

TITLE: "Christ's Suffering and Our Salvation" (Part 4)

PASSAGE: 1 Peter 3:20-22

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

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{Read Passage}

Last wk. we had fun w/1 difficult verse (v. 19 - X's proclam. to t/spirits now in prison). Today, we tackle another problematic verse, namely v. 21 which as been used by some to support t/heretical doctrine of baptismal regeneration.

While it's satisfying to unravel difficult texts, we don't want to miss t/forest for t/trees. IOW - we're not scholars trying to figure out every minuscule point, we're disciples of JC who desire to hear from His Word.

The big picture in this passage is ==>

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

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.

We've broken vv. 18-22 down into two major sections

A. Christ's Suffering

B. Our Salvation

X's suffering covers vv. 18-20 & Our Salv. from v. 20 to end of chapt.

A. Christ's Suffering (18-20)

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

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

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

4. The Culmination of Christ's Suffering (18d-20)

Last week ==>

5. The Triumph of Christ's Suffering (19-20)

If you weren't here for that, I'd encourage you to get a copy of t/message or tune in to t/radio show tonight at 8.

We left off at v. 20 & we're going to pick it up w/the same v. Verse 20 is what we could call a hinge verse. It makes a transition from 1 point to another.

On 1 hand ==>

5. *The Triumph of Christ's Suffering (19-20)*

a. *Proclaimed to the spirits now in prison (v. 19-20)*

Other hand ==>

B. Our Salvation (20-22)

1. Typified by the Account of the Flood (20)

a. Verse 21 ==>

Corresponding to that, baptism now saves you . . .

(1) Corresponding to what? Back to the flood in verse 20

. . . the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, while the ark was being built, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were saved through water.

(2) Was common among the Jews to view the flood as a type of judgement

Not only past judgement, but future judgement. In his 2d letter, Peter writes in chapt. 3 ==>

3 Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts, 4 and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation." 5 For when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that by the word of God the heavens existed long ago and the earth was formed out of water and by water, 6 through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water. 7 But the present heavens and earth by His word are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.

(3) While it was common to view the flood as judgement, Peter without totally leaving the idea of judgment, also sees it as a type of salvation

In case of Noah ==>

... **eight persons, were saved through water.**

(a) How were they saved through water?

Could say it was t/Ark that saved them or that God saved them & he used t/Ark as a means to do so (God closed the door behind them).

Note that it says they were saved through water. The Ark and Flood were like the Passover of t/Jews. B4 t/Exodus from Egypt, God tells t/Jews to prepare a passover meal which included slaughtering a lamb & placing t/blood of t/lamb on the door posts of their houses. In seeing t/blood, the angel of death would passover them. The first-born of all Egypt would be killed. God's judgement. But t/faithful Jews would be saved through that judgement. Same sort of thing.

In t/case of t/flood, Noah and his family were saved thru t/flood in t/Ark. Flood was judgement on a wicked world & on t/demon-possessed men that had corrupted t/race & threatened to pollute t/very line of Messiah.

i. Note this!

Those within t/safety of t/Ark were saved thru t/water. Yet, it was that same water that preserved t/Messianic line. The same water that killed t/wicked men of t/world also preserved t/messianic line through Noah so that t/world could one day be saved.

ii. There's lots of imagery here

In building t/Ark (remember this wasn't a little toy, was a Ship that would have filled a modern-day football stadium). In building t/Ark, Noah was preparing for t/coming day of judgement. They would enter t/wooden structure & be saved from that judgement.

Lois and I have some older friends whom we have known for years. We visited them in G.R. a year ago and he showed us something that he had made with wood, something he and his wife plan to enter one day. Their coffins! (there's a parallel here somewhere, I just don't know where it is!)

Picture Noah & his family entering this wooden ark, a large sarcophagus if you will. Waters of God's judgement swept all t/ungodly from t/earth. Noah & his family were buried w/i t/Ark & those same waters that judged not only depraved, wicked men, but also t/disobedient spirits of v. 19. Those same waters preserved t/eight men & women as t/Ark was carried upon t/water. When t/flood abated, they were resurrected to a new creation, a new world.

B. Our Salvation (20-22)

1. Typified by the Account of the Flood (20)

2. Illustrated by the Metonymy of Baptism (21)

(I would guess I'm t/only preacher in American who has t/word "Metonymy" as part of his outline!) - Get to that later . . .

And corresponding to that, baptism now saves you . . .

a. Corresponding to what? To the waters / flood

(1) Word that Peter uses for "corresponding" is ἀντίτυπος

Literally, an "anti-type." Theol. term that refers to an earthly expression of a heavenly reality. An analogy of a spiritual truth.

Numbers 21 - people of Isr. R in t/wilderness. In judgement of their lack of faith & complaining God sends a plague of deadly snakes. People ask Moses to intercede for them & God tells him to make a bronze serpent, put it high on a pole, & those who were bitten were to look upon that serpent (which represented their sin) & they would live.

That was a type, an illustration, as Jesus points out in John 3:14 ==>

And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up

Even as it relates to the Great Flood, it was common for t/CH t/o history to see t/Ark as a type of X or of t/CH. To be in the Ark is to be in X.

(b) BUT - Peter doesn't say, "corresponding to that, CHRIST now saves you"

If he would have, we would be spared lots of time scratching our heads trying to figure out what this means. But he had to say "baptism." For 1 thing, it fits t/analogy (water). Another thing, that's what t/H.S. inspired him to write!

b. Here's the million dollar question: Is this water baptism?

Years ago I was taught in college that this was not talking about water baptism. And t/key to understanding all of this & steering clear of t/heresy of baptismal reg. was to rightly understand t/words "baptism" & "now."
"baptism now saves you"

This was a fairly typical dispensational approach to understanding this text. *"The word 'Baptism' really means I.D. - & t/fact that Peter says, 'now saves you' doesn't refer back to their water baptism but to their present I.D. w/JC."*

I have to admit that I was never comfortable with that interpretation. I felt that it was novel & forced a meaning on t/passage that doesn't seem to be there.

I very much believe that this is referring to water baptism. Patently evident by fact that Peter uses t/words "water" & "flood."

(1) BUT this isn't talking about or teaching "baptismal regeneration"

There are groups out there that teach you must be baptized in water to be saved. Baptism is a sacrament, a means of essential grace. And if you don't have that grace, you are still in your sin.

This is t/teaching of t/Church of Christ (oxymoronic name). Christian CH movement. Oneness Pentecostals (two strikes). Of course, R.C.

This passage is one of their key proof-texts in that regard - But it's not the only one.

(a) They also appeal to Acts 2:38 (turn there)

Set t/stage Day of Pentecost. Jesus has ascended into heaven & t/promised vicar of X (not the pope but the H.S.) has come. The CH is now in its fulness. t/HS comes upon t/disciples & miraculously enables them to speak in languages, different dialects. Peter then preaches t/first Apostolic sermon. {summarize verses 22-23, 24, 32-33, 36}

Same H.S. that brought t/message brought conviction {read v . 37}

Peter's response: And Peter said to them -

μετανοήσατε, και βαπτισθήτω ἕκαστος ὑμῶν ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ εἰς ἄφεσιν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ὑμῶν
...

I'm not speaking in tongues. And I'm not trying to impress anyone. I'm just making a point.

Like one of my profs back in college who was a pretty well-known theologian. One of t/subjects he taught was biblical interpretation (hermeneutics). He shared a story with us one day about a seminar he was doing on b.i. at a CH. As he taught, he noticed that a gal in attendance was looking bothered. So he said, "Maam, have I said something to offend you?" She replied, "No; I just feel sorry for you." When he asked her why she said, "Because you have to go through so much just to learn what the Bible means." Dr. so and so asked her, "How do you learn what the Bible means?" "I pray and the H.S. tells me," she replied. Well, he grabbed his Greek NT. He opened it, handed it to her and asked, "Can you tell me what this says?" She said, "Of course not, I don't know Greek!" "Yes," he said, "But the Holy Spirit knows Greek."

Well, what's t/point I'm making. Every translation of t/Bible is an interpretation. Bible wasn't written in 20th c. English. Bible was written in Hebrew (OT) & Greek.

Sometimes the answer to a tricky v. lies in understanding t/language & grammar. That's t/case here. (Never base a doctrine on 1 or 2 passages, esp. if they go against the grain of t/rest of Scripture / analogy of t/faith.)

What we have is an Accusative of Cause with the prep. εἰς. Word "forgiveness" is in the accusative case. The word "for" ("for the forgiveness") is the Gk. preposition εἰς. εἰς can be translated lots of different ways such as: "unto," "into" "in" "toward" "in the vicinity of" "near" "for" or "because." Myriads of uses (check out any standard Gk. Lexicon).

One of t/choices that makes perfectly good sense here is t/option to translate εἰς "because of" when it's used w/the Accusative as here.

Be baptized because of the forgiveness of your sins.

“For” (as used in Acts 2:38 “for the forgiveness...”) could have two meanings. If you saw a poster saying “Jesse James wanted for robbery”, “for” could mean Jesse is wanted so he can commit a robbery, or is wanted because he has committed a robbery. The later sense is the correct one. So too in this passage, the word “for” signifies an action in the past. Otherwise, it would violate the entire tenor of the NT teaching on salvation by grace and not by works. [Strong's Lexicon]

Cf. Matt. 12:41 - “The men of Nineveh shall stand up with this generation at the judgment, and shall condemn it because they repented at the preaching of Jonah . . .” [Lit. because of the preaching of Jonah they repented]

(b) Then there's Mark 16

This is called "the long ending". If you look at t/last chapter of Mark's gospel, you'll note that vv. 9-20 are marked off in your Bibles in some

way. Might be in brackets // italicized. Reason for this is that in t/oldest MSS Mark's Gospel ends at v. 8. Speculation that vv. 9-22 were added by a scribe to clarify t/rather abrupt ending at v. 8.

Dr. Charles Ryrie, has a footnote in his study bible that's helpful here. It reads ==>

"These verses do not appear in two of the most trustworthy manuscripts of the N.T., though they are part of many other manuscripts and versions. If they are not a part of the genuine text of Mark the abrupt ending at verse 8 is probably because the original closing verses were lost. The doubtful genuineness of verses 9-20 makes it unwise to build a doctrine or base an experience on them (especially vv. 16-18)."

Verses 17 & 18 ==>

17 "And these signs will accompany those who have believed: in My name they will cast out demons, they will speak with new tongues; 18 they will pick up serpents, and if they drink any deadly poison, it shall not hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover."

No doubt you've heard of some Pentecostal groups that handle poisonous snakes as part of their worship. Every so often you hear of one who gets bit and even dies as a result. Foolish.

Verse 16 "He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned."

This verse is often cited as proof that you must be baptized to be saved. But as we've noted, it's not a good idea to base a doctrine on this particular passage. But there's something else here ==> Note that while it says "He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved. . . "

It also says, "he who has disbelieved shall be condemned."

IOW - it doesn't say, "he who has disbelieved and not been baptized."

Significant. Points to t/fact that it is one's believe that saves, not baptism in water.

So there's no biblical basis for baptismal regeneration. In fact, as I said before, to teach that one must be baptized to be saved is heresy. (I would add a "damning heresy.")

(c) Why is it a heresy?

Because it's works salvation. Works salvation is an oxymoran. It's a false equation. Whenever you add anything to grace you obliterate grace.

Really no different than t/issue of circumcision and law-keeping that Paul addressed in t/book of Galatians.

Adding works or ceremonies or sacraments as a requirement for justification is "a distortion of the Gospel of Christ" (1:7). It's "another gospel" that's no gospel at all. It's damning (and that's not good news).

Galatians 5:2-4 **2 Behold I, Paul, say to you that if you receive circumcision, Christ will be of no benefit to you. 4 You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.**

Could say t/same thing about baptism. If you receive baptism thinking that it's a means of salvation, X will be of no benefit to you.

Also t/deception of Rome which makes it's seven sacraments requisite for salvation. At t/center of that is t/Mass. So we could say to those who forsake t/Gospel of grace for Rome, "If you receive t/Mass X is of no benefit to you. You have been severed from Him and have fallen from t/way of grace."

In 1 Corinthians TAP claims that he was not sent to baptize, but to preach t/Gospel. Gospel includes all that is essential to salvation, no less, no more.

Bad, heretical, damning theology to believe that baptism or any other work is salvific.

Go back . . .

B. Our Salvation (20-22)

1. Typified by the Account of the Flood (20)

2. Illustrated by the Metonymy of Baptism (21)

And corresponding to that, baptism now saves you . . .

Peter is simply using baptism as a type and he's using it as a figure of speech called metonymy.

c. Metonymy is the use of one noun for another

To substitute one word in the place of another.

(1) Different kinds of Metonymy (you thought this would be easy!)

Here it's a Metonymy of Effect where the effect (here baptism) is put in place of the cause (salvation). Get that? Got to keep t/cause & effect straight. Baptism isn't t/cause of salvation. IOW - it doesn't save. But salvation is t/cause of baptism. Same thing we saw in Acts 2:38 "**repent and be baptized because of your forgiveness of sins.**"

(a) Example: Another common metonymy is the word "blood" 1 John 1:7 says that the blood of Christ cleanses us from sin. What does that mean? Did the literal blood of Christ have some sort of magical saving power? True humanity of X would necessitate that his

blood be perfectly human.

There was nothing unique about his blood if we isolate it from the rest of who He is & what He came to do.

His blood is a metonymy for his life (Lev. 17:11). To say that we are saved by His blood is to say that we are saved by His death on the cross for us.

i. Don't misunderstand

It was necessary that his sacrifice be bloody (Heb. 9:22). By virtue of t/typology of all t/bloody sacrifices of t/OT. He had to bleed. But it wouldn't have been enough for him to ONLY bleed. It isn't like diabetes test. A prick of the finger, a little shedding of blood, and there's atonement. Even in t/OT, the shedding of blood meant death to the animal.

Another example from contemporary evangelicalism would be "going forward" in a Billy Graham crusade. Going forward, or going to the altar doesn't save someone, but it could stand as a metonymy for salvation.

My opinion is that is what we have here. A metonymy where t/word "baptism" (immersion into water) stands in the place of t/real cause, our justification in X. Rem. Peter's point - he's drawing from the flood, so water is on his mind, so to speak.

d. That being said, we take it for granted how closely baptism and salvation were related in the first century

Remember, baptism in water (immersion) was the practice of the Jews. It wasn't for the Jews, per se, but for Gentiles who wished to join with Israel. It was part of the process of converting to Judaism.

For the early church, it also marked a conversion: of leaving behind dead religion & embracing newness of life in X. While that transformation comes by grace alone through faith alone in X alone, & while it is a work of God - He's the one who regenerates the heart - baptism was an ordinance that immediately followed one's confession.

There was no waiting to take a class on baptism first, or waiting to see if the person's faith is really genuine. There was no *"we won't baptize anyone until they are at least 18 years old."* We've separated the two. People are saved and then they are baptized months, sometimes years later. So we see it as two distinct events. The CH saw it as two connected events.

You wouldn't see someone baptized in 1st c. & ask him afterward, *"How long ago were you saved?"* You knew that person was spiritually a week or less old. Maybe even hours. Something else we need to understand when we see passages like this one.

e. What's the connection to Noah and the Flood?

There's a couple of connections that Peter's making.

Go back to our main idea, "Christ's Suffering and Our Salvation." X suffered, so will we. We can face suffering because He suffered on our behalf. For Peter's readers, they were suffering for their faith. They were a minority of light in a world of darkness.

Same thing with Noah ==>

... a few, that is, eight persons, were saved through water.

Only a few were saved. The rest perished. The water killed t/majority. Judgement.

What was true then is true now. Only a few will be saved.
The rest will perish. Judgement.

In Luke 13 someone asked Jesus, 23 . . . “Lord, are there just a few who are being saved?” And He said to them, 24 “Strive to enter by the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able.

Sounds like a minority to me . . .

Something else we see - In our salvation figured by baptism, our sin is judged at t/cross & we are raised to a new world, a world of life with JC.

Wayne Grudem puts it t his way ==>

"The water of baptism is like waters of judgement--similar to the waters of the flood, and showing clearly what we deserve for our sins. Coming up out of the waters of baptism corresponds to being kept safe through the waters of the flood, the waters of God's judgement on sin, and emerging to live in newness of life . . . Baptism thus shows us clearly that in one sense we have 'died' and 'been raised' again, but in another sense we emerge from the waters knowing that we are still alive and have passed through the waters of God's judgement unharmed. As Noah fled into the ark, so we flee to Christ, and in him we escape judgement." [Grudem, 162-63]

f. Second half of the verse indicates that Peter isn't placing some mystical saving power in baptism ==>

. . . not a removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal for a good conscience to God through the resurrection of Jesus Christ--

a. Elements of true salvation (21)

In these three clauses you have all the elements of true salvation. What it isn't and what it is.

(1) Not Religious Ritual or Sacramentalism

There is the sign (baptism) and the substance (salvation). We have to distinguish between the two and not equate them (sacramentalism).

This isn't salvation by sacraments (note it's not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to a good conscience to God through the resurrection of Christ).

This was an issue with Luther and the Reformers as it related to Rome. Rome claimed that the sacraments had inherent power to save regardless of the faith of the partaker. The Reformers denied this and they no doubt appealed to this passage.

At the Council of Trent Rome used the Latin term, "Ex opere operato" to say that t/sacraments had inherent power to dispense grace, & it didn't matter if the person partaking of them had faith.

a. Elements of true salvation (21)

(1) Not Religious Ritual or Sacramentalism

(2) Subjectively Gained in Repentance

... an appeal for a good conscience to God ...

This is an appeal to God for a good conscience that's made when one comes to saving faith. That's what baptism represents. Our conscience was once defiled, dirty. When God calls us we turn to Him, we appeal to Him for a new conscience, a good conscience. "Good" = ἀγαθῆς - intrinsically, morally good.

"Pledge" (NIV) is a bad translation of the word. We don't make a pledge.

We can only appeal to God. ἐπερώτημα - appeal, request.

"Whoever will call upon the name of the Lord will be saved" (that's a request). "How much more will your Father give the Holy Spirit to those that ask him" (that's a request). "God be merciful to me, the sinner" (that's a request).

One of the Puritans put it this way ==>

"The conscience of a true believer inquiring within, upon right discovery, will make this answer to God: 'Lord, I have found that there is no standing before you, for the soul in itself is overwhelmed with a world of guiltiness. But I find a blood sprinkled on it that has, I am sure, virtue enough to purge all my guilt away and to present my soul pure to you. And I know that wherever you find that blood sprinkled, your anger is quenched and appeased immediately upon the sight of it. Your hand cannot strike where you see that blood.'" [Leighton, 170]

(3) Objectively Grounded in the Resurrection

... through the resurrection of Jesus Christ--

This brings us back to t/thought of v. 19 - **"made alive by the Spirit."**

Also v. 20 ==> Victory proclamation!

Our salvation isn't based on subjective sentimentality. Based on objective truth. Cf. 1 Peter 1:3 {read}

Here is where the mortifying of sin takes place. An appeal to God with a good conscience based on the resurrected Lord. Here is where our graces are strengthened and sin purged. Here is where we look, we set our eyes on Him.

Yet, we are so easily distracted. Our eyes are fixed elsewhere, on those things that do not satisfy.

B. Our Salvation (20-22)

1. Typified by the Account of the Flood (20)

2. Illustrated by the Metonymy of Baptism (21)

Last point ==>

3. Secured by the Victory of Christ (22)

who is at the right hand of God, having been taken into heaven, after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him

having been taken into heaven = Ascension - Acts 1:9 - Jesus, following his resurrection, was speaking to the disciples, telling them of the coming H.S. & their mission to bring t/Gospel to the world. Then, it says that **after he said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on and a cloud received Him out of their sight.**

After that, He was seated at God's right hand. Place of power and authority. Psa. 110:1.

. . . after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him.

Parallel to verse 19.

These words can be used of good or evil angels. Given the context, it's best to understand this as referring to all spiritual beings without exception. Good and evil angels.

Angels - Authorities - Powers ==> Best not to see some sort of hierarchy of angels here, or different classifications. All inclusive.

Why at His ascension? Wasn't all of creation subject to Him before?

After all, he is the creator of all (all things have been created by Him and for Him)? The answer is yes. All of creation has always been subject to Him. But before the cross they were subject to Him as the eternal second person of the Trinity. This side of the cross, they are subject to Him as not only the second person of the Trinity, but also as the God-Man.

The one who came to live, die, resurrect, defeat the forces of wickedness, and purchase a people for His glory.

Hebrews 1:3-6 3 And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high; 4 having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they. 5 For to which of the angels did He ever say, "THOU ART MY SON, TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN THEE" ? And again, "I WILL BE A FATHER TO HIM AND HE SHALL BE A SON TO ME" ? 6 And when He again brings the first-born into the world, He says, "AND LET ALL THE ANGELS OF GOD WORSHIP HIM."

This closes the door on chapter three

"Christ's suffering and our salvation"

Luke 24:26 [Jesus to the two disciples on t/way to Emmaus] "Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?"

Maybe we ought to adopt the same attitude. Is it not necessary for us to suffer as He did, and then to enter into glory with Him.

John Bunyan, "Pilgrim's Progress" - "The way to heaven lies by the gates of hell."

Close with this extended quote by the 17th c. Puritan Robert Leighton ==>
"Turn your thoughts more frequently to this excellent subject, the glorious state of our great High Priest. The angels admire this mystery, but we slight it! They rejoice in it, and yet we, whom it certainly more closely concerns, are not moved by it. We do not draw the comfort and instruction from it that it plentifully affords if it is sought after. It would comfort us against all troubles and fears to reflect. Is Christ not on high, who has undertaken for us? Does anything happen to us unless it is allowed by heaven? And shall anything pass there to hurt us? Christ sits there and is the One who has loved us and given himself for us. Yes, he descended from there for us and in the same way ascended there again for us! He has made our inheritance that he bought certain for us, taking possession for us and in our name, since he is there not only as the Son of God but as our Surety and as our Head. And so the believer may think he has already possessed this right, inasmuch as his Christ is there. The saints are glorified already in their Head. 'Where Christ reigns, there I believe myself to reign.'" [Augustine]

"Consider further, in all your troubles, outward and inner, that you are not hidden from Christ. He knows them and feels them, your compassionate High Priest. He has a gracious sense of your frailties and griefs, your fears and temptations, and will not allow you to be overwhelmed. He is still presenting your state to the Father and is using the interest and power that he has for your good. What more could you want? Do you wish in your heart to rest on him and cling to him? You are united to him so that his resurrection and glory secure yours. His life and yours are not two lives but one, like that of the head and members of the human body. And if he could not be overcome by death, neither can you. Oh, that sweet word, 'Because I live, you also will live' (John 14:19)."

"Let your thoughts and life be molded by this contemplation. Always look on your exalted Head. Consider his glory. Look down on sin and the

world with a holy disdain, being united to Christ who is so exalted and so glorious. 'Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God' (Colossians 3:1). What will you do? Will you let go of your interest in this once crucified and now glorified Jesus? If not, why do you not conform more to it? Why does it not possess your heart more? It should not be like this. Should not our hearts be where our treasure is, where our blessed Head is? Oh, how much we may be ashamed to have any room in our hearts for thoughts, desires, or delights that are about anything other than Christ."

"If this was deeply buried in the hearts of those who have a right to it, would they have any attachments to things that are passing away? Would death be a terrifying word? Would it not, indeed, be one of the sweetest thoughts to make us rejoice, to bring our hearts solace and rest, as we look forward to the day of freedom? . . . But consider how Christ wishes us to contemplate our union with him. Will it not be our earnest wish, as it is his, to be with him? 'Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory' (John 17:24). Let us look forward to this with patient submission, yet strive and be on the lookout for our release from this body of sin and death." [Robert Leighton, 174-75]