

Suffering for Doing Good (6)

(1 Peter 3:8-22)

**Finding Hope in a
Hopeless World**

Suffering for Doing Good

- When we suffer for righteousness, we will be blessed

Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble. Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.... But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. Do not fear their threats; do not be frightened. But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. For it is better, if it is God's will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil. For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit (1 Peter 3:8-9, 14-18).

Christians' 5 Dispositions

- All of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble (1 Peter 3:8).
 - **Harmony** (be like-minded): pursuing the same goals;
 - **Sympathy**: an understanding and acknowledgment of another's pain;
 - **Love**: seeing and treating each other as brothers and sisters;
 - **Compassion**: a deeper and active response that involves feeling with them and being motivated to help alleviate their suffering;
 - **Humility**: being willing to encourage one another and rejoice in each other's success.
- We live out these virtues
 - These qualities provide a strong foundation for how Christians are to interact with the world.
 - When we act like Jesus in these ways, we can bless the people around us.

Christians are People who Bless

- We should respond to evil with blessing
 - Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing (1 Peter 3:9).
- Biblical examples
 - Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing (Luke 23:34).
 - (David to Saul): This day you have seen with your own eyes how the LORD delivered you into my hands in the cave. Some urged me to kill you, but I spared you; I said, 'I will not lay my hand on my lord, because he is the LORD's anointed' (1 Samuel 24:10).
- Why Christians should bless instead of retaliate:
 - Believers are called to a higher standard, a standard set by Jesus who did not retaliate when insulted but entrusted himself to God, and Christians follow his example.
 - It leads to a spiritual inheritance, a future reward for those who live out this principle.
 - It encourages internal transformation, moving toward a transformed heart that seeks God's favor for others.

Suffering for Righteousness

- You are blessed to suffer for what is right
 - But even if you should suffer for **what is right**, you are blessed (1 Peter 3:14).
 - God blesses those who patiently endure testing and temptation. Afterward they will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him (James 1:12, NLT).
- Reasons why suffering for righteousness is a blessing
 - Suffering for doing good is different from suffering for sin; A consequence of living according to God's will vs. A result of wrongdoing.
 - It is an opportunity to be a witness: You are called to be prepared to explain the reason for your hope with gentleness and respect, in a way that may shame your persecutors.
 - It is a sign of God's watchful care. For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their prayer (1 Peter 3:12).
 - It is a source of future reward: Suffering is temporary, but the blessing and reward are eternal. This suffering stores up an eternal reward for you in heaven.

Christ also Suffered

- Suffering of Jesus
 - For **Christ also suffered** once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit (1 Peter 3:18).
- Characteristics of Jesus' suffering
 - He suffered (the crucifixion).
 - His suffering was for sins (not His own, but ours).
 - He suffered and died only once (the final sacrifice for sin).
 - His death was a substitute to bring us to God: The righteous (Christ) for the unrighteous (us).
 - Alive in the Spirit: Jesus was resurrected from the dead by the Holy Spirit.
- When we suffer for doing good, we are acting like Jesus
 - Christ suffered for the unrighteous to bring us to God;
 - We may bring others to Christ through our suffering.

Imitate the Faith and Obedience of Noah

- Proclaimed to the spirit in prison
 - After being made alive, he went and made proclamation to the imprisoned spirits to those who were disobedient long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built (1 Peter 3:19-20).
- Who are these spirits in the prison?
 - Two interpretations: 1) fallen angels, demons; 2) the human spirits of those who perished in the flood of Noah's day.
 - Jesus' preaching was through the prophet Noah (the herald of righteousness, 2 Peter 2:5) during Noah's lifetime to people who disobeyed. Their spirits were imprisoned.
 - After his resurrection, Christ went to them in the spirit realm to announce his victory and the final judgement they would face.
- What's the point?
 - Believers today (like Noah) are called to testify to the hope of the gospel before a world that mocks and scorns us in unbelief. Why? Jesus has won the victory!!!

- Lessons from Noah

- Noah and his family were a minority in a hostile world; so were Peter's readers.
- Noah was righteous and Peter exhorts his readers to be righteous during wickedness.
- Noah witnessed boldly in the face of persecution and Peter encourages us to do the same.
- Noah proclaimed imminent judgement, and we must not shrink back from speaking of Hell when presenting the Gospel.
- Just as God was patient in Noah's day before he brought judgement, God continues to be patient to bring salvation to some.
- Noah was finally saved, albeit with persecution and suffering, and so shall we be.

- We must live holy lives

- We should have a good conscience about our own lives. So that when nonbelievers mock our faith and look at our lives. They are put to shame. Then they have to realize those things are not true about us.

Is Baptism Necessary for Salvation?

- Baptism saves?
 - In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a clear conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 3:20-21).
- What saves us?
 - It is not the getting wet part that saves but the “pledge of a clear conscience toward God” which is signified by baptism, that saves us.
 - Baptism itself doesn't save you, but it is a spiritual pledge and public declaration of a good conscience before God through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.
 - he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5).

Are you Ready to Share your Hope?

- We should have an answer for the hope we have in Jesus;
 - Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect (1 Peter 3:15).
 - If we live with hope and joy in the midst of suffering, it will cause people to take notice and ask questions. The way we handle suffering is a strong witness of the Gospel.
- Questions;
 - How often and to whom are we to offer a defense for Jesus?(Always and to everyone).
 - Why do bad things happen to good people (Christians)? (Because others are watching Christians. Their response could be a steppingstone on another's pathway to salvation).