

The Triumph of Christ's Suffering Part 1

Scripture: 1 Peter 3:18

Code: 60-36

Let's open our Bibles at this time now to the study of the Scripture that God has brought us to, 1 Peter chapter 3...1 Peter chapter 3. We come now to a new section of teaching in this great epistle, verses 18 to 22, the concluding section of this third chapter brings us to the study of the triumph of Christ's suffering...the triumph of Christ's suffering. We're going to take a few weeks to get through this section because of its great importance, its great truth.

Let me give you a little bit of a background. We have often stated in our ongoing study of this wonderful epistle that Peter's recurring theme is simply living in the midst of suffering...living in the midst of suffering. And all the way through the epistle, his great example is Christ. If you want to know how to view suffering, then look at Jesus Christ. In chapter 2 you will remember verse 20 and 21 where he talks about the fact that when you suffer, you must endure it with patience for this finds favor with God. And then he says, "For you've been called for this purpose since Christ also suffered for you leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps." When you and suffer, when any believer suffers for doing what is right, if we want to get a perspective on that we look at Christ who is the modeling for suffering for righteousness sake.

In chapter 4 please notice verse 1, Peter comes back to the same theme, "Therefore since Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same purpose because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin." Again, we will suffer in the flesh, Christ is our model and we are to have the mind of Christ.

In that same chapter would you notice verse 12 and 13? Peter writes, "Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you which comes upon you for your testing as though some strange thing were happening to you, but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exaltation. If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed."

Then again in chapter 5 verse 1, "Therefore I exhort the elders among you as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed."

So, on a number of occasions in this epistle, Peter's theme of suffering turns to Christ. And Christ becomes the model or the pattern for how the believer endures suffering for righteousness sake. Now obviously as Peter was penning this epistle under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he was

writing to believers who were in dire difficulty. They were enduring some very hostile persecution. In fact, back in chapter 1 and verse 6 he says, "You have been distressed by various trials." In verse 7 he says, "You are being tested by fire." In chapter 2 and verse 12, he says, "You are being slandered by the evil doers in the society in which you live." In verse 18 he says, "Obviously some of you will be treated in an unreasonable way by those who are over you. You will suffer unjustly," says verse 19. And, of course, they already were experiencing that.

In chapter 3 and verse 9, he assumes that they will receive evil, they will receive insults. But they are not to return evil for evil nor are they to return insult for insult. In verse 13 he says, "And who is there to harm you if you prove zealous for what is good?" Again, implying that there were people just waiting to do harm to these believers. In chapter 4 verse 14, as I just read, he says, "If you are reviled or spoken against for the name of Christ you are blessed." In verse 16 he says, "If anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not feel ashamed." In verse 19 he says, "Let those who suffer according to the will of God entrust their souls to a faithful creator."

So, again and again and again he remarks about their suffering. In verse 10 of chapter 5 he says, "After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace who called you to His eternal glory in Christ will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you." The theme then is one of suffering.

And in this matter of suffering for doing what is right in the midst of an ungodly and hostile society, we must keep our focus on Christ. Christ shows us how to deal with unjust suffering. We've already learned that when He was reviled He did not revile. When He was evil treated He did not give that back. When He suffered He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to the one who judges righteously. We are to respond to our trials the way Christ responded to His...quietly, confidently, graciously, trustingly committed Himself to God. That's how we are to respond.

But there is something more to be added to this picture and that we're going to look at in the particular passage before us. Not only does Peter want us to respond to trials the way Christ did, but he wants us to see that Christ triumphed in His suffering and we may triumph also. That's the intent of this passage. It isn't just stiff upper lip, bear it, hold on, it isn't what you really would like, it isn't perhaps the best, but you can slug it out. It isn't that at all. It is that there is triumph, there is victory, there is conquering in the midst of trial. And that is nowhere illustrated as graphically as it's illustrated in the case of Jesus Christ. And so we learn then not only to have a right attitude in suffering, and that is one of committing ourselves to the just God who is our God, but to even anticipate that through our suffering we will triumph. There will be some note of triumph, something triumphant will come even out of our suffering. That is Peter's purpose in verses 18 through 22. Don't be discouraged, there is the potential of great spiritual victory.

Now we closed last time with a look at verse 17, let's just pick it up there so we can transition into our text. Verse 17 reminds us that there are two kinds of suffering for the Christian. You can suffer for doing what is right, or you can suffer for doing what is wrong. Now, most likely all of us at one time or another will suffer. And you may choose which kind of suffering you want. You can choose to suffer for doing what is wrong, and if you suffer for doing what is wrong, you suffer at the hands of God for God will chasten you. If on the other hand you suffer for doing what is right, you suffer at the hands of men and God will protect you. So take your choice. In the society in which you live there will be pressure to compromise. When you compromise and live the worldly life, you will suffer. You will not suffer at the hands of men but you will suffer at the hands of God.

On the other hand, if you choose to be obedient at any cost and live a godly and virtuous life, you may suffer at the hands of men but you will be protected and blessed by God. That's the simple choice you make. You will suffer most likely in this life, choose the nature of your suffering.

Now, as you view your suffering for what is right, keep in mind that not only are you to have the attitude of Christ but you may triumph as He did as well. Let's read verses 18 to 22.

For Christ also died for sins, once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God; having been put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit in which also He went and made proclamation to the spirits in prison 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. And 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 who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him.

Now as I read this over, it's so typically Peter that I find a smile coming into my mind and ultimately on my lips. Peter is not like Paul. Paul is very ordered in his thinking. He's very logical, he's very sequential, he's very reasoned. Peter tends to be a bit less reasoned, a bit less orderly. He seems to be a bit tangential. He says something and shoots off on something else and shoots off on something else and finally comes back to where he started. That's exactly what he did here. What he wants us to understand is at the beginning and the end of the section, he wants us to understand that Christ died for sins and He died unjustly, He died the just for the unjust. He didn't deserve to die. But even in being treated unjustly, would you please notice that He triumphed through the resurrection and is at the right hand of God and all those demon beings who were part and parcel of His suffering are now subjected to Him. That's the point. The point is that Christ even though suffering unjustly triumphed in that suffering, that's the message...that's the message. His point is very very clear. He suffered unjustly, He suffered for doing what was right and God caused Him to triumph. A marvelous and glorious truth.

Peter says He suffered death in the flesh, death for sinners, but He was alive in the spirit. And as a living spirit, He immediately was able to go and proclaim His victory to the spirits in prison. Right at the cross while His body was dead, His spirit was alive and already He was proclaiming the victory. That should give us great hope in our suffering. That should give any believer who endures suffering for righteousness sake a great confidence that God sounds a note of victory in the midst of that difficulty.

Now, as we look at the pieces of this great passage, I want to show you four areas in which He triumphed...four areas. It was a triumphant sin bearing, a triumphant sermon, a triumphant salvation and a triumphant supremacy. To understand the immense richness of this section, we have to spend some time on it. And frankly, Peter will plunge us, I believe, more deeply into the cross work of Jesus Christ than we are ever plunged anywhere else. This will be the deepest dive you will take mentally and spiritually into what is going on at the death of Christ. The richness here frankly is matched only by the difficulty of this text. And we could understand that it would be difficult because it plunges us into such deep and mysterious things. But by the time we have come back up, I believe we will be gloriously encouraged and enriched. This passage frankly demands the best from the interpreter, it demands the best from the preacher, it demands the best from the people if we are to grasp the triumph of Christ's sufferings, not only for their sake, that is the sake that we might know those great triumphant realities, but for our sake that we also may understand our triumph in Him.

For tonight in the brief time that we have, let me talk to you about point one...a triumphant sin bearing...a triumphant sin bearing. Verse 18, "For Christ also died for sins, once for all, the just for the unjust in order that He might bring us to God." Just reading that demands a moment of silence, to just let it sink in. Christ died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust in order that He might bring us to God. Beloved, Christ was unjustly executed. He was without sin. Pilate was dead right when he said, "I find no fault in Him." The Jews had to fabricate lies about Him. They had to pay off and bribe false witnesses to bring about the illegal conviction. Because there was no sin in Him, He was the just, the righteous, dying for the unjust, the unrighteous. But in spite of the fact that He suffered unjustly, He triumphed in that through His suffering He has brought us...where? To God. And there is sort of underlying that, I'm sure, in the heart of Peter the reality that even a believer while his suffering is not substitutionary and it is not redemptive, the suffering of a Christian could be the tool by which someone might be brought to God when they see how we handle that suffering. So there's even an example there that we can follow...which example was clearly pointed out and delineated in chapter 2 verse 21 and following.

Now, as we look at this great statement, I want just to separate out several features of the sin bearing of Christ. All right? Number one, it was ultimate...it was ultimate. The suffering of Christ was ultimate. It says this, "For Christ also died." May I please note that word "also." What is its implication? Its implication is this, the "also" means in addition to somebody else. Who else is he

talking about? He's talking about believers. He's been talking about the fact that you will suffer for doing what is right, but keep this in mind, Christ also suffered. You shouldn't be surprised then if you suffer. In other words, our Lord in asking you to be willing to suffer for righteousness sake is only asking you to do what He also was willing to do, right? He was the just when He suffered. He suffered unjustly. And His suffering, first of all, was ultimate. What do you mean by that? Simply this, for Christ also...what's the next word?...died, that's what I would call ultimate suffering, wouldn't you? You can't suffer anymore than that. In fact, the writer of Hebrews reminds the people to whom he writes in chapter 12 that they haven't suffered yet unto blood, chapter 12 verse 4. They hadn't suffered yet unto blood.

In other words, you have suffered but not ultimately. You haven't had to give your life. Christ also died. Many of the manuscripts, ancient manuscripts of this particular portion of Scripture use the word "suffered." In fact, when those people who operate in what is called lower criticism, that's simply a title for people who deal with manuscripts, when they compare the manuscripts that say Christ died with the manuscripts that say Christ suffered, they really cannot make a choice as to which is best so some of your Bibles probably say "Christ died," and some of them probably say, "Christ suffered." And that's fine because the words would be interchangeable in terms of meaning anyway. The implication here is that Christ suffered to the point that He died. He suffered ultimately. The ultimate suffering is to be murdered for righteousness sake. He's not asking anyone in this life in the church of which He is the head to do anything that He Himself has not done, in terms of suffering. Because the most that any martyr could ever do would be to die. Christ has done that. His suffering was ultimate.

Secondly, and we start to build on that, His suffering was related to sins...to sins, not His own. His suffering was related to sins not His own. You say, "Why are you saying that?" That's what it says. Christ also died for sins. When a believer is unjustly treated, when you and I suffer criticism, abuse, hostility, persecution, or when some Christians in some parts of the world even suffer death, it is related to sins...not their own. There's a sense in which they are suffering because of the sins of other people, right? The sin of hatred, the sin of animosity, the sin of hostility, the sin of anger, the sin of jealousy, the sin of envy, the sin of murder or whatever. So there's a sense in which even when the believer suffers for righteousness sake, we are suffering because of other sins against us. So it is in the case of Christ. He suffered for sins, only in a very different way. He bore in His own body the sins of the world. They weren't His sins, they were the sins of others.

Chapter 2 verse 22 says, "He committed no sin." He lived His entire life without committing a sin. He never had an evil thought. He never said an evil word. He never did an evil thing. Let me go a step further. He never thought anything that wasn't perfectly holy. He never said anything that wasn't perfectly holy. And He never did anything that wasn't perfectly holy. And yet, He suffered for sins. It was sins that put Him there. In the specific sense, it was the sins of the crowd that cried, "Crucify Him," it was the sins of the Romans that nailed Him there. But in the general sense it was the sins of the world. In fact, there's a sense in which this phrase, "died for sins," is used in the Scripture to

speaking of a sin offering. It is so used in Romans 8:3, it is so used in Hebrews 10 verses 6 and 8. He suffered as an offering for sin. The Bible says the wages of sin is...what?...death. The Old Testament laid it out, God said because of your sins you must make an offering. And God required the death of an animal as a symbol of the need for someone to die to cover sins. And so, Jesus Christ in His death died for sins. He died to pay the penalty that sins required. He was dying as the punished victim of God for the sins of the world.

There's a third thing about His triumphant sin bearing, not only did He die, not only did He die for sins, it was, thirdly, He died in a unique way.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

What do I mean by unique? Once. Something that is unique is set apart, there's nothing else like it. And the death of Jesus Christ was not only ultimate suffering, it was not only related to sin as He died for sins as the sacrifice to atone for sins, but, thirdly, His death was unique. How so? "For Christ also died for sins...what's the next word?...once," that is utterly unique, hapaxin the Greek, once.

W. E. Vine says in commenting on this word hapax that it means "perpetual validity that does not require repetition." He died once. Do you think that was something new to the Jewish people who had slaughtered as many as a quarter of a million lambs at one Passover and then repeated it every year, and who had offered sacrifice after sacrifice after sacrifice after sacrifice, and now all of a sudden Christ dies once? Once--once and it was sufficient for all.

Hebrews tells us that. In Hebrews chapter 7 and verse 26, "For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens," listen to this, "who does not need daily like those high priests to offer up sacrifices first for his own sins and then for the sins of the people because He did this once for all when He offered up Himself." You see, that is why the new covenant is better than the old. That is why Christ's sacrifice is better than any other sacrifice. It was once for all.

In chapter 9 of Hebrews, as the writer explores even more of this majesty of the priestly work of Christ, in verse 24 he says, "Christ didn't enter a holy place made with hands, a mere copy of the true one, but into heaven itself now to appear in the presence of God for us, nor was it that He should offer Himself often," did you get that? Verse 25, "Nor was it that He should offer Himself often." As the high priest enters the holy place year by year with blood not his own, other wise he would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world, but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. He did it once and it put away sin.

So, Christ..says verse 28...having been offered once to bear the sins of many...once. One death was completely sufficient to provide the atonement for sins. He was unlike any other sacrifice, never needed to be repeated. Beloved, as a footnote, that is what is so desperately wrong and gravely in error about the Roman Catholic Mass which sacrifices Christ again and again and again and again and again. Any viewpoint that necessitates a renewed sacrifice of Christ is an attack on the singular uniqueness of what He accomplished on the cross that day. There is no ongoing blood being poured out in heaven either. There is no further work of Christ. He did it once. It was comprehensive. The English says in your Bible, as in mine, "Once for all." And that is implied in the hapax, once for all. It was comprehensive.

The suffering of Christ was ultimate. The suffering of Christ was for sins. The suffering of Christ was unique, never to be repeated. The suffering of Christ was comprehensive, it covered the ground completely. Do you remember this? Second Corinthians 5:14? "For 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." He died for all. It was comprehensive.

The sacrifice of Christ for sin was not limited like the Old Testament. In fact, Old Testament sacrifices were limited to a certain person, a certain family, a certain nation, a certain time. Not so the sacrifice of Christ. It was unique and He was at that moment the propitiation not for our sins but for the sins of the...what?...whole world, 1 John 2:1 and 2. And that because God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son. All the sins of all time placed upon Him there, He wrought satisfaction to God for all who would come to Him.

In John chapter 6 I just call your attention to those marvelous words in verse 37. "All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me and the ones who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out, for I have come down from heaven not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me, and this is the will of Him who sent Me that of all that He has given Me, I lose nothing but raise it up on the last day, for this is the will of My Father that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him may have eternal life." And He came to provide a salvation for all who would come to Him.

Fifthly, and this is a marvelous reminder, the death of Jesus Christ was not only ultimate, not only in behalf of sins, not only unique, not only comprehensive, but, fifth, it was vicarious...it was vicarious. This wonderful phrase, "the just for the unjust," really sums it up...the righteous for the unrighteous, the sinless for the sinful, that's what he's saying. Jesus Christ without sin took the place of sinners. Go back to chapter 2 verse 24 and remember what we studied there. He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross. The sinless one in the place of the sinful. In 2 Corinthians chapter 5 verse 21 it says, "He made Him...that is God made Christ...who knew no sin sin," that's what the Greek says. He made the one who knew no sin sin. "He made Him sin on our behalf that we might become the

righteousness of God in Him."

Again, in that great ninth chapter of Hebrews and verse 28 it says, "He was come and offered once to bear the sins of many." The just for the unjust. He took our place, He bore our sins. You remember when Peter was preaching in Acts 3, he called Christ the holy and righteous one, I love that, the holy and righteous one. He says to the Jewish people, "You have rejected the holy and righteous one and desired a murderer to be released to you and then you killed the prince of life." What an indictment.

So, the perfect sinless Son of God died for the sins of the world. It was a penalty due to all of the unrighteous that He bore in their place. He took the judgment that belonged to us, He was the perfect full final sacrifice for sins. And what do we learn from Him? That unjust suffering at its most extreme point can be triumphant. 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.

That brings me to the sixth and the capstone point, the suffering of Christ was purposeful...it was purposeful. Not only ultimate, not only related to sin, not only unique, not only comprehensive and vicarious, it was purposeful, it was triumphant. In what sense? In this sense, for Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust in order that He might bring us to God. Great statement. Jesus Christ gathered up on the cross that day all our sins, He endured the God- forsaken darkness of death for us and He opened the way to God. Symbolically, God demonstrated that when He rent the veil in the temple from top to bottom and threw open the Holy of Holies for immediate access to everyone. No more separation, no more priesthood, we're all priests of God, we all have immediate access. He brought us to God. He satisfied God's just penalty for sin, required by the law and opened the way to God.

I love what it says in Hebrews chapter 2, it says He is our pioneer. And the word basically means He is the one who blazes the trail to God. And this was the purpose, the triumph purpose of His death toward us...reconciliation to God.

Please notice the word "us," that He might bring us to God. The elect. That He might bring the chosen, the elect, into union and communion with God. The verb there, do you notice that verb? It says, "In order that He might bring us to God." It's a purpose clause and the verb "to bring us" is a technical word often used to denote introducing someone, or providing access for someone, or bringing someone into a relationship. That's what the word indicates. It's a marvelous word, prosagongus(?), funny word, but that's the word. If used in the substantive form, or the noun form it means an introducer, or a giver of access, someone who brings you into the presence of someone else. And in a king's court, there would be a prosagongus, that person would be the one who was approached if you wanted to see the king, and if you convinced him you had just cause he would introduce you to the king. And Jesus is the official introducer, He's the official giver of access. In fact, He said, "No man comes to the Father...what?...but by Me," John 14. He said, "I am the way." It was

Jesus Christ who came, He said, to show us the Father, to lead us to the presence of God. He's the only way. He's the only source of introduction.

You remember what it says in Acts 4:12? "Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be...what?...saved." There's no one else to introduce you to God, no one can do it...no one.

I listened to a radio talk show the other day and they were extolling the virtues of the Dalai Lama of Tibet who received a Nobel Peace Prize. And I was listening to the radio and someone called in and said, "I want to say how glad I am that the Dalai Lama received the Nobel Peace Prize because he is God's representative on the earth who brings men to God." I don't want to burst your bubble, but the Dalai Lama doesn't bring anybody to God. Neither does anyone else except the Lord Jesus Christ. No man comes to the Father but by Me. Only Christ is the introducer.

And so, you see 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 the elect to God, reconciliation with God. Marvelous truth, marvelous truth. For those who put their faith in Jesus Christ, they are ushered into the presence of God, to be reconciled to Him.

Jesus is no Fairy Godmother, Jesus is not a super psychiatrist, Jesus is the one who introduces you to God. He is the agent of reconciliation for all who come to Him.

You say, "Well how do you come to Christ to have Him introduce you to God?" Well, you have to come with a sense of your sin, a deep desire to be forgiven and a longing to have relationship with God. That's the gospel message. The gospel message is that you're a sinner and I'm a sinner. And our sins demanded death and Christ died in our place, paying the penalty for our sin. And if we will turn from sin and come with a heart that desires to know and be reconciled to a holy God, then Jesus Christ will introduce us to God. That's His sin bearing triumph. And it has to be a wonderful thing to think about, just contemplating it that when Jesus was dying on the cross and even God turned His back and Jesus said, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" and the disciples had forsaken Him and fled except for a few faithful ones at the foot of the cross, and the whole earth became dark and it was a terrible horrible indescribable scene of rejection, hostility, sin and all of that, that in the middle of that He was triumphing because He was accomplishing the atonement, the bearing of sin that would allow Him to bring us to God. And so, the suffering of Christ was a triumphant sin bearing.

There's a second point, I don't have time to develop it, I just want to whet your appetite. At the time of the death of Christ there was also a triumphant sermon. Notice verse 18 again, "Having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit in which also He went and made proclamation, or preached or heralded, to the spirits in prison." Now just stop at that point.

It would have been enough if He had just triumphed over sin. But He also triumphed over spirits in a most incredible way. You see, you have to understand this, that the death of Jesus Christ involved the full force of the demons of hell and Satan himself. They were trying to snuff out and crush His life to such a degree that it would forever eliminate Him. And in the very midst of His dying, though He was put to death in the flesh, His living spirit went to those spirits and preached a triumphant sermon to them. It's one of the most, if not the most, dramatic scene behind the scenes of the death of Jesus Christ. One of the most frightening, shocking, troubling scenarios imaginable lays behind this whole thing as described in verse 20 as occurring in the days of Noah.

To understand this second and marvelous triumph of Christ, you've got to come next week. But let me just give a footnote. The whole presentation of this does not just stand for its own sake, but for our sake. And what Peter is saying to us that when we suffer we should suffer triumphantly like Christ did. There's a sense in which even though we suffer unjustly, there can be a triumphant note in that suffering because if we go through it with the right spirit and the right attitude, it could lead to the salvation of others. Secondly, while we suffer it may seem as if the demons of hell are winning the victory, and Peter wants us to know that the truth is that if we suffer for righteousness sake and commit ourselves to the keeping of a faithful creator, we will not only triumph over the sinners, we will triumph over the spirits, too. But that for next time. Let's bow together in prayer.

Father, what a wonderful evening we've shared, how our hearts rejoice. How grateful we are for another look at the majesty of the triumph of Christ and what a model it is for our own confidence in suffering. And while we may not suffer unto blood, we may not suffer ultimately, whatever suffering may come our way as we live a godly life in an ungodly society, whatever hostilities or persecution or misunderstanding or misrepresentation or lies may come against us, and whatever difficulties we may find in our homes because we are in the midst of unbelievers, whatever difficulty in our job because there are those there who resent Christ and our godly testimony, our honesty, our integrity, whatever difficulty we might find in our school setting when we stand up for Christ in class, Lord, may we realize that while it might seem for the moment as if the sinners are triumphing over the righteous, it is not the case. For there is even in our unjust suffering a triumphant note that we in suffering so may find our suffering becomes the testimony that might turn a sinner's heart to Christ. Give us to suffer the way Christ did with a spirit of confidence, committing ourselves to a faithful creator who will deal justly, counting it a privilege to have the Spirit of Christ and the Spirit of glory rest on us and be an example to those who watch of the great and pervasive grace of God that stills our soul in the midst of difficulty. My our suffering be triumphant. And then, Lord, give us to understand how we not only triumph over sinful men, but we triumph over sinful spirits. Show us there as well the example of our Christ. And we thank You for all that Calvary means to us in His dear name. Amen.

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