

The Triumphant Suffering of Christ

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1 Peter / 1 Peter 1:18–22

INTRODUCTION

1. We are just one week away from celebrating the resurrection of Jesus Christ (and)
2. It is only by God's providence that we find ourselves where we are today in 1 Peter chapter 3
3. Please take God's Word and turn to 1 Peter chapter 3
4. In this last section of chapter 3, Peter gives us the consequences of Christ's suffering
5. He uses this to identify their suffering with Christ's
6. Just as they suffered unjustly for righteousness sake, so did Christ
7. But as Peter makes his point, he also gives us information on how Christ's suffering brought about His triumph
8. Notice what Peter says beginning in verse 18
9. Read [1 Peter 3:18-22](#).
10. The word triumph means, an "instance or occasion of victory" (Dictionary.com)
11. The death and resurrection of Jesus was certainly that
12. It was victory over death, over sin, over hell and over Satan
13. As we look at verses 18-22, Peter talks about that victory in "the triumphant sufferings of Christ"
14. He does that by making two points
15. The first point talks about Christ's suffering itself
16. The second talks about His triumph over the enemy
17. Let's notice the first point in verse 18

· Peter says...

LESSON

I. Christ Also Suffered (v.18a-c)

“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”

> He says...

a. He “died” (pascho, aor.act.ind.) the aorist indicates a past event

> Scripture teaches that “Christ also died”

The use of “also” indicates that Christ suffered too

i. [Romans 5:6](#) says He “died”

ii. [Titus 2:14](#) says Christ “gave Himself for us”

iii. [Hebrews 9:26](#) says He “sacrificed...Himself”

iv. [Matthew 27:45-50](#), “45 Now from the sixth hour darkness fell upon all the land until the ninth hour. 46 About the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?” that is, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” 47 And some of those who were standing there, when they heard it, began saying, “This man is calling for Elijah.” 48 Immediately one of them ran, and taking a sponge, he filled it with sour wine and put it on a reed, and gave Him a drink. 49 But the rest of them said, “Let us see whether Elijah will come to save Him.” 50 And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit.”

> Scripture also teaches...

b. He died “once” (hapax, adv) used together with the aorist (died) indicates the uniqueness of Christ’s work as something that cannot be repeated” (DEH). He died “once” and “never again” (Louw-Nida)

1 Peter a. The Portrayal of His Suffering (v. 18a)

The once-for-all offering of Christ stands in contrast to the annual sacrifice of the Jewish high priest on the Day of Atonement and portrays the absolute sufficiency of His atoning work

i. [Romans 6:10](#) says, “...He died...once for all”

ii. [Hebrews 9:28](#) says, “Christ...having been offered once”

> Christ died once and Peter tells us why

c. He died once “for sin”

1 Peter a. The Portrayal of His Suffering (v. 18a)

According to Whedon, the preposition peri (“for”) “represents Christ throwing himself down upon and around sins in such a manner that the falling curse of the broken law would surely strike him.”

“for sins” (peri harmartias) is used in the LXX for the sin offering ([Lev.5:7](#); [6:30](#)) and conveys the thought of atonement (DEH)

Peter doesn't say Jesus died on account for His own sin but for the sins of the "unjust"

[Romans 4:25](#), "He who was delivered over because of our transgressions, and was raised because of our justification."

[2 Corinthians 5:21](#), "He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."

"the just (righteous, NIV) for the unjust (unrighteous, NIV)" speaks of the character of Christ and those who benefit from His death

He is "the just" or "righteous" who died for the "unjust" or "unrighteous"

[Zec.9:9](#), "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, Humble, and mounted on a donkey, Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey."

[1 John 2:1](#) refers to Him as "Jesus Christ the righteous"

> Peter already stated in...

i. [1 Peter 2:24](#), "and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed."

ii. [Isaiah 53:6](#), "...the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him."

iii. [Romans 5:8](#), "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

iv. [Galatians 1:4](#), "who gave Himself for our sins..."

> Not only did He die once for our sins but He also died...

d. He died to "bring us to God"

i. His once for all death for our sin "brings us to God"

ii. The compound verb "bring" (prosagage) in the aorist tense implies actual entry into an intimate personal relationship (DEH)

iii. [Ephesians 2:13](#), "But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ."

iv. [Colossians 1:21-22](#), "21 And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, 22 yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach—"

> Peter again refers to Christ's death by assuring his readers that...

e. He was "put to death in the flesh"

i. This is an aorist passive participle that recalls the violent action of men against Him in crucifying Him (DEH)

- ii. “In the flesh” (sarki) points to the reality of His death as a real human being (DEH)
- iii. “flesh” refers to the humanity that Christ assumed at the incarnation ([Jn.1:14](#); [1 Tim.3:16](#))

· Peter now launches into how...

II. Christ Triumphed (vv.18d-22)

“but made alive in the spirit; 19 in which also He went and made proclamation to the spirits now in prison, 20 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. 21 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, 22 who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him.”

- a. By being “made alive in the spirit” (v.18d)
 - i. This phrase is the antithesis of the previous phrase “being put to death in the flesh”
 - ii. It is literally “on the one hand...on the other hand” (DEH)
 - iii. The construction in Greek is identical
 - iv. So “on the one hand He was put to death in the flesh” and “on the other hand He was made alive in the spirit”
 - v. What does “made alive in the spirit” mean?
 - vi. Is spirit referring to the Holy Spirit or His human spirit?
 - vii. Some translations use a capital “S” to indicate it’s the Holy Spirit
 - viii. Other translations, like the NASB, use the lower case “s” to refer to His human spirit
 - ix. You have good men on both sides
 - x. Charles Spurgeon takes it as referring to the Holy Spirit
 - xi. Martin Luther refers to it as His human spirit
 - xii. D. Edmond Hiebert takes it as referring to the Holy Spirit
 - xiii. John MacArthur refers to it as His human spirit
 - xiv. Which is it?
 - xv. In addition to good men, there are also good arguments so it is a matter of interpretation
 - xvi. We can note a couple of things by looking first at the text:

1. The word Spirit (pneuma) is without the definite article which gives support to His human spirit rather than the Holy Spirit
 2. Plus if you're using it as a contrast to the flesh, you can only do that with His human spirit and not the Holy Spirit
- xvii. In addition to this, there is no textual basis to capitalize the "S" and refer it to the Holy Spirit
 - xviii. The three oldest and best Greek manuscripts are entirely in capital letters (Vaticanus, Sinaiticus [4th century], Alexandrinus [5th century])
 - xix. Nestle in his text does not capitalize the "s" which tells us this is a textual interpretation just like we see in our translations (KJV, NIV capitalizes the "S", NAS doesn't)
 - xx. It is true the Holy Spirit raised Jesus from the dead according to [Romans 8:11](#).
 - xxi. But here Peter is contrasting the flesh with the spirit
 - xxii. So he says Jesus "having put to death in the flesh," and death means separation, then "but made alive in the spirit"
 - xxiii. The question that comes out of this is in the last phrase, "does it assume that He had been dead in spirit?"
 - xxiv. Does it assume that at some point in the death on the cross He had died spiritually?
 - xxv. According to [Matthew 27:46](#) and [Luke 23:46](#) something did happen while He was on the cross
 - xxvi. Jesus said [in Matthew 27:46](#), "...My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"
 - xxvii. At this point there was some kind of separation from God, not a cessation of existence (none of us cease to exist, we are either separated from God or united with Him, depending on whether you're a believer in Christ or not)
 - xxviii. Then in verse 50, "Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit."
 - xxix. [Luke 23:46](#) tells us what He said, "...Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit." Having said this, He breathed His last.
 - xxx. [In Matthew 27:46](#) He addresses Him as "My God, My God"
 - xxxi. [In Luke 23:46](#) He addresses Him as "Father"
 - xxxii. So whatever experience of spiritual separation He had was only for a moment, when He was made sin
 - xxxiii. And then again His spirit was made alive and He committed it to God

xxxiv. Peter's point here must be that though Jesus' body was dead, He remained alive in His spirit

xxxv. And it was when Jesus' body was in the tomb, His divine human spirit "went and made proclamation to the spirits now in prison" (v.19)

› This shows us the second way Christ triumphed...

b. By making proclamation to the imprisoned demons (vv.19-20)

i. How did He do that?

ii. Peter said He "went and made proclamation to the spirits now in prison"

1. "proclamation" (kerysso, aor.act.ind.) means "to announce", "proclaim" or "herald"
2. He heralded His triumph to the enemy by announcing His triumph over sin, death, hell, demons and Satan
3. He directed His proclamation "to the spirits" who were "now in prison (phylake, actual place)"
4. [Revelation 9:1-2](#) calls this "prison" the "bottomless pit" or lit. the "pit of the abyss"
5. [2 Peter 2:4](#), "For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell (tartarus not gehenna) and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment;"
6. [Jude 1:6](#), "And angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, He has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day,"
7. Some demons pleaded with Jesus not to be sent to this place in [Luke 8:31](#), "They were imploring Him not to command them to go away into the abyss."

› Verse 20 says...

iii. These spirits were disobedient (v.20a)

1. Peter tells us who these "spirit" are and when they were "disobedient"
2. [Genesis 6](#) refers to them as "the sons of God" which is a reference used only of angels ([Job 1:6](#); [2:1](#)), in this case, fallen angels or demons
3. [Genesis 6:1-4](#), "1 Now it came about, when men began to multiply on the face of the land, and daughters were born to them, 2 that the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves, whomever they chose. 3 Then the Lord said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, because he also is flesh; nevertheless his days shall be one hundred and twenty years." 4 The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown."

1 Peter: The MacArthur New Testament Commentary Christ's Triumphant Sermon

The oldest interpretation, the traditional Jewish view of ancient rabbis and modern Jewish commentators, as well as of the church fathers, is that “the sons of God” were demons, or fallen angels. The context of judgment in the Flood precludes holy angels from being in view (see Gordon J. Wenham, Genesis 1–15, Word Biblical Commentary [Waco, Tex.: Word, 1987], 1:139).

4. These “disobedient” fallen angels are the demons who cohabited with human women in Satan’s failed attempt to corrupt the human race

› Peter, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, tells us when this took place

iv. This was in the days of Noah (v.20b)

1. This is “when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah”
2. The “patience of God” was seen by Noah preaching for 120 years to the world to repent
 - a. [Genesis 6:3](#), “Then the Lord said, “My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, because he also is flesh; nevertheless his days shall be one hundred and twenty years.””
 - b. [Hebrews 11:7](#), “By faith Noah, being warned by God about things not yet seen, in reverence prepared an ark for the salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world, and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.”
3. All this occurred during the construction of the ark (v.20c) prior to the Flood (v.20d)

The MacArthur Study Bible Chapter 3

so that even 120 years of Noah’s preaching, while the ark was being built, could not convince any of the human race beyond the 8 people in Noah’s family to believe in God (see notes on 2 Pet. 2:4, 5; Jude 6, 7; cf. Gen. 6:1–8). Thus God bound these demons permanently in the abyss until their final sentencing.

› Peter mentions being immersed into Christ as a result of the “eight persons [who] were brought safely through the water”

› So in verse 21 he talks about this immersion or baptism and uses...

4. The typology of the flood with baptism (v.21)

Peter says, “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”

- a. “Corresponding” is antitypos, means “a copy” (LXGNTLEX), an “antitype” (LXGNTLEX) or a “representation” (DBL Greek) or as the NIV translates “symbolizes”

- b. The early church often interpreted Scripture typologically. Persons, things, and events of the Old Testament were held to be types of their New Testament counterparts. (Robert H. Mounce, *A Living Hope: A Commentary on 1 and 2 Peter*, (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2005), 58.)
- c. Peter understood the salvation of Noah and his family as a prefiguration of Christian baptism: “and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also.” (D. Edmond Hiebert, *1 Peter*, (Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books, 1997), 246.)
- d. That is why Peter mentions baptism with the ark and Flood
- e. “Corresponding” or a “representation” or “type” of ark is baptism
- f. Just as the ark was salvation from the Flood where Noah and his family in the ark passed through the Flood waters to a new world, so is baptism, which pictures the believer’s passage from the old life to the new
- g. D. Edmond Hiebert says, “It is more probable that similarity or correspondence is all that is meant.”
- h. But Peter helps us to understand what he means when he says, “baptism now saves you”
- i. He says how baptism saves you at the end of verse 21, “through the resurrection of Jesus Christ”
- j. It’s “not the removal of dirt from the flesh”
- k. This is only meant as a representation of Noah and his family on the ark passing through the flood waters of God’s judgment
- l. He’s not talking about a water baptism but a dry one, one of faith
- m. The water was the judgment that fell on the ark
- n. As long as they were in the ark they were safe
- o. The same is also pictured in baptism in Christ
- p. Believers escape God’s wrath by being immersed into Christ
- q. And you are immersed into Christ through faith in Christ
- r. The believer who is in Christ is in the ark of safety and will sail over the waters of judgment into eternal glory (MSB)
- s. What saves a person plagued by sin is the “appeal to God for a good conscience” which comes through faith in Jesus Christ
- t. The appeal is for God to place them into the spiritual ark of salvation safety (JM)
- u. This appeal (*eperotema*, noun) is a “pledge” (Mounce) “to God for a good conscience”

- v. That “good conscience” comes through faith in Jesus Christ ([Rom.10:9-10](#))
- w. Some have used this verse to teach baptismal regeneration failing to understand the rest of the verse
- x. [Colossians 2:12](#), “having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.”

› Charles Spurgeon said...

1 Peter Exposition

If He was humiliated for us, He is also exalted for us. If He Himself once stooped to come near to us, He now lifts us up from our low estate and brings us near to Himself in His glory. It is not only that He is partaker of our lowliness, but we are partakers of His exaltation. The fellowship is full and complete, for while He takes upon Himself our fall, we, on the other hand, partake in His rising again. He comes down to us in His incarnation, but He calls us up to Him in His ascension. He wears our garb of poverty by bearing our flesh, but He robes us in His splendor as He bears our nature into heaven.

› Peter concludes with the...

5. The ultimate triumph of Jesus (vv.22)

› He notes two things that reveals His ultimate triumph

› First...

a. He is at the “right hand of God, having gone into heaven”

i. To be at the “right hand of God” is a place of honor and authority

1. [Ephesians 1:20-23](#), “20 which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, 21 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. 22 And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, 23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.”

2. [Hebrews 1:3](#), “And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,”

ii. To be at the right hand of God also signifies God’s acceptance of His sacrifice of Himself for sin

› That’s the first of His ultimate triumph, being at the right hand of God

> The second is...

b. “angels and authorities and powers” have “been subjected to Him”

i. This indicates different groups or ranks of angels

ii. It could be angels of authority and angels of power

iii. Or it could be 3 categories of angels

Wayne Grudem says, “The three terms can be applied to both good and evil spiritual beings elsewhere in Scripture, and without specific restrictions in the context it is best to understand them as a reference to all spiritual beings in the universe, both good and evil.”

iv. Either ways, all are “subjected to Him”

v. [Psalm 8:6](#), “You make him to rule over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet,”

CONCLUSION

1. Our Savior has triumphed in victory

2. His death and resurrection was triumph over death, sin, demons and Satan

3. His suffering unto death led to His triumph

4. The same is true to all those who suffer for righteousness sake

5. Suffering then can be the context for one’s greatest triumph

6. The question lies is how you respond when you’re suffering

7. Do you follow the example of Jesus in 2:21-23?

8. Does your’e suffering cause you to draw closer to God?

9. Jesus suffered at the hands of wicked men for one reason

10. It’s all given in His name

11. [Matthew 1:21](#), “She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.”

12. If you’re here today and have never been saved from your sins, then you do not understand the reason for Jesus coming

13. His love for you compelled Him to pay the price for your sin Himself

14. When you place your complete trust in Him by turning from your sin, He saves you and grants you eternal life with Him

15. Will you come to Him now? Let's pray.