



November 22nd, 2009
Sermon Based Studies

Group members page

“Surviving Life” #14
I Peter 3:18-22

Text: I Peter 3:18-22 ¹⁸ For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, ¹⁹ in which He went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison, ²⁰ because they formerly did not obey, when God’s patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water. ²¹ Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²² who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.” (ESV)

Getting to know me

1. Tell us about your baptism. Where and when did that take place? What did this mean to you? If you haven’t been baptized, what questions do you have about it?

Into the Bible

1. Look up some other verses that speak of Christ bearing our guilt. Isaiah 53:6 & 12; John 1:29; II Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13; Heb. 9:28; I Pet. 2:24. How do these add to your understanding of Christ’s sacrifice? Stop and reflect for a moment about your sins and then imagine writing down a “guilty plea” for each one. Now God takes these pleas of guilt and the consequent punishment and hands them to Christ and puts his name on the plea.

2. God shows His grace and greatness by showing all through history that salvation was only through Christ. Compare 3:19-20 with I Peter 1:10-11. This (3:19-20) has been a difficult passage to interpret, but Pastor Dean has phrased it this way--

Just as the Spirit of Jesus was in the Old Testament prophets predicting His coming, so the Spirit of Jesus was in Noah preaching to the people of Noah's day. A message of grace was offered but rejected. They thought it was foolish to heed the call of God like Noah did. So they stayed comfortable and respectable until the rain started. They are NOW in prison -- that is, in a place of torment awaiting the final judgment (Luke 16:24). Christ is not bound by space and time. He was there preaching thousands of years before and He is here speaking today. He will be with us, as He said, to the end of the age.

3. The point of the above passage is that Christ has been working through His people all through history and continues to do that. How do you see Christ working through your life?
4. Check out Genesis 6 and 7 and compare with I Peter 3:19-20. How is Noah's situation like that of Peter's readers (and us as well)? Are these true in your life?
5. What is pictured in the mode of baptism by immersion? See Colossians 2:12-14 and Romans 6: 4-6.

6. Since our enemies are destroyed, how do we face them? Look at the following passages: II Cor. 10:3-5; Eph. 6:10-18; James 4:7-8; I Peter 5:8-9.

Application Questions

1. Stop and reflect for a moment about your sins and then imagine writing down a "guilty plea" for each one. Now imagine God taking these pleas of guilt and the consequent punishment. He puts Christ's name on them and hands them to Jesus.
2. Who do you consider to be your spiritual enemies? Do you think of them as having power over you? How does 3:22 change your opinion of that power?
3. Resisting the devil and being alert means that we know what sins will cause us to trip. Do you know your "trigger points?" A key step in Celebrate Recovery (as well as many 12 step recovery programs) is to do an inventory of your life. "We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves" and "We admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs." The first part of this inventory helps you to see the areas of your life that you are susceptible to failure and sin. If you haven't done that, it can be a helpful exercise. The point is not to focus on your sins, but to avoid the traps.