

He Carried Our Sins

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- [0 : 0 0] Verse 24 of that chapter in 1 Peter, he himself bore our sins in his body on the tree.
- When I was a lad in the 1950s, in case you're wondering when that was, we used to make a journey out towards Strathblain quite often.
- And about a quarter of a mile past what we called the Millguy Waterworks, there was this sharp left-hand turn.
- It's been softened since then. But in those days it was a really sharp bend. And even my dad had to slow down when he got near it.
- And in the field facing you as you came to the turn was what to my small eyes seemed an enormous billboard.
- [1 : 1 5] And it had five words on it. Christ died for our sins.
- Each time we passed it I wondered what it was there for. And I remember asking in the car, what is it there for and what does it mean?
- And I didn't get an answer then that I could understand. But maybe it was seven years later, when a teacher at school invited a few of us to come to his home.
- And he opened up the Bible, and particularly the Bible's teaching on the cross. And it amazed me.
- And it was life transforming. And to a great extent, the highlights of my Christian life since then have been discovering more about the cross of Jesus.
- [2 : 3 2] I'd like to ask the question, what did the cross achieve? There are many answers actually that the Bible gives to that great question.
- But I want to begin with what is the most foundational one. Let me read again those words. Verse 24, 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've been healed, for you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the shepherd and overseer of your souls.
- Going away from God, we incur a weight on our lives.
- We sometimes call that oppressive load a troubled conscience. But it's actually more than that.
- [4 : 0 0] It's our inner realization of judgment deserved and of judgment to come. David in the Psalms was aware of this.
- And one time before he acknowledged his sin before God, he says, for day and night your hand was heavy upon me.
- And that's the condition of us as rebels from God. God sees us weighed down.
- And when we cry to him for help, he hears us. And he has come near to us with the solution in Jesus Christ.

I want to look at what it means now for the bearing of our sins to be on Christ. Because he carried them, says Peter in this text.

[5 : 18] He bore them. He lifted them and took them away. Now, first of all, you need to understand that he took our sins to himself.

Among the Jewish people, bulls, sheep, goats, were beasts of burden.

But they didn't just carry sacks and packs. They were taken to carry the sins of the people.

And when the priests gathered with the intention of making atonement for sin, they took these animals and they laid their hands on them, on their heads.

And in doing so, they called out the sins of the people. They called out the sins done in ignorance.

[6 : 26] They called out the sins on another occasion done deliberately. They called out the sins contravening the temple rules.

And especially, they called out the sins that violated God's holy commandments. And in putting them in their hands on the animals, they were pinning those sins to the beasts.

Now, when Jesus came into the world, as we read earlier, he was numbered among the transgressors.

That is, he identified with you and me. And he agreed for our sins to be pinned on him.

now, this is a complete mystery. That the Son of God should have our sins put on him.

[7 : 32] He was holy. He was innocent. He was separate from sinners. He committed no sin. and yet, it was by agreement within the Godhead that sins would be placed on him and he would be identified with our rebellion.

Luther said, all the prophets did foresee in spirit that Christ should become the greatest transgressor, murderer, adulterer, rebel, blasphemer that ever was.

He took our sins into his own being. He became sin for us. He took our sins to himself, but then, next from this verse, he paid for our sins by himself.

We read those words from Isaiah 53 and they speak of Jesus. Surely he's borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities.

The Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. Going to the cross then, Jesus was taking he was taking our burden and it was punishment by proxy.

[9 : 20] He was standing in for us. He was becoming our substitute saviour. By this wonderful exchange, our sins were given to him.

and he would be executed as a criminal. That is staggering. It's an affront, it's an injustice, it's a scandal.

But that was God's way of lifting from his people their condemnation.

love to be. Now, there's a few things I want to fill in about this verse. I want you first of all to see that the work that Jesus Christ did on the cross was comprehensive.

He, we're told that he saves to the uttermost. He saves absolutely. Now, that means that he saves and deals with every one of our sins.

[10 : 37] And we need to write that into our thinking, friends, that he deals with our deliberate sins, our defiant sins.

And he deals with sins that we may only discover a few years later, they really were sins. He deals with the sins that we've committed frighteningly often.

And he deals with the sins that regrettably you and I are going to commit again before we go to glory. And he carries them all away.

But I want you to see in this comprehensiveness that he carries them away for all time.

He doesn't bring them back to us and say, ah, I need some payment for that. It's not just a temporary removal.

[11 : 50] this was brought out to us a few Wednesday nights ago when we were looking at the Lord's prayer petition, forgive us our debts.

And we saw there that when we say that prayer, we are standing on the certainty that the debt has already been paid.

there's a poem that I really like that brings this home to me. And in the poem, the poet asks Jesus a question and then he gives Jesus the answer that he knows is true.

And will the righteous judge of men condemn me for that debt of sin that Lord was laid on thee?

If thou my pardon has secured and freely in my place endured the whole of wrath divine, payment God cannot twice demand once from my bleeding saviour's hand and then again from mine.

[13 : 28] Do you see the biblical logic of that? If Christ has taken my sins to the cross and paid for them he's done so for all eternity payment he cannot twice demand.

Two more little things from the verse. He himself in his body. That was vital for the Jews because they knew in their heart of hearts that the blood and bulls of bulls and goats couldn't take away sin.

But here is Jesus coming and he has been made like his brethren like you and me in every respect. He's become a human and he the perfect man has come into our human world to deal with our human fallenness.

That's so important. But then I want really to stress this. It was on the tree. Now you may wonder what significance that is but to the Jewish reader it would have meant so much.

A hanged man is cursed by God. That's what the law had said.

[15 : 11] Really notorious criminals were executed by hanging on a tree but only until sunset.

Such was the awfulness of that because when a person was hanged or impaled on a piece of wood they were cursed by God.

Cursed. John Duncan some of you may know of him the likeable totally eccentric but holy preacher of a past 150 years ago.

He taught his students in Edinburgh and he asked them once do you know what Calvary was?

And he must have thought they weren't going to answer so he said what? What? What was Calvary? And then he gave them the answer damnation and he took it lovingly.

[16 : 32] And you see the cross was damnation because he was damned so that we might not be.

He carried our sins into hell and he put them into oblivion so that we might not have to go there.

Now how can how can this lifting of your burden happen? How does it take place?

Well Peter says you were straying like sheep that you have turned.

You have turned to the shepherd and faith in Christ is a turning to him.

[17 : 43] It's a turning to him in complete dependence dependence. It's as if you're turning to Jesus and you're offloading.

You're offloading the dirt that's been clinging to you, the weight that's been weighing you down and you're saying Jesus I want rid of it.

Thank you that you take it. And so when we turn in faith to Jesus we first of all we say yes it's true I am utterly weighed down by it.

and then we say yes I recognize that that's why you went to the cross to carry it away.

And then we say yes I accept that you take my sins. have you offloaded onto Jesus yet?

[19 : 15] We're not just talking about admiring him for what he did or what he taught. We're not just talking about some kind of sympathy for him that he took it all like that, the father's flack and the condemnation and the going to hell.

We're not just talking about sympathy. We're not even just talking about regret, sadness for the mess that my life is in.

We're talking about receiving this infinitely valuable gift. gift. Have you turned to Jesus?

Jesus? Now I want to finish with an important look at the second little phrase in that verse.

That we might die to sin and live to righteousness. righteousness. What is the connection between the death of Christ and your and my holy living?

[20 : 48] Because clearly there is a very, very deep connection. We see it here. now the first thing you need to notice is the death of Christ leads into your holiness and mine.

He carried our sins in order that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. That is the death of Christ takes us into holiness. That's the purpose of it.

that is one of the great aims of the cross. That we might become conforming to the image of Jesus.

Now note an important thing here. It's not that my holiness makes the cross work.

It's not that we die to sin and live to holiness in order that he might carry my sins. That's a complete reversal of what Peter is saying.

[22 : 01] No. The death of Christ leads us into holiness. But secondly from this passage the death of Christ is a pattern for holy living. And that actually is what brought Peter to saying all this.

He'd been saying a practical word to household servants. maids and home helps and nannies and whoever else was a servant out there.

And he was saying to them when you get knocked around by your boss, your employer and he's abusive to you, well here's what you need to do. You need to go to the cross and see the example of Jesus Christ.

When he was abused he wasn't abusive in return. there was no element of personal revenge. And we see in so many ways that the cross is an example for holy living.

But the wonderful thing is it goes further than that. the cross energizes our holiness.

[23 : 11] righteousness. He bore our sins in his body on the tree so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness.

And friends, how important it is that we see that we keep coming back to the cross in our Christian lives because it is the engine room for us battling against sin.

There are other sources of power and helps that we're given and many of them are good and necessary. Our consciences are good at pointing us in the right direction.

The help that we get from one another in the church the belonging to the body of Christ that is invaluable. And the law of God the liberating royal law by which we show that we love him that too is an enabler.

But I want to say this the cross of Christ is the thing that empowers you. The love of Christ constrains us.

[24 : 39] It hems us in because we are persuaded that one has died for all. And it's this love that we see on the cross that it shapes our thinking, our behaviour and the more we come to it, the more we find that we live for him.

He bore our sins in his body on the tree that we being dead to sin should live to righteousness. righteousness. And I want to urge myself and to urge you all, keep coming back to the cross.

Let it be your joy, your boasting, and the first thing that you do in looking to him for help in time of need.

Let's pray. Father, we thank you for your crucified son, who died and rose again.

We thank you that he did so that he might make us into a holy nation. Please do that more and more this week.

[26 : 14] For Jesus sake, Amen. reminders. Thank you.