

Biblical Principles Of Parenting – 1 Pet 3:18-22 (Part 3)

1 Pet 3:18-22; We're in a series on parenting; The point of which, is to build your family on the rock solid truths of God's Word

Truths that are foundational for a life and lineage built to last

And this particular message contains some biggies; Truths that beg to be understood, and *have* to be embraced; B/c they're gospel truths; *Foundational* to a life built to last Unfortunately, they're found in a passage that's about as difficult as any in Scripture But if we put our thinking caps on, I think we can sort them out, and benefit greatly in our parenting (**Intro**)

- The Apostle Peter is writing here, and he's just been talking about suffering; Suffering for doing good, and the blessing that comes from it (14) Saying in v17 – *For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil.* If you're going to suffer in life he says, make sure it's b/c you're living *right*; Not wrong; It's better that way; And then he tells us why

[18] *For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous* [the epitome of suffering for doing good], *that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit*, [19] *in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison, [20] because they formerly did not obey, when God's patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water. [21] Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, [22] who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.*

If that doesn't make your head swim, I don't know what will; It's like Peter cooked up some theological goulash and dropped it on the floor But on *closer* inspection, there's a very tight flow of thought here, and a very intentional purpose; It goes like this

If you're going to suffer in life, make sure it's for doing good, like Jesus; Who suffered as our example, and substitute, and Savior And in so doing, spared us from judgment just like Noah; Which baptism shows That's the flow of thought; That's the main idea

And within it, we find a triad of some amazing truths; Starting with . . .

3 Truths About The Suffering of Christ

The death of Christ; The first of which, is that . . .

1. It was needed

Jesus suffered and died, b/c it was necessary; It was needed

V18 says – *Christ also suffered once* [in addition to us] *for sins* (18); Sins It wasn't suffering for suffering's sake; It wasn't suffering just b/c; Or just b/c men were evil and cruel; It was suffering for *sins*; It was suffering as *payment* for sins Suffering to the point of death

Why? B/c God *demand*s that a price be paid for sin; His perfect justice cannot overlook it

He cannot and will not allow us to rebel against him; Either *we* pay the price, or *he* pays the price

And since the price *we'd* pay is suffering and separation in the eternity of hell, the price he paid, was needed; The suffering he endured, was necessary

2. It was substitutionary

Christ suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous (18) it says

The holy for the unholy; The sinless for the sin-full; The blameless for the depraved

The key word being *for*; *The righteous for the unrighteous*

IOW he took our place; In the punishment demanded due to God's perfect justice, he took our place due to God's perfect love; He became our substitute

3. It was reconciling

Christ suffered for [our] sins, the righteous for the unrighteous – that he might bring us to God; That he might *reconcile* us to our creator That he might make a way, for our relationship to be restored That he might bridge the gap, between enemies at odds

Which means, that the suffering and death of Christ was reconciling; Joining two parties, separated by an infinite chasm; Rebellion on one side, holiness on the other It's something Rom 5:10 is explicit about it – *While we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son*; 3 truths

But that's not all; We also find . . .

3 Truths About The Resurrection of Christ

V18 – *Christ suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit*

Jesus not only rose again *physically*, but *spiritually*; As soon as he died, his spirit was released to the Father's care; Something he attested to at his final breath

"Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!" (Lk 23:46)

That's the idea of being *made alive in the spirit*; It's part of his resurrection; Which he refers to *explicitly* at the end of v21

And b/c of it, he reigns over all; V22

Having been *made alive* (18), *through the resurrection* (21) – *Jesus has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God* [the ultimate place of supremacy and privilege], *with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.*

Having been brought under his Lordship, his control; All of it; In all creation Including, the power of sin and death; That too has been conquered by him; Like Paul says in 1 Cor 15 – death was *swallowed up in victory* (54)

So the first truth we find here about the *resurrection* of Christ, is not only that it secured his supremacy over all *creation*, but that . . .

1. It sealed his victory over sin and death

B/c death could not hold him; That's what Peter said in Acts 3 – *God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it.* (24) Nor could the *weight* of sin keep him down; The sheer volume of it all that he bore in his body on the tree (1 Pet 2:24); All of which sealed his triumph once and for all

That's the first truth about the resurrection that begs to be understood and embraced
Especially if you're going to trust him with your life

2. It ensures our victory over the powers of darkness

And this is where it gets dicey – v19-20; Jesus was *made alive in the spirit* [v19] . . .

In which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison, [20] because they formerly did not obey, when God's patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared

There are 4 main questions here we need to answer, if we're going to understand this
Who are the *spirits*? What is the *prison*? What did Christ proclaim? And when?
And while the *correct* answers might be hard to come by, the *incorrect* ones are easy to identify

➤ Like those who say that the *spirits* are souls of people in hell or Purgatory, to whom Jesus went and gave a second chance to repent
That's not only *theologically* flawed, it's biblically indefensible

There is no such thing as Purgatory in the Bible, and Jesus did not descend into hell
B/c he told the thief on the cross just before he died – Today you will be with me in Paradise (Lk 23:43)

And once again, a few hours later – “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!”
Not only that, but *what fellowship has light with darkness?* (1 Cor 6:14); None
So despite what the Apostle's Creed says, Jesus did *not* descend into hell

Nor does he offer anyone a second chance to repent
It's *appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment* – Heb 9:27; After death, comes a determination of whether we're in or out; There's no 2nd chance
That much is clear

➤ What isn't so clear, is what it *does* mean; B/c there are 2 very different views, that have biblical merit
One, says that when Noah was building the ark, Christ was in him spiritually, preaching a message of repentance, to people who didn't believe, and are now in hell
That's one view; And it's possible; It has merit

But the view *I* would commend to you, albeit very loosely, is that . . .
Jesus, at the time of his death, proclaimed victory *in the spirit*, over fallen angels, like those in Noah's day . . .
Who are in *prison*, as in destined for hell and *committed to chains of gloomy darkness until the judgment*; (2 Pet 2:4), due to their rebellious ways

That seems to me, to be the most straightforward way to *understand* the text, and honor the timing to which it refers; And, I think it fits best w/in the overall flow of thought
That we can take comfort in *our* suffering, whether at the hands of man, or nature, or the powers of darkness – b/c Jesus has ensured our victory, with his resurrection

3. It guarantees our salvation through him

Through faith in him; V18 – *Christ suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God* [that he might save us] . . .

Being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit

The death and resurrection of Jesus, is the *means* by which we are saved; That's the idea of the word *being*; It's a part of speech . . .

To say that what follows it, is the means to accomplish what precedes it

Like Jesus said in the Great Commission; Go and make disciples of all nations, *baptizing* them and *teaching* them all that I have commanded you (Mt 28:19-20)
Baptiz-ing and *teach-ing* are the means by which we accomplish discipleship

And the same is true here in 1 Peter; *Being* put to death and made alive, is the means by which Jesus accomplishes and guarantees our salvation
If the one is true, so is the other; If *Jesus* died and rose again, so will we
Through faith in him, the resurrection of Christ guarantees our salvation; 3 truths

And then last, are . . .

3 Truths About Baptism

Jesus proclaimed victory over the fallen angels in Noah's day . . .

While the ark [v20b] was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water. [21] Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ

The first truth about baptism, is that . . .

1. It corresponds to Noah's ark

Baptism, v21, *corresponds to*, or resembles, the ark

It goes like this – just like the ark was Noah's tangible and visible expression of *his* faith in God, baptism is the tangible and visible expression of *ours*
Building and getting into the ark was Noah's outward expression of his faith in God's *spoken* word . . .

While getting baptized, is our outward expression of faith in God's *Living* Word; Jesus

2. It pictures our escape from judgment

Just like the ark was Noah's means of escape from the judgment of the flood – baptism pictures our escape from the judgment of death

Or to say it another way, the waters of *baptism* represent judgment and death, just like the waters of the flood did

And baptism itself, represents our *escape* from such judgment, by coming up *out* of the water, and passing through; Just like Noah

3. It's an expression of our confession

V21 – *Baptism, which corresponds to this* [the flood and the ark], *now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body* [not as a physical, outward work; that just b/c you do, you're saved] *but as an appeal to God for a good conscience* [an outward expression of an inward plea]

It's not the act or *ritual* of baptism that saves us, like taking a bath cleans us – but our appeal to God for forgiveness; That's what saves us

It's our inward desire, expressed *by* our baptism, to have a clean conscience

Which means that baptism, is an outward expression of our inward confession

Made possible, once again, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ

Through *his* work, and our faith in him (**Summary**)

9 truths – 6 about the gospel, the good news of Jesus Christ, and 3 about a picture of it

And the parenting principle I want to commend to you, is teach it to your kids

Parenting Principle #4 – Teach your kids the gospel

Tell them over and over the old, old story of Jesus and his love

Starting with the fact that they're a sinner; A sinner separated from God, and destined for hell; Show them Rom 3:23, and Rom 6:23, and Is 59:2

And then tell them that Jesus suffered and *died* for their sins – Rom 5:8

And that he rose again to save them from judgment – 1 Cor 15:20-22

And that such a salvation is theirs to receive, if they only ask (Rom 10:9,13; 1 Jn 1:9)

Tell them; Teach them; How can they believe if they've never heard? *And how are they to hear without someone preaching?* (Rom 10:14b); And who better to do it, than you?

Parenting Principle #5 – Tell them how you were saved

Confess *your* belief; Openly and clearly; Like at the dinner table

Take a night and share your testimony; How *you* came to Christ

And I'm not talking about the *circumstances* of your salvation, I'm talking about your words of repentance and your profession of faith

I'm talking about the Scripture(s) that were meaningful; *Tell* them about those things

And if you're not sure about all that, get sure

Go to our website and click on how to be saved; Pick up a tract at our Welcome Center;

Talk to somebody who can help you

B/c if you can't articulate a clear testimony of your faith in Jesus and repentance of sin – you may not be saved

And if you can, but you're too bashful to do it, even in front of your kids, you've got a bigger problem; B/c Jesus said that if you're ashamed of him before men . . .

He'll be ashamed of you before the Father

➤ And the same goes for your baptism; One of the best ways to tell your kids how you were saved, is to get baptized; Or tell them about it if you already were
Parents, this isn't about you influencing your *kids* to be baptized; Which far too many do, far too soon in their children's lives; Robbing them of the impact it could have
This is about *you* being baptized; This is about *you* being obedient; This is about *you* professing your faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus

Which you can do 4 weeks from now; If you haven't been baptized, now is the time

Go online, fill out the packet, and make plans for the first weekend in March (**Summ**)

B/c when you get right down to it, there's no better way to tell your kids how you were *saved*, or teach them the gospel

Prayer – Find us faithful to tell the old, old story; And help us to live it out and love it more and more; (If you need to be baptized, commit to God right now)

We give of our tithes and offerings now, as an act of worship for all you've given us