

Who his own self bare our sins

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[0 : 00] Let us turn to the scripture we read in the first epistle of Peter, the second chapter, and we may read again from verse 24.

1 Peter chapter 2 from verse 24. 2 Peter chapter 2 from verse 24.

3 Peter chapter 2 from verse 24.

The Christian teacher is no different in this respect from others, though of course he has no difficulty at all in finding the living embodiment of all the virtues which he wishes to commend, finding their living embodiment in supreme perfection.

In the person of Jesus Christ, goodness has its definitive exposition. Whether the theme be of unselfishness, a theme much loved of the moralist, or of humility and meekness, notoriously more difficult to practice than to parody.

[2 : 08] Whatever the theme be, it will find living demonstration in the character and work of our Savior Jesus Christ.

The difficulty which confronts the Christian teacher is not in finding the model, but in reading off from the model because of its unique characteristics to those who must seek to follow it.

There is a difficulty in the person of the person who must seek to follow it.

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Peter takes the obviousness of that for granted it's obvious that here we have a description here we have a declaration of the uniqueness of the person and of the work of our blessed Redeemer but Peter's immediate interest is to encourage in us who look to encourage in us who observe this Redeemer in his work to encourage in us an attitude of mind or a disposition of heart which will in its own way be worthy of and in every personal instance will be an advertisement of the disposition of Christ himself the disposition which on the human level is explanatory of the work or of the faithfulness and devotedness with which he accomplished the work that was given him to do

[4 : 50]

Peter is saying to us as Paul says elsewhere let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus well we ask what is the disposition which Peter wants us to share which in part springs from and in part makes for identification with the Lord Jesus Christ a disposition which we say with all reverence will give us a marvelous insight into the psychology of our blessed Redeemer in his endurance of the cross of Calvary it is told us it is described or isolated this description this disposition of heart is intimated to us by Peter himself earlier in this same passage at verse 19 where he speaks of consciousness of God this is thankworthy if a man for conscience toward God or for consciousness of God endure grief suffering wrongfully it is this consciousness of God that we want to lay emphasis upon consciousness of God was without question one of the dominant features in the thinking of the first Adam as he came very good from the hands of his maker and consciousness of God was without question a dominant feature if not the dominant feature in the thinking of the second Adam the Lord from glory and it is this consciousness of God that underlies every part of his behaviour it is in terms of this consciousness of God in terms of his consciousness of the will of God the supremacy of the will of God that he undertakes the work of redemption not sluggishly not reluctantly not as one who is forced to do something that is against his will but even in confrontation with death is able to say

I delight to do thy will O my God it is this consciousness of God that highlights the perfection of the obedience of our Lord Jesus Christ and our calling is to perfect obedience too to perfect obedience in situations which are often hostile and inimical to the rendering of it often what is uppermost in our experience is what seems to blot out seems to remove seems to crowd out from our minds the remembrance of the consciousness of God in the struggle for survival we become so aware of the difficulties that confront us we become so aware of the many miseries of life that we lose our sense of the good will of God sometimes in the struggle for survival we lose sight of the fact that the ultimate tragedy for man is not death at least not death as it is normally interpreted amongst us but separation from God in the multitude of thoughts in the multitude of thoughts that fight within our hearts our danger is to lose the sense of God's presence to lose the sense of God's being to lose the sense of the goodness of the divine will now Peter is speaking here to people who were themselves very much aware of the difficulties of the wretchedness of the miseries and injustices that life holds you see that he speaks specifically to slaves go back to verse 18 here is the introduction of this section and Peter says slaves be subject to your masters with all fear not only to the good and gentle but also to the forward and it's in that connection that he wants to bring to the uppermost of their thinking their consciousness of God that they'll realize that whatever they do and whatever they are whatever their reactions are to the situation in which they are placed must flow from their consciousness of God and if they wish inspiration if they look for some exposition of a man in difficult circumstances of a person where every circumstance and every element in each situation is hostile to his obedience to God then let them look away to the Lord Jesus Christ here we have the situation where people may feel that their miseries are such the injustices that they suffer are such that the only thing they can do they have only two options open the two options are to hit out to meet violence with violence to hit out and stand up for one's rights or else or else to run away to forget to opt out of the struggle altogether to run away

and try and find in some distant place a place of security a place of refuge well now the Lord Peter wants us to consider the Lord Jesus consider what would have happened had he concentrated for any time consider what would have happened if he had concentrated upon the injustices done to his person as he moved among men consider consider what would have happened if he had made the prime issue of his life the prime issue of his teaching the wrongdoing of people against him who did no ill who went about doing good who practiced good always towards his neighbor and if you consider that he did not either hit back or run away you ask what was the explanation of it

Peter gives it to you in these terms it is because of his consciousness of God it is because of his consciousness of the divine will because of his consciousness of the mission upon which he has been sent by God that he has been given a task to fulfill he has been given a people to redeem he has been given a people whose sins he must bear upon his own body to the tree and consider how the greatness how his acceptance of the greatest injustice on the part of men consider the high virtue of our Lord's consciousness of God is our salvation it is because he did not opt out of this struggle because he did not make his own personal experience the first matter of concern but consider the will of God in connection with the people that he had come to redeem consider him this is what Peter is saying to those slaves if you want the cure both for your readiness to hit back and for your temptation to run away consider him who his own self paid our sins and his body on the tree that we being dead to sin should live unto righteousness by whose stripes you were healed for ye were a sheep going astray but are now returned unto the shepherd and bishop of your souls we want to consider two lessons that we can derive from this and their effect in psychological and spiritual healing that accrues to those who consider them the lessons we draw from consideration of certain conclusions to which people in the situation of those to whom

Peter writes here conclusions to which they might readily come and how our Lord answers them in that situation as he bears our sins on his own body to the tree so let us put ourselves for a moment in the place of one of those slaves to whom Peter writes a slave who is much obsessed by the sense of injustice by the denial of what we would call basic human rights to which he is subjected who sees himself and knows that others regard him as just a piece of property a worm and no man as the psalmist would express it the conclusion to which he is most likely to come is this nobody cares for me nobody cares for me and if nobody cares for me

[16 : 04] I must look after myself indeed the truth that a man has to live by is this that a man must be his own savior don't put your trust in princes not in man son don't put your trust in anybody keep your counsel to yourself look after yourself work out your own salvation a man has got to be his own savior and that's the sort of thing that people say to themselves still people who have become cynical people who have become who have tasted so much of the raw side of life people who have become embittered by their experience of human cruelty they'll say there's only one person who look after you and that's yourself a man must be his own savior now what has the what is there to say to such a man what message comes to such a person in such a situation coming to such a conclusion from the one who bare our sins on his own body to the tree well first of all the message that comes from the cross is this that our real pain our real burden our real misery our real debasement is not from others but from ourselves the real affliction is what we is that with which we afflict ourselves for in the ultimate analysis our real enslavement is not to others let that slave talk as he will let him expound as he will basic human rights over against the master who is exerting as he thinks unjust authority over him let him consider a situation in which he will have freedom from that master deliverance let him be set free by him is he truly free the real enslavement is not to people but to sin and so if the real enslavement is not to people but to sin and there isn't one among us whose experience doesn't give answer to this there isn't one among us who doesn't understand in some degree what an enslaving what a debasing and enslaving and fettering thing sin is if the real situation is that our enslavement is to sin then real liberation can only be when we are delivered from our sin there can't be real liberation no matter how much you improve the external environment no matter to what degree you bring about physical and political liberation for those who are downtrodden and these are worthy in their own way but there cannot be real ultimate liberation for man until he knows the liberty with which

Christ and Christ only can make him free until he is able to give ear to that gospel which our Lord himself said he had come to fulfill the spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to open the prisons to speak the acceptable year of the Lord the day of vengeance of our God that's the true liberation and until the day that we hear the voice of the son of man say to us son daughter thy sins be forgiven thee we don't know what it is to walk free to walk at liberty in the presence and in the light of God's countenance this is the significance of what Peter is telling us here who his own self bear our sins on his body the slave knew so well what it was to be burdened to carry other people's loads he knew what it was to be compelled to bear what other people should be carrying but now he sees a strange sight now he sees something unique he sees a master he sees the master bearing a burden not his own but the burden that he has taken from the backs of other people who his own self bear our sins on his body to the tree the slave knew what it was to feel the lash many times wheels had been opened on his back as the lash fell on him never had he seen a master so afflicted never had he seen a free man so dealt with but

Peter bids him look here look to the son of God look to the Lord Jesus Christ look to the one who out of consciousness of God who in consciousness of God bends his back to this burden and submits to this lashing is not this the one who proclaims true liberation to us who delivers us from our burdens who delivers us from our cruel oppressions who his own self bear our sins on his body to the tree that we being dead to sin should live unto righteousness by whose stripes we are healed that's the first lesson drawn from the first wrong conclusion the second wrong conclusion to which a person in the kind of situation we are envisaging here the second wrong conclusion to which he easily comes is this in the definition of sin a man whose mind is dominated by the sense of injury done to himself very readily subscribes to the creed that sin is wrong done to me sin is wrong that is done to me

I have just grievances nobody can deny the justness of my grievances just grievances against society against the system against God even God himself Abbot says Peter look again to the tree and the man who bears our sins whose sins are these what grievances does he bear what injustices does he sustain look to him and identify the sin identify the burden that's laid upon his back identify it sinner identify the burden laid upon the back of Christ identify the burden that is placed upon him upon the cross cross that's when we do that we become less and less aware of other people's sins the more that any one of us looks to the

Lord upon the cross the more that any one of us tries to peer to identify the burden that he bears the sins that are laid upon him what are the sins that stand out what are the sins you see laid upon him not the sins of others but your own my own that's what makes us almost start back in horror to begin with as we see it it's my sin the burden of my sin and my transgression that is laid upon his body that he has taken to the tree sin is not wrong done to me but the wrong that I have done to God the rebellious spirit that I have shown toward my God and make the evil that I have done in his sight that he knows and he has taken it this is the marvel of it he has taken our sins and laid them upon his own son he has taken our sins and laid them upon him upon him who is there upon the tree our sins on his body to the tree so let's consider in the second place the effect of those lessons if we have listened to those conclusions and heard them rebutted not merely heard them rebutted but felt the force of the rebuttal as we have recognized our own sins upon the body of

[26 : 14] Christ what is the effect of this in terms of the spiritual inner relief that we experience well this is brought home upon us this sin that has loomed so large in our thinking whether other people's are our own and the more we have contemplated the more we have thought exclusively in terms of our own sin what is brought home upon us is this that the only definitive deliverance from sin is by death it's only when a man dies that you say this or that that was his no longer belongs to him however much a man may have however rich he may be in this world's goods whenever he dies not one particle belongs to him anymore and this is the truth that

Peter is bringing home to us so vividly we are rid of our sin as surely by the death of Jesus Christ by our dying in him by our dying in him we are rid of our sin as surely as a dead man is rid of all that belongs to him they're no longer ours that we being dead to sin should live unto righteousness and this is the full liberation this is the full liberation to which we are summoned according to the gospel of redemption through Jesus Christ we are delivered from our sins we are brought to newness of life we become alive to righteousness we become alive to the claims of

God's righteousness we become alive to the righteousness of God it's ours we claim it by faith by the appropriation of faith we claim the righteousness of Christ as our very own that's how we live that we should be dead to sins and live unto righteousness but what is this liberation what is the restoration we are restored to freedom but freedom for what how do we orientate in this newness of life where do we find the point of direction the point of perspective we are brought back maybe as runaway slaves as slaves who have run away we are set free we are told you needn't worry anymore you needn't be on the run anymore because here is your decree here is your signed and sealed decree of liberation but what we make of life anymore you see life has lost its point of perspective it's a strange thing how even a grievance can become a thing to live for it's a strange thing how even the sense of injustice can be a thing to live for and when that's taken away when the sense of what we are to live for is taken from us what's left life is rudderless we're like a ship that's rudderless we're like people without a sense of direction without purpose no no

Peter says that's not the way it is at all you remember the slave is not merely one who is tempted to hit out but he's tempted to also to run away but now he's returned we're returned unto the shepherd and bishop of our souls this is how we enter into a new sense of purpose life has a new sense of direction life has a new sense of meaning the cure for our purposelessness the cure for the sheer boredom that would accrue to us in our purposeless life is here we are returned to the shepherd and bishop of our souls we are turned to security to protection and to provision this Lord makes provision for us he is the one who affords protection to us he is the one who gives us security so that we live day by day in the contentment of his fellowship but how does this really apply to the like of you and me sure we're not slaves in the sense that those people were to whom

Peter wrote and we don't have the same temptation to run away that these people might have had or don't we it may well be that we duplicate that experience more closely than we think there can be times when we have even in Christian service a sense of grievance there grows up in our minds the feeling who cares suppose I gave all this up suppose I just really am fed up and nobody is making any response maybe a young person who is going round the doors of the vicinity here and finding the going very difficult finding the responses are very few maybe he or she says to himself there's no point in all this

[32 : 19] I might as well just give it up that's the renunciation of responsibility that's the runaway attitude that's the attitude of the person who wants to get out of his difficulties by what appears to be the easy way or we may say people are just misrepresenting the whole thing people are questioning my motives in going about I'm going to throw the whole thing up be done with it but it isn't from people that we take out orders in the new found liberty wherewith Christ has made us free it's not from people that we take out orders it's from the shepherd and bishop of our souls to whom we are returned my sheep says Christ my sheep hear my voice and they follow me they follow me through good report and through evil report through reviling and evil speaking this is the example this is the inspiration that

Peter is setting before us here of the one who through consciousness of God does God's will he is the one who brings us back to this sense of being upheld by the counsel of God in the doing of his will we are returned to the shepherd and bishop of our souls this is the point at which our life has meaning this is the point that gives continual sense of purpose to us in our living that we live not to ourselves but unto him who died for us and rose again we thus judge that if one died then all have died that they who live should henceforth live not unto themselves but unto him who died for them and rose again it is to this liberty and to this security that our Lord Jesus Christ has brought us in giving himself a ransom for us in bearing out the burden of our sins upon his body to the tree that we might return to him as the shepherd and bishop of our souls blessed blessed blessed blessed blessed be God for Jesus Christ let us pray as the sons of God for his name sake Amen