

The Wednesday Word, May 9, 2018: He Suffered Once!

1 Peter 3:18; "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God."

A missionary was speaking to a remote tribe of people who had never heard about Jesus. Seated in the front row, listening intently to all the missionary had to say, was the chief of the tribe.

As the story of Christ came to its climax and the chief heard how our Saviour was cruelly crucified, he could restrain himself no longer. He jumped up and cried, "Stop! Take Him down from the cross! I belong there, not Him!"

He had grasped the meaning of the Gospel; he understood that he was a sinner and that Christ was the sinless One who died in his place.

The greatest truth in the universe is that Jesus, our Saviour, suffered and died for our sins in order to bring us to God. Spurgeon said of this truth, "It is meat to my soul. I can feed on it every day and all day."

Our sins were so hideous and horrible there was nothing God could do but put us in hell unless a sin-bearing substitute could be found. But where could He find a sinless substitute? All had sinned and fallen short of His glory (1 Kings 8:46, Job 15:6). All deserved eternal death. So in love, grace and mercy, the Sovereign God came here Himself in the person of His Son. He was and is the God/Man. He is not a mixture of both man and God. He is the full perfection of both. He was not a demi-God who was less than God and more than man. He was fully God yet fully man. Great is the mystery of Godliness (1 Timothy 3:16).

He came down from heaven to become one of us. What a demonstration of love! What a parade of condescension. Yet not condescension, for there was no disdain in His attitude towards us. He came alongside us ... no, no, wait a minute ... not alongside but below us. Philippians 2:7 says, He "made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men"

Then, He took our place and died instead of us. Can you affirm this for yourself?

Our sins had sprung from deep within us and seeped through our being like a toxic pollutant. Our sins, past, present and future, had to be purged by precious blood, saving blood (Hebrew 1:3).

So, let's read our text again; "Christ also hath once suffered for sins."

Once! What a great Gospel word. When Christ died for our sins it was a unique event that has never needed to be repeated.

The priestly sacrifices for sin in the Old Testament Temple had to be repeated daily but Christ made the perfect sacrifice once and for all time when He offered Himself (Hebrews 7:27). Christ was once and for all time offered to bear the sin of many (Hebrews 9:28).

We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Christ once and for all (Hebrews 10:10).
When Christ died, He died once and for all (Romans 6:10)
What a saviour! Our guilt brought suffering upon Christ, but His suffering brought us to God.
Christ's sufferings were.

1. Unique, "Once for all."
2. Vicarious. "The just for the unjust"
3. Entirely Effective. "That He might bring us to God."

No condemnation now I dread:
Jesus and all in Him is mine!
Alive in Him, my living Head,
And clothed in righteousness divine,
Bold I approach the eternal throne,
And claim the crown, through Christ my own.

And that's the Gospel Truth!