



3-15-20

Journey to the Cross Suffering

Genesis 50:20 (NIV) 20 *You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good...*

Romans 8:20-23 (NIV) 20 *For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. 22 We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. 23 Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.*

Ezekiel 33:11 (NIV) 11 *Say to them, 'As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn from their ways and live. Turn! Turn from your evil ways! Why will you die, O house of Israel?'*

Lamentations 3:32-33 (NIV) 32 *Though he brings grief, he will show compassion, so great is his unfailing love. 33 For he does not willingly bring affliction or grief to the children of men.*

Everything that Christ accomplished for us sinners, he accomplished through suffering:

1. Christ absorbed the wrath of God on our behalf — and he did it by suffering.

Galatians 3:13 (NIV) 13 *Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree."*

Romans 6:23 (NIV) 23 *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

In Christ Alone

(Verse 2)

In Christ alone, who took on flesh
Fullness of God in helpless babe
This gift of love and righteousness
Scorned by the ones He came to save
'Til on that cross as Jesus died
The wrath of God was satisfied
For every sin on Him was laid
Here in the death of Christ I live

2. Christ bore our sins and purchased our forgiveness — and he did it by suffering.

1 Peter 2:24 (NIV) 24 *He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.*

Isaiah 53:5 (NKJV) 5 *But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.*

3. Christ provided a perfect righteousness for us that becomes ours in him — and he did it by suffering.

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NIV) 21 *God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

Philippians 2:7-8 (NIV) 7 *but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death-- even death on a cross!*

4. Christ defeated death — and he did it by suffering death.

Hebrews 2:14-15 (NIV) 14 *Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death--that is, the devil-- 15 and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.*

1 Corinthians 15:55-57 (NIV) 55 *"Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" 56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Revelation 1:18 (NIV) 18 *I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.*

5. He disarmed Satan — and he did it by suffering.

Colossians 2:13-15 (NIV) 13 *...He forgave us all our sins, 14 having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross. 15 And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.*

6. Christ purchased perfect final healing for all his people — and he did it by suffering.

Isaiah 53:5 (NIV) ⁵ *But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.*

Revelation 7:17 (NIV) 17 *For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.*

7. Christ will bring us finally to God — and he will do it by his suffering.

1 Peter 3:18 (NIV) 18 *For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God...*

1 Peter 2:21-25 (ESV) 21 *For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps.*

1 Peter 2:21 (NASB) 21 *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,*

From our Devotional this week - The testimony of Scripture is that Christians need to embrace suffering as part of our calling and endure it as part of our witness.

1 Peter 4:12-13 (NIV) 12 *Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. 13 But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.*

Philippians 1:29 (NIV) 29 *For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for him,*

2 Timothy 3:12 (NIV) 12 *In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,*

So I take it to be a biblical truth that the more sincere we become about being the salt of the earth and the light of the world, and reaching the unreached and simply religious people of the world, and exposing the works of darkness, and loosing the bonds of sin and Satan, the more we will suffer. That's why we should prepare.

Job 42:5 (NIV) 5 *My ears had heard of you but now my eyes have seen you.*

Acts 7:54-55 (NIV) 54 *When they heard this, they were furious and gnashed their teeth at him. 55 But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.*

1 Peter 4:14 (NIV) 14 *If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.*

James 1:2-4 (NIV) 2 *Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, 3 because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. 4 Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.*

We can consider it pure joy/rejoice on two accounts:

First, suffering provides a context for our faith to mature.

Second, suffering focuses our hope on the consummation of all things, when God *“will wipe away every tear from [our] eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore”* (Revelation 21:4).

Discussion Questions: (For your Life Group or Personal Study)

1. How would you explain suffering? Is there a difference between the world's definition of suffering and a Biblical definition of suffering?
2. The Bible teaches how everything Christ accomplished for us, he accomplished through suffering. Does his death change your view of suffering? Look over the 7 accomplishments listed in your notes and explain which one stands out to you and why.
3. Read James 1:2-4. Think of a time when you walked through a season of suffering (brought on from persecution or from your own mistakes). How did God use suffering in your life at that moment to mature your faith?
4. Read the “Daily Devotion” section for Day 22 in the Journey to the Cross and answer the questions together. What do you long for from the past? How can you see God's goodness in your present hardships? What do you need from God to move forward in faith?
5. **Closing thought:** What is one thing you are going to do differently having studied this passage?