

Series: 1 Peter
Title: Suffering For Well-Doing
Text: 1 Peter 3: 16-18
Date: May 29, 2011
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1 Peter 3: 16: Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ. 17: For *it is* better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing. 18: For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

I. IT IS BETTER—WHY?

IF I AM ACCUSED, NOW I KNOW WHAT THE ENEMY IS LOOKING FOR. SO LET ME EXAMINE MYSELF.

Notice these two *v16:...a good conscience...good conversation...* both are “in Christ”

Believers have our conscious purged from dead works by the Holy Spirit sprinkling the blood of Christ. We know it is not by works of righteousness that we have done, but by God’s mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost.

Christ has purged us of guilt. As Christ is so are we. Complete in Christ. Seated at God’s right hand in Christ we are accepted with full delight of the Father in Christ. We serve God not TO BE ACCEPTED of God but because we ARE ACCEPTEED of God. Our hope is not in our doing, but in what Christ HAS DONE!

The conscientious OBJECT of our worship is Christ and the conscientious OBJECTIVE in our conduct is for Christ to be adorned. So we actively seek to live so that we always have a “conscience void of offense toward God and men.”

Still, we can’t escape the accusations of evil; We will be charged with crimes our souls abhor. Yet God is able to use even the *false* accusations of men to make us more *conscious* of our *conduct and to bring us nearer to Christ*. Even when we suffer for well-doing—it is better. Those accusations make us AWARE that the enemy of Christ is looking. It serves to make us more careful in the future, NOT to be guilty of that which we have been accused. So when the charges come, let us examine ourselves, and see to it that the charges area always false.

1 Peter 3: 17: For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing.

1 Peter 4:15: But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men’s matters. 16 Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.

II. IT IS THE WILL OF GOD

1 Peter 3: 17: For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing.

If someone levels charges at you, becomes angry, though you have done nothing wrong, it is not by chance, but according to God’s will. God uses everything to teach us how we need him every hour.

Example: You hear the word preached. A description of what to expect in this world: David said, the oppressor lowers his eyes like like a young lion bent on attacking his prey—angry, fierce. The world fights back with the same oppression—“renders evil for evil, railing for railing”. David said, “As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness”—I will turn my face from the oppressor to God in whose hand I am held. We hear such a word, we rejoice in it, we are settled by it

BUT SATANS DESIRES IS TO TAKE AWAY THAT WORD IMMEDIATELY. You go out and some man levels angry charges against you. If all we see is a man, then we have forgotten that we wrestle not against flesh and blood. The Lord said, “Peter, Satan hath desired to have you that he might sift you as wheat”. But what we suffer has happened according to the will of God. God will not allow his children to be devoured.

Why then would God allow such a thing? God uses everything to teach us how we need him! He reminds us how easily the word of peace can be replaced with enflamed flesh. No sooner do we find ourselves strong by the word, in the word, than we realize how quickly our peace can be interrupted. The more we think of how unjust the charges were, the more we repeat the whole scene, dwell on it—the more we are enflamed and the more we enflame others--chief friends are separated. That is, our minds are taken off Christ—*the Friend that sticks closer than a brother.*

If we ever do lose control and revile back, render evil for evil or railing for railing, we have not suffered. Instead, the evil one has gotten us to conform to him. Let us turn our face from the oppressor, like David, who said, “As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness.”

Psalm 17: 1: «A Prayer of David.» Hear the right, O LORD, attend unto my cry, give ear unto my prayer, that goeth not out of feigned lips. 2: Let my sentence come forth from thy presence; let thine eyes behold the things that are equal...5: Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not. 6: I have called upon thee, for thou wilt hear me, O God: incline thine ear unto me, and hear my speech. 7: Shew thy marvellous lovingkindness, O thou that savest by thy right hand them which put their trust in thee from those that rise up against them. 8: Keep me as the apple of the eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wings, 9: From the wicked that oppress me, from my deadly enemies, who compass me about.

Isaiah 26:3: Thou wilt keep *him* in perfect peace, *whose mind is stayed on thee*: because he trusteth in thee.

If we suffer for well-doing—1. It is better--let us examine ourselves—we hear what the enemy is using to accuse us; 2. It is the will of God, teaching us to trust him;

III. IF I SUFFER, FOR WELL-DOING, LET ME REMEMBER, MY REDEEMER.

1 Peter 3: 15: Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts (*let him be your fear, let him be your dread* Is 8: 13)...**18: For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:**

Christ also hath once suffered for sins

- Have I suffered—Christ also hath once suffered
- Have I suffered one particular sinner against me—everyone Christ came into contact with was a contradiction of sin to his holy nature
- Have I suffered unjustly?--Christ was just, God spoke from heaven commending how just his Son was.

- Have I suffered FOR the unjust?—Christ suffered not for just men, but for the elect of God who were all unjust—enemies in our minds

What did Christ suffer?

- Have you born false accusations—Christ did!
- Have you born threatening's—Christ did!
- Have you suffered betrayal by his friends—Christ did!
- Have you been stripped naked, spat upon, mocked, beaten beyond bodily recognition—Christ was!
- Have you been lifted up on a cursed tree—Christ was!
- Have you born the wrath of justice for every unjust elect child of God—Christ was!
- To what extent have I suffered? To what extent did Christ suffer--18:...**being put to death in the flesh**

How did Christ BEAR his suffering?

- 1 Peter 2: 22-23—patiently bore it

In Noah's day, Genesis 6:5: And GOD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually.

It was Christ, in the Spirit, preaching through Noah—with the exception of his family, all from that generation are now in prison—in hell (v19). But notice—God suffered LONG—till the Ark was prepared wherein Noah and his house were saved (v20.)

God teaches us to suffer long by teaching us how long he suffered with us—but God suffered long because it was his will to bring us to repentance from ourselves to him—he suffers long now because he will bring all his chosen, redeemed sheep to repentance. So it is that he even now, brings us to suffer, to turn us from ourselves to his Son to behold him and his suffering for us.

Why did Christ suffer long, why did he patiently endure his suffering?

1 Peter 3: 18: that he might bring us to God.

What did he accomplish by his suffering? Have you borne stripes?—know, that if you are born of his grace, “By his stripes ye were healed”

If you suffer, remember where Christ is now.

1 Peter 3: 18: Quickened by the Spirit...3:22: Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.

Application: If you suffer for well doing- It is better—examine yourself—learn from the accusations—you know better what to avoid. It is the will of God—God is teaching us to patiently wait on him—to keep our minds stayed on him—we need him every hour. Remember Christ has also suffered—this is where we will find peace and strength—our Risen Redeemer. Here is the instruction: 1 Peter 4: 1-2...12-13.

AMEN!