

A Study of The Epistle of 1st Peter

Theme: “A LIVING HOPE!”

Trinity Lutheran Church - Norman, OK.

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Lesson: 24

Chapter 3:17-22

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BIBLE TEXT:

(17) For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be **God's will**, than for doing evil.
(18) For **Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, (19) in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison, (20) because they formerly did not obey, when God's patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water. (21) Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, (22) who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.**

STUDY NOTES:

(17) For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be **God's will**, than for doing evil.
(1 Cor 10:13; Heb 12:7)

(18) For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, (19) in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison,
(Jn 10:17,18; Ac 2:32; Rom 4:25; 5:2,6; Gal 1:1; Eph 1:20; Php 2:5-11; Col 1:22; Heb 7:27; 9:26-28; 10:12)

(20) because they formerly did not obey, when God's patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water.
(Gen 6:3-14; 7: 1,7,23; 8:18; Rom 2:4; Heb 11:7)

(21) Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to **God** for a good conscience,
(Ac 16:33; 22:16; 23:1; Rom 6:3-6; 10:10; Eph 5:25-27; Titus 3:5; Heb 10:22)

through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, (22) who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.
(Ps 8:1,6; 93:1-4; 110:1; Zech 9:10;
Mt 28:18; Mk 16:16-19; Lk 24:50-53; Ac 1: 9-11; 2:33-34;
Rom 8:34-38; Eph 1:20,21; 4:10; 6:12; Col 3:1; Heb 1:3; 4:14; 12:2)

18. *For Christ also died for sins once for all, the Righteous for the unrighteous, that He might offer us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit.*

It will not come about that those who are on the way to heaven will have good days on earth, since those who do not come into heaven cannot have good days either... Now since we are all subjected to misfortune, how much more it is necessary for those who want to come into eternal life to bear the cross! For this reason St. Peter says that because God wants it this way, it is better for you to suffer for doing right. Those who suffer for doing wrong have an evil conscience and a twofold punishment. But Christians have only half of this. Outwardly they suffer, but inwardly they are comforted.

Yet here the apostle has set a limit, as he did above (1:6), when he said that “for a little while you may have to suffer various trials.” ... God does not want us to search for misfortune and to choose it ourselves. Walk in faith and love. If the cross comes, accept it. If it does not come, do not search for it. Therefore those hotheaded spirits do wrong by scourging and beating themselves or by killing themselves and trying in this way to take heaven by storm.

For Christ also died for sins once for all, the Righteous for the unrighteous.

Actually, however, St. Peter is saying here: Christ suffered for us once, that is, Christ bore many sins on Himself. But He did not do this in such a way that He died for each sin. No, He rendered satisfaction for all at one time. By doing so He took away the sin of all those who come to Him and believe in Him. They are now free from death, just as He is free.

“The Righteous for the unrighteous,” says the apostle. It is as though he were saying: We should sooner suffer, since we die for the Righteous One, who has no sin. But He died for the unrighteous on account of our sin.

**The Formula of Concord: Epitome / IX. The Descent of Christ into Hell
Chief Controversy concerning This Article.**

1 It has also been disputed among some theologians who have subscribed to the Augsburg Confession concerning this article: When and in what manner the Lord Christ, according to our simple Christian faith, descended to hell: whether this was done before or after His death; also, whether it occurred according to the soul alone, or according to the divinity alone, or with body and soul, spiritually or bodily; also, whether this article belongs to the passion or to the glorious victory and triumph of Christ.

2 But since this article, as also the preceding, cannot be comprehended by the senses or by our reason, but must be grasped by faith alone, it is our unanimous opinion that there should be no disputation concerning it, but that it should be believed

3 and taught only in the simplest manner; according as Dr. Luther, of blessed memory, in his sermon at Torgau in the year 1533 has explained this article in an altogether Christian manner, separated from it all useless, unnecessary questions, and admonished all godly Christians to Christian simplicity of faith.

4 For it is sufficient that we know that Christ descended into hell, destroyed hell for all believers, and delivered them from the power of death and of the devil, from eternal condemnation and the jaws of hell. But how this occurred we should [not curiously investigate, but] reserve until the other world, where not only this point [mystery], but also still others will be revealed, which we here simply believe, and cannot comprehend with our blind reason.

LIFE APPLICATION

Today it is still better to suffer for doing good,
if that should be **God's will**, than for doing evil – give examples.