

# Are We Following in His Steps?

1 Peter 2:21-25

John 15:16-27; 2 Timothy 3:10-17



9 March 2025

## The Times We Live In

- What is the greatest of all sin? (Matthew 22:36-37)

## A Quick Review

## A Letter to the Elect and the Persecuted

- The Holy Spirit moved Peter to write to persecuted and dispersed saints.
- Peter's intent is to encourage and exhort these saints to "endure to the end." (Matthew 10:22; 24:13; Mark 13:13; Romans 2:6-7; Hebrews 3:6, 14; 6:11)
- The Doctrine of the Perseverance and Preservation of the Saints:
  - All whom God has chosen, predestined, called and justified can neither totally nor finally lose their salvation, but all will persevere to the end and be eternally saved. (Romans 8:29-30; Philippians 1:6; 2 Peter 1:10; John 6:37-40; 10:28-29; 1 John 3:9; 1 Peter 1:5, 9)



- This perseverance of the saints does not depend on their own free will, but upon the immutable decree of election, which flows from the free unchangeable love of God, based on the works of Christ, and the abiding of the Holy Spirit. (1 John 3:1-10; Romans 8:22-39; John 17:11; Hebrews 7:25; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 2 Corinthians 1:22; 5:5)
- This is a doctrine that must be carefully studied because it has been seriously "leavened" or "twisted" in the past two centuries. (2 Peter 3:15-16; 2 Corinthians 4:2)
- There are many who believe "once saved, always saved" who are not saved, yet believe they are saved! (Matthew 7:21-23)
- This letter has been written for our learning (Romans 15:4) since serious persecution is coming our way!

## Christians Are Called to Suffer! (v. 21a)

- This letter was written during a time when Christians in the Roman Empire were being persecuted. Yet, in 1 Peter 2:13, the Holy Spirit commands Christians to “submit” themselves to that government!
- Last week, we studied that Christians must “submit” themselves to their employers – whether “good and gentle, or harsh” one. (1 Peter 2: 18)
- (vv. 20-21a) Christians are told that suffering unjustly is what they are called to!!!
- Christ preached that those who wanted to be Christians ought to first sit down and “count the cost” (Luke 14:28) of following Him!
  - ★ Christ preached that following Him would be costly! (Luke 9:23, 57-62; 14:25-27)
  - ★ He preached that the “gate is narrow and the way difficult that leads to life (eternal)”. (Matthew 7:13-14)
  - ★ Christ promised that His followers would be “persecuted” just as He was! (John 15:18-20)
- (2 Timothy 3:12) Paul told young Timothy, “ALL who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.”
- (Acts 14:21-22) Paul told churches, “We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.”
- (Philippians 1:29) Paul told the saints at Philippi, “For to you it has been granted (“graced”) on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake.”
- (1 Thessalonians 3:3) Paul writes the saints in Thessalonika who were suffering persecution, “. . . no one should be shaken by these afflictions, for you yourselves know that we are appointed to this.”
- One must seriously ask, “Where is the persecution in western Christendom?” if these things are true!

## BECAUSE Christ Suffered FOR YOU! (v. 21b)

- Suffering for the sake of Christ is a privilege for the saint – one who has “counted the cost.” (Acts 5:41; Luke 14:25-30)
- The saint rejoices in persecution. (1 Peter 4:12-16; Romans 5:3; 2 Cor 12:9-10)
- The saint knows that there is a GREAT REWARD awaiting them that have suffered for the sake of Christ. (Mat 5:10-12; Heb 10:34; Luke 6:32-35)
- The saint knows that suffering is working for him!. (2 Cor 4:17; Rom 8:18)
- The saints are “heirs of God . . . if they suffer with Him . . .” (Romans 8:17)
- If the HEAD suffered, then the Body will suffer.
- HOW LITTLE DO WE HEAR THESE TRUTHS TODAY?

## Christ Is Our Perfect Example (v. 21c-23a)

- Christ, Himself, was crucified as a criminal (Matthew 27:38; Isaiah 53:12) even though He was found without any offense deserving death. (Matthew 27:24; Luke 23:41; John 18:38; 19:4, 6; 1 Peter 3:18)
- Christ suffered when He had done absolute NOTHING wrong, criminal, or sinful! (1 John 3:5; 1 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 4:15; 7:26; John 8:46)
- "example" is upogrammoj *hupogrammos* which literally means "to write under" or "to trace". Christians are to "trace" their lives by "copying" Christ's life!
- ★ "AS" ("love" John 13:34-35; 1 John 3:3 "purify"; Col 3:13 "forgive"; 1 John 2:6 "walk"; 1 John 3:16 "lay down our lives"; Matt 20:28 "serve"; John 15:10 "obey"; 1 Peter 2:20-22 "suffer")
- (v. 22) Peter quotes ISAIAH 53:9. Interestingly, Isaiah uses the word "violence" to describe sin! ALL sin is violence toward God and His Law!
- (v. 23) Though He was/is GOD, Christ refused (chose), when suffering unjustly, to: 1) have no guile in His mouth; 2) not revile back when reviled; and 3) not to threaten when suffering!

## He Trusted God (v. 23b)

- Christ knew He was called for this purpose, "Now my soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save Me from this hour? But for this purpose I came to this hour. Father, glorify Your name.'" (John 12:27-28)
- He committed Himself to God, "Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit." (Luke 23:46)
- He left the judgment to GOD, the One who "judges righteously". (Genesis 18:25; Psalm 7:11; 96:13)
- Peter exhorts his readers to follow Christ in this example, "Let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls to Him in doing good, as to a faithful Creator." (1 Peter 4:19)

## He Bore Our Sins! (v. 24a)

- Christ did not suffer for anything He did, but FOR US!
- Christ gave HIS LIFE FOR US! (Matthew 20:28; Galatians 2:20)

## That We Might Live for RIGHTEOUSNESS (v. 24b)

- Christ died for His people so that they might –
  - ① Die to sin. (Romans 6:11-13)
  - ② Live unto righteousness. (Romans 6:4, 13, 16)
- One of the results of Christ dying for His people is that they become "children of God" who "practice righteousness" (God's Law). (1 John 2:28-3:10)

- BECAUSE by His suffering (“stripes” or “wounds”) we are “healed” – spiritually – NOT physically – yet our physical healing comes later when we receive our redeemed bodies. (1 Corinthians 15:42-49)

## We WERE, But NOW (v. 25)

- Peter again uses Isaiah 53, this time verse 6.
- Two kinds of “sheep” —
  - UNBELIEVERS: Going their OWN way foolishly thinking they do not need a Shepherd – the LORD. (Isaiah 53:6; 1 Peter 2:25; John 10:26)
  - BELIEVERS: These are the LORD’s sheep. They obey their Shepherd. They follow their Shepherd. (John 10:4, 14-16, 27-29; Psalm 23; 95:7; 100:3; Isaiah 40:11; Jer 23:1; Acts 20:28-29; Heb13:20)
- The verbs here are important: “were” and “but have now” - new creatures!.
- “returned” has repentance in its meaning. It is “turning from living life our way for ourselves, and turning to living life according to God’s written Word and for Him.” See Jeremiah 6:16-17.
  - The verb is in the AORIST tense indicating PAST TENSE and it is in the PASSIVE VOICE indicating something done to or for us rather than we ourselves doing the action.
    - ★ See Luke 15:4-5; 19:10 – it is Christ who came to seek, find, and save His own!!
    - ★ He died to “bring us to God” – 1 Peter 3:18.
- NOW that we have returned we come under the care and protection of our Shepherd.
  - ☆ He Is the GOOD Shepherd. HE laid down His life for His sheep. (John 10:11, 14)
  - ☆ He is SHEPHERD and OVERSEER of my soul. He WATCHES over every aspect of our lives. (1 Peter 2:25)
  - ☆ He is the CHIEF Shepherd. (1 Peter 5:4)
  - ☆ He is the GREAT Shepherd. (Hebrews 13:20)
  - ☆ He is OUR Shepherd. (Psalm 23)
- ★ HIS SHEEP KNOW HIM and THEY FOLLOW HIM! (John 10:27-28; Luke 9:23; 14:26-27; Matthew 10:38-39)

## Running the Race

- We are saved but we are called to persevere. (Hebrews 12:1; Romans 8:23-25; Hebrews 10:36; Revelation 3:10; Matthew 10:22; 24:13)
- Persecution is part of a Christian’s life. (Philip 1:29; Acts 14:22; John 15:18-20)
- Suffering for Christ’s sake is a privilege. (Acts 5:41; Hebrews 11:24-25)
- We are called to follow Christ’s example. (1 Peter 2:21; 1 John 2:6)
- If we are following Christ’s teachings we are His disciples. (Luke 9:23; John 8:31)