

Facing Injustice 1 Peter 3:18-4:6

ETS: Peter reminds those suffering that Christ suffered unjustly and prevailed

ESS: We will prevail in the face in injustice if we follow Christ's example

OSS: I want people to stay focused on Christ in the midst of suffering

PQ: Where is your focus?

UW: Injustice

ME

What is "injustice"?

- Violation of another person's rights
- Unfair treatment or action

There are many examples of injustice.

- **Nelson Mandela** was incarcerated unjustly for 27 years for his crusade against apartheid in South Africa.
- **Alexander Solzhenitsyn** was unjustly imprisoned and forgotten.
 - In February 1945, Solzhenitsyn was arrested for writing derogatory comments about Stalin and

the war. He was accused of anti-Soviet propaganda and of “founding a hostile organization.” After being beaten and interrogated, on July 7, 1945, he was sentenced in his absence to an 8 year term in a labor camp.

- **Joseph** was wrongly treated by his brothers.
 - Even though his intentions in finding out how they were doing were honorable and sincere, they mistreated him and sold him as a slave into Egypt. Joseph was mistreated by **Mrs. Potiphar**.
 - Again, even though his actions were honorable and sincere, he was falsely accused of attempted rape.
 - This led to the loss of his job and a term in prison, where, as we will see now, Joseph was further mistreated, being forgotten by someone whom he had helped in prison.

GOD

Peter is writing to people who are **suffering unjustly** because of their **faith**.

- They are being *unfairly* maligned!
 - Called **Atheist**
 - Labeled “**Incestuous**”

- Called “**Cannibals**”
 - They were being accused of heinous things
- Many had to flee due to **increasing persecution**
- They were faced with **hostility**
 - **Not** worship **Caesar**.
 - **Not** being **understood**.

Believers were **counter-cultural**

- They were being **watched**
- They were being **scrutinized**
- They were being **slandered** against

WE can expect the same thing—especially as our **culture** becomes increasingly **secular**

- Believers are being **accused** of being “**Judgmental**”
 - To say something is “**wrong**” is viewed as **judgmental**
- Believers are being **accused** of being “**intolerant**”
 - To refuse to “affirm” certain lifestyle choices is said to be *intolerant*

Peter started his letter by giving us **HOPE**

- **1 Peter 1:4** we have an “**inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you!**”

- **1 Peter 1:5** “You are being guarded by God’s power through faith for a salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.”
- **1 Peter 1:9** “...You are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls.”

Throughout his letter, Peter has been directing our **FOCUS** on **CHRIST!**

- WHY?
 - Christ has **WALKED** the path of **suffering** due to **injustice!**
 - **1 Peter 2:21** “For you were called to this, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.”
- WHAT was Christ’s example to us?
 - **1 Peter 2:22-23** “He did not commit sin...²³when he was insulted, he did not insult in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten but entrusted himself to the one who judges justly.”

*The **CHALLENGE**: To follow Christ’s example in the midst of injustice!*

Whether it is **injustice** at the **hands** of ...

- **Government** leaders
- A **hostile** or **cruel boss** (Master)

- A **unbelieving** husband
 - In all cases, the challenge is to *follow Christ's example in the midst of injustice!*

1 Peter 3:18a “For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring you to God....”

- No matter HOW much we may suffer, it is NEVER going to be **equivalent** to the **injustice** Christ suffered.
 - The **injustice** with Christ was that the “**Righteous suffered for the unrighteous**”
 - The **injustice** with Christ was that HE “**suffered for sins**” which He did not commit!
 - Suffering for something you are innocent is the **injustice**

Believers suffering the accusation of being **cannibals**, incestuous, etc. was **injustice**

- Those were **unfair accusations** which led to people being **prejudiced** against them!
 - Those were **unfair accusations** which led to NERO and others feeling they could **ABUSE** the believers!

A believer may suffer an **injustice** but it will never rise to the **level of injustice** suffered by Christ!

WHY did CHRIST allow Himself to suffer injustice?

- 1 Peter 3:18 “...that he might bring you to God”

The phrase “bring you to God” is a technical term that means “gain audience at court.”

- Because of the work of Christ on the cross, we now have an **open access** to God (Eph. 2:18; 3:12).
- We may come **boldly** to His **throne!** (Heb. 10:19ff)
- We also have **access** to His **marvelous grace** to meet our daily needs (Rom. 5:2).

CHRIST suffered INJUSTICE for US. Jesus **suffered injustice** to...

- 1 Peter 1:3 “give us new birth into a living hope”
- 1 Peter 1:4 enable us to have an “inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading.”
- 1 Peter 1:9 give us “Salvation”
- 1 Peter 1:18 to “redeem us from our empty way of life”

However, NONE of these things would have happened if CHRIST has *not* **Triumphed** over **injustice!**

- If Christ had simply died on the cross, HE would have been just **another** dead religious leader!

WHEN we face **injustice** due to our faith, we need to remember that...

- **Christ suffered injustice**

But we also must remember that....

Christ TRIUMPHED over injustice!

Look at how Christ triumphed... **1 Peter 3:18b-20**: “He was put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit,

- When Christ was “put to death in the flesh” it looked like **injustice** had won!
 - It looked like the **false accusations** had sealed His **fate!**
 - It looked like the **opposition** had **won!**

“He was put to death in the flesh **BUT** made alive by the Spirit...

- Christ **died physically** on the cross
 - His **body** was **dead, rigid** and lifeless
 - He was taken down off the **cross**
 - His body was **anointed** with burial spices
 - His body was **wrapped up**
 - His body was **sealed** in a tomb

WHILE this was going on in the **physical realm**, *a different reality was happening in the spiritual dimension.*

- There are **two dimensions: Physical and Spiritual**
 - We **cannot see** the **Spiritual dimension**—all we see are things in the physical world (our bodies are not equipped to see the spiritual dimension)

We saw a **dead, lifeless body physically**, but Spiritually Christ was **“Made alive by the Spirit.”**

Peter is **not talking** about the **resurrection** here, but he is talking about what happened **BEFORE** the resurrection!

- On the cross, Christ **“Who knew no sin, became sin for us.”** (2 Cor. 5:21)

Death = separation

- **Separation** of our **soul** from our **body**
- **Separated** from the physical world
- **Separated** from our loved ones on earth
- **Separation** of **us** from **God** (e.g., we are **“dead in our trespasses and sin”**)

When Christ was on the cross and **“became sin for us”** He **died in His spirit**—*in the sense* that He was **separated** from, **abandoned by** the Father (Mark 15:34; Ps. 22:1)

- Christ separation from God the Father was due to Him **“becoming sin for us.”**
 - **Mark 15:34** **“And at three Jesus cried out with a loud voice, “Eloi, Eloi, lemá sabachtháni?”** which

is translated, “My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?”

When Christ cried out “It is finished” His **body died**, but in the **spiritual dimension** He was “made alive by the spirit”

- In other words, the **separation**, the **abandonment** was over!
 - The payment for our sins was made; **God’s justice was satisfied**

In other words...

Christ TRIUMPHED over injustice!

As the **TRIMPHANT King**, **Christ operated in the spiritual realm** while **His physical body** lay dormant in the grave. Look at what Christ did in His **triumph over injustice...**

1 Peter 3:19 “in which he also went and made proclamation to the spirits in prison (so, Christ is operating in the spiritual realm while His physical body lay dormant) ²⁰who in the past were disobedient, when God patiently waited in the days of Noah while the ark was being prepared. In it a few—that is, eight people—were saved through water.”

HOW did Peter know about this?

- Christ must have **told Peter** about this during the **40 days** between His resurrection and ascension.

WHY does Peter **share** this information?

Noah was held in **very high regard** among Jewish people in Peter's day.

- **Noah** was **linked** with **Daniel** and **Job** in Ezekiel 14:19–20
- The **Psalms** and the **Prophets** refer to Noah
- **Jesus** referred to **Noah** in His prophetic **sermon** (Matt. 24:37–39; see Luke 17:26–27)
- **Peter** again talks about **Noah** in his **second letter** (2 Peter 2:5; see 3:6).
- **Noah** is listed with the **heroes of faith** in Hebrews 11:7.

WHAT **relationship** did Peter see **between** his readers and the ministry of **Noah**?

- Noah was a **“preacher of righteousness”** (2 Peter 2:5) in a **hostile environment** Just like **Peter's readers** were living in a **hostile environment**
- Jesus had promised that, before His return, the world would become like the **“days of Noah”** (Matt. 24:37–39); and they were **expecting** Him soon (2 Peter 3:1–3).

- As they saw **society decay** around them, and **persecution** begin, they would think of our Lord's words.
- Noah was a **man of faith** who kept doing the will of God even when he **seemed** to be a **failure**.
 - Again, Peter's readers probably felt like they were fighting a **losing battle**.
 - If we **measured faithfulness** by results, then **Noah** would get a very **low grade**. Yet God ranked him very high!

Peter is sharing this **“behind the scenes”** information to remind them and US that—even though all may seem lost (e.g., Christ's body was dead)-- ***Christ is TRIUMPHING over injustice!***

- While Christ's body lay in the grave, Christ went to preach **TRIUMPH** to the **“spirits in prison ²⁰who in the past were disobedient.”**
- While Christ's body lay in the grave, Christ went to proclaim **TRIUMPH** over sin!

Peter is also sharing this information to **REMIND** us that despite the **INJUSTICE**, **“eight people—were saved through water”**

- Those who **mocked, scorned, laughed** at, and **REFUSED** to believe Noah's message were now **“in**

prison” awaiting their **final judgement**, while those who took the **“narrow”** way, those who **“believed the message”** were **saved!**

Peter takes this **illustration** of the **flood**, to **REMIND** his readers (and us) that they too will experience **TRIUMPH** over injustice!

- **WHY? 1 Peter 3:21** **“Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you (not as the removal of dirt from the body, but the pledge of a good conscience toward God) through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.”**

What happened in the flood?

- Those who **REFUSED to believe** the message **DIED**
 - Died **physically**
 - Died **spiritually** – separated from God forever— they are now **“in prison”** (Hades)
- Those who **REFUSED to believe** the message were **BURIED**—They became **fossil fuel!**

Those who **BELIEVED** were **SAVED**

- **Saved** because they **believed** the message of **God’s coming judgment** upon sin
- **Saved** because they **DIED** to their **PRIDE**
 - The **water BURIED** the **wicked**

- Saved because they **humbled** themselves and got into the boat
 - They were **brought through** the **waters** safely.
 - The **WICKED** died and were **buried** in the water

“Baptism, which corresponds to this”

- Baptism is an **ILLUSTRATION** of happened at the flood.
 - Baptism “**corresponds**” to **Dying** to sin and self!
 - Baptism “**corresponds**” to being **BURIED** with Christ
 - Baptism “**corresponds**” to being **SAVED** because of Christ’s resurrection

Baptists (and others) practice **BELIEVER’S BAPTISM**

- In other words, **Baptism** is only for those who have **professed FAITH** in **Christ**
 - *A baby cannot profess Faith in Christ—which is why we don’t practice infant or pedobaptism.*

Baptism “**corresponds**” to **Dying** to **sin and self**—which can only be done as a result of **responding** to the **conviction** of the Holy Spirit.

Baptism “corresponds” to the **BURIAL** of the **PAST**—of a **REPENTANCE** (change of mind) about the **PAST**.

Baptism “corresponds” to the **SALVATION** we receive through Christ.

- Peter makes it clear that **baptism DOES NOT** do the saving--(not as the removal of dirt from the body, but the **pledge of a good conscience toward God**)
 - It’s **NOT** the “removal of physical dirt off your body” through baptism that saves you!
 - It’s “the **pledge of a good conscience toward God**”
 - That “**good conscience toward God**” only comes through repentance!
- Peter makes it clear that baptism **DOES NOT** do the **saving** “**Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you ... through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.**”

We got a glimpse of what happened during those three days Jesus’ body lay in the grave, now we get to what happened on the third day—the “**resurrection of Jesus Christ.**”

The “**resurrection of Jesus Christ**” is the **physical EVIDENCE** that...

Christ TRIUMPHED over injustice!

The “**resurrection of Jesus Christ**” is the ARK that “**saves**” us “**through the water**” of God’s **judgement** upon an unjust world!

- When the **world faces God’s judgment**, **Believers are safe** BECAUSE of the **resurrection** of Christ!
 - Christ is TRIUMPHANT
 - The spirits are “**in prison**” while Christ is FREE and we are FREE in Him!

1 Peter 3:22 “who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God with angels, authorities, and powers subject to him.”

- WHERE is Christ now?
 - At the “**right hand of God**”
- HOW powerful is Christ?
 - “**angels, authorities, and powers subject to him.**”

Christ, the “**Suffering servant**” who went to the cross, now has **angels, authorities, and powers subject to him.**”

- **Isaiah 66:16** “For the LORD will execute judgment on all humanity with his fiery sword, and many will be slain by the LORD.”

2 Peter 3:1-7 “This is now the second letter that I am writing to you, beloved. In both of them I am stirring up

your sincere mind by way of reminder, ² that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles,³ knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires.⁴ They will say, “Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation.” ⁵ For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God, ⁶ and that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished. ⁷ But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.”

This will happen because....

Christ TRIUMPHED over injustice!

YOU

WHAT are we supposed to do with this information?
HOW should this affect our lives?

Peter gives us the application: **1 Peter 4:1-6** “**Since** therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves *with the same way of thinking*, for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, ² so as to live for the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for human passions but for the will of God.”

- WE are to be **DIFFERENT!**
 - IF you claim to be believer, YET continue to live a **life of sin**—then did you TRULY REPENT?
 - HOW can you repent of sin and yet continue to live in sin?
 - WHY would you continue to live in sin—the very thing that brought your Savior’s death and suffering?

PQ: HOW are YOU Thinking in the Face of Injustice?

- Peter: “**Since** therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves *with the same way of thinking...*”

WHAT is that “Same way of thinking”?

- THINKING: Christ suffered injustice to bring life
 - **YOU:** You might have to suffer injustice to bring LIFE to others through Christ
- THINKING: Christ suffered injustice but ultimately Triumphed over injustice

- **YOU:** You may have to suffer injustice NOW, but ultimate you will share in **Christ's triumph** over it.
- **THINKING:** Injustice is temporary—God's justice is coming
 - **Christ** “has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.”
 - Christ is RETURNING as the **TRIUMPHANT KING**
- **THINKING:** Christ **suffered injustice** in the flesh
 - **YOU:** YOU may also **suffer injustice** while in this life
- **THINKING:** Christ **DEFEATED** sin on the cross!
 - **YOU:** You are not a **SLAVE** to sin!

PQ: HOW are YOU Thinking in the Face of Injustice?

³ For the time that is past suffices for doing what the Gentiles want to do, living in sensuality, passions, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and lawless idolatry.

⁴ With respect to this they are surprised when you do not join them in the same flood of debauchery, and they malign you;

- **THINKING:** Christ faced **slander, accusations** and being **maligned**

- Noah faced: **slander, accusations** and being **maligned**
 - **YOU: You** will likely face **slander, accusations** and being **maligned**

WHY? Because you are **not joining** in on the sin

- Because you are **living counter-culturally!**
- Because you are **different!**
- Because your **life** is **convicting** to those who are REJECTING God.

REMMBER....

Christ TRIUMPHED over injustice!

PQ: HOW are YOU Thinking in the Face of Injustice?

⁵ but they will give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. ⁶ For this is why the gospel was preached even to those who are dead, that though judged in the flesh the way people are, they might live in the spirit the way God does.”

- THINKING: Justice will come b/c Christ has been given authority to “**judge the living and the dead**”
- THINKING: NO ONE will face God’s **judgment unjustly!**

- Those who have **died** have heard the GOOD NEWS
- God has revealed HIMSELF to all through **natural revelation** and specifically through His Word.
 - There is NO INJUSTICE with GOD!

WE

PQ: HOW are YOU Thinking in the Face of Injustice?

- ARE YOU Focused on the **injustice** or on the **cross**?
- ARE YOU Focused on what humanity is doing or what Christ has done?

PQ: HOW are YOU Thinking in the Face of Injustice?

- Are you using **injustice** as an **excuse** to **sin**?
- Are you giving into the pressure to sin?
- Are you giving into the pressure due to the **maligning**?

PQ: HOW are YOU Thinking in the Face of Injustice?

- Remember, everyone will give an account!
 - YOU will give an account for how you have used your time to live for Christ
 - THEY will give an account for their sin

PQ: HOW are YOU Thinking in the Face of Injustice?

- NO ONE has an excuse before God