

Wednesday • May 13, 2026

The Righteous for the Unrighteous

1 Peter 3:18 — *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.*

Peter grounds everything he says about suffering in a single, staggering historical fact: Christ suffered for sins. Not his own — he had none. He suffered for ours. The righteous one, in the place of the unrighteous ones. That is the exchange at the heart of the Gospel.

This verse is dense with good news. Notice the direction of it all. Christ did not wait for us to clean ourselves up. He did not hold off until we had become righteous enough to approach God on our own. He came to us in our unrighteousness, took our sin upon himself, and bore the full weight of God's judgment so that we might be brought to God.

The phrase 'bring us to God' is simple but enormous. Without Christ, there is a barrier between sinful human beings and a holy God — a barrier we could never break through on our own. Christ breaks through it for us. He does not just make the path to God easier. He is the path. He opens the door and carries us through it.

And then — 'put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit.' The cross is not the end of the story. What looks like defeat is the beginning of the greatest victory the universe has ever seen. Peter is preparing us for what comes next: the full scope of what Christ's resurrection means. But today, let the center of it hold you — Christ, the righteous one, in your place, for you.

Discussion Questions

1. In your own words, what does it mean that Christ was 'the righteous for the unrighteous'? Why does it matter that it was Christ — and not us — who did this?
2. The text says Christ suffered so that he 'might bring us to God.' What does that tell you about what God wants — and what he did to get it?
3. How does remembering this great exchange change the way you think about your own failures and mistakes this week?

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus, you were the righteous one who stood in our unrighteous place. You took what we deserved and gave us what we could never earn. We are brought to the Father not by our goodness but by yours. Thank you. Help us to live each day from that unshakeable foundation, so that no failure, no guilt, and no shame can define us — because you already have. Amen.

Family Action Item

Write the phrase 'The Righteous for the Unrighteous' on a notecard or sticky note. Place it somewhere your family will see it throughout the day — the bathroom mirror, the refrigerator, the dashboard — as a reminder of what Christ has done in your place.