THE VILLAGE CHURCH

1 Peter

Experiencing Victory in a Hostile World -

"… a primer for winning the war that really matters"

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Opening Questions

Choose a leader and facilitate a discussion and responses to the following questions:

1. Why did the apostle Peter write his first epistle?
2. What's the thrust 1 Peter 3:18-22? What's the overall message?
3. How might God use our Christ-like response to suffering?
4. What is the meaning of the phrase "once for all"? In what way did that phrase express a new idea to Jewish people?
5. What was Christ's purpose in gathering up our sins on the cross and enduring the darkness of death?
6. In verse 19, it states that "He went to preach". Where did Christ go and to whom did He speak in 1 Peter 3:19? Why was Jesus' audience where they were?

1 Peter

Experiencing Victory in a Hostile World

1. Our Past: Remember Our Anchor… (1:1 – 2:10)
   We Have so Great a Salvation
2. Our Present: Remember Our Testimony… (2:11 – 4:6)
   How We Navigate Life Really Matters
3. Our Future: Remember Our Living Hope… (4:7 – 5:11)
   Our Lord Will Return Soon

Victory in Jesus!

Today's Objective – To know that the path to the promised land is paved with pain and suffering; but we can persevere through whatever lies ahead because Christ traveled the same path and prevailed for us.

Victory in Christ's Suffering

I. Our Model of Enduring Suffering: Christ

- The theme of 1 Peter is living in the midst of suffering. Throughout the epistle, Peter points to Christ as our model of enduring suffering and emphasizes the necessity of suffering in believer's lives (1 Pet. 2:20-21; 4:1; 4:12-13; 5:1)

- Peter wrote to people in the midst of difficult circumstances. Throughout his first letter Peter shows he was aware there were people who desired to harm his readers. (1 Pet. 1:6-7; 2:12; 3:9; 3:13; 4:14; 4:16; 4:19; 5:10)

Victory in Christ's Suffering

II. Our Model of Victory Through Suffering (3:18-22)

Christ is also our model of how to triumph through suffering. Suffering is to be a time of victory and triumph for us. That's what we see in the life of Christ.

The key thought is in verses 18 and 22: though Christ unjustly suffered at the hands of demons and men, He triumphed through the resurrection. Like Him, we too will triumph over our unjust suffering.

Four areas in which Christ triumphed:

1. It was a triumphant Sin Bearing (18a)
2. A triumphant Proclamation (18b-20)
3. A triumphant Salvation (20b-21)
4. A triumphant Supremacy (22)

Victory in Christ's Suffering

1 Peter 3:18-22

18 For Christ also died for sins once for all,
the just for the unjust,
so that He might bring us to God,
having been put to death in the flesh,
but made alive in the spirit;

(Victory of Bearing Sins)

19 in which also
He went and made proclamation
to the spirits now in prison,

(Victory Proclamation)

20 who once were disobedient,
when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah,
during the construction of the ark,
in which a few, that is, eight persons,
were brought safely through the water.

21 Corresponding to that, baptism now saves you
—not the removal of dirt from the flesh,
but an appeal to God for a good conscience
—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

(Victory of Salvation)

22 who is at the right hand of God,
having gone into heaven,
after angels and authorities and powers
had been subjected to Him. [NASB]

(Victory of Supremacy)

The Victory of Bearing the Sins of Humanity (v.18a)

"*Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God,*"

Features of the sin bearing of Christ:

1. Christ's suffering was Ultimate

- Christ endured suffering to the utmost point: He" Died ."

- In contrast, the writer of Hebrews said his readers had not "resisted to the point of shedding blood" (Heb. 12:4) – they had not suffered in an ultimate sense by dying for their faith

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Features of the sin bearing of Christ:

2. Christ's suffering was for the Sins of others

- When we as believers suffer persecution, criticism, or even death, we are sinners suffering because of the sins of others – whether hatred, anger, envy, or murder.

- Christ also suffered for sins, but as the Sinless One who bore the sins of the world. (1 Pet. 2:22; Rom. 8:3)

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Features of the sin bearing of Christ:

3. Christ's Suffering was Unique

- The phrase "once for all" (v.18) translates the Greek word hapax, which means, "of perpetual validity".
- Christ's sacrifice was uniquely sufficient for all time. (Heb. 7:26-27; Heb. 9:24-28)
- Unlike any other sacrifice, the atoning death of Christ need never be repeated. "It is Finished!" (John 19:30).

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Features of the sin bearing of Christ:

4. Christ's Suffering was Comprehensive

- 2 Corinthians 5:14--"*The love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for* all*, therefore all died; and He died for* all*, that they who live should no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.*"
- Christ came to provide salvation for all who would come to Him. (John 3:16; 6:37-40)

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Features of the sin bearing of Christ:

5. Christ's Suffering was Vicarious (means "in place of or a substitute)

- Christ suffered as "the just for the unjust" (1 Pet. 3:18).
- Christ suffered the Righteous for the unrighteous (1 Pet. 2:24)
- Christ died the Sinless for the Sinner (2 Cor. 5:21)

And what do we learn from Him? That unjust suffering at its most extreme point can be victorious. Even though an ultimately worthy One was dying for unworthy sinners, even though He didn't deserve to die, and we did, He triumphed through it all.

The Victory of Bearing the Sins of Humanity (v.18a)

"*Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God,*"

Features of the sin bearing of Christ:

6. Christ's Suffering was Purposeful

- Christ's purpose in gathering up our sins on the cross and enduring the darkness of death was to open a way to God. (Matt. 27:51;1 Pet. 2:9; Heb. 4:16)

- Hebrews 6:20 says that Jesus entered the heavenly Holy of Holies "as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever." He entered to bring the elect into communion with God.

The Victory of Bearing the Sins of Humanity (v.18a)

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Features of the sin bearing of Christ:

6. Christ's Suffering was Purposeful

- The Greek verb translated "He might bring" (prosago; 1 Pet. 3:18) states the purpose of Jesus' actions. To move towards providing access to God (John 14:6; Acts 4:12)
- He came to lead us into the Father's presence.

- And what do we learn from Him? His suffering was triumphant in the fact that He suffered as a sin bearer, and He accomplished triumphantly the goal of that sin bearing which was to bring believers to God, reconciliation with God.