

The Hero of Our Afflictions (Part 2)

1 Peter 3:18-22

Reading: Psalm 110

Bethany Baptist Church

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(7/31/05 am; Bethel in Lancaster)

Turn w/ me & let's read **1 Peter 3:13-22**

- A. In vv. **13-17** Peter urged his friends to *sanctify* Christ as Lord, and to *fearlessly maintain a clear conscience*, even when their godly lives were met with *opposition & suffering*.
- B. Hey, that's a *tall order*: *to do right, to get **beat up**, to do right again!*
- C. So the Apostle immediately *draws their attention* to their Lord.
- D. Here is *hope*, here is *strength*: Jesus *suffered*, Jesus *endured*, and Jesus *conquered!* ***So will you!***
- E. Peter's words *trace the progress* of Jesus' victory; beloved, when we submit to God's will, we *trace the steps* of Jesus' victory:
- F. This evening we'll continue to consider:
- G. ***Four events in Jesus' temporary suffering & ultimate victory:***
 - 1. ***Crucifixion: The purpose of Christ's suffering (18).*** *
 - 2. ***Death: The proclamation of Christ's victory (19-20).*** *
 - 3. ***Resurrection: The foundation of Christ's salvation (21).***
 - 4. ***Ascension: The culmination of Christ's victory (22).***

* *Two weeks ago...*

Here is Peter's lesson: remember Christ's *victory!* Take *hope & stand firm* when **you** *suffer for righteousness sake*.

I & II Reviewed:

A. *Crucifixion*: The *purpose* of Christ's *suffering*.

- a. Peter essentially reviews the *Gospel* for us, doesn't he?
- b. Do you see it in v. **18**? (This verse is *packed*!)
 - i. *Atonement*: He died for sins.
 - ii. *Acceptable payment*: He was just.
 - iii. *Substitutionary payment*: The *just* for the *unjust*.
 - iv. *Reconciliation*: so that He might *bring us to God*.
 - v. *Historic death* (it really happened): *put to death in the flesh*.
 - vi. *Historic resurrection* (it really happened): *made alive* (spirit &, v. 21-22, body).
- c. Christ died for your sins to allow you to have a relationship with our holy & merciful God.
- d. Of course, Peter's friends *knew all that*, but the apostle wanted them to *remember this*: when Christ is your Lord, *when troubles come*, God has **purpose** in your *suffering*.
- e. The **first event** on the timeline of Christ's *suffering & victory* is His *crucifixion*; Jesus died **once** to bring sinners to His Father.

B. 2nd event: **death**... **Death** and the proclamation of Christ's victory (19-20).

- a. **Where did He go?** Vv. **19-20** examine where Jesus went *in His Spirit*, the moment He *breathed His last breath*.
- b. He went **down!**
 - i. (We also know He went **up**, to Paradise, and welcomed the repentant *Thief on the Cross*...) "*This day, you will...*"
 - ii. But v. **19** tells us that He *also* went **down** to the *prison-holds of darkness*. → "*Tartarus*" – "*hardness*" A *maximum security prison for fallen angels*.
- c. And appearing in that dark place, *Death's Conqueror* proclaimed His triumph to His *incarcerated enemies: vile, fallen angels* from the days of *Noah*. Held in bonds until the *final judgment*.
- d. That's an *amazing story*; here is what God wants you to understand: He can bring *victory* out of **suffering**. (2X)
- e. *The second event on the timeline of our Lord's suffering & victory is His proclamation to His enemies: **Christ has conquered!***

C. So we've seen that suffering does **not** *cancel* God's purpose or *derail* His victory. Not for *Jesus*...not for *you & me*.

D. III. Resurrection: The *foundation* of Christ's salvation (21).

- A. Now with these ideas of *purpose & conquest* suggested in **vv.19&20**, Peter turns to the **3rd** event on Christ's timeline of *suffering & victory* – His *resurrection* from the grave (21).
- B. Don't miss this from v. **20**: only a *few* were saved in the days of *Noah* (just **8**).
- a. So Peter's *friends*, who often feel like *outnumbered outsiders*...
 - b. ...are reminded that even if they **are** *pilgrims in this life*, God can deliver *them* from *their* suffering. And, w/ God, a *few* are *enough*.
- E. Yet Peter's words, if not *read carefully & understood rightly*, could cause us some *theological heartburn* (follow in your **NT** while I **read v. 21**): *Is the apostle teaching that the ordinance of water baptism saves us from our sins!?!*
- F. **Not at all!** Let me give you *three reasons* from this text why baptism does *not* save:
- first...**
1. Peter says baptism is an **outward** picture of an **inward** reality.
 - a. Peter describes baptism as an "*antitype*." Though that *exact word* may not appear in your Bible; perhaps its translated:
 - i. "*corresponding to*" ..or...
 - ii. "*symbolizes*"
 - iii. So, NASB: "*Corresponding to that...*"
 - b. Peter's meaning is that baptism is only an *outer symbol* ("*antitype*") of our *inner turning* **from** sin & **to** God, thru *faith* in Jesus Christ.

second...

2. The apostle says that a *washing ritual* is **not** what saves!
 - a. Look with me in the middle of v. 21: ...**not** the *removal of dirt from the flesh...* (2X)
 - b. This is like a *parenthetic note* in the middle of the text
 - c. It's as if Peter wants to make his point *very clear*: *deliverance from sin is not found in the symbol!*

third, and this is very important as we remember Christ's victory ...

3. Peter says salvation is not based on an *outer picture* (or *symbolic observance*), **but** finds its foundation in the *resurrection* of Jesus Christ, our crucified *Savior* (**reread v. 21**).
 - a. Your salvation is not *secured* by what *you've* done,
 - b. It's completely dependent on *trusting* in what Christ has *accomplished* in His death & burial & *resurrection!*

G. So *if* believer's baptism doesn't save, *if* it's just a *symbolic observance* ("antitype"), what *is* baptism's significance?

- a. Do you see that word "*appeal*" (or, "*answer*" – KJV) in the middle of v. **21**?
- b. Peter employs the language of *contracts* which describes baptism as a *pledge*.
- c. Baptism allows the a new Christian to make a *pledge* to God to live a life that results in a *clear conscience*, and therefore a life that *honors God*.
- d. The *collateral* for the believer's pledge is **not** the *currency* of his own goodness, it's the *saving value* of the *resurrection* of Jesus Christ from the dead.

H. Beloved, just think of what this does to a *shallow* view of *salvation*!

- a. To identify yourself as a *follower of Jesus* (as in by *believer's baptism*) is to pledge to live your life in a way that *pleases Him*.
- b. ***Not*** to simply grab your eternal *fire insurance*, and then heedlessly live *any which way you please*.
- c. To follow Jesus is full of *grace*, full of *wonder* & full of *weight*!

Here is the progress of Christ's Suffering & Victory:

Sin-atonig Crucifixion...

Hell-defeating Proclamation...

Life-changing Resurrection...

IV. Ascension: The culmination of Christ's victory (read 22).

- A. In Psalm **110:1** King David pens his poem under the *inspiration* of the Holy Spirit, and David *anticipates* the *ascension* of the resurrected Messiah to the right hand of **YHWH** (Jehovah God):

*The LORD says to my Lord:
"Sit at My right hand
Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet."*
(The most quoted **OT** verse in the **NT**!)

- B. Now (22) Peter reminds us that the *ascension & enthronement* (coronation) of our Lord Jesus Christ is the *fourth* event on His *timeline to victory*.

- a. Luke documents the *Ascension* with these words from **Acts 1:9-11**:

And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was going, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them. They also said, "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."

- b. Do you believe this *really* happened? **You must!** What part of the Gospel do you think you can *jettison*, and still have an *Ark* that will deliver from you from *God's wrath*?

- C. Peter uses exactly the same Greek term here in v. **22** that he used in v. **19**: "*having gone*," or "*He went*." What's my point? What's *Peter's* point?

- a. Just as Christ *went* in His *spirit* to proclaim His victory to fallen angels (*defeated foes*)... (vv. **19-20**)
- b. ...*our Lord Jesus* then went in His *resurrected body* to take His *place of honor & glory* at the **right hand** of God.

D. And don't miss *this*: Christ proclaimed His victory to spirits *shackled in pits of darkness*, then our Lord took His *place* at the Father's *right hand*, and as a result fallen spirits everywhere (v.22):

a. *angels & authorities & powers...*

b. *...(the entire array of Satan's forces)...*

c. *...are now & forever placed in subjugation to our Lord. Heb 1:13 – His enemies are His footstool!*

E. *Submission & suffering*. Christ *submitted Himself* to the will of God in *His suffering*,

a. and now all of His *enemies* are at His *feet*.

b. Christ has *ascended*; Christ is *seated* in glory, His victory is *complete*!

V. In the *darkest* circumstances, God can bring the *greatest* victories. Remember Peter's timeline:

- A. Jesus Christ, *completely righteous*, suffered an *underserved death*.
 - a. And despite every *sincere* effort to live a godly life, *you* sometimes suffer.
 - b. But think of Jesus: when you suffer, that is **not** a sign that God no longer cares for you. ***He cared for His own dear Son!***
- C. Yet Jesus ***triumphed*** and *declared* His *victory* over His *wicked & plotting* enemies. *In Christ*, your ultimate triumph is *also assured*.
- D. *Christ was raised from the dead*; Christian, *you* are raised to walk in *newness of life*.
- E. *Christ has gone into Heaven*, He is at the *right hand of the Majesty on high*. Christian, in some mystical way that words can't fully explain, *you* are seated there with Him.

*Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. **When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.** (2X) Col 3:1-4*

Suffering is not the *death of victory*...

...***pray***...