

HC 37 – Nature of Christ’s Suffering in life and death

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: Suppose a fireman died a horrible death while rescuing you from a fire in your house, what would you do? Wouldn’t you want to learn how you could show your thankfulness? If you learned there was a fund set up to help his wife and children, wouldn’t you donate? Would you support a plaque to honor that man at City Hall? Wouldn’t you like to go on television and tell the world what that man did for you?

Of course you would!

Hear today what Jesus did for you in life and in death and then hear how you must respond to him.

Our headings are:

Jesus Christ’s **Suffering During his Life**

Jesus Christ’s **Suffering During his Death**

Jesus **Christ saves you by his suffering in his life and in his death.**

Our goals are: **That you won’t treat Christ’s suffering in life and in death for you as an insignificant fact, but will love him and show that love by worshipping him and telling the world about him.**

37 Q. WHAT DO YOU UNDERSTAND BY THE WORD “SUFFERED”?

A. That **during his whole life** on earth, but **especially at the end**, Christ sustained in body and soul the anger of God against the sin of the whole human race. This he did in order that, by his suffering as the only **atoning sacrifice, he might set us free**, body and soul, from eternal condemnation, and **gain** for us God’s **grace, righteousness, and eternal life.**

Jesus Christ’s Suffering During his Life

1. Jesus Christ suffered throughout his life in his body.

- a. He **faced hunger and thirst**. His travels often caused him to go without water and food.
- b. He often had **no place to rest his head**. His pillow was a stone.
- c. He **traveled without shelter in 40C weather** in the day and very **cold temperatures** at night.
- d. He was often **tired** from his journeys to preach the Gospel.

e. He sometimes had to **escape those who were trying to kill him.**

f. His family was **poor.** Imagine their **meager meals, his bed, and his house.** His parents could only **offer pigeons** for his redemption; they did not even have a lamb!

g. He lived in an **occupied land** and his **people collaborated with Rome** and **extorted** money from the poor- like his family.

2. Jesus Christ had to suffer throughout his life in his soul.

Isaiah 53:3 He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and **acquainted with grief.** And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.

a. **Sorrow characterized the life of Jesus.** Sorrow and grief were his constant companions – his friends. He faced abuse from his own people. They **tried, and often succeeded, to force him out of their towns so he could not preach there.**

Consider the emotion of Jesus when he saw how his people rejected Jehovah.

Matthew 23:37 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! **How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks** under her wings, but you were not willing!

b. **Some wanted the free food** Jesus gave or to **see his miracles,** but had **no interest in what he said.**

c. Some mocked Jesus as **working for the Devil.**

d. Jesus' **own family tried to stop him** from preaching the Good News. They thought he was crazy – mentally unfit. Thankfully that changed after the resurrection. His brother believed and wrote the Epistle of James.

e. Jesus had to be subjected to and **depend on a human family.** Jesus made them...and subjected his body and soul to them.

f. Many of **Jesus' own people tried to kill him, or get him executed** by trying to get him to confess to crimes he didn't do.

g. Jesus gave the law, and then **he had to go through the process of learning it as a man.** How humiliating!

Jesus Christ's Suffering at his Death

1. Jesus suffered intensely in his body at his death.

a. Jesus was crucified. The Jews would normally have executed someone by stoning. Crucifixion was Roman. In stoning, the executioners would crush the chest with a big stone and then stones were piled on the body. Stoning was short-a few minutes perhaps, and not as gruesome. **But God the Father would not allow Jesus to die that regular way, as it took the worst kind of death to satisfy his anger.**

And Jesus had to **publicly die** as an oblation to God.

Isaiah 53:5 But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.

b. Jesus was impaled in his side, and his hands and feet were nailed to a cross.

c. Jesus was slapped on his face.

d. Jesus was scourged by the Romans. They made furrows on his back – hit with hooks and pulled.

e. Jesus was crowned with a crown of thorns.

f. Jesus had a painful thirst on the cross. He asked for water. They didn't give him. Thirst is worse than hunger.

2. Jesus suffered intensely in his soul at his death.

a. He was arrested as a common criminal by his own people and endured a mock trial by the Romans, those over whom he had authority.

b. The soldiers mocked him as a pretending king – dressing him in purple. (How hard it was to keep silent with this!)

c. The people spat on him. That did not hurt the body, but it sure hurt his soul.

d. His friends abandoned, denied, and betrayed him! How that must have hurt. The one who ate with him turned against him.

e. The Jewish religious leaders, who should have supported a godly man, **abandoned him as well.**

f. The soldiers stripped him naked. How humiliating for the God of Glory! He had

to be **shamed** – humiliated – as crucifixion was reserved for the worst criminals.

g. He felt his Father's abandonment – the worst punishment of all. You see this in how he cried out to his Father in intense **agony of spirit**: “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” Jesus was **accursed by God**.

Deuteronomy 21: 22 "If a man has committed a sin deserving of death, and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, **23** "his body shall not remain overnight on the tree, but you shall surely bury him that day, so that you do not defile the land which the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance; for **he who is hanged is accursed of God.**

h. He was mentally tortured by being crucified with real criminals.

i. The Jewish people abandoned him. (He came to his own, but his own did not receive him.) His **people** who had earlier chanted “hosanna” chanted “crucify him.” And what an aggravation of Christ's suffering - **to die for those who did not care that he was dying for them.** These wicked people called for God's judgment on their own children for whom Christ was dying, ignoring his teaching and ignoring their only hope.

Mental or spiritual suffering is worse than physical suffering.

Jesus Christ Saves you by Suffering in Life and in Death

1. Jesus had to die, suffering in his body and soul because you deserved to die, suffering in your body and soul.

2. Jesus had to suffer in life and in death for the whole human race; he loved all kinds of people.

By themselves, the **Jews were not a special people**. It was the love of God for them that set them apart. So when God puts his love on you, Gentiles, it sets you apart as well. Consider the promise to save the world:

John 3:16 "For God **so loved the world** that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. **17** "For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

1John 2:2 And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the **whole world.**

Galatians 3:13 Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law... 14 that the blessing of Abraham might **come upon the Gentiles** in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise...

How sad the Jews are still **waiting for the Messiah** and waiting for a **return to making animal sacrifices**. But Apostle Paul said Jews are only children of Abraham if they have faith in Jesus.

3. Jesus Christ's suffering was considered an atoning sacrifice for you, for all your sins!

Isaiah 55:10 Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. **When You make His soul an offering for sin...**

1John 4:10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the **propitiation for our sins**.

You owe him everything now! What do you think of those in the United Church of Canada who deny the atonement, or Hindus who believe your sincerity will cause you to please God? What do you think of Gretta Vosper, the United Church minister in Scarborough who says you can be saved with or without Jesus? What do you say to Muslims who believe you don't need atonement? What do you think of every other religion in the history of humanity that tells you that you must do something for God to save you?

4. Jesus Christ's suffering in life and death was done as an atoning sacrifice to God to set you free from eternal judgment.

There is no purgatory...as the Roman Catholics and Muslims say!

Romans 3:24 being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance **God had passed over the sins...**

5. Jesus Christ's suffering and death put God's graces, righteousness, holiness, which results in eternal life, to your account.

1Peter 2:23 who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously; 24 who Himself **bore our sins in His own body on the tree,** that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes **you were healed.**

Don't minimize Jesus' suffering by stating it was for physical healing! It was much more!

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

Romans 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. **3** For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, **4** that the **righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us...**

2Corinthians 5:21 For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the **righteousness of God** in Him.

Don't minimize Jesus' suffering and death like Roman Catholics and say it has to be done every day,

6. I know how you would respond when you hear a fireman suffered and died for you, but how do you respond to the one who personally suffered for you in the worst possible way, physically and spiritually, in his life and in his death, in his childhood and throughout his adult life?

Tears! Love! Service! Wouldn't you want to **herald this name** and his character?

Wouldn't you **talk about his love**? Would you **give gifts so the Gospel can go** around the world? Can anyone stop you from speaking about Jesus?

Conclusion:

Because Jesus loved you, he subjected himself to obedience to the law so you could get the credit for his obedience. Because **Jesus loved you, he went to the cross** to bear the horror, terror, and violence of his Father's justice. Jesus Christ was your scapegoat! Your hands were on his head to pass-on your sins to him.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. The cross was not just a sad story about an innocent man who was killed. This type of unfairness happens all the time. The cross means more to you. The work on the cross by Jesus is the **work that brings life-giving change that lasts for eternity.** The cross was the means by which Jesus atoned for your sins and set you free.

2. Knowing this, then what? Titus 2: 11-14 “*For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, **looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ**, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, **zealous for good works**.” How are your good works...your worship...your obedience, your evangelism? **Is your work better today that it was 2 years ago? Is your life better today than it was 2 years ago?** I hope so.*

Finally, if you are not a Christian, it means you don't know this Jesus intimately and you are doomed to hell. But if you ask him to show himself to you...and to show you his work on the cross...and you believe with all your heart in what he has done for you...eternal life is yours! It is an experience like none other!