

Sermon or Lesson: 1 Peter 2:22-23 (NIV based)
[Lesson Questions included]

TITLE: How To Respond When Inflicted With Unjust Suffering

READ: 1 Peter 2:19-21 for context

INTRODUCTION:

- - Directly following the notification in verse 21 that we true believers are "called" to endure unjust painful suffering for doing good and are assigned to implement this calling in a manner that "follows in [Christ's] steps", the next two verses describe Christ's example that we are to follow.
 - - These verses cite how he responded when being judged guilty of false charges that were brought against Him, and then was severely tortured unto death by crucifixion, even though He was completely innocent of any wrongdoing and He had engaged in extraordinary doing of good.
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v.22 - READ, with cross reference Isaiah 53:9

[Lesson Question: Expand on describing the meaning of the two concept phrases in verse 22, and include appropriate relating implications. Develop why Christ responded to unjust suffering in these manners, and then tie in your descriptions with the principle in context verse 20 and the mandate in context verse 21.]

SECTION POINT: Throughout His entire severe suffering and crucifixion situation, Christ perfectly conducted Himself without any sinning and without any inappropriate speaking.

"He committed no sin,"

- - In verse 22 states that "He committed no sin", which means that comprehensively, Christ did not commit any sin, including prior to and during His arrest, railroaded trial, severe torture, and horrific crucifixion on the cross.
- - This broadly-encompassing statement leaves no area of His behaviors, words, or thoughts open to the possibility that He committed any kind of sin during this time.
- - This declaration that "He committed no sin" coincides with the declaration in verse 1:19 that Christ was "a lamb without blemish or defect" - a perfectly pure and innocent "blood" sacrifice that endured the unjust suffering of torture and death, for the benefit of, for the "redemption" of (v.1:18), and in the place of people who deserve that punishment because of the sins they commit during their life on earth. (cf. Isaiah 53:8)
- - Christ had no sins of His own, so in that sense therefore He was qualified and eligible or worthy to be "chosen" (v.1:20) to take upon Himself the sins of others. (AHD - 'eligible')
- - For us true believers, if we incur unjust suffering but we endure it sinfully rather than appropriately, then our unjust suffering becomes not commendable before God. (v.2:20)
- - Thereby, our sinful response to being inflicted with unjust suffering causes us to lose our "commendation" from God, and we quench any good that might have been produced through our unjust suffering. (v.2:20)

"and no deceit was found in his mouth"

- - Next in verse 22 and specifically pertaining to His speaking, "no deceit was found in his mouth", meaning that Christ did not speak anything that was deceptive, or false, or incorrect, or dishonest, or misleading, or misrepresenting, or exaggerating, or partially true.
 - - By implication then, Christ did not engage in speaking anything that was inappropriate, which therefore would include all of the reactions that we humans normally would do in that situation, such as: cussing, cursing, venomous spewing, deflecting and/or returning accusations and blame, or distorting the truth about what we had done and why.
 - - From the study of Scriptures relating to His crucifixion, an interesting aspect to note is that Christ did not engage in any kind of begging or pleading with His abusers to stop, or to select a less painful manner of inflicting torture, or to outright kill Him instantly, or to spare His life.
 - - These characteristics of His response distinctly suggest that He wanted to endure the suffering, and all of the suffering, that was inflicted upon Him by His abusers.
 - - During this crucifixion event, the pain and suffering He endured were real, but overridingly greater was His "love" for people, and overridingly greater was His "joy" and desire to deliver them from ever enduring the eternal pain and suffering that they deserve and would otherwise experience for their sins. (John 3:16; Hebrews 12:2)
 - - Obviously, therefore, Christ took the long view during the entire time of being inflicted with unjust suffering for doing good, looking at and staying focused on the benefits for other people that would be achieved after His suffering ended.
 - - Establishing and holding this long term view and perspective does not come natural for us ordinary humans when we are inflicted with unjust suffering for doing good.
 - - So if we are to "follow Christ's example" (1 Peter 2:21), then it seems reasonable that we are going to need to develop a dramatic change in our outlook on our life, so that it powerfully compels us to react and behave and speak in a manner that encompasses God's perspective and consistently dismisses the self-oriented outcome that we want, especially when we are enduring unjust suffering for doing good.
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v.23 - READ, with cross reference Isaiah 53:7

[Lesson Question: Expand on describing the meaning of the three concept phrases in verse 23, and include appropriate relating implications. Also include a description of how the foreknowledge and sovereignty of Christ and the Father impacted what happened and Christ's response during His suffering and crucifixion situation. Develop why Christ responded to unjust suffering in these manners.]

SECTION POINT: Throughout His entire severe suffering and crucifixion situation, Christ perfectly conducted Himself without retaliating or threatening, while consistently maintaining fully entrusting Himself and His suffering situation to the Father.

"When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate;"

-- While Christ was enduring the intentionally-designed horrific torture from His abusers, people nearby "hurled their insults at him":

- - - - "reviling" Him - "assailing Him with abusive language"; (Strong's #3058 with *AHD* - 'revile')
- - - - and "reproaching" Him - "criticizing" and "bringing shame, disgrace, and rebuke" upon Him; (Strong's #3058 with *AHD* - 'reproach')
- - - - and "vilifying" Him - "making vicious and defamatory statements about" Him. (Strong's #3058 with *AHD* - 'vilify')
- - From the evidence in the accounts in the New Testament, apparently Christ made some very angry and hostile enemies during the time He was doing ministry, even though and while He was doing good and had not ever done anything sinful or wrong.
- - Can you imagine that while on numerous occasions Christ was doing the miraculous good of outright and instantly healing sick people, one right after another in a line, there were other people observing, who nevertheless developed and maintained the hostile opinion that He consequently deserved to be 'reviled', and 'reproached', and 'vilified'?
- - From watching news reports nowadays, sadly, this kind of adverse and hostile reaction to the 'doing of good' and to the 'doing of what is right' commonly occurs even during our modern time, even to the extreme extent of 'good being called evil', and 'evil being called good'. We true believers should be discerning and diligent not to get caught up into this kind of thinking.
- - In response to being verbally assailed while He was being severely tortured for doing good, Christ did not "retaliate" - He did not "revile in return", or 'reproach' or 'vilify' or "rail against in reply". (Strong's #0486)
- - He not only made no attempt to "retaliate", but by implication He furthermore possessed no desire to strike back, or to get revenge, or to go on the offensive to inflict pain and suffering on those persons who were insulting Him and those persons who were inflicting physical torture on Him.
- - Again, this reaction of Christ runs exactly contrary to the natural reaction of us ordinary humans, in which we want to give a verbal lashing to anyone who insults, or reviles, or reproaches, or vilifies us.
- - We naturally want to defend our reputation and our actions - to in a sense, set the record straight.
- - And simultaneously, we want to take the insulting person down a notch - to in a sense, cut them down off their high pedestal.
- - We true believers should likewise be careful and diligent not to get caught up into this kind of reaction.

"when he suffered, he made no threats."

- - Another specific about Christ's response is that in the midst of when He was enduring horrific suffering, "he made no threats" - He did not issue any ultimatums, or "endanger or constitute a threat to", or "make any verbal threats to" His abusers, nor to any of those people who were verbally assailing Him. (Strong's #0546 with *AHD* - 'menace')
- - He not only "made no threats", but by implication He furthermore possessed no desire to issue any threats, or to inform them of the future consequences that they will surely receive on Judgment Day for their wicked treatment of Him.
- - By implied extension therefore, in the midst of His horrific suffering, Christ did not desire to engage in performing any miracles to stop the progression of His torture, nor

desire to escape, nor desire to incite His disciples or anyone in the crowd to liberate Him, nor desire to call upon the Father or angels to strike down His torturers.

- - Unshakeable immeasurable "love" stood rock-solid in the mind and heart of Christ, even during this time of Him enduring horrific torture unto death for having "committed no sin" and for "doing good". (John 3:16; 1 Peter 2:22,20)

- - We true believers should likewise genuinely possess and exhibit this kind of love when we go through and then recover from situations of suffering unjust treatment or abuse.

"Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly."

- - All of these specifics, about Christ's response to being inflicted with unjust painful suffering, are stated in the negative - that He did not do these stated things.

- - Now in the second sentence in verse 23 is stated what Christ did "instead" - He "entrusted himself" and His situation to the Father, "giving Himself" and His situation "over to the care of" the Father, "surrendering to, yielding to, and fully trusting in" the Father to cause to occur what the Father wills for Christ in this unjust painful suffering situation. (Strong's #3860 with AHD - 'entrust')

- - Christ unreservedly "entrusted himself" and his situation to the Father, resting in the trust that the Father will (someday in the future) "justly", "righteously, and equitably" "distinguish, judge, put on trial, condemn, and punish" every person who was involved in inflicting this unjust painful suffering and crucifixion upon Christ. (Strong's #1346, #2919)

- - At this point, it is important to note that this unjust painful suffering situation of Christ was not a predicament for Christ or the Father - it was a situation that was fully planned and fully foreseen by both of them long ago, even before "the creation of the world". (vv.1:18-20)

- - Far in advance, Christ and the Father both possessed an absolute, precise, and detailed knowledge of everything that was going to happen to Christ during this situation of Him being inflicted with unjust painful suffering and death on a cross.

- - And this situation was, in a sovereign way, fully ordained by both Christ and the Father to occur exactly the way that it did occur. (from vv.1:18-20 and 2:24; 'sovereign' - used in the sense here of 'being in supreme authority and control over all things')

- - For both Christ and the Father, there was no surprise that this unjust painful suffering was happening and was so horrific, nor was there a desperation response and frantic search for a way for Christ to escape.

- - Neither was there any need for them to get angry or enraged, because this unjust painful suffering situation of Christ was all specifically planned to happen exactly as it did.

- - Furthermore, there was no regret by either Christ or the Father - wishing that Christ had not volunteered to go through this suffering.

- - On the contrary, Christ instead dwelled on the "joy set before him" as He "endured the cross, [while] scorning its shame". (Hebrews 12:2)

- - Thus, within His enduring of unjust painful suffering, Christ maintained a distinct and profound awareness of the infinitely supreme good that was being accomplished by means of His suffering. (Hebrews 12:2; 1 Peter 2:24)

- - A reasonable generalized assumption here is that during the suffering, at least some motivation, incentive, strengthening, and encouragement are supplied to the victim true

believer through his/her awareness, focus on, and joy derived from the good that is being accomplished by his/her enduring of unjust painful suffering.

- - Consequently, this joy-filled awareness will foster an acceptance of the abusive treatment that is enacted by one's abuser, and will foster an allowing of the whole inflicting-of-unjust-painful-suffering process to continue to fruition.

- - And our recollection of Christ, as the "supreme" example for us true believers to follow, will help to inspire and motivate us in terms of how to endure unjust painful suffering in a manner that is "commendable before God". (Colossians 1:18; 1 Peter 2:20)

BIG IDEA: We true believers have the example of Christ's perfect conduct within severe and unjust suffering, to guide how we are to respond when we are inflicted with unjust suffering.

IMPLICATIONS AND APPLICATIONS:

- - When enduring unjust suffering, following in Christ's steps involves making conscious deliberate choices not to respond by sinning, deceiving, retaliating, or threatening in words or actions. As a true believer, are you prepared to react and behave in this manner when you are inflicted with unjust suffering?

- - Are you furthermore committed to submitting and entrusting yourself to God's will and care, whatever that may be, while steadfastly maintaining faith and patience for God to eventually bring some day in the future: relief from the unjust suffering; restoration to wellness; and enacting of justice?

- - Are you going to react, behave, and endure in these manners even when the inflicting of unjust suffering on you comes from people who claim to always do what is right and claim to always treat people appropriately?

- - An unpleasant reality here is that if we true believers are ongoing-ly 'doing good', then it is probable and perhaps inevitable that sooner or later as a direct result of our 'doing good', we will incur unjust suffering, which God wills and "calls" us to experience. (1 Peter 2:20b-21a)

- - So, **"Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you."** - 1 Peter 4:12

- - Expect sooner or later to be inflicted with unjust suffering, even for doing good.

- - Then, expect that furthermore there could include being: insulted; reviled; reproached; vilified; falsely or erroneously accused; adversely judged and labeled without being given any opportunity to verbalize your side of the situation; condemned; shunned; blacklisted; railroaded; driven out; banished; devastated; destroyed; and occupationally or ministerially or philanthropically figuratively assaulted, tortured, and murdered for doing good and being innocent of any wrongdoing.

- - For those of you who technically are non-believers, what do you think about this incarnate deity entity who created you, Christ, that He loves you so much and so desires to save you from eternal punishment, that He willingly endured horrific torture

and death, in order to now offer a way for you to entirely be pardoned from ever being tortured for every one of the sins you commit in your life? (Colossians 1:13-16)
- - Do you think His character, His actions, and His love that He demonstrated toward you during His crucifixion on the cross - do you think those virtues warrant your attention and serious consideration about whether or not you want to believe in Him and spend eternity with Him?

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