

TITLE: "Christ's Suffering and Our Salvation" (Part 2)

PASSAGE: 1 Peter 3:18b

THEME: *Christ suffered for a time so that we could be saved for eternity*

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Just curious . . . Does anyone know of someone who was here last Sunday who died during week? If you don't know what I'm talking about, you either weren't here last week or you weren't listening . . .

{Read Passage}

V. 18 is rich beyond measure of t/fulness of JC & t/Gospel . . .

The Three Offices of Christ: Prophet Priest King

Sometimes these are referred to as His mediatorial offices. His role as our mediator, the one who reconciles us to God t/Father.

1 Tim. 2:5 - **There is one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.**

When we think of X as a med., as our mediator, we include His offices as PP&K. ("office" = "an official role or position" - like t/office of president). When we look at JC in His Person and Work, we see these 3 offices.

CHRIST AS PROPHET (REVEALING)

What does that mean? Generally, t/role of t/prophet is to make God known to man - part. God's nature, will, and plan. The prophet acts as God's spokesman or representative.

The prophetic office of Christ was predicted in Deuteronomy 18:15 (Peter claims the fulfillment of this in Christ in his sermon recorded in Acts 3:22-24).

Jesus Christ perfectly fulfilled the office of prophet. The writer to t/Hebrews, a book that resonates w/the three offices of X - begins his letter by emphasizing His role as prophet:

Hebrews 1:1-2 1 God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, 2 in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.

Westminster Catechism: "Christ executes the office of a prophet in revealing to the church, in all ages, by his Spirit and word, the whole will of God in all things concerning edification and salvation."

Remember, these are mediatorial offices. They relate to t/Gospel. JC is t/final revelation of God & He proclaims to all men t/good news of salvation in Him.

John writes that ==>

No man has seen God at any time; the only begotten God, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him. [John 1:18]

ἐξηγεομαι - interpret, explain, describe. We often talk about t/essential role of good exegesis in Bible study and in teaching and preaching. To be a good exegete is to be an accurate interpreter of God's Word. While there is no perfect exegete of t/Bible, JC is a perfect interpreter of God t/Father. So much so that when Philip asked Him to show them the Father, Jesus replied, "If you've seen me you've seen t/Father."

WGT Shedd, the great theologian of a few generations ago, noted that "The great characteristic of Christ as a prophet is his consciousness of infallibility." [Shedd, Systematic Theology, 683]

JC is an infallible prophet. He's t/only infallible prophet. Did you know that unlike all merely human prophets, He never once said, "The Word of the Lord came to Me." He was and is "The Word of the Lord!"

Even in t/OT dispensation He was speaking through t/prophets. We see that in 1 Peter 1:10-12.

Now that we have t/written Word of God we have the infallible, prophetic word of X. There is no need of an infallible prophet or institution, in fact there is no infallible church or man. Fallible, sinful men cannot improve upon that which is perfect, that which was "once for all delivered to the saints." (Jude 3)

So we are ambassadors of that office of prophet. We are t/human agents that are to proclaim that unalterable message of God's grace in X.

After the death of Stephen recorded in Acts 7, t/CH was scattered about, going "everywhere preaching the Word." (Acts 8:4).

We are all called to this {cite 1 Peter 2:9} - true of every one of you!

CHRIST AS PRIEST (RECONCILING)

Key word for Pro. was "revealing" - key word for Priest = "reconciling."

What's t/difference between a prophet and a priest? Namely this, t/prophet reveals God to men; t/Priest intercedes on behalf of men to God.

Prophetic office flows this way ↘ (God to men) * Priestly office flows this way ↗ (from man to God).

Again, t/Westminster Catechism ==> "Christ executes the office fo a priest, in his once offering himself a sacrifice without spot to God, to be a reconciliation for the sins of his people; and in making continual intercession for them."

If you know much about t/Bible you know that t/book of Hebrews is filled with revelation about X in his office as priest.

He is called t/HP of our confession (3:1)

He is t/HP that has passed through t/heavens (4:14)

He is t/Great HP who was tempted in all ways as we, yet w/o sin (4:15)

He is a Priest who holds his PH perpetually / forever (chapter 7:1-24)

He is "a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens; who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins, and then for the sins of the people, because this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. (7:26-27)

He is t/once for all priest who entered t/tabernacle not made with hands by virtue of his own blood and by that blood he has obtained eternal redemption for us. (9:11-12).

He is the only priest who can take away sins (Heb. 10:11)

Shedd once again writes ==>

"The Romish theory of an ecclesiastical priesthood acting, since Christ's ascension, as the delegates and agents of the great High Priest has no support in Scripture. Had Christ intended to discharge his sacerdotal (sacrificial priestly) office through a class of persons in his church, he

would have appointed and commissioned such a class and provided for its continuation. He did this in regard to his prophetic office. He appointed 'apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers, for the perfection of the saints and the work of the ministry' (Eph. 4:11-12). But he did not appoint any to be priests to 'offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins' (Heb. 5:1). On the contrary, he abolished the early priesthood when he formally assumed his own priestly office. . . . The earthly sacrifice was done away, and the earthly priest with it." [Shedd, Systematic Theology, 687]

Shedd brings up a great point - what about the RC priesthood?

According to Scripture & this is affirmed esp. in t/book of Heb., there are only 2 kinds of priesthood. 2 orders. 1) The OT Levitical PH that originates from Aaron, t/Brother of Moses; or 2) The order of Melchizedek which is uniquely fulfilled in X.

Bible recognizes no other priestly orders. Historically, the RCC has claimed the Aaronic P.H. and this is confirmed in the 1994 Catechism of the Catholic Church (citing para 1541-42):

"The liturgy of the church . . . sees in the priesthood of Aaron and the service of the Levites . . . a prefiguring of the ordained ministry of the New Covenant. . . . At the ordaining of priests, the Church prays: 'Lord You shared among the sons of Aaron the fullness of their father's power.'" [Para. 1541-42]

That's a problem. The Jewish P.H. of Aaron was part of t/Old Covenant & t/O.C. has been rendered obsolete (Heb. 8:13).

The priestly order of Melc. has replaced that of Aaron because it has been founded upon a "better covenant." (Heb. 7:22) and "better promises"

(Heb. 8:6), which give us a "better hope" (Heb 7:10), and which serves with "better sacrifices" (Heb 9:23).

If I could cite again, t/RC catechism, para. 1367 ==>

1367 **The sacrifice of Christ and the sacrifice of the Eucharist are one single sacrifice:** (IOW - what happened at t/cross & what happens at t/mass are t/same thing) "The victim is one and the same: . . . only the manner of offering is different." "And since in this divine sacrifice which is celebrated in the Mass, the same Christ who offered himself once in a bloody manner on the altar of the cross is contained and is offered in an unbloody manner. . . this sacrifice is truly propitiatory."

propitiatory means that it satisfies t/wrath of God against sin. Upshot of this is that what happened at Calvary was not sufficient & must continue in a non-bloody, propitiatory sacrifice repeated again and again and again.

Turn to Hebrews Chapter 7 {read vv. 11-25}

Melchizedekian Priesthood	Fulfilled in Jesus Christ
Was a royal priesthood - Melchizedek was a King and a Priest (Gen. 14:18), something unknown among Aaronic priests	Is both Priest and King (Zech. 6:12-14; Heb. 9:11; Rev. 19:16)
Was independent of ancestral ties (Heb. 7:3)	The priesthood of Christ is not dependent upon his being of Aaronic descent (Heb. 7:14)
Was timeless in that there is no record of a beginning or a ending	Christ's priesthood is forever (Psalm 110:4, cf. Heb. 5:6, 6:20, 7:17)

In light of this, Robert Raymond whom I quoted last wk. asks t/following: "[The] Roman [Catholic] priest must face this question . . . : Is the Aaronic sacrifice that he makes in the Mass imperfect or perfect? If it is imperfect, then he must be able to explain why he is offering it, since it is incapable of clearing the conscience of the worshiper, can never take away sin, and can never perfect those who attempt to come to God by it? If it is perfect, then he must be able to explain how it is that he, an Aaronic priest, has a perfect sacrifice to offer when Aaron himself, the head of his order, never had such a sacrifice? Moreover, if it is perfect, then he must be able to explain why he needs to keep repeating it? For Christ sat down; his work was done! Why do Roman priests still stand and offer him?" [Robert Raymond, The Reformation's Conflict With Rome, 101]

Hebrews 10:14 **For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.**

Hebrews 10:21-23 **21 and since we have a great priest over the house of God, 22 let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. 23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful;**

CHRIST AS PRIEST (RECONCILING)

Prophetic office = "revealing" - Priestly = "reconciling."

CHRIST AS KING (RULING)

1TI 6:15 . . . **He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords;**

He is **King of kings and Lord of lords** (Rev. 19:16).

Prophet, Priest, King . . .

All three of these offices are at work on our behalf. He is our prophet, our priest, our king!

BUT t/fact that He is our Prophet, our Priest, our King, did not exempt him from suffering.

I. Christ's Suffering and Our Salvation (18-22)

A. Christ's Victory Came Through Suffering

For even Christ suffered . . .

The word "for" connects v. 18 with vv. 13-17 - continues t/flow of thought. {review 12-17}

The path to the promised land is paved with pain and suffering; but we can persevere through whatever lies ahead because Christ traveled the same path and prevailed for us.

Suffering to glory theme {cite 5:9b-10}

There is an inseparable connection between X's suffering & ours {4:13}

The 17th c. Scottish Presbyterian, Robert Leighton observed==>

"The correct consideration of Christ's sufferings greatly assist Christians in their own sufferings, especially in those that are directly for Christ. It is a comfort to the mind in any distress to look at examples of other people in great distress, both in the past and in the present. This diverts the eye from continual concentration on our own suffering, which, when we return to view it again, seems less of a weight to bear. . . . If we follow the lives of the most eminent saints, will we not find that every notable step is

marked with a new cross, one trouble following another, as the waves do in incessant succession? Is this not clear in the life of Abraham and Jacob and the rest of God's followers in the Scriptures? And does this not make it unreasonable to imagine that we can be an exception to this? Do you want a new path cut for you that is free of thorns and flowers? Do you expect to meet with no contradictions and no hard times from the world? This can never be the situation. . . . This is the path [suffering] that leads to the kingdom, along which all the children of God, heirs of the kingdom, have traveled. It is the road that even Christ trod. As Augustine said, "One Son [capital "S"] without sin, but not one without suffering." [Leighton, 159-60]

Note the cloud of witnesses that spur us on in the race in Hebrews 11. Yet, we consider the witnesses, but fix our eyes on whom (12:1 ff.)?

The Suffering Servant; Note Isaiah 53:4-6 -

4 Surely our griefs He Himself bore, And our sorrows He carried; Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted. 5 But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being {fell} upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed. 6 All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the \Lord\ has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him.

Note again verse 18 of chapter 3 ==>

For even Christ suffered . . .

Saint Bernard (the man not the dog) said, "Since our Lord has taught us by suffering himself and has dignified suffering in this way, we should not be afraid to suffer but be keen to endure it. . . . They truly do not feel their own wounds who contemplate Christ's." [cited in Leighton, 160-61]

4 ideas out of this verse that relates to X's suff. ==>

a. The Fact of Christ's Suffering (18a)

b. The Nature of Christ's Suffering

c. The Purpose of Christ's Suffering

d. The Culmination of Christ's Suffering

a. The Fact of Christ's Suffering (18a)

For even Christ suffered . . .

He is called the suffering servant. We speak of his passion (by that we mean his suffering and death).

b. The Nature of Christ's Suffering

(1) Christ Suffered for Sin and Because of Sin

(a) Not His Own Sin (He was Sinless)

1 Peter 1:19 - "The Lamb unblemished and spotless"

(2) His Suffering was Unique and Unrepeatable

For even Christ suffered once for all concerning sin . . .

(a) The phrase that's used here: περὶ (concerning) ἁμαρτιῶν (sin/sins) indicates that Peter is referring to a sin offering

(b) Not just any sin offering - unique sin offering

Unique in that it is final, sufficient, unrepeatable. There is no other suffering, no other offering that can make atonement for sin. We do not suffer for sin; our suffering is not expiatory (doesn't remove our guilt).

That it is unrepeatable is clear from the words used ==>

For even Christ suffered once for all concerning sin . . .

"once for all" is not "once for all people" but once for all concerning sin".

Emphasis isn't on the application, but on the accomplishment.

"once for all" could simply be translated "once" or "only once" so this isn't a commentary on t/extent of t/atoning work of X. It's a commentary on t/finality of it. We're talking about an unrepeatabe, sufficient, final, completed, never-to-be-repeated act.

Third point under The Nature of Christ's suffering ==>

(3) His Suffering was Vicarious

(a) "Vicarious" is a Latin term that means "in the place of" or "a substitute"

JC suffered, died, & was resurrected, not for Himself, but for whom? Us! For His CH, for t/elect. This relates to t/Priestly office of X that we looked at a moment ago.

Christ suffered once for all concerning sin, the just for the unjust...

(or "the righteous" for the unrighteous" would be another way to translate it).

(b) He is the just, or the righteous one

The same Apostle Peter who wrote this declared to the Jews in Acts 3:14
"But you disowned the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, "

2:21-22 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 any deceit found in His mouth\;

Note verse 24 (vicarious/substitutionary)

24 and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.

(c) We are the unjust or the unrighteous ones

Peter takes the same word for righteous δίκαιος & adds the prefix "α" to it (that's called an alpha privative) which makes it not δίκαιος (righteous), but αδίκος (unrighteous). We are t/opposite of righteous. We are anything but righteous.

This same word is translated "wicked" in Acts 24:15. To be αδίκος is to be in t/final analysis "wicked." Most people today think that's silly.

Even w/i t/CH there are those who think that's silly. So we have a whole group of religious people in CHs today who think they've been saved & yet they haven't a clue of what they have been saved from - their own wickedness & God's sure condemnation for their sin.

Apart from a perfect righteousness there is no peace with God // we stand condemned in our sin. Where do we get that perfect righteousness? From ourselves? Our religiosity? Our CH membership? Sacraments? Penance?

No! There's only one place to go, only 1 city of refuge, that's JC t/righteous.

i. Any student of history & the Reformation knows that this was what plagued Martin Luther -

His quest for holiness which was constantly trumped by his own personal wickedness.

Within him burned a desire to be acceptable to a holy God. After all, that was why he entered the convent at Erfurth in t/first place. He prayed, he fasted, he confined himself to a small cell. He attempted to mortify his flesh. If he could only punish himself enough for his sin he could somehow, someway perhaps pay for them.

Yet, to others, he was a model monk: "If ever [a] monk could obtain heaven by his monkish works, I should certainly have been entitled to it."

Like TAP who wrote in Philippians 3 that as to outward righteousness as a Pharisee, he was found blameless. But we see within our own hearts what others don't. Sometimes we see what God sees: wickedness.

So was Luther. He wanted to have assurance; he had none. His friends exhorted him to find peace through meritorious works. He visited the confessional daily. That was of no use. As soon as he returned to his room he would remember some sin that was unconfessed.

God brought to him a spiritual father by the name of John Staupitz. Upon Luther's complaint that in spite of his repeated promises to God to overcome his sin, sin was always the victor within him, Staupitz replied: "More than a thousand times have I sworn to our holy God to live piously, and I have never kept my vows. Now I swear no longer, for I know I cannot keep my solemn promises. If God will not be merciful towards me for the love of Christ and grant me a happy departure, when I must quit this world, I shall never, with the aid of all my vows and all my good works, stand before him. I must perish!" "Why," said he, "do you torment yourself with all these speculations and high thoughts? . . . Look at the wounds of Jesus Christ, to the blood that he has shed for you: it is here that the grace of God will appear to you. Instead of torturing yourself on

account of your sins, throw yourself into the Redeemer's arms. Trust in him—in the righteousness of his life—in the atonement of his death. Do not shrink back; God is not angry with you, it is you who are angry with God. Listen to the Son of God. He became man to give you the assurance of divine favour. He says to you, "You are my sheep; you hear my voice; no man shall pluck you out of my hand."

In time Luther like so many others before and after him, found t/truth & followed in the footsteps of the Apostle Paul who wrote in Philippians chapter 3 of his testimony of saving faith in Christ ==>

8 . . . I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish in order that I may gain Christ, 9 and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith,

(d) This is the nature of genuine salvation

It's to count all things loss to gain X. It's to be found in Him, stripped of all pretenses of self-righteousness & clothed in t/righteousness that comes from God by faith.

Christ suffered once for all concerning sin, the just for the unjust...

Central Passage on vicarious/substitutionary work of X is 2 Cor. 5:21 ==>

He made Him who knew no sin {to be} sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

According to Titus 2:14, He gave himself for us so that he might redeem or purchase us and purify us as a people for his own possession, a people zealous for good works.

According to Galatians 3:13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us-- for it is written, "\Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree\"-- [Deut. 21:23]

Romans chapter 5 6 For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. 8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners [wicked], Christ died for us.

(e) This is the great exchange

Vicarious; substitutionary atonement. The once for all sacrifice of X.

Hebrews 10:1,3,4 1 For the Law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the very form of things, can never by the same sacrifices year by year, which they offer continually, make perfect those who draw near. 3 But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins year by year. 4 For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

i. This is why JC had to be both God and man

The mediator between God and man cannot be only God or only a man. A mediator presupposes 2 parties. The Med. mediates, or comes between t/2. Man is one party and God is the other. The mediator must be related to both and be the equal of both.

1 Samuel 2:25 "If one man sins against another [man], God will mediate for him; but if a man sins against the Lord, who can intercede for him?"

Job 9:32-33 [Job speaking] 32 "For He [God] is not a man as I am that I may answer Him, That we may go to court together. 33 "There is no umpire (LXX μεσίτη) between us, Who may lay his hand upon us both."

Galatians 4:4-5 **4** But when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, **5** in order that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

Hebrews 2:17 Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

Hebrews 10:5 . . . a body Thou hast prepared for Me;

Isaiah 53:11 . . . My Servant, will justify the many, As He will bear their iniquities.

a. The Fact of Christ's Suffering (18a)

For even Christ suffered . . .

b. The Nature of Christ's Suffering

(1) Christ Suffered for Sin and Because of Sin

(2) His Suffering was Unique and Unrepeatable

. . . once for all concerning sin . . .

(3) His Suffering was Vicarious

. . . just for the unjust...

c. The Purpose of Christ's Suffering

(1) Christ's Suffering Reconciles us to God the Father

. . . in order to reconcile us to God–

(1) "In order to" points to the fact that this is what is called a result or purpose clause (ὅτι clause w/the subjunctive)

The reason He suffered was to reconcile us to God. There's a definite article here, literally "the God" - that is "God the Father."

That's really where we've been heading all along this morning. The offices of Christ that point to His work in revealing and reconciling.

His vicarious suffering that was in our place.

It was all so that we could be reconciled. We who were enemies! We who were under His wrath, destined for hell! By His grace we were redeemed out of fallen humanity, purchased with Christ's blood, reconciled to God the Father.

Amazing Grace how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me! I once was lost but now am found, was blind but now I see! 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, And grace my fears relieved; How precious did that grace appear The hour I first believed!

a. As a side-note the word that's used here translated "reconcile" is the Greek verb προσάγω

προσάγω was a technical term used of a person who had the ability to gain an audience before an important figure on behalf of another.

I'm told that in antiquity it was common for a king had such a person. An official who was given the authority to bring commoners B4 Monarchs.

Important people are hard to access. I can't drive to Washington, go through the front door and declare, "Tony Bartolucci to see the President." I would need someone who could serve as a προσάγω w/the power & authority to grant me a meeting w/the president.

Turn to Ephesians 2 {read vv. 11-18}

JC serves as the Father's προσάγωγος. It is only through Him that we have access to the Father and eternal life.

John 14:6.

JC satisfied the just penalty of the broken law which we incurred by our disobedience. He removed t/barrier that barred our access to God. By faith & repentance we are led into the presence of God the Father by God the Son, dressed in the righteousness of JC Himself.

That, my friends, is good news indeed.

I. Christ's Suffering and Our Salvation (18-22)

a. The Fact of Christ's Suffering (18a)

b. The Nature of Christ's Suffering (18a)

c. The Purpose of Christ's Suffering (18b)

d. The Culmination of Christ's Suffering (18c)

(1) His Suffering Ended With His Death

(2) His Suffering was Vindicated by His Resurrection