

Be Blessed: He Suffered, So Shall We

1 Peter 3:8–22

WHAT IS TRUE, AND WHAT SHOULD CHRISTIANS DO?

Jesus's death and resurrection provide the basis for why Christians who fear God experience suffering and why they are blessed when they suffer. So, be blessed, fear God, and trust in Christ as your Lord and Savior.

1. WHEN SUFFERING, HOW TO HAVE HOLINESS, UNITY, & LOVE AMONG GOD'S PEOPLE (v.8–12)

- A.** Live in harmony (“unity of spirit”) – working together for the common goal of spreading the Gospel
- B.** Be sympathetic – share in others' needs, have sensitivity toward others because of their relationship in Christ
- C.** Love one another – not only to family love, but to the special love that should draw Christians together
- D.** Be compassionate – be conscious of others' needs, but this includes a drive to alleviate the need; be deeply touched by the hurts, pains, joys, and needs of others; be quick to give support
- E.** Be humble – having an honest view of yourself / abilities with thankfulness to God. Nurture and rejoice in other's successes
- G.** Give a blessing and control your tongue – do not speak deceit or return evil for evil
- I.** Turn from evil and seek peace – the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous; His ears are open to their prayer (see Psalm 34:12-16)

2. GODLY SUFFERING DIRECTS OTHERS TO GOD; A BLESSED REWARD AWAITS THE RIGHTEOUS (v. 13–22, See also Rom. 5)

- A.** What to do when our good is returned with evil? Strive for holy living in this wicked world. Keep a clear conscience and know that you are blessed (v. 13–17)
- B.** Jesus shows us the result of His godly suffering (18–22): that He might bring us to God. Despite the world's pagan opponents and the evil spiritual forces behind them, none are outside Christ's control. They stand defeated already and await punishment. This truth is real comfort for the persecuted church.

Note: v. 21, water on the body accomplishes no spiritual cleansing. Baptism first involves a change of heart condition and spiritual renewal (see Acts 10:47)—it is a loyalty oath, a pledge, to the risen savior in the cosmic spiritual battle between good and evil—it is not a human work that earns salvation. The word ‘Baptism’ here is a metonymy (a substitution of an attribute for the whole) for “faith and repentance” (e.g., “oval office” points us to the U.S. President, or a “suit” implies a “business executive”).