

THE SUFFERING SAVIOR
HUMANITY AND HUMILIATION OF JESUS- PART 2
(HEBREWS 2:10-13)

Pastor Charles R. Biggs

Sermon Title: *“Suffering Savior”- Pt. 2 of ‘The Humility and Humanity of Jesus’*

The Book of Hebrews - Pastor Charles R. Biggs

Scripture Lesson: Isaiah 8:11-18; 1 Peter 4:12-19

Scripture Text: Hebrews 2:10-13

Theme of Worship Service: Suffering is rooted in the sovereign will of our great and wise God and father. The purpose of suffering is to sanctify us as God’s dear children.

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.” - ^{ESV} **Hebrews 12:1-2**

“For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.” - ^{ESV} **1 Peter 2:21**

“We ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers, as is right, because your faith is growing abundantly, and the love of every one of you for one another is increasing. Therefore we ourselves boast about you in the churches of God for your steadfastness and faith in all your persecutions and in the afflictions that you are enduring. This is evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are also suffering....” - ^{ESV} **2 Thessalonians 1:3-**

“Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God, who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, and which now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, for which I was appointed a preacher and apostle and teacher, which is why I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that Day what has been entrusted to me.”
- ^{ESV} **2 Timothy 1:8-12**

“Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for sin, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities.” - ^{ESV} **Isaiah 53:10**

Hymns:

1. Hallelujah, Praise Jehovah, O My Soul - 57
2. Whate'er My God Ordains Is Right - 108
3. Lord's Supper- Rejoice, All People, Homage Give - 73

- 1. Sovereign Lord and God**
- 2. Suffering Savior and Archegos**
- 3. Sanctified Sons**

In the context of Christ's suffering and exaltation, the author of Hebrews teaches the congregation then and us today that God sovereignly and wisely willed the suffering of Christ to bring many sons to glory.

God in His grace could not allow sin to go unpunished, and graciously provided a Savior in His Suffering Son who was willing to be made man, and have solidarity with the children that God had promised to him in their own nature.

Christ set a pattern of suffering and then exaltation, and we as God's children in union with Him are made sanctified through our sufferings.

It is easy for God's children to be tempted to say during difficult times: “If I am so loved, and my redemption has been fully accomplished by Christ who has tasted death for me, then why must I suffer?” The author answers in Hebrews 2:10-13.

What is suffering? Elisabeth Elliot describes suffering as:

“Wanting what you don't have and having what you don't want.”

This passage in Hebrews 2:10-13 helps us to have the proper focus in our sufferings. The larger context is on Christ our Suffering Savior who took upon Himself our nature to bring us to Glory, and to call us to carry our cross following Him on the road of suffering as His disciples.

John Owen wrote about suffering: “Christ will be taken with his cross, or not at all. And the follies that of our hearts can never be enough bewailed, in thinking strange of trials and afflictions, when the very first thing that the Lord Christ requires of his disciples is that they will be partakers of him and ‘deny themselves, and take up their cross.’ But we would be children, and not be chastised; we would be gold, and not be tried; we would overcome, and yet not be put to fight and contend; we would be Christians, and not suffer. But all these things are contrary to the eternal law of our confession. And so necessary is this way made, that though God deals with his people in great variety, exercising some with such trials and troubles, that others sometimes in comparison of them seem utterly to go free, yet every one, one way or other, shall have his share and measure. And those exceptions that are made in the providence of God as to some individual persons at some seasons derogate nothing from the general necessity of the way towards all that do believe.”

Throughout our sermon, we want to understand that suffering is because we are loved, not because God doesn't care about us; Suffering is God's way, even with His sinless Son, to make Him complete in the execution of His salvation mission suffering is in union with Jesus Christ; the results of suffering will be exaltation with Christ.

1) Sovereign Lord and God

Summary statement of point: God the Father ordained Jesus' suffering. Jesus willingly took this suffering upon Himself in our nature/humanity. God ordains what happens in our lives as His beloved sons. In our union with Jesus Christ, we are privileged to participate in Christ's sufferings; a kind of judgment that leads to sanctification and life eternal.

“It was fitting...”

The Bible says it was fitting. This means it was appropriate for God to cause Christ to suffer. This was God's all-wise and most-holy and sovereign will for His Son. This was with an eye to bring many sons to glory! God sent His Son with a mission to save and redeem lost sinners. What a great God and Savior!

In the passion and sufferings of our Savior, we see the heart of God laid bare for all of us to see. How could we not trust Him with our lives?!

2:10- God brings suffering to his people. He brought suffering to Christ, that

is, he allowed it in order to achieve a greater goal. That is exactly what he is doing in our lives.

Sufferings in our lives as Christians do not mean that God doesn't care or doesn't love us, but exactly the opposite, he is making and conforming you to look and act like Jesus-who also was made perfect, that is fit, to be your perfect representative to bring you to glory.

God's plan was to bring many sons to glory. God was going to fulfill Psalm 8 by exalting His sons.

The Son came to suffer willingly, and it was the Father who initiated the covenant relationship with His Son (Heb. 13:20-21).

It was through Christ's "tasting death" (Heb. 2:9) for His own, redemption was accomplished.

It was the sovereign will of the Father to crush Jesus in our place to heal us from our sins and brokenness.

God is holy. God must punish sin.

God is wise. God in His wisdom put forth Jesus to be our propitiation so that He would be just and the justifier of all those who believe in Jesus (Romans 3:24-26).

God is good. God the Father did not leave us in our sins, but before the foundation of the world, covenantally agreed with Son and Spirit to accomplish our redemption for His own glory (Eph. 1:3-14; cf. Heb. 13:20-21).

"It was fitting and appropriate" that Jesus be the final death for sins, as He took upon our human nature and died under God's wrath in our place.

Commentator F. F. Bruce wrote: "The person who says, 'I could not have a high opinion of a God who would (or would not) do this or that,' is not adding anything to our knowledge of God; he is simply telling us something about himself."

Implication: It may seem strange to man; it may seem like a stumbling block, but it was fitting to God to do what He did to bring His own to glory, and we should be thankful.

^{ESV} Isaiah 53:10-11: Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for sin, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. ¹¹ Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by

his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities.

“...This also opens the mystery of wisdom, and love, and grace of God, in the salvation of sinners. This is that which He will be forever admired in: A way God has found out to exercise grace and satisfy justice at the same time, in a by the same person. Sin shall be punished, all sin, yet grace exercised; sinners shall be saved, yet justice satisfied; all in the cross of Christ.” – John Owen

2) Suffering Savior and *Arhegos*

Summary of this point: Jesus died for our sins. He tasted death for His own so that we could be redeemed. Jesus died for us, and secured a complete salvation. We are saved “by the grace of God” (Heb. 2:9) alone. Jesus is our “Founder” or *Arhegos* who has been made complete/perfect through His death to prepare the way to glory of His dear children.

“...Should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering.”

Jesus tasted death for us in our nature, and He was exalted as the glorified God-Man to be our Lord and King. In His wisdom, God willed to use suffering to complete or perfect Jesus for His office as Mediator and High Priest. Through suffering, God in His wisdom has healed us in Christ. We are God’s sons (children) because of the work of Jesus Christ. In union with Jesus Christ, God sanctifies/consecrates His people to be glorified.

These sufferings are a type of judgment (1 Peter. 4:17), but a judgment that sanctifies us and makes us like Christ. We can suffer knowing that it is just because this is God’s way of privileging us to be identified with Christ.

Christ perfected through sufferings Christ experienced suffering in his flesh, lived perfectly according to God's righteous standards and was raised for our justification. He experienced glorification after God made him complete or perfect through his sufferings.

Christ is called our *Arhegos*, or our Captain, Pioneer, Champion, even, Pathfinder. He blazes a trail of salvation ahead of his people through suffering, that his people must follow him through to glory.

A “Suffering Savior” is a stumbling block to unbelievers, but it is God’s ordained way of salvation.

A “Suffering Savior” was taught throughout the Old Covenant. Christ would be the ultimate vicarious victim and sacrifice for His people.

Archehos means “trailblazer” or “pioneer” or “captain” or “leader” or “hero. Christ is the one who is first; he leads His own; He is first that leads others (literally what Archehos means). He is champion, a hero, a tribal chief, and/or representative of his people, pioneer, etc. (see use of word in OT: Judges 5:15; 9:44; 11:6; Nehemiah 2:9).

Christ has gone before us, taking upon Himself the wrath of God on the cross in a way that no one else could accomplish.

Jesus was raised as the Glorious Savior who had accomplished redemption and taken away God’s wrath upon His own.

F. F. Bruce wrote: “Christ is the Savior who blazed the trail of salvation along which alone God’s ‘many sons’ could be brought to glory. Man, created by God for His glory, was prevented by sin from attaining that glory until the Son of Man came and opened up by His death a new way by which humanity might reach the goal for which it was made. As His people’s representative and forerunner He has now entered into the presence of God to secure their entry there.”

As Our Lord Jesus taught His disciples:

ESV John 14:2-4: In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. ⁴ And you know the way to where I am going."

Implications: We will follow him through the wilderness undergoing the same kind of sufferings and afflictions in union with him, but not the suffering of God’s wrath and judgment. Our “judgment” (1 Peter 4:17) is the sanctifying work of the Spirit of God that conforms us to the likeness of Christ (Rom. 8:29-34).

Christ has set his own a pattern of following Him in His suffering to glory. Christ is the way to the glory of God. Christ sits at God’s right hand in our nature glorified, and we can be assured that we will make it to glory because of the will and purpose and accomplishment of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The Suffering of Christ....and Christ’s People

As Christ suffered on our behalf, so we look to him by faith to endure during our own sufferings. The Apostle Peter in his first epistle teaches us that we should not be amazed when trials and sufferings come upon us, because this was told before to us (1 Pet. 4:12ff). The Apostle Peter continues saying that we should rejoice "in so far as you share in Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed" (1 Pet. 4:13; cf. Mt. 5:11-12).

Christ suffered the pains of death on our behalf and became identified with his people in order that he might be a faithful High Priest who would, as the Lamb of God, lay down his life for his sheep (Heb. 2:14-18; cf. John 10:11).

Christ's suffering according to Hebrews 2:10ff is taught to his wilderness people so that we might understand that Christ, although divine, made himself a servant in order that he might fulfill the demands and curse of the Law, and to be obedient unto death (cf. Phil. 2:6-11). He did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but he humbled himself as a servant in order that as our substitute he might reconcile us to God (Heb. 2:9; cf. Rom. 5:8-11; 2 Cor. 5:17-21).

As a son, he identified with his brothers (Heb. 2:11ff), the children of Abraham (Heb. 2:16), in order to be a faithful High Priest on behalf of his people. He is a human High Priest, but one who is of an eternal order of Melchizedek (Heb. 5:1-10; 6:13-7:28). Therefore, he could offer a better and eternal sacrifice once and for all by his blood (Heb. 9:26-28).

This is the hope of those who suffer in the wilderness. Christ suffered, and we have not suffered to the point of resisting blood (Heb. 12:3-4), but God uses our suffering to conform us to the image of Christ, the True Eschatological Man (Acts 14:22; 1 Cor. 15:44b-50; Phil. 3:10-14,20-21).

This teaching of the Book of Hebrews may be better understood in what Calvin calls the *duplex mortificatio*. John Calvin says that we have a two-fold mortification: an inner dying to our sins and fleshly way of life and an outer suffering that God brings upon us in order to conform us to Christ's glory.

Because Christ was made perfect or complete through suffering, so his brothers are identified with him are made complete and like him through the same kind of suffering (cf. Heb. 2:10ff; 5:7-10; 12:3ff). While unbelievers harden their hearts in anger against God when they suffer, the righteous who are identified with Christ look to him by faith and are gloriously conformed to his image through their sufferings (cf. 1 Pet. 1:6-9).

We should remember what the author says concerning Christ's own suffering: "Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered, and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him..." (Heb. 5:8-9). As Hebrews 12 teaches us, God chastises the sons that he loves so that we may share in the holiness of Christ, and the peaceful fruit of righteousness (12:7-11).

Elisabeth Elliott wrote: "Our vision is so limited we can hardly imagine a love that does not show itself in protection from suffering.... The love of God did not protect His own Son.... He will not necessarily protect us - not from anything it takes to make us like His Son. A lot of hammering and chiseling and purifying by fire will have to go into the process."

Remember Moses? Moses considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward (Heb. 11:26). John Owen wrote: "Let us labor for the same spirit of faith...and it will relieve us under all of our trials." We as God's people must consider our union with Christ in His resurrection and sufferings as part of the blessings of knowing Him. Says the Apostle Paul:

*^{ESV} **Philippians 3:8-11:** Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith-¹⁰ that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death,¹¹ that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.*

What does it mean that Jesus was made "perfect"? Simply that Jesus was fully equipped for His office as Savior/Mediator/High Priest between God and man.

This doesn't refer to any moral flaws, or weakness of character. Jesus was made like man in every way, yet without sin. Being made perfect doesn't refer to morality or character, but rather that through suffering Jesus completed His assigned mission given to Him by the Father to prepare or "complete" Him for the office of High Priest (next few sermons will focus on this).

Use of "perfection" in Hebrews: 5:9, 14; 6:1; 7:11, 19, 28; 9:9, 11; 10:1, 14; 11:40; 12:2, 23. Especially relevant passages: 7:11, 28; 10:14; 12:2

^{ESV} **Hebrews 7:11** *Now if perfection had been attainable through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need would there have been for another priest to arise after the order of Melchizedek, rather than one named after the order of Aaron?*

^{ESV} **Hebrews 7:28** *For the law appoints men in their weakness as high priests, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son who has been made perfect forever.*

^{ESV} **Hebrews 10:14** *For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.*

^{ESV} **Hebrews 12:2** *looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.*

3) Sanctified Sons

The summary of this point: The goal of God for His family is to make us like Jesus. God uses various types of suffering to accomplish this in our lives. As Jesus was completed/perfected for office, so we are perfected for glory. Jesus had no sin to be perfected from; we do have sins that through sanctified suffering are mortified and put off as we become more like Jesus in our union with Him.

The Son of God is “heir of all things” (Heb. 1:3) and we are heirs in Him (1:14); The Son is God’s Beloved Son, and we are sons in Him (1:2, 5, 8, 2:10-13).

Christ our Sanctifier (the Consecrator of God's People) Christ was set apart and consecrated himself in order to save and redeem his people. This was done to sanctify us.

2:11- Notice how Jesus and his people are linked together: He who makes men holy, and those made holy.

Commentator and New Testament theologian **William Lane** wrote: “Both the Son and those who are sons share a common family relationship that is rooted in the gracious determination of God to bring His children to their destiny through the redemptive mission of the Son.”

Notice the phrase of one in v. 11- Jesus and those he represent are from the same humanity. That is, Jesus was a Son of Adam, as well as a Son of Abraham. He was able to truly represent his people - because he was from the same common humanity.

Jesus was sanctified in order to achieve our salvation. Our salvation is to make us holy. His consecration of himself in his life and death on our behalf, has made a way for us to draw near to the throne room of God with boldness.

Remember: ***“Sanctification is glory begun, and glory is sanctification completed”*** (F. F. Bruce).

“Bringing many sons to glory” was God’s goal in His electing mercies (Eph. 1;3-14).

We are sanctified and set apart, or consecrated by Jesus as we are prepared for our exaltation in glory.

Sufferings of God’s people should be understood as necessary and unavoidable: “Through many tribulations Christians must enter the Kingdom of God” (Acts 14:22) – Romans 8:29; Colossians 1:24; 1 Timothy 2:8ff

John Owen wrote: “The way whereby God will bring the sons unto glory is full of difficulties, perplexities and oppositions, as that of the Israelites into Canaan was also; so that they have need of a Captain, Leader, and Guide to carry them through it. But yet all is rendered safe and secure unto them, through the power, grace and faithfulness of their leader. They only perish in the wilderness and die in their sins, who, either out of love unto the flesh-pots of Egypt, the pleasures of this world, or being terrified with the hardships of the warfare which he calls them unto, they refuse to go up under His command.”

*ESV Psalm 22:22-24: **I will tell of your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation I will praise you:** ²³ You who fear the LORD, praise him! All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him, and stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel! ²⁴ For he has not despised or abhorred the affliction of the afflicted, and he has not hidden his face from him, but has heard, when he cried to him.*

There is a qualitative difference between Jesus the Son and sons: “He who sanctifies and those being sanctified”; Jesus alone can atone for sins and serve God as the Final, Merciful, Faithful, Eschatological High Priest; there is also an important unity and family solidarity.

“Christ is no ashamed to call us brothers.”

2:12-13- Quote from Ps. 22- Messianic Psalm of Christ's agony on the cross in his death, but this quotation is from the transition from suffering to glory.

Quotations from Isaiah 8: Isaiah's trust when God's judgment fell upon Israel was in the LORD to bring about good. Isaiah's children in the midst of God's judgment was a sign that God was faithful to keep his promises!

As believers, we are God's children and Christ's brethren because of his work on our behalf.

We are one with Christ in His family.

His presence is with us.

We can trust Him through all that He calls us to!

What can give us strength in our sufferings in the wilderness? Knowing that our sins are covered and washed by the precious blood of the Lamb. Knowing that Christ is our *Archegos* and has successfully opened up the way for us to glory through Him. Knowing that Christ is with us in the wilderness declaring His word “to the congregation” or “in the midst of the congregation” (2:12-13). Knowing that in Christ we suffer not as God’s enemies, but as God’s precious children or “sons”.

Amen.

In Christ’s love,

Pastor Biggs