvation. Others teach infant baptism is a rite that joins you to the community of faith that protects you from hell until the age of accountability at which time your profession of belief at confirmation becomes the means of salvation. Mixed in with this are those that teach baptismal regeneration that may or may not be joined with some profession of faith. For such religious groups, baptism is a means of salvation instead of an expression of salvation. 1 Peter 3:21 is a verse to which they will turn in order to back up their beliefs. The other is Acts 2:38 which I will deal with in a few minutes.

First, what 1 Peter 3:21 refers to by "*baptism now saves you*" has nothing to do with the water itself. Note first that water is not the type to the antitype of baptism because Noah was saved because he was in the ark that rode above and through the water of the flood. The water was the danger to Noah's life and not the means of his salvation.

Note next that the word baptism, βαπτίζω / baptizo, means to dip or immerse, and for that reason it was used with reference to washing things or dying fabric. You dip what is dirty in water to remove the dirt. You immerse fabric into dye in order for it to take on the color qualities of the dye. Both of those ideas have a symbolic meaning in Christian baptism, but Peter directly states here that this baptism that saves is "*not the removal of dirt from the flesh.*" So Peter is not talking about the physical aspects of religious baptism, he is talking about something else.

Second, Peter states that the baptism that now saves you is "*an appeal to God for a good conscience - through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.*" That also shows Peter is talking about a spiritual reality beyond any physical religious ritual and ties it to verse 15-16 in sanctifying Christ as Lord in your heart by giving a defense of the hope with in you and keeping a good conscience. The word appeal,

ἐπερώτημα / eperōtāma, also translated as “pledge,” is a technical term used in making contracts related to affirming the acceptance of the conditions of the contract. The condition of salvation is belief in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ which Peter marks here as *the resurrection of Jesus Christ*. To believe in Jesus requires repentance, a change of mind about sin, self and the savior, in order to turn to believe and trust Him. Paul states in Romans 10:9-10 with regard to the word of faith, the gospel which he was preaching, <sup>9</sup> “*that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved;* <sup>10</sup> *for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation,*” and then in verse 13, “*Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.*” The sinner humbly seeks God for cleansing of the heart as David does in Psalm 51. That is the source of a good conscience. The tie to the rite of Christian baptism is what Paul describes in Romans 6. The believer identifies with the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus in their baptism having their old self crucified with Him and put to death, buried, and then risen to newness of life. This is the symbolic cleansing aspect of baptism reflecting the reality of being cleaned by faith in Christ’s atonement (Hebrews 9:14) and confession (1 John 1:9). This symbolism is an additional reason we practice baptism by complete immersion as well as following the meaning of the word.

Noah found grace in the eyes of Yahweh, and Noah believed Yahweh and so he built the ark which kept him and his family safe from the waters of the flood which brought death to the rest of wicked mankind. God’s grace is extended to mankind to save from sin all who will believe in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. They are baptized with the Holy Spirit and radically changed to become new creations in Christ to walk in newness of life with a pure heart, a good conscience and sincere faith (1 Timothy 1:5). The symbolism of baptism as a dye reflect the reality that in being baptized by the Holy Spirit we take on some of His qualities demonstrated in His fruit in our lives (Galatians 5:22-23).

There is no question that the ritual of water baptism is important to Christians since Jesus commanded in the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20 that those who would be His disciples were to be baptized. It was the immediate practice on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2 and throughout the rest of Acts. No epistle has to encourage Christians to get baptized since that was not a problem. Early church history does not record any problem of believers refusing to be baptized or of even putting it off. That is a more recent phenomena.

Certainly part of a good conscience for a Christian will be found in obeying the commands of Jesus which includes being baptized. However, as important then is Christian baptism it must be emphasized that baptism is a result of salvation and not a means lest faith be placed in the ritual instead of the reason for it. Some will point to Acts 2:38 as a proof text that baptism is required for salvation, so let me quickly deal with that text.

After Peter’s sermon on the Day of Pentecost, many were pierced to the heart and asked what they should do. Peter answered, <sup>38</sup> *Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.* <sup>39</sup> *For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself.”*

First, the preposition translated as “for” (εἰς / eis) that links forgiveness of sins to repentance and baptism is not definitive because it can mean either baptized “*for the purpose of*” or “*because of.*” What Peter means will have be determined by other factors such as Peter linking forgiveness of sin with repentance independent of baptism in his next sermon (Acts 3:19), his defense before the Sanhedrin (Acts 5:31) and his message to Cornelius (Acts 10:43). It should also be kept in mind that those present on that Day of Pentecost would have linked Peter’s call to repent and be baptized with John’s earlier message which included a baptism of repentance. They most likely would have used the many Mikvahs, the ceremonial baths, at the south end of the Temple mount to baptize that many people so quickly.

Another evidence baptism is a result of salvation and not a means of it is Acts 10:44 when the Holy Spirit came upon Cornelius and those with him while Peter was still speaking and these Gentiles being baptized after the fact (Acts 10:47-48). Peter later points out that this baptism with the Holy Spirit was the fulfillment of what Jesus had said would happen and all then agreed that God had granted the Gentiles also the repentance to life (Acts 11:1-18). It is the baptism with the Holy Spirit that places you into Christ body, the church (1 Corinthians 12:13), and it is the Holy Spirit that is the seal of a person's salvation (Ephesians 1:13).

It should also be noted that Paul's statement in 1 Corinthians 1:17 that "*Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel*" would not make much sense if baptism was necessary for salvation. And finally, it is extremely significant that major passages giving clear gospel presentations such as Romans 3:21-30; 10:9-10; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11; Galatians 2:16; Ephesians 2:1-10 and Philippians 3:7-14 do not mention baptism and neither does 1 John even though its very purpose was "*written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, in order that you might know that you have eternal life*" (1 John 5:13).

Baptism is extremely important in life as a Christian and should be one of the first acts of obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ. However, salvation comes only by God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ and not by any works or righteousness we have done. It is in Jesus Christ alone that we have redemption, the forgiveness of sin (Eph. 1:7).

Please pick up the paper on Christian Baptism in the literature rack for more about baptism and preparation for it if you have not been baptized since making a profession of faith in Jesus Christ.

### **The Victory of Jesus Christ - 1 Peter 3:21-22**

Peter concludes this passage with a return to the victories of Jesus as the example of the superiority of suffering for righteousness when it is according to the will of God.

**Victory Over Death** is the first he mentions since the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is a core belief of salvation. As Paul explains in 1 Corinthians 15, without the resurrection of Jesus, there is no hope for the Christian or anyone else. There is no gospel.

**Victory in Position of Authority** is the second point Peter makes. Jesus "*is at the right hand of God, having gone to heaven.*" As recorded in Act 1, Peter was present along with the rest of the apostles to see Jesus physically ascend into the clouds of heaven and had the angel then tell them "*Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven.*"

The right hand of God is the position of authority for it is viewed as the hand of strength and ability. Jesus Himself said in Matthew 26:64 that He would be "*sitting at the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds.*" In his defense before the Sanhedrin in Acts 5:31 Peter boldly proclaimed to them that Jesus "*is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as Prince and a Savior . . .*" Paul includes a reference to Jesus being seated at God's right hand in Romans 8:34; Ephesians 1:20 and Colossians 3:1. The writer of Hebrews references Jesus being seated at God's right hand five times with three of those stating it was after He had endured the cross making one sacrifice of purification for sin for all time and that it is His position as high priest from which He intercedes for us (Hebrews 1:3, 13; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2). Peter may be making an allusion to Psalm 110:1 here, "*The Lord says to my Lord: "Sit at My right hand Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet,"*" for he next points out Jesus' victory in subjugating His enemies.

**Victory In Subjugation of Enemies.** Jesus is "*at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him.*" The good angels were already in submission to Jesus and ministered to Him. The evil angels are now subjected to him along with authorities and powers too, which according to Ephesians 6:12 are ranks within the demonic host. Note that the timing of Jesus ascension is after angels, authorities and powers had been subjected to Him.

Jesus' death as the payment for sin and resurrection made them subject to Him which would have been part of His proclamation to the spirits now in prison. What Peter says is in complete agreement with what Paul states in Ephesians 1:19-21.

*“ . . . These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might <sup>20</sup> which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, <sup>21</sup> far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.”*

### **Conclusions**

Do not be dismayed if it is within God's will that you suffer for the sake of righteousness. God has a plan for it even if you do not yet know what that is. Peter points to Jesus as the supreme example of the blessing God can bring about even from the midst of suffering. The cross became the place of triumph, not defeat. I like how William Barclay expressed it. *“Christ the sufferer has become Christ the victor; Christ the crucified has become Christ the crowned.”*



## Introduction

Improper interpretations often arise from forcing passages into a theological box & interpreting \_\_\_\_\_

## Context

1 Peter 3:1:1-2:10 - The Christians' \_\_\_\_\_ in Jesus Christ

1 Peter 2:11-3:12 - Submission to \_\_\_\_\_ and the lines of authority extending from Him

1 Peter 3:13-17 - Responding in \_\_\_\_\_ when you suffer for doing what is right before God

## Suffering According to the Will of God - 1 Peter 1:17

It is better, it is superior, it is an advantage to suffer for doing \_\_\_\_\_ rather than doing bad & is commendable

God is at \_\_\_\_\_ to accomplish His will even when you do not understand what He is doing / allowing or why

## Victory in the Suffering of Christ - 1 Peter 1:18

Peter points to Jesus' \_\_\_\_\_ for sins as the example for us to follow when we suffer for righteousness

Jesus' suffering includes everything \_\_\_\_\_ its culmination in His being forsaken by God & death

The extent of Jesus' atonement was " \_\_\_\_\_ " (Heb. 7:27; 9:12, 25; 10:10-13)

The \_\_\_\_\_ was the "*the just for the unjust*" - the supreme example of suffering unjustly & love

Jesus did this so that He might \_\_\_\_\_ you to God by removing the sin that causes the separation - Isa 59:2; Col 1:20

Bring, προσάγω / prosagō, 1) to bring a priest to door of meeting at the Tabernacle. 2) to give \_\_\_\_\_ to the king

Jesus was put to death, θανάτω / thanatō, \_\_\_\_\_

He was "*made alive in spirit*" - resurrection from death to \_\_\_\_\_. Father, Son & Holy Spirit were all involved

## Proclamation of Christ's Victory - 1 Peter 3:19-20

Jesus, in His spirit, went & made a proclamation / declaration of His \_\_\_\_\_ over sin & death

Whether *the spirits now in prison* are demons in Tartarus or evil men in Hades is \_\_\_\_\_ to Peter's point

It is a message of their \_\_\_\_\_ for demons cannot be redeemed & men die once & are judged (Heb. 9:27)

The period of their disobedience was during the days of \_\_\_\_\_ when the wickedness of man was especially great

God's \_\_\_\_\_ is seen in that during the 120 years of building the ark, Noah was also a preacher of righteousness

Noah is mentioned because it was during His days these spirits committed their evil, & Noah is another \_\_\_\_\_

## Baptism & Salvation - 1 Peter 3:21

Baptism corresponds to / is the \_\_\_\_\_ of God's salvation of Noah during the flood

Salvation is not the result of any \_\_\_\_\_ work (Rom 3:20, 27-28; 11:6; Eph. 2:8-9; 2 Tim 1:9; Titus 3:3-5)

Any baptism done as a \_\_\_\_\_ of salvation instead of an expression of salvation is contrary to Biblical teaching

The baptism in 1 Peter 3:21 is \_\_\_\_\_. Water was the danger to Noah's life, not the means of his safety

Peter directly states this is baptism is "*not the removal of dirt from the flesh*" eliminating \_\_\_\_\_ as the agent

This Baptism is \_\_\_\_\_ in nature - *an appeal to God for a good conscience*

Appeal, ἐπερώτημα / eperōtāma, (pledge) is a technical term for \_\_\_\_\_ the conditions of a contract

Salvation from sin requires repentance to \_\_\_\_\_ and confess the person and work of Jesus - Rom. 10:9-10

Romans 6 - baptism is a \_\_\_\_\_ the old self is crucified with Jesus & the new self is risen to newness of life  
Noah was saved because he found \_\_\_\_\_ in the eyes of Yahweh, believed Him and therefore obeyed Him  
Salvation is by God's \_\_\_\_\_ through faith in Jesus & baptism by the Holy Spirit to be new creations (1 Tim 1:5)  
Baptism is an \_\_\_\_\_ Christian rite (ordinance) done in obedience to Jesus command - Matthew 28:18-20  
Baptism is a \_\_\_\_\_ of salvation by God's grace through faith in Christ and not a means of salvation  
Acts 2:38 - can be translated as \_\_\_\_\_ baptized . . . "for the purpose of" or "because of" . . . forgiveness of sins  
Peter links forgiveness of sin with repentance \_\_\_\_\_ of baptism in Acts 3:19; 5:31 & 10:43  
On the Day of Pentecost, the people would have linked Peter's call to repent & be baptized with \_\_\_\_\_ baptism  
In Acts 10:44-48 the Holy Spirit came upon the Gentiles, fulfilling Jesus' promise, \_\_\_\_\_ they were baptized  
Major passages on salvation (Rom 3:21-30; 10:9-10; 1 Cor 15:1-11; Gal 2:16; Eph 2:1-10, Phil 3:7-14) -  
\_\_\_\_\_ Baptism nor does 1 John though it was written for that purpose  
Baptism is extremely \_\_\_\_\_, but salvation comes on only by God's grace through faith in Jesus

### **The Victory of Jesus Christ - 1 Peter 3:21-22**

**Victory Over Death** - the resurrection of Jesus was His \_\_\_\_\_ over death - and it is a core belief of the gospel

**Victory in Position of Authority**- Jesus is at the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Father (Mt. 26:64; Acts 5:31; Col 3:1; Heb 1:3)

**Victory In Subjugation of Enemies** - Jesus ascends after \_\_\_\_\_ all things to Himself - Eph. 1:19-21

### **Conclusions**

Do not be \_\_\_\_\_ if it is within God's will that you suffer for the sake of righteousness for God has a plan for it

*Christ the sufferer has become Christ the victor; Christ the crucified has become Christ the crowned.* (W. Barclay)

### **KIDS KORNER**

Parents, you are responsible to apply God's Word to your children's lives. Here is some help.

**Young Children** - draw a picture about something you hear during the sermon. Explain your picture(s) to your parents at lunch. **Older Children** - Do one or more of the following: 1) Write down all the verses mentioned in the sermon and look them up later. 2) Count how many times the word "victory" is used. 2) Discuss with your parents the victories of Jesus that came about because of His suffering for righteousness

### **THINK ABOUT IT!**

Questions to consider in discussing the sermon with others. What is the context of 1 Peter 3:17-22? What reasons may there be for it to be within God's will for Christians to suffer for righteousness? What is included in Jesus' suffering for sins? What victories did Jesus' suffering bring about? What is the extent of those victories? What is the importance of Jesus substitution - *the just for the unjust*? How does Jesus *bring us to God*? What spirit is Peter referencing in 3:18? What proclamation is made to *the spirits now in prison*? What spirits could these be? What prison could this be? Why is a clear identity of both the spirits and the prison irrelevant to Peter's point? Is there any possibility of redemption / saving faith after death has already occurred? Why does Peter refer to Noah? How did God exhibit His patience in the days of Noah? What were people like at that time? How is baptism in 3:21 the antitype of what Peter writes in 3:20? Can any human work of righteousness save an individual? Why or why not? What are some of the reasons that some Christian sects baptize infants? Can such baptism save them? Why or why not? Is a person saved from sin before or after Christian baptism? Explain. Does the baptism mentioned in 3:21 involved water? Explain. How was the life of Noah & his family preserved? What is the meaning of the word, baptize? What baptism is being referred to in 3:21? Explain. According to Roman 6, what is the purpose of baptism? Does Acts 2:38 require baptism for salvation? Why or why not? Why is baptism important? Have you been baptized since professing faith in Jesus as the Lord & Savior? If not, why not? When will you get baptized? Jesus suffering resulted in victory over death, victory in authority of position and victory over His enemies (3:21-22). Explain each.