The Suffering Of Christ

Intro: 1 Pet. 3:18 “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.” To contemplate the suffering of Christ has a profound effect on the human mind. Studying the great love manifested by Jesus begets a love in our own hearts.

1. 1 John 4:19 “We love him, because he first loved us.”
2. 2 Cor. 5:14 “For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead.”
3. Let us now notice three great fundamental truths, presented in our text, connected with the suffering and love of Christ.

I. THE FACT OF CHRIST’S SUFFERING.
   A. “For Christ also hath once suffered for sins.”
      1. Notice the word “also”, the background of 1 Peter is that the Christians are suffering for the sake of Christianity.
      2. Mat. 5:10-12 “Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. 12Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.”
      3. 2 Tim. 3:12 “Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.”
   B. This is the most important fact in all the Bible.
      1. Everything in the Bible centers around it.
         a. The Old Testament pointed forward to it.
         b. The New Testament is founded upon it.
      2. It has been given greater prominence that His birth or His life.
      3. The New Testament mentions the death and suffering of Christ 175 times specifically, and we also find many indirect references to the fact of His suffering.
   C. Notice some other lessons concerning this fact.
      1. Who it is that suffered.
         a. “For Christ”
         b. He is the only begotten Son of God.
      2. The fact that he hath once suffered.
         a. Heb. 9:12 “Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.”
         b. Heb. 7:25 “Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.” Not He ever dieth.
II. THE NATURE OF CHRIST’S SUFFERING.

A. “The just for the unjust.”

B. Christ suffering was vicarious.

1. Notice how many statements emphasize the vicarious suffering of Christ; Isa. 53:3-6 “He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. 4Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. 5But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. 6All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.”

2. This fact is further emphasized by the New Testament scriptures also.
   a. Rom. 5:8 “But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”
   b. 1 Cor. 15:1-3 “Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; 2By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. 3For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;”
   c. 2 Cor. 5:21 “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”
   d. 1 John 3:5 “And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.”

3. The Modernist deny the vicarious suffering of Christ.
   a. They claim that this principle is unjust.
   b. It is a recognized principle of life (cf. childbirth.)

III. THE PURPOSE OF CHRIST’S SUFFERING.

A. “That he might bring us to God.”

B. Why was there a need for this?

1. Because man is a sinner and sin separates from God.
   a. Rom. 3:23 “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God”
   b. Rom. 6:23 “For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

2. Isa. 59:1-2 “Behold, the Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: 2But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.”

C. How was this accomplished by the suffering of Christ?

1. Eze. 18:4, 20 “Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die.... 20"The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.”
   a. The law required the death penalty for sin.
   b. Christ’s death satisfied the justice of the law.
   c. Eph. 2:1 “And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;”
2. John 14:6 “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”

D. We thus, have hope of eternal life with God; Tit. 1:2 “In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;”

Conclusion: Christ’s death can be of no effect or value unless we appropriate or come in contact with that death. Rom. 6:1-11 “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? 2God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? 3Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 4Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: 6Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. 7For he that is dead is freed from sin. 8Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: 9Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. 10For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. 11Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”