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STANDING FIRM
IN A HOSTILE WORLD

HOPE AS EXILES



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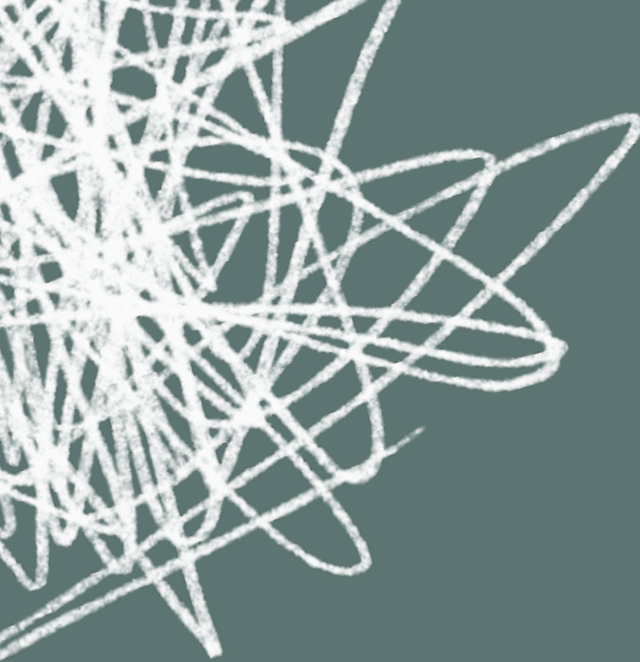


[WEEK TEN]

SUFFERING RIGHTEOUSLY

HOPE AS EXILES

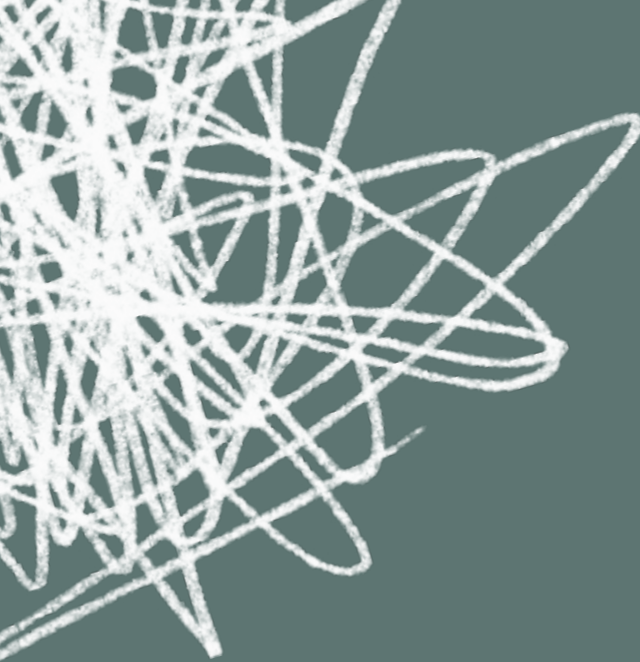




Human happiness is something that is dependent on the chances and changes of life, something which life may give and which life may also destroy. The Christian blessedness is completely untouchable and unassailable.

WILLIAM BARCLAY





[The] Christian has the serene and untouchable joy which comes from walking forever in the company and in the presence of Jesus Christ. The greatness of the beatitudes is that they are not wistful glimpses of some future beauty; they are not even golden promises of some glory; they are triumphant shouts of bliss for a permanent joy that nothing in the world can ever take away.

JOHN MACARTHUR



Embrace the blessing of unjust suffering

¹³ Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good?

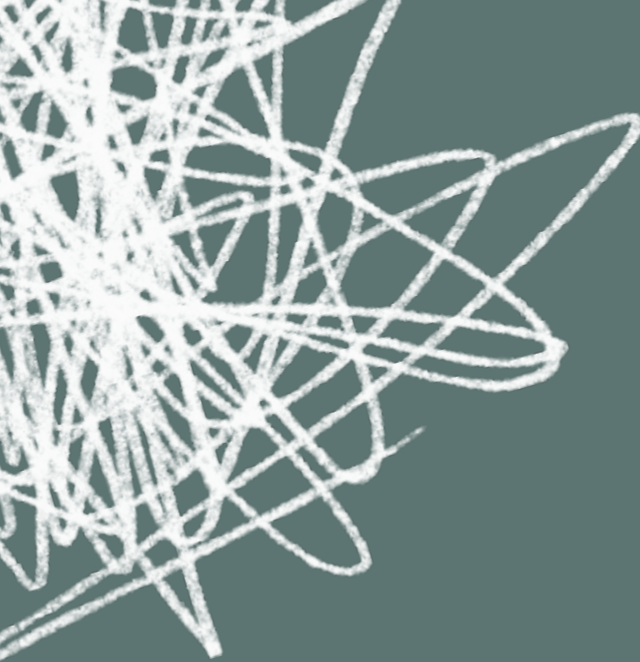
¹⁴ But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, ¹⁵ but in your hearts honour Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defence to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, ¹⁶ having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behaviour in Christ may be put to shame. ¹⁷ For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil.



Because of Christ's victory over unjust suffering

¹⁸ For Christ also 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, 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.





The concept of substitution may be said, then, to lie at the heart of both sin and salvation. For the essence of sin is man substituting himself for God, while the essence of salvation is God substituting himself for man.

Man asserts himself against God and puts himself where only God deserves to be; God sacrifices himself for man and puts himself where only man deserves to be. Man claims prerogatives that belong to God alone; God accepts penalties that belong to man alone

JOHN STOTT



