

“Sufferings and Glories”—1 Peter 1:10-12

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[What follows is the transcript of a sermon. It was originally intended to be heard, not read, so the tone is more conversational than academic. It has only been loosely edited, so forgive any grammatical, syntactical, or spelling errors. If you have questions please contact Southern Oaks Baptist Church through their official website, www.welovethegospel.com.]

Take your Bible and meet me in 1 Peter 1...

It is good to be back with you this morning. I am thankful for Derek and Carlton filling in for me these past couple of weeks, so that I could prepare and take some exams in Chicago for my doctoral program. It has been a long couple of weeks and it's refreshing to be behind the pulpit with the church family this morning.

While you are finding the text, let me remind you of a couple of things...

[Update on our missionaries]

Alright then...Let's have a look at 1 Peter as we prepare our hearts for the Table this morning. There are two sentences I want to focus on this morning, found in verses 10 to 12. Peter has just given a long introduction about how God has saved the Christian, whom he calls “elect” and “exiles” in verse 1 and then he says something that has amazing implications for our understanding of the relationship between the Old and New Testaments. I'll begin reading in verse 10. Follow along as I read. This is God's Word....

“Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully,¹¹ inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories.¹² It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look.” (1 Peter 1:10-12)

These verses are very rich and thought provoking. There is way more here than we can adequately address today. So I just want to highlight a couple ideas and then illustrate them from an Old Testament passage that Peter himself has in mind.

To begin with, let me state what should be obvious about our salvation: It is in fact a *salvation*. This is proved, of course, by the fact that Peter uses the word “*salvation*” in verse 10. But, nonetheless, I feel like it needs to be said in our day because salvation by necessity implies something that people today struggle admitting—they need saving! We need saving! We are a proud people and salvation escapes us until the pride of our self-sufficiency is broken on the back of the cross. We *need* to be saved.

There are some logical questions that surface with that admission though. What do we need to be saved from? And what are we saved for?¹ As it turns out Peter has a lot to say about both of these curiosities. We certainly don't have time today to explore all that he will say in answer to these questions, but let me at least give you the Reader's Digest version by highlighting a few verses that are on the horizon that deal with the first question—what do we need to be saved from?²

In 2:24, Peter writes, “[Christ] *himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.*” When you are a parent it is tough to see your

kids suffer through things like sickness. When have you not wished that you could just take their sickness upon yourself so that they would be free of it? That's what Christ has done, only the sickness in view is far more deadly than any we experience in our physical lives (which all, one way or another, come to an end). It's the sickness of sin. We need to be saved from our sin because sin is a terminal disease that will kill us forever. Christ came to heal us of it. He did that by doing what we parents only wish we could do for our kids; He took the disease of sin upon himself when He died in our place on the cross. His death on the cross makes possible the removal of our sins through forgiveness.

In 3:18, Peter says, *"For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God."* The disease of sin does more than just kill us forever; it separates us from God forever. So apart from Christ's work we would be separated from God. Some of you need to hear that because you think that you can make yourself right with God by just being a "good" or "religious" person. No. Salvation is in fact a salvation. If you could do it yourself, you wouldn't need saving. And as long as you keep trying to save yourself by your activities and inactivities you merely reinforce the reality that you don't understand this salvation. Christ died for our sins because apart from that we would never have a positive and personal relationship with God. But there's more...

In 4:17, we read, *"For it is time for judgment to begin at the household of God; and if it begins with us, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God?"* We need to be saved from sin because sin brings God's judgment. Sin is a terminal disease that spreads terminal guilt through us like a cancer. That guilt deserves judgment. When Christ died for our sin on the cross, He bore our guilt and the judgment of God that comes with it for all who would repent and believe.

Do you see the point that he is driving into our hearts again and again in these different ways? We need to be saved from sin. Sin is a terminal disease that kills us unless someone else heals us. Sin brings upon us terminal guilt that separates us from God, unless someone can remove that guilt. Sin deserves terrible judgment from a holy and just God, unless God Himself makes a way for us to avoid it. Sin is a huge problem that will destroy us on so many levels and there is nothing you can do about it. Nothing. You can't deliver yourself from it. You can't deal with it. You can't save yourself from it or make restitution for it. Period. You need to be saved from sin, which means you need a Savior. Saviors *save* (by definition). If you don't think you need saving from your sin (because either it's not that bad or, if given enough time, you can make amends for it), you know nothing of the salvation that Peter describes here. Our salvation is, in fact, a *salvation*.

But look again at verses 10 and 11. Peter says that this salvation was taught by the prophets (meaning the prophets of the Old Testament) when the *"Spirit of Christ in them...predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories."* Then in verse 12, he adds, *"It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven..."*

From this we can deduce a couple of things. First of all, what Christ has done on the cross is at the heart of both the Old and New Testament. It is not just the story of the New Testament. Peter is saying that the prophets' ministry was ultimately pointing to Christ. And the ones who preach the Gospel to Peter's audience—the Apostles (like Peter himself) and those who passed along the teachings of the Apostles—were proclaiming the same message. In other words, the Old Testament was pointing to the cross and the New Testament is pointing from the cross. The cross of Christ is at the center of the story of Scripture. The Bible is a unified story.

But there is another way that Peter demonstrates the unity of the Testaments. He says to his readers that the same Spirit revealed the story (or pieces of it) to both the Old Testament prophets and the New Testament preachers. In verse 11, he says that the source of the Old Testament prophets' message was *"the Spirit of*

Christ in them” and then, in verse 12, he adds that those who preached the Gospel after the death and resurrection of Jesus do so “*by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven.*”³ Therefore, we have a unified story throughout the whole of Scripture because it all was revealed by the same “*Spirit.*” The Gospel is the scarlet thread that ties all of this revelation together.⁴

Think about that for a second. In his second epistle, Peter says, “*For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit*” (2 Peter 1:21). So it was the Spirit of Christ who inspired all of the Old Testament writers. And after the resurrection of Christ, it was the Spirit of Christ whom Christ Himself sends into the life of the Church, into the heart of individual saints. Wrap your mind around that. That means that Jesus is not simply the one whom the prophets spoke about; He is the one whose voice is heard through the prophets.⁵ The prophecy in Scripture bears witness to Jesus, but when we hear that prophecy we are actually hearing Jesus bearing witness to Himself, through that prophecy. And not just in the Old Testament, friends. Peter is saying that “both testaments bear witness to Christ” and “both are the witness of Christ.”⁶ Anyone else feel like your head is about to explode?

The implications of this doctrine of Scripture and revelation are far reaching. For example, one writer noted,

“[This] means that Christ, the Son of God in Heaven, has been contemplating his suffering and his death for us for centuries. Indeed as far back as the plan of salvation reaches in the mind of God, so far back has Christ been willing and ready to give himself for our sins. You were not loved for just a bloody moment of sacrifice in history. You have been loved for endless ages in the eternal plan of the Father and the Son to save sinners who trust in him.”⁷

Isn’t that amazing? The Gospel thread unifies all of Scripture into one beautiful story. Peter didn’t always understand this. In fact, none of his contemporaries seemed to understand this. But then, one day, the risen Christ started appearing to the disciples and teaching this very thing. What Peter is teaching us, Jesus taught him and the other disciples.

For example, do you remember the story of Jesus appearing to a pair of disciples on the road to Emmaus? They were discussing everything that had happened to Jesus at the crucifixion with their faces downcast. Jesus appears to them and the text says that “*their eyes were kept from recognizing him*” (Luke 24:16). Jesus asks them why they are so troubled and they are shocked that he would ask. “*Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?*” one of them asks. So Jesus says, “why don’t you go ahead and enlighten me...” They give Him a rundown of Christ’s sufferings and how His body was not found at the tomb. And then Jesus opens their eyes. We read,

“*And he said to them, ‘O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!’*”²⁶ *Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?’*” (Luke 24:25-26)

Don’t miss the relationship between what Jesus just said and what Peter said in our text. Jesus just said to these disciples that the prophets taught that the Messiah was going to be a suffering Messiah before He entered into glory. That is exactly what Peter claimed in 1 Peter! The Spirit spoke through the prophets about “*the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories*” (1 Peter 1:11). Peter is not being original. He is echoing what the resurrected Christ taught.

Some of you may be thinking, “Okay preacher, I see your point. But you claimed that the whole Bible was about this and Peter just said the Old Testament prophets were pointing to this, so haven’t you overstated your case?” No I have not. Look at what happens after Jesus said those words to these disciples on the way

to Emmaus. The next verse tells us,

“And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.” (Luke 24:27)

“*Moses*” is a reference to the books of Moses, which are the first five books of the Old Testament, the Torah. The prophet material concludes the Old Testament canon. “Moses and the Prophets” is another way of saying the whole Old Testament (cf. 24:24, “*Psalms*”). In literature, this is called a merism. It’s as if Luke says, Jesus opened the Old Testament and from beginning to end He explained to them how it was all about Him. You talk about a powerful small group Bible study! This opened their eyes. This changed how they read the Old Testament. It changed their whole lives. And not just for them, because He does it for the other disciples at the end of the chapter, including Peter (24:44-46).

Now Peter is passing along that truth. The Scriptures are pointing to the sufferings destined for Christ and the subsequent glories. The Old Testament prophets were pointing to the same message that those who preached the Gospel to you preached. They were all speaking the same voice. The voice of the Spirit of God. They are all helping us understand the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories, the Gospel message, our need for that suffering and glory, the character of that suffering and glory, and the implication of that suffering and glory.

So let me give you one example of a prophet who “*prophesied about the grace that was to be yours*” and served you by “*predicting the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories.*” Keep your finger in 1 Peter, and turn to Isaiah 52 and 53.

The book of Isaiah has sometimes been referred to as the “fifth Gospel.” In a recent book, John MacArthur called it “a miniature compendium of the Bible” and he points out that there are many “interesting parallels between how the book of Isaiah is laid out and the arrangement of the Bible as a whole.” He writes,

“There were of course no chapter breaks or verse numbers in the original manuscripts. (Those were added in the middle of the sixteenth century, when Bibles were first being mass-produced on printing presses in order to make Scripture more accessible to common people.) Nevertheless, the chapter and verse divisions do generally follow the logical composition of the text, and they can sometimes reveal the amazing symmetry of the Bible’s structure in an extraordinary way.

Isaiah is divided into two sections, the first containing thirty-nine chapters and the second twenty-seven chapters. The Bible is also divided into two sections: the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament and the twenty-seven books of the New.

That second major division of Isaiah begins and ends exactly where the New Testament begins and ends. It opens with the ministry of John the Baptist (Isa. 40:3-5), as does the New Testament (Matt. 3:3; Mark 1:3; Luke 3:4-6; John 1:23). It concludes with the new heavens and the new earth (Isaiah 65:17; 66:22), which is also how the New Testament ends (Revelation 21-22). So Isaiah’s incredible prophecy accurately anticipates and foreshadows the flow of the New Testament, even though it was written centuries before the birth of the Messiah.”⁸

Now, just to give you some perspective, a week and a half from now we will celebrate Independence Day, the birth of our nation. The Declaration of Independence (which was approved by the Continental Congress on July 4th, 1776) was signed on August 2 of that same year, long before we were born (most of us). That means that our nation is not even 250 years old yet. Multiply that times three and we are somewhere around when the amount of years Isaiah was preaching before the Son of God arrived in Bethlehem in the first century. That’s a lot of time and yet his prophecy rings with perfect precision.

One example of this precision is the fourth and final “Servant Song” that occurs in the second half of the

book and I want us to look at that now. Isaiah was writing about one whom God would send in the future, the Messiah, chosen by God to suffer on behalf of God's people. So as we read it, you need to remember that Isaiah was speaking about Jesus—the sufferings destined for Him and the subsequent glories. As we go through it, watch how the prophet brings these two themes of the career of the Messiah—suffering and glory—together. He begins and ends with the theme of glory. Look at Isaiah 52:13...

“Behold, my servant shall act wisely; he shall be high and lifted up, and shall be exalted. (Isaiah 52:13)

That is clearly about glory. But what you may not recognize is that the phrase “high and lifted up” is dripping with associations of divinity. Those same words are used in Isaiah 6:1 and 57:15 to describe the glory of God Himself. What the Jews in the first century didn't recognize was that the Servant would be none other than God Himself. But He would also, in some miraculous way, be man as well. The next verse brings this reality into view.

“As many were astonished at you— his appearance was so marred, beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of the children of mankind—¹⁵ so shall he sprinkle many nations. Kings shall shut their mouths because of him, for that which has not been told them they see, and that which they have not heard they understand.” (Isaiah 52:14-15)

Now so far, the Lord Himself has been speaking. But then the voice shifts to the people of God in chapter 53. Look there. This is what Isaiah anticipates the people of God confessing about Jesus when they come to their senses...

“Who has believed what he has heard from us? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? ² For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him. ³ He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. ⁴ Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. ⁵ But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.” (Isaiah 53:1-5)

By the way, we are hundreds of years before the piercing of crucifixion was invented, yet it reads like eyewitness testimony. Keep reading. Verse 6. This is you and me...

“All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. ⁷ He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth. ⁸ By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people? ⁹ And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth. (Isaiah 53:6-9)

Jesus was killed. He would have been assigned a grave of a criminal, but the rich man intervened and provided a grave. In other words, this one who was silent before his accusers, stricken for our transgressions, and cut off from the land of the living by a brutal death on the cross, was assigned a grave with the wicked and the rich in his death. It feels as though we are reading the New Testament's Passion account when we read Isaiah's prophecy. But then He adds something startling. Look at verse 10...

¹⁰ *Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an*

offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.” (Isaiah 53:10)

Will you please just take a moment to let verse 10 wreck you? *“It was the will of the LORD to crush him; HE has put him to grief.”* The God who takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked (Ezekiel 18:23, 32; 33:11), actually took pleasure in the death of this Servant, the Righteous One. The word that is translated “will” in the ESV that I just read actually means “to delight in” or “take pleasure in.” This idea is seen more explicitly in the New American Standard Bible translation: “The LORD was pleased to crush Him.” This is Jesus we are talking about. It wasn’t just the agony of His death on the cross. It was every drop of God’s wrath against sinners being poured out on Him. “Infinite wrath moved by infinite righteousness brought infinite punishment on the eternal Son.”⁹ But how, we might ask, could God have been “pleased” to bring such agony and torment on His Son? MacArthur answers the questions like this:

“It was the *outcome* that pleased him, not the *pain*. His pleasure in crushing Jesus and putting him to grief was not in the torment inflicted on his Son, but in the Son’s fulfilling his Father’s purpose—not his agony, but his accomplishment; not his suffering, but the salvation that suffering accomplished. God was pleased because the servant willingly sacrificed himself as a guilt offering; he gave his life for sinners.”¹⁰

And that’s exactly where Isaiah goes in verse 11, where the voice shifts back to God.

“Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities.¹² Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors.” (Isaiah 53:11-12)¹¹

This is your Lord, Church. This is your Savior. Broken and bled. Glorified and honored. As Peter said, this is the Gospel preached to you, the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories.

Now flip back to 1 Peter and let me just show you that Peter absolutely has Isaiah in mind when he is teaching us such things. He echoes Isaiah in several places, but let me show you an example that you can clearly see is derived from the Servant Song in Isaiah. Look at 1 Peter 2:19 and following.

“For this is a gracious thing, when, mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly.²⁰ For what credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure? But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God.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.²² He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth.²³ When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.²⁴ He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.²⁵ For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.” (1 Peter 2:20-25)

Can you hear Isaiah in Peter’s words? That’s because the Spirit of God inspired them both. The same voice. *“In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins”* (1 John 4:10), which is to say that the death of Christ satisfied the wrath of God for any sinner who is willing to take their sin before God and plead the blood of Christ. Anyone willing to turn from sin and to the Savior Jesus, trusting in Him alone for forgiveness and eternal life. There is no more burden-lifting truth in all the universe than the Gospel—the story of the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. Is there any more soothing salve than those words of Isaiah—*“Surely he has borne our*

griefs and carried our sorrows...He was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed” (Isaiah 53:4-5)? And this we now remember, at the Lord’s Table...

Pray with me...

[Lord’s Supper]

¹ John Piper asked the questions in a sermon he preached to Bethlehem Baptist Church in Minneapolis, MN, on November 21, 1993, called “What the Prophets Sought and Angels Desired.” He surveys the same verses (and others) that I highlight in this section to make the same point. His sermon can be found here: <http://www.desiringgod.org/sermons/what-the-prophets-sought-and-angels-desired>.

² For those interested in exploring what Peter has to say about the second question—what are we saved for?—you can read verses like 2:5. Similarly, in exploring what Peter has to say about the second question—what are we saved for?—you can read verses like 2:10. See it this way.

³ Karen Jobes states it this way: “In 1 Pet. 1:11 the point seems to be that the Spirit who was the agent of revelation to the prophets of old is the same Spirit of Christ known to the first-century church. The Spirit who had inspired the prophets was the same Spirit who descended on Jesus at his baptism, identifying him as the Messiah who would experience the foretold sufferings and the glories that would follow. Peter thereby shows a continuity of the presence of the Spirit with the prophets and with the Christians, who receive the gospel of God’s mercy centered in the suffering and glorification of Jesus Christ.” Karen Jobes, *1 Peter* (BECNT; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 101.

⁴ Edmund Clowney puts it this way, “The same Spirit of Christ, sent from his ascended glory, now fills the apostles who preach the prophecies come true [cf. 1 Peter 1:12; John 15:26; 16:14; Acts 2:33]. One Lord through the ages, one great plan of salvation, one revealed message, heralded by the prophets of old and now announced by the apostles of Christ—all is focused on the lordship of Jesus Christ. Peter’s thrilling witness to one Lord and one scriptural gospel was attacked by Marcion in the second century. For Marcion the God of the Old Testament was a tyrant to be replaced by the God of love. Many since Marcion have missed what Peter teaches: both testaments bear witness to Christ, both are the witness of Christ.” Edmund Clowney, *The Message of 1 Peter* (BST; Leicester, England: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 58.

⁵ This is possible Christ is Lord. He is God the Son. He has always existed. What happened at Christmas was not Him coming into existence. That was His humanity coming into existence. He took on human flesh to redeem humanity.

⁶ Ibid., 59.

⁷ This was from a sermon preached by John Piper on November 21, 1993, to Bethlehem Baptist Church in Minneapolis Minnesota. The sermon was titled “What the Prophets Sought and Angels Desired.” The transcript and audio can be found online here: <http://www.desiringgod.org/sermons/what-the-prophets-sought-and-angels-desired>.

⁸ John MacArthur, *The Gospel According to God: Rediscovering the Most Remarkable Chapter in the Old Testament* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2018), 16.

⁹ Ibid., 140.

¹⁰ Ibid., 141.

¹¹ “Isaiah 53:11 is one of the fullest statements of atonement theology ever penned. (i) The Servant knows the needs to be met and what must be done. (ii) As ‘that righteous one, my servant’ he is both fully acceptable to the God our sins have offended and has been appointed by him to his task. (iii) As righteous, he is free from every contagion of sin. (iv) He identified himself personally with our sin and need. (v) He accomplishes the task fully. Negatively, in the bearing of iniquity; positively, in the provision of righteousness.” J. Alec Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1993), 442.