

TITLE: "Satisfaction in Suffering" (Part 6)

PASSAGE: 1 Peter 2:21b-23

THEME: *Every believer is a servant who is to suffer patiently and justly even as Christ suffered patiently and justly for him.*

NUMBER: 06071PE2.21b-23(60)

DATE: June 3, 2007

Read Passage

Finally, by God's grace, we will get through v.23 this AM

V. 23 isn't t/last v. of this passage (v. 25 is) but it is a yardstick of sorts as t/thoughts begun on v. 21 (you have been called for this purpose) have a natural pause at t/end of v. 23.

I thought we'd get through v. 23 about 3 weeks ago. Definitely planned on it for last wk., but that didn't work out either.

We continue on looking at Satisfaction in Suffering

How can we find contentment, patience, perseverance, satisfaction not with suffering, but in it, that is, in the midst of affliction.

One of t/things we've said all along is that K.D. of suffering is a democracy; we all share in it.

Eliphaz in Job 5:6-7 6 "For affliction does not come from the dust, Neither does trouble sprout from the ground, 7 For man is born for trouble, As sparks fly upward.

We all share in suffering. True for us, was true of our Lord, was true of OT saints, was true for NT saints, was true of believers t/o history.

In that sense, there is a fellowship of sufferings

Bible talks about that in t/sense that we fellowship in t/sufferings of X.

Classic passage: Phil. 3:10 that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death;

Romans 8:17 says that . . . we suffer with {Him} in order that we may also be glorified with {Him.}

2CO 4:10-11 always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.

It's as if Paul is saying, *"I carry around w/me in my body a dying X. I suffer as He suffered. But, I also live because He lives."*

1 Peter 4:13 {cite}

So every genuine believer is a partaker in Christ's sufferings

We fellowship in His sufferings. Does it not follow we, as the body of X, fellowship in each other's suffering?

2TI 2:3 Suffer hardship with {me,} as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.

1CO 12:26 And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if {one} member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.

HEB 13:3 Remember the prisoners, as though in prison with them, and those who are ill-treated, since you yourselves also are in the body.

We fellowship or participate in X's suffering. We also participate in each other's suffering. Part of that fellowship includes encouraging one another through our affliction, even finding solace in observing t/lives of those who have persevered through suffering.

{Pause}

Benjamin Brook, in his three vol. work, "The Lives of the Puritans," has written that the reading and study of the lives of believers who have themselves gone through the crucible of suffering is not only interesting,

but instructive and edifying. He writes that, in these men you see "orthodox principles, Christian tempers, and holy duties in lovely union and in vigorous operation. . . . you see religion shining forth in real life, subduing the corruptions of human nature and inspiring zeal for every good work."

So, in t/face of persecution and suffering, it's encouraging to look to the lives of past saints who have suffered affliction & withstood t/test as they pursued t/prize.

We see that in Hebrews 11

Hebrews 11:1 **Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.**

We need faith. We need that assurance, that confidence, that conviction. But note how t/writer to t/Hebrews moves on to living examples of faith. By my quick count, he cites by name, 14 men and 2 women. These men & women demonstrated their faith in various ways, from the offering of sacrifices to the keeping of the Passover. One thing that comes up quite often is their faithfulness in suffering.

Cain suffered at the hands of Abel (v. 4)

Noah suffered the mockery of men in building an Ark in a desert

Abraham suffered in leaving all at Ur to travel to Palestine where he was an alien in a foreign land.

Joseph suffered in the prisons of Egypt

Moses suffered under Pharaoh as well as under t/scorn of his own people

The prophets, "who were tortured, mocked, beaten, chained, imprisoned, stoned, bodies severed in half, tempted, killed w/the sword, hiding under the skins of sheep and goats, destitute, ill-treated, afflicted.

Then in 12:1 . . . Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,

The "cloud of witnesses" spurs us on in the race

Certainly, we have t/example of JC. We see that in 2:21 - He left us an example that we might follow in His steps. But there is also great benefit in seeing t/life of X demonstrated in t/lives of otherwise sinful men & women. After all, we're sinful men & women ourselves.

We run t/race; we run it with endurance casting off every encumbrance & sin that might trip us up. God himself cheers us on. But we also have t/cloud of witnesses, men who have themselves run t/same race w/their eyes on t/same prize, men who have suffered and endured and won. They, as it were, run alongside of us on t/sidelines cheering us on.

I think of men in history - men like John Bunyan

No doubt you're all familiar w/Bunyan as t/author of "The Pilgrim's Progress" - a book second only to t/Bible in worldwide distribution.

Bunyan was a reformed-baptist pastor who was imprisoned for 12 years for preaching t/gospel.

He was born in England, in 1628. He lived amidst a time of political & religious turmoil. In 1662 the Act of Uniformity was passed which required conformity to t/Church of England. Bunyan was a non-conformist & he, along w/2k other Puritan pastors were forced out of their churches.

Bunyan married sometime around 1649 & was converted sometime after that, the story of which he tells in his book, "Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners."

His conversion was much like Luther's (he wrote that t/Wittenberg Reformer was a key influence in his life, Luther's commentary on Galatians his favorite book second only to t/Bible).

In Bunyan's "Grace Abounding" he writes:

"One day as I was passing into t/field . . . this sentence fell upon my soul: 'Thy righteousness is in heaven.' And I thought, right then, that I saw w/the eyes of my soul JC at God's right hand; there . . . was my righteousness; so that wherever I was or whatever I was doing, God could not say of me, 'he lacks my righteousness . . .' I also saw, moreover, that it was not my good frame of heart that made my righteousness better, nor yet my bad frame that made my righteousness worse, for my righteousness was JC himself, 'The same yesterday, today, and forever.' Hebrews 13:8. Now did my chains fall off my legs indeed. I was loosed from my afflictions and irons . . . now went I also home rejoicing for the grace and love of God."

With that a preacher was born. As he matured in the faith, his popularity exploded and a day's notice would bring a crowd of 1200 people to hear him preach at 7:00 AM on a weekday.

When he was 30, his first wife had died, leaving him with 4 children under the age of 10. One of them, Mary, was blind from birth. He remarried a year later. A year after that, he was imprisoned for preaching.

Blind daughter that was t/apple of his eye, blind from birth, Mary would visit him in prison. Seeing her was like "the pulling of the flesh from my bones."

He could have opened t/prison door at any time himself and left IF he would agree not to preach. His conscience was bound by WOG & that was something he could not promise. He languished in t/Bedford Jail for 12 years until the Declaration of Religious Indulgence was passed in 1672.

Not to say that his life apart from prison was easy.

The puritans and non-conformists in England continued to be persecuted and at least one other time Bunyan was again imprisoned (some think that this was when he wrote P.P.).

What about me?

I'm not a martyr? I haven't been imprisoned for my faith. In fact, I rarely even get attacked for my faith. If you live out your faith in t/marketplace you will eventually be attacked or mocked for it. No escaping that, especially in our nation which is rapidly being immersed in paganism.

But beyond that, God uses all kinds of suffering in our lives as a means toward t/end of purging sin from our lives, including self-reliance & pride.

I want to come back to Bunyan in a moment, but first ==> bring you back to our three main points (big picture) ==>

I. Servants are to submit themselves to their masters (18)

II. God blesses us when we suffer well (19-20)

Then we looked at what it means for us to suffer well.

A. Suffering well means that we rest in God's providence

We cast ourselves upon t/sustaining grace of God's providence, knowing that come what may He cares for us. His care encompasses our affliction.

B. Suffering well means that we worship God in our suffering (18a and 19a)

We saw that out of both verses 18 and 19 & saw an example of worshipping God in suffering with the life of t/OT patriarch, Job.

Thirdly, we said that ==>

C. Suffering well means that we suffer for righteousness sake (19b-20)

We need to be sure that our difficulties/afflictions are not a direct result of our disobedience to God and His Word.

III. We have been sovereignly called by God to suffer well (21-23)

<A.> Look at verse 21 ==>

For you have been called for this [purpose] . . .

<1.> Literally, "You have been called for this" (what?)

<a.> For suffering!

That's the context. Why t/verse goes on to say ==>

. . . since Christ also suffered on your behalf leaving for you an example so that you might follow in His steps . . .

<b.> Suffer like He did

He was called to suffer and so are you.

That same effectual calling that brought you to t/fellowship of JC also brought you into t/fellowship of His sufferings.

III. We have been sovereignly called by God to suffer well

John Piper writes in this regard, "There have always been, as there are today, people who try to solve the problem of suffering by denying the sovereignty of God—that is, the all-ruling providence of God over Satan and over nature and over human hearts. But it is remarkable how many of those who stand by the doctrine of God's sovereignty over suffering have been those who suffered most and who found in the doctrine the most comfort and help." [The Hidden Smile of God,

That was most certainly true of Bunyan. In 1684 he wrote an exposition of 1 Peter 4:19 for his church. He entitled the work, "Seasonable Council, or Advice to Sufferers." The passage reads==>

Therefore, let those also who suffer according to the will of God entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right.

In pondering the phrase, "according to the will of God," Bunyan wrote: "It is not what enemies will, nor what they are resolved upon, but what God will, and what God appoints; that shall be done. . . . No enemy can bring suffering upon a man when the will of God is otherwise . . . [Just as Jesus showed Peter 'by what death he would glorify God,' in John 21:19]. We shall or shall not suffer, even as it pleases Him." [cited in Piper, The Hidden Smile of God, 67] So God appoints who will suffer, when and how.

III. We have been sovereignly called by God to suffer well

4 sub-points that I want to look at in this regard. These sub-points are answering t/question, "How can we be satisfied in suffering?"

First==>

A. We can be satisfied in suffering because Christ suffered for us (21b)

For you have been called for this [purpose], since Christ also suffered on your behalf . . .

1. Note that, "Christ Suffered on your behalf" - Our God has tasted suffering

Our Lord has entered into and tasted of t/sufferings of men. Allah doesn't suffer for Muslims; Buddha doesn't suffer for Buddhists. Yet, JC, t/eternal 2d person of t/Trinity suffered for all who have been called by His name!

He was t/lamb slain (slaughtered) before t/foundation of t/world (Revelation 13:8).

2. suffering is the means by which we receive our final reward even as it was the means by which Christ received His

The ultimate reason that suffering exists in the universe is that God may display his glory by the suffering of Christ to deliver us from suffering. The suffering of the innocent in our place, to bring us everlasting joy.

This is the connection to why we have to suffer. It was the ordained means for Christ!

By His suffering, Christ "entered into glory"

LUK 24:26 "Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?"

The crown of thorns must come before t/crown of glory!

a. Christ's suffering was meritorious

He suffered for us. I would go so far as to say that t/suffering's of X are imputed/credited to us so that when God sees our suffering, he overlays it w/the sufferings of His Son.

Suffering was part of Christ's active obedience for us. Our affliction would be meaningless if Christ had not suffered for us, on our behalf. Since X suffered for us & imputes to us the glory of his sufferings, our sufferings are an acceptable form of worship. By them we enter into "The fellowship of His sufferings."

Listen to 2 Cor. 4:17 ==>

For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison,

A. We can be satisfied IN suffering because Christ suffered for us (21b)

He knows what it's like. He not only empathizes with us, he enters into our suffering w/us.

Hebrews 4:15-16 15 For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted [includes suffering] in all things as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need.

B. We can be satisfied in suffering because Christ left us a living example (21c-23)

For you have been called for this [purpose], since Christ also suffered on your behalf, leaving for you an example so that you might follow in His steps.

1. He left us an example

a. Fascinating word

ὑπογραμμος - Here only in N.T. Very literally, t/word means Lit. "a writing under."

It's a word that was used in antiquity of what was called a copy-head that was at t/top of a child's school exercise book. T/copyhead was there for the child to imitate. He would look at t/type at t/top and trace it out below. This was a way that children learned t/letters of t/alphabet, for example.

We might think of it in t/sense of tracing paper.

.... [He] also suffered on your behalf, leaving for you a ὑπογραμμος –an example so that [Purpose clause] you might follow in His steps.

We trace the footprints of Christ with our own, like a child walking in the snow, following the footprints of his father.

b. In this context the footprints are those of suffering

His footprints are aflame w/affliction. Dare we step into those impressions? Yet, we must for to stray from them is to walk alone & to walk alone is to walk in darkness.

A. We can be satisfied in suffering not only because Christ suffered for us

But also ==>

B. . . . because Christ left us a living example (21c-23)

Note==>

2. His suffering was not a result of personal sin (22a)

Remember, vv. 19-20? {cite}

a. He suffered because of us, not because of himself

Look at verse 22 . . .

WHO COMMITTED NO SIN . . .

(1) Peter is bringing us to the OT book of Isaiah

Specifically, chapter 53. Rem. Isa. 53? A passage that's often entitled what? The suffering servant.

You think that might be relevant in light of Peter's audience (v. 18a)?

We are slaves of the Suffering Servant who are to strive for satisfaction in our sufferings since He suffered for us.

(a) Verses 22,23,24,25 all quote or allude to Isaiah 53

V. 22 = 53:9; V. 23 = 53:7; V. 24 = 53:12; V. 25 = 53:6.

(2) Quotation of Isaiah 53:9

WHO COMMITTED NO SIN . . .

(a) Foundational to Christian orthodoxy - the sinlessness of Jesus Christ

He was t/"Lamb unblemished and spotless" (1:19).

He is our Great H.P., tempted in all ways as we, yet w/o sin (Heb. 4:15).

He who knew no sin was made sin for us (2 Cor. 5:21).

He appeared to take away sin, yet in him there is no sin (1 John 3:5).

For 33 years He lived a perfect life in the flesh, a life we could not live. He kept God's Law, He was obedient in all things, The sufferings of his life as well as his death were for us.

(b) Here we have a blanket statement==>

WHO COMMITTED NO SIN . . .

Peter gets specific ==>

3. There was no deceit in his mouth (22b-23)

. . . NEITHER WAS DECEIT FOUND IN HIS MOUTH.

The entire verse is almost word for word identical to 2nd half of Isa. 53:9 in t/LXX or Gk. translation of t/OT (contrast to t/Hebrew).

a. "Deceit" = δολος from noun δελεαρ meaning bait (fish)

Deceitful speech. Cunning. Treachery. Same word translated "guile" in 2:1.

b. Peter elaborates on this in the next verse

Progression ==>

WHO COMMITTED NO SIN . . . (could have stopped there)

... NEITHER WAS DECEIT FOUND IN HIS MOUTH. (could have stopped there).

4. When he was reviled he did not respond in kind (23a)

Who while being reviled, was not reviling in return . . .

a. An allusion to Isaiah 53:7

He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth;
Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before its
shearers, So He did not open His mouth. written about 700 yrs. B4 X.

(1) Reviled means to be subject to verbal abuse

John Calvin writes that t/word denotes a harshness. It ". . . not only rebukes a man but also bites him, and stamps him with open [abuse]. It is to wound a man with an accursed sting." [Wuest, 67-68]

MacArthur notes that the ==>

". . . present participle . . . means to use abusive, vile language over and over against someone or 'to pile abuse on someone.' It described an extremely harsh kind of verbal abuse that could be more aggravating than physical abuse." [MacArthur, 168]

(2) Sinful men mocked him during his life

Calling him an illegitimate son & a man possessed by devils.

(3) Sinful men mocked him during the last hours of his life

{summarize}

Jesus, when he stood before t/H.P. in John 18, was reviled—even struck on t/face, but he did not respond in kind ==>

If I have spoken wrongly, bear witness of the wrong; but if rightly, why do you strike Me?

MAT 27 - And they stripped Him, and put a scarlet robe on Him. And after weaving a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand;

and they kneeled down before Him and mocked Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they spat on Him, and took the reed and {began} to beat Him on the head. And after they had mocked Him, they took His robe off and put His garments on Him, and led Him away to crucifix Him.

(4) They mocked him in his crucifixion

Putting up a sign over his head that mockingly read: "THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS."

The Roman soldiers mocked Him, offering Him sour wine.

MAT 27:39ff. And those passing by were hurling abuse at Him, wagging their heads, and saying, "You who {are going to} destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross." In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking {Him,} and saying, "He saved others; He cannot save Himself. He is the King of Israel; let Him now come down from the cross, and we shall believe in Him. "\He trusts in God; let Him deliver\ {Him} now, \if He takes pleasure in Him;\ for He said, 'I am the Son of God.'"

Who while being reviled, was not reviling in return . . .

HEB 12:3 For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you may not grow weary and lose heart.

b. How do you handle it when you are provoked, reviled?

That's a real test. To keep your mouth shut and maintain a good attitude is fairly easy when things are normal. What about when you are attacked? Do you strike back? Do you "get even."

I struggle with this! Contemporary jargon: "Don't be dissin' me." One of my besetting sins.

“When you are bumped as a Christian, what spills out?”

Always a pride issue. Pride says, "I need to defend my honor, my reputation." Pride says, "I need to be someone." Pride says, "My self-worth is in myself." Humility says, "I will be content to be counted as nothing for X's sake, my self-worth is in Him."

1CO 4:13 when we are slandered, we try to conciliate; we have become as the scum of the world, the dregs of all things, {even} until now.

B. We can be satisfied in suffering because Christ left us a living example (21c-23)

. . . . **suffered on your behalf, leaving for you an example** (ὑπογραμμος) **so that you might follow in His steps.**

(4) Note again the progression

2. *His suffering was not a result of personal sin (22a)*

3. *There was no deceit in his mouth (22b-23)*

4. *When he was reviled he did not respond in kind (23a)*

5. *While he was suffering he uttered no threats (23b)*

while suffering was not uttering threats . . .

a. **Most of the threats that Peter's readers would receive were verbal in nature (true for us as well)**

Remember, Peter writes to those who were suffering for various reasons, including persecution for their faith. But the persecution was short of physical abuse or martyrdom.

So Peter focuses on speech, on the verbal abuse that was directed toward the Christians (cf. 2:12, 15; 3:16; 4:4, 14)

(1) We are not to respond in kind

The fact that Peter exhorts his readers not to make threats or revile their attackers, is further evidence that he has left slaves behind and is addressing all believers (for slaves would not be tempted to threaten their masters, to do so could be suicidal).

The sort of threats that Peter has in mind that his readers may be tempted to utter against their persecutors were not what we might expect (revenge: "I'll get you back for this!"), but rather eschatological. Future judgement.

Thomas Schreiner writes, "[Even if physical harm cannot be inflicted on tormentors, it is tempting to intimidate them with words of future judgement.](#)" (Page 143).

Polycarp (Mart. Pol. 11:2): "[You threaten with that which burns for a time. . . . you do not know the fire of the coming judgement and eternal punishment that awaits the ungodly.](#)"

The Maccabaeen martyrs in 4 Mac. 9:5-9: "[You seek to terrify us with your threat of death by torture. . . . But you, because of your foul murder, will suffer at the hand of divine justice the everlasting torment by fire you deserve.](#)"

(a) Jesus didn't do that

He said, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do."

How tempting it would be, as t/God of t/Universe, the Creator, to tell those sinful peons, "*Yeah, mock me. Spit on me. Hit me. Crucify me. You're in for a big surprise on judgment day!*"

In that regard, this verses 22-23 are t/positive parallel to vv.19-20.

Jesus prayed for his executioner's forgiveness . . . "[but \[He\] nowhere . . . threatened divine vengeance on those who made him suffer.](#)" [Michaels, 146]

How could He do that? How could the sinless Son of God, who had at his

disposal legions of angels to defend Him and could have even done it Himself, how does He do this? ==>

**6. He kept on entrusting himself to the righteous judge (23c)
... but he kept entrusting [Himself] to the One who always judges
righteously.**

This was Jesus' unshakable confidence in the plan of Him who always judges righteously. This really is the bottom line. {read 4:19}.

Alan Stibbs observed that there are two senses in which Jesus did this, entrusted Himself to God as a faithful judge==>

"In . . . the unique instance of our Lord's passion, when the sinless One suffered as if He were the worst of sinners, and bore the extreme penalty of sin, there is a double sense in which He may have acknowledged God as the righteous Judge. One the one hand, because voluntarily, and in fulfillment of God's will, He was taking the sinner's place and bearing sin, He did not protest at what He had to suffer. Rather He consciously recognized that it was the penalty righteously due to sin. So He handed Himself over to be punished. He recognized that in letting such shame, pain and curse fall upon Him, the righteous God was judging righteously.

On the other hand, because He Himself was sinless, He also believed that in due time God, as the righteous Judge, would vindicate Him as righteous, and exalt Him from the grave, and reward Him for what He had willingly endured for other's sake by giving Him the right completely to save them from the penalty and power of their own wrong-doing." [Tyndale NT Commentaries, First Peter, 119]

All of this was for our good, even our salvation (v. 24).

III. We have been sovereignly called by God to suffer well

A. We can be satisfied in suffering because Christ suffered for us (21b)

B. We can be satisfied in suffering because Christ left us a living example (21c-23)

Two more points, next time