

**Psalm 22: 12-21 – “Christ’s Patient Perseverance”, A Sermon on the Sufferings
of Christ on the Cross, Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall on
March 28th, 2021, in the Afternoon Worship Service.**

Reading also – John 19: 28-30. I want to continue to present the sufferings of Christ on the Cross to you this afternoon so that you will see how great Christ’s love was, and is, for every believer. While He was suffering, we were benefitting eternally. I spoke to you about Christ’s faith in His Father this morning from the first 11 verses of Psalm 22. In this message I want to speak to you about His patient perseverance in enduring these sufferings to the very end. His perseverance consisted of His becoming obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross, for you and me. It was because of His patient perseverance that He was able to completely finish the work of redemption; that mighty work of purchasing us back from our slavery to sin; purchasing also for us, the gift of the Holy Spirit’s work in our hearts, so that we might become holy.

His perseverance in obedience and sufferings purchased all the blessings of our salvation, and all of the spiritual strength conveyed to us by the Holy Spirit, to do God’s will. Jesus’ patient perseverance in suffering is seen in the following ways in the two texts that I have just read to you. 1st – In His enduring the rage of wicked religious men and devils. 2nd – In His enduring the complete loss of His physical strength. 3rd – In His enduring the insulting gaze of the wicked. 4th – In His praying and looking for the answer to His prayer, for deliverance. Let us consider now, together, that Christ’s perseverance is the basis of our own perseverance to the end of our life.

1st of all – Jesus’ patient perseverance in suffering is seen in His enduring the rage of wicked men and devils.

Verses 12, and 13, and 16 say – “Many bulls have surrounded Me; strong bulls of Bashan have encircled Me.” “They gape at Me with their mouths, like a raging and roaring lion.” “For dogs have surrounded Me; the congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me.” “They pierced My hands and My feet.” Who are these “strong bulls of Bashan” who had encircled Him? Who was it who was gaping at Him with their mouths when He hung upon the cross? And who was it who was a raging and roaring to Jesus? Well, turn with me over to Luke 23: 1. We will begin with the congregation of the wicked that enclosed Jesus. “Then the whole multitude of them arose and led Him to Pilate.” “And they began to accuse Him saying, ‘We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar, saying that He Himself is Christ a King.’”

The congregation of the wicked was the whole multitude of the leaders of the various sects in Israel at that time. And, we can also say, that those who went to arrest Jesus that night in the Garden of Gethsemane were also probably still with them, helping them escort Jesus to Pilate and to Herod. It would have probably been a group of about 2-300 people I would guess. Of the leaders who were agitators in this group, it says in Luke 22: 66 – As soon as it was day, the elders of the people, both chief priests and scribes, came together and led Him into their council, saying, ‘If you are the Christ tell us.’ This large group of scribes and chief priests and the whole group of men who were under them, the temple officers and all the people supporting those who were wicked among the Sanhedrim, this was the multitude being spoken of.

In Luke 23: 3, Pilate asks Christ – “Are You the King of the Jews?” And Jesus plainly stated – “It is as you say.” “And so Pilate said the chief priest and the crowd, ‘I find no fault in this Man.’” But the response of these strong bulls of Bashan is seen in verse 5 – “But they were the more fierce, saying, ‘He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee to this place.’” They were speaking blatant lies. Jesus was not stirring up the people. He was paying His taxes to Caesar where He needed to. He was not perverting the nation. He was not trying to foment rebellion against the government. Well, who were the dogs who had surrounded Jesus? They were no doubt the Gentile leaders and their soldiers who Pilate sent Jesus to, when he heard that Jesus belonged to Herod’s jurisdiction. But when Jesus was sent to Herod, these strong bulls

of Bashan came along too, and while Jesus was standing before Herod, they were vehemently accusing Him.

And then, Herod's soldiers treated Jesus with contempt and mocked Him. And Herod, not finding anything worthy of death in Jesus, He sent Him back to Pilate again. Pilate wanted to release Jesus. He kept saying that he found not fault in Him, and then he proposed that since it was a custom that he could release one of the prisoners at the feast, he asked them whether they wanted Jesus or Barabbas to be released; Barabbas being a known and convicted robber and murderer, And they all cried out at once, it says in verse 18 of chapter 23 of Luke – "Away with this Man, and release to us Barabbas!" Pilate protested and said to them the third time, "Why, what evil has He done?" "I will chastise Him and let Him go." But these strong bulls of Bashan "gaped at Him with their mouths", from this time forward to the time that He was crucified.

They were insistent, they were demanding with loud voices that He be crucified, it says in verse 23, and the voices of these men and of the chief priests prevailed. And so Pilate gave the sentence that it should be as they requested and he released Barabbas, and delivered Jesus to their will. So they led Him out to be crucified. But something that you might not think of, was what was taking place in the spiritual world, behind the scenes, in all of this. You have to ask yourself the question – Why was it that there was so much rage in these men? Why were their voices like the roaring of a lion in Pilate's ears? It was because Satan, who prowls about as a roaring lion, was working overtime, himself, in this situation to see to it that the Lord of Glory was crucified.

It was he who put it into the mind of Judas to betray our Lord. It was Satan stirring up the passions in these men to behave like bulls and dogs. It was he who demanded permission of God to sift Peter like wheat, at this time, so that he would deny our Lord three times. Our Lord was patiently persevering in righteousness during all this time of these men accusing and misrepresenting His Person, His character, His words, and His works. He did this for our sakes. The Devil was then, and he is still today, a liar and the father of lies. In John 8: 37 Jesus said to some of these same people that were now acting as bulls of Bashan, and acting like a raging and a roaring lion towards Him – "I know that you are Abraham's descendants, but you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you."

They responded to Him by saying that Abraham was their father. Jesus said to them – If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham; in other words, they would live by faith in God and try to be truly righteous people; loving His word, and doing what is right from a loving heart. But in verse 40, He had to tell them straight out – "But now you seek to kill Me, a Man who told you the truth which I heard from God." "Abraham did not do this." In verse 43, He had to ask them – "Why do you not understand My speech?" "Because You are not able to listen to My word." "You are of Your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do." "He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him."

So, it was not only the sinful murderous hearts of these men that hankered after putting Jesus to death. It was also the fact that Satan was stirring them up to these outrageous things that they did, acting like strong bulls, acting like a raging and roaring lion, the whole crowd of them together. When I say that Jesus patiently persevered in enduring these things for our sake, I am saying that He knew that He had to overcome the Devil, cast Him out from being able to succeed in His deceptive schemes, and ruling over men unrighteously through men like all of these men who believed the devil's lies. It was through Christ's suffering these things for for our sakes, that He purchased the grace and power to be freed from all false religion, and the lies of the Devil.

2nd – Our Lord Jesus persevered throughout the loss of all of His strength.

In verses 14 and 15 the Lord Jesus says – "I am poured out like water, and all My bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; it has melted within Me." "My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and My tongue clings to My jaws." "You have brought Me to the dust of death." Whenever you and I think of perseverance we think of our striving and being able to continue to what we know that we

should be doing, by the strength which God supplies. This is the correct definition of perseverance, but we must see here that on the cross Christ was being poured out like water. Crucifixion is an awful way to die. The hands and feet pierced with big, sharp nails, the cross lifted up and jammed down into a hole. The whole back and body of the person is not racked with sharp intense pain, but the bones of the shoulders and back are severely jarred and dislocated.

Blood was pouring out of wounds on Jesus' head, hands, and feet. His back was furrows from the scourging and it was bleeding, but now pressed upon against the rough wooden cross, the pressure of the weight of his body rested against the cross there. After a few hours of this, trying to push up with the nailed feet and legs, and not being able to either raise or lower His arms, the Lord Jesus felt that He was poured out like water; that His heart was like wax. Was this simply the physical sufferings that He was thinking of, here? No, it was not.

If you will recall, in the Garden the night before, the Lord Jesus agony of thinking what it would mean for Him bear our sorrows and the guilt of our sins, put Him into a great sweat. The sweat was so great that it is described for us in Luke 22: 44 in this way – “Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.” The Lord Jesus experienced this great sweat like drops of blood in anticipation, not only of the physical sufferings that He would undergo in being crucified, but also in anticipation of God the Father's punishing Him in our place there at the cross. His physical sufferings brought Him to be quite weak and His soul's sufferings lead Him to be sorrowful and dispirited, His heart was fainting. And yet, He persevered. He patiently endured for our sakes.

I hope that you can see, my dear friends, what bearing your sins cost the Lord Jesus. All of His strength was being poured out, even unto death, for your sake. And this so that you would have the strength to believe, and the strength to live the Christian life. It was while we were without strength, that Christ died for the ungodly. You may recall that time in 2nd Samuel 14, after Absalom had killed Amnon for forcing his sister Tamar to make love to him, that he fled Jerusalem and went to live in Geshur for 3 years. David's general Joab devised a way to bring back the banished one. He had a woman of Tekoa disguise herself and pretend to be a mourner, and go to David and give him a good speech, a story of how she supposedly had two sons, and they fought with each other in the field, and the one struck the other and killed him. And now, she said, the whole family had risen up against her and said – Deliver him so that we may execute him?

David told her – I will give order concerning you that this should not happen. After David answered her favorably in this way, she then said – “Please let the king remember the Lord your God, and do not permit the avenger of blood to destroy anymore, lest they destroy my son. David assured her that he would not permit it. And then she said to him – “Why then have you schemed such a thing against the people of God? For the king speaks this things as one who is guilty, in the the king does not bring his banished one home again.” “For we will surely die and become like water spilled on the ground which cannot be gathered up again.” “Yet God does not take away a life but He devises means, so that His banished ones are not expelled from Him.”

Ah yes, my friends, this is what God the Father was doing so that we the banished ones, might be brought back into favor with Him. His means was the Lord Jesus becoming like water spilled on the ground which cannot be gathered up again. Let us see where all of spiritual strength really lies; where it comes from. It comes to us because the Lord Jesus was poured out like water.

3rd – The Patient Perseverance of Jesus is seen in His enduring the insulting gaze of the wicked.

Verse 17 – “I can count all My bones.” “They look and stare at Me.” Meaning all of His enemies among the Jews acted as dogs here, even as some of the Roman soldiers did as well; this congregation of the wicked. The Lord Jesus had to patiently endure this multitude staring at His emaciated, bloody, naked body with contempt. He had to endure their eyes upon Him, the Prince of glory, thinking that He was most disgusting, and someone who deserved to be despised and rejected; mocked and ridiculed, for all that He had said and done in His good and righteous

ministry. This He patiently endured for our sakes. But let us look deeper here. It may be true that sinners deserve to be despised by God or men for the sins that they have committed. But it is just as true that unless you are perfect, as God is Himself, you should not stare contemptuously at anyone, especially those people who are clearly trying to do good.

Do you remember what Elihu said to Job in Job 36: 5 – “Behold, God is mighty, but despises no one; He is mighty in strength of understanding.” “He does not preserve the life of the wicked, but give justice to the oppressed.” “He does not withdraw His eyes from the righteous; but they are on the throne with kings, for He has seated them forever, and they are exalted.” Let us understand that the Lord Jesus had to endure this insulting gaze of these wicked men upon Him, for our sakes, so that God can look upon us in the best of ways. Justice being satisfied in Christ, God the Father will never withdraw His eyes from you, the one trusting in Him.

Because of Christ’s suffering the contemptuous gaze of wicked men, when you believe in Him you come to have a better idea of how to look at people. Those bound in sin, you pity rather than looking at them with contempt. Those who are persecuting you, they will try to make a spectacle of you, both by reproaches and tribulations, but you will remember that Christ died so that you might have display a righteous attitude towards them. Christ endured and patiently persevered so that you can know the right way to look at people around you.

4th – Christ’s patient perseverance is seen in His praying and looking for the answer to His prayer, for His deliverance.

In verse 19, He says – “But You, O Lord, do not be far from Me; O My strength, hasten to help Me!” “Deliver Me from the sword, My precious life from the power of the dog.” “Save Me from the lion’s mouth and from the horns of the wild oxen!” “You have answered Me.” Here we see the faith of our Lord Jesus persevere unto death, and He triumphs in doing so. Even though, while He was dying, He felt as though He was really being forsaken, and He cried out to God because of it, asking – Why? Yet when He knew that all things were accomplished by His sufferings, we are told in John 19: 28, that He said – “I thirst!” This declaration of His physical thirst has a double reference. He was indeed physically thirsty, but it also conveys His desire to see His complete victory on the cross take place; the complete triumph over His enemies, and the salvation of all of God’s people through His death.

We are told here in Psalm 22, that He was, in His spirit, praying and asking that God would not be far from Him; that He would strengthen Him and help in His dying, that He would deliver Him through death to be able to see the reward of His sufferings. He prays that the Father would save Him from the lion’s mouth and from the horns of the wild oxen; from the schemes of the Devil and from His enemies being able, in the least, to triumph over Him! He says – “You have answered Me.” So the Father did answer Him when Jesus said, as it is recorded in Luke 23: 46 – “And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, “Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit.” “Having said this, He breathed His last.” I pray as we close this study, that you will see that it is these sufferings of Christ which both save us from our sins, and are the basis for our being able to pick up our own particular cross, in following Him.