

The Righteous for the Unrighteous

1 Peter 3:18a

Introduction

What does it mean for us to say that “Jesus died for me?”

Read 1 Peter 3:18a

Exposition

I. Who is this passage about? – Christ

We are all familiar with the saying, “Familiarity breeds Contempt.” I fear that when dealing with a text like this, such a saying is unfortunately shown to be true. It is easy to grow familiar with the gospel. It is easy for us to lose our wonder about the gospel.

Consider this morning from our text, who is being spoken of:

Jesus Christ – The Creator, The Sustainer, the Lord of Glory, The Lord over All, The Only Begotten Son, Prince of Peace, King of Kings, The Way, The Truth and The Life, The Light of the World, The Christ, The Savior, The Word of God Incarnate!

II. What has Jesus done? – He has suffered for sins once for all!

This Jesus Suffered! If ever there was One who did not deserve to suffer, it was Jesus. Yet He suffered! He was afflicted! He was ill-treated and punished! For sin! Jesus willingly suffered for something that He never did!

According to Peter in his Pentecost sermon, we find in Acts 2:22-23, that Jesus’ suffering for sins was by divine design. Considering what Peter preached on that glorious day:

Men of Israel, listen to these words: This Jesus the Nazarene was a man pointed out to you by God with miracles, wonders, and signs that God did among you through Him, just as you yourselves know. Though He was delivered up according to God’s determined plan and foreknowledge, you used lawless people to nail Him to a cross and kill Him.

The suffering of Christ was not an accident. It was of divine intention to accomplish what God had purposed in it. So why did Jesus do it? Why did He suffer for sin if he didn’t commit any sin?

III. Why Did Jesus Suffer? – In order to bring unrighteous people to the holy and righteous God!

Jesus suffered in the place of unrighteous people that deserved God’s wrath. On the cross, Jesus bore the wrath of God toward sin. By doing so, according to 2 Corinthians 5 & 6, the way back to God was opened and offered to all that would acknowledge their sin, believe in Christ, and confess Him as Lord and Savior.

For those who have trusted in Jesus Christ, your sins have been dealt with forever! **Hebrews 9:24-28** captures the definitive nature of Jesus’ work on the cross for sinners, saying:

For the Messiah did not enter a sanctuary made with hands (only a model of the true one) but into heaven itself, so that He might now appear in the presence of God for us. 25 He did not do this to offer Himself many times, as the high priest enters the sanctuary yearly with the blood of another. 26 Otherwise, He would have had to suffer many times since the foundation of the world. But now He has appeared one time, at the end of the ages, for the removal of sin by the sacrifice of Himself. 27 And just as it is appointed for people to die once—and after this, judgment— 28 so also the Messiah, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for Him.

The end of salvation is to bring us to God that we might worship him, glorify him, and enjoy him forever. Our sins have been not dealt with so that we could drive a nicer car, or live in a better house, or live in relative ease!

Our sins were dealt with that we might behold the glory of God in the demonstration of mercy and wrath on the cross. That our blind eyes might be opened to the glory of God in his manifold wisdom. That we might be granted to gaze upon his beauty and matchless perfection forever without our sinful flesh clouding and distorting our view.

Christ suffered and died that we might know our God. That we might worship him. “And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.” (**John 17:3**)

Conclusion

You were made to know and enjoy God, but your sin separates you from God until you turned to Christ for forgiveness and restoration. Once you have turned away from sin and to Jesus Christ, you enjoy the freedom and fellowship for which you were designed by God.

This morning, you may be here and not know this freedom and forgiveness. In a few moments, I am going to pray for you and guide you in asking God to have mercy upon you.

If you are here this morning and you have already received the freedom and forgiveness that is promised to those who trust in Christ, I want to encourage you afresh to think on these realities and celebrate the Lord’s Supper with us in a few moments. The fact you get to enjoy this supper is evidence that God has restored the fellowship with you that sin has broken. Be encouraged this morning at what Jesus Christ has done for unrighteous people like you and me. If you feel unrighteous and unworthy, then take care, you are just the type of person that Jesus suffered for that you might know the joy and presence of your Heavenly Father.