

Saint Pauls Cathedral, Melbourne
Bible Study, Sunday 17 July 2020
1 Peter

1 Peter 2:21 - 25

Read verses 21 to 25.

1Pet. 2:18 Slaves, accept the authority of your masters with all deference, not only those who are kind and gentle but also those who are harsh. ¹⁹ For it is a credit to you if, being aware of God, you endure pain while suffering unjustly. ²⁰ If you endure when you are beaten for doing wrong, what credit is that? But if you endure when you do right and suffer for it, you have God's approval.

²¹ For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps.

²² "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth."

²³ When he was abused, he did not return abuse; when he suffered, he did not threaten; but he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly. ²⁴ He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, free from sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. ²⁵ For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

The Suffering we face as Christians

1. Recall 1 Peter 2:9

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.

- (i) How does this fit with verses 21 – 25 that we just read?
 - (a) Why do Christians have to suffer?
 - (b) How can suffering and being in God's marvellous light coexist for the Christian?
 - (c) In what way should the life of Jesus be a motivation or illustration for us concerning suffering?

2. Peter borrowed a stream of phrases from Isaiah 53:4-12 when he wrote this *pericope*. Read it together:

Is. 53:4 Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases; yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. ⁵ But he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities;

upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his bruises we are healed.

⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray; we have all turned to our own way, and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

- (i) What does this passage from Isaiah illustrate for us about Christ's suffering?
 - (ii) What does 1 Peter 2:22 tell us about Jesus?
3. Note verse 23. As Jesus was suffering unjust pain during his arrest, trial, and crucifixion, he refused to retaliate.
- (i) How does Jesus' reaction compare to our natural inclinations when we are being attacked? What are we likely to do when we are attacked?
 - (ii) Rather than retaliating when he was attacked, what did Jesus do (verse 23)?

Note these words by another commentator, Norman Hillyer:

Believers are not left to face suffering solely in their own strength, which might well prove inadequate. In the same confidence that Jesus had, they are to hand over their whole situation to God, for God, as all-knowing and all-seeing, judges justly. He alone can be relied upon to view all the evidence and to understand all the motives which lie behind every human action—and in the final analysis to dispense perfect justice.¹

4. The ultimate illustration of unjust suffering and pain is seen in the crucifixion of Jesus Christ (verse 24).
- (i) What does this verse teach us?
 - (ii) In the light of what we have read in this chapter and Peter's reference to it here, what does it mean to "live for righteousness"? How are we *able* so to live?
 - (iii) What do you think the "healing" is, to which Peter refers?
5. What do you understand verse 25 to mean?
- (i) In what way have Peter's readers strayed?
 - (ii) Note the assurance given in this verse of Jesus being "the guardian of your souls".
 - (iii)

Pray Together

¹ Hillyer, N, Understanding the Bible, 1 & 2 Peter, Jude, p85–86.