

Valley Bible Church – Sermon Transcript

The Suffering Jesus 1 Peter 2:21-25 Part One

The section we are about to examine is really a continuation of what we have already considered beginning in V. 18. Peter is still addressing Christian servants. In V. 18 he gave them a mandate, “..... **be submissive to your masters.**” After giving the mandate Peter went on to clarify it “..... **with all respect , not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable** (Eph. 6:5-7, Col. 3:22). Then Peter went on to explain the mandate “**For this finds favor, if for the sake of conscience toward God a man bears up under sorrows when suffering unjustly. (20) For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer for it you patiently endure it. this find favor with God.**” (Rather than putting our trust in ourselves and in what we can accomplish through our own efforts in fighting for, standing up for, or defending our rights when we are being unjustly treated, we are to ultimately be putting our trust in the Lord which will result in patient endurance.

Peter now continues his address to the servants in **VV. 21-25** and gives them the model of patient endurance. Let us read this particular section of Scripture,..... “**For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, (22) Who committed no sin, nor was nay deceit found in His mouth; (23) and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; wile suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously.**” Christ is the example of patient endurance. Jesus came to serve mankind and mankind crucified Him.

Notice the word “called” in V. 21. This is not the first time that we have seen this word. Peter used this word in **1 Peter 2:9** to speak of our calling into the kingdom of light. “**But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.**” This call into the kingdom of light is our **HEAVENLY CALL**.

We have been given a heavenly calling and with that calling are untold blessings and the Apostle Peter has been very lavish in extolling these various privileges in this great epistle.

1. We have been blessed with great mercy (1 Pet. 1:3).
2. We have been blessed with the new birth (1 Pet. 1:3).
3. We have been given a living hope (1 Pet. 1:3).
4. We have been given an imperishable inheritance (1 Pet. 1:4).
5. We have been given a purified soul (1 Pet. 1:22).
6. We have been introduced into a brotherhood of love (1 Pet. 1:22).
7. We have been given the opportunity to be constantly nourished from God’s Word (1 Pet. 2:2).
8. We have been given the honor of being identified as living stones and a holy priesthood (1 Pet. 2:5).
9. We have been given a spiritual gift by which we can minister in the church (1 Pet. 4:10).

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10. We have been given a stewardship of God’s manifold grace (1 Pet. 4:10).
11. We have become recipients of the promise of eternal glory (1 Pet. 4:13).
12. We have been made the beneficiaries of God’s eternal peace in Christ. (1 Pet. 5:14).

Yes, we have been given a heavenly calling which Peter refers to and with that calling are untold blessings many which Peter lists in his epistle. But we have also been given an earthly calling. And that is the calling that Peter is referring to in **1 Pet. 2:21** when it says that, “**you have been called for this purpose.**” What exactly is this earthly calling Peter is referring to? It is a call to patient endurance while suffering unjustly. Just as Peter shared many of untold blessings which are associated with our heavenly calling in this epistle, Peter also shared many of the untold sufferings which are associated with our earthly calling in this epistle.

1. We will be distressed by various trials (1 Pet. 1:6).
2. We will be tested by fire (1 Pet. 1:7).
3. We will be alienated (1 Pet. 2:7).
4. We will be abused by unreasonable masters (1 Pet. 2:18).
5. We will receive harm and evil at the hands of men.
6. We will suffer insults (1 Pet. 3:9).
7. We will be troubled (1 Pet. 3:14).
8. We will be slandered (1 Pet. 3:16).
9. We will suffer for doing what is right (1 Pet. 3:17).
10. We will be maligned (1 Pet. 4:4).
11. We will go through fiery ordeals (1 Pet. 4:12).

Certainly it is not only Christian servants who were called to suffer. All of us who have placed our faith in the Lord Jesus will in fact suffer persecution. **2 Tim. 3:12** says, “**All indeed, all who desire to live Godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.**” Someone might say, “Maybe this has changed?” (**Romans 11:29**)..... We must not spend our lives purposing to avoid difficulty. Neither should we purpose our lives to experience difficulty. Rather we should be purposing ourselves to live righteously but if we purpose to live righteously or godly in Christ Jesus know that you will experience PERSECUTION, know that you will experience SUFFERING.

What we must understand is the fact that our call to glory is through the path of suffering. It is God’s way of positively impacting us in two different ways.

1. CHARACTER - Most of you are familiar with **James 1:2**, “**Consider it all joy, my brethren when you encounter various trials, (3) knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. (4) And let endurance have its perfect result, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.**” The suffering that we encounter acts as purifying flame to remove the impurities of our lives so that we might be better conformed to Christ. But the flame of persecution has another important benefit which is often times overlooked Peter has already touched on this earlier in the epistle.

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2. CAPACITY TO BRING GLORY TO GOD IN RESPECT TO ETERNITY - Let us consider **1 Pet. 1:6-7** **“In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, (7) that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”** It appears that suffering is not only utilized by the Lord in perfecting us but also in increasing our capacity to bring praise, honor, and glory to the Lord in respect to eternity. Paul touches on the same idea in **2 Cor. 4:17**, **“For momentary light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison.”** Not only is suffering teaching us to be more patient and therefore making us more like Christ in time but it is also producing an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison in light of eternity.

Suffering is not only effecting us in time by maturing us but also in eternity by increasing our capacity to glorify the Lord.

Turn in your Bibles to **Matt. 20** and let us look at a very interesting story. Let us read **VV. 20-23** **“Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came to Him with her sons, bowing down, and making a request of Him. (21) And He said to her, “What do you wish?” She said to Him, “Command that in Your kingdom these two sons of mine may sit, one on Your right and one on Your left.” (22) But Jesus answered and said, “You do not know what you are asking for. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink?” They said to Him, “We are able.” (23) He said to them, “My cup you shall drink; but to sit on My right and on My left, this is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by My Father.”**

What the mother of James and John did certainly was not an action that we can commend but what led her to take the action is commendable. There certainly was on her part an unshakable faith in Christ as the Messiah and the kingdom which he would bring to Israel. It was most likely because of her faith that she was not more strongly rebuked.

Why did Jesus tell the mother of James and John that she did not **“know”** what she was asking for? He said this because the path to glory was through suffering. She was in effect asking for something that would mean that her sons would have to suffer.

He emphasizes this point to her by asking a question of James and John concerning his cup. The cup was a familiar image for great suffering which is seen clearly in **Ps. 75:8; Isa. 51:17; Jer. 49:12**. Jesus had just spoken about his suffering or in other words His cup in **VV. 18-19** and now He makes it very clear that any special honors or capacity to bring greater glory to God would be through drinking the same cup of suffering. Did they understand what Jesus was talking about? I believe that they did. When he asked them were they **“able to drink the cup”** they knew that he was referring to suffering and they responded that they were.

Clearly what I have shared with you that the path to glory is through suffering is strongly reinforced by Christ in this particular dialogue.

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Let me ask you a question. Who has suffered the most in the cause of Christ? Christ Himself!! If he has suffered the most, and if increased suffering in the cause of Christ brings an increased capacity to bring glory to God in respect to eternity, who in heaven will have the greatest capacity to bring glory to God? It will be Christ Himself and this is exactly what we see in the Scriptures. In **Phil. 2:5-11** it says, **“Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, (6) who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, (7) but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bondservant, and being made in the likeness of men. (8) And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. (9) Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, (10) that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, (11) And at every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”**

If the path to glory for Christ was through suffering should we expect anything less. Certainly this would be a mistake. We need to understand that we not only have a heavenly calling which will result in glory, but the path leading there is through our earthly calling which will result in pain.

1) Consider **Matthew 10:21-25**, **“and brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents, and cause them to be put to death. (22) And you will be hated by all on account of My name, but it is the one who has endured to the end who will be saved. (23) But whenever they persecute you in this city, flee to the next; for truly I say to you, you shall not finish going through the cities of Israel, until the Son of Man comes. (24) A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a slave above his master. (25) It is enough for the disciple that he become as his teacher, and the slave as his master. If they have called the head of the house Beelzebub, how much more the members of his household!”**

2) **John 13:12-16** **“And so when He had washed their feet, and taken His garments, and reclined at the table again, He said to them, “Do you know what I have done to you? (13) You call Me teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am. (14) If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. (15) For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you. (16) Truly, truly, I say to you, a slave is not greater than his master, neither is one who is sent greater than the one who sent him.”**

We should not expect that our earthly life will be easy. If Christ suffered in ministering truth in this world. then we should expect that we will also.

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CONCLUSION

Yes, We have received a heavenly call, a call to glory and in this call we have been introduced to wonderful spiritual privileges. But we need to understand that we have also received an earthly calling. A call to suffering. The glory that we will one day enter is through the path of suffering.

This certainly was true of Christ. Before the throne was the cross. As this was true of Christ it will also be true of us.

As such these Christian servants, as well as ourselves, can look to Christ as our model of righteous suffering.

Next week we will see how Christ righteously suffered in three different ways.