



***Equipped For The Inevitable
“The Model of Suffering”***

1 Peter 2:21b-25

There are many opinions about Jesus. As people think of and try to describe Him, they often do so in the following ways: moral example; great teacher; a carpenter from Nazareth; the baby in the manger; healer; profound philosopher; truth bearer; and many others. All of these listed can be affirmed, but many of them miss the point of who He is and what He accomplished.

The most pointed description of Jesus and the objective of His first coming was written 700 years prior to His birth. It is found in **Isaiah 53**. The prophet describes the Suffering Servant Messiah. Isaiah tells us of the most important reason why Jesus descended to this earth and the awesome result of His coming.

The concluding passage of 1 Peter 2 presents the Suffering Servant Messiah as our great example. Peter reveals three aspects of Jesus’ suffering: He is the believers’ perfect standard for suffering, their perfect substitute for suffering, and their perfect shepherd through suffering.

**** *Jesus is the perfect standard for us to imitate in suffering. (1 Peter 2:21b-23)***

All forms of Christian suffering have but one standard -one perfect example as to how to respond - Christ. Peter’s phrase, **since Christ also suffered for you**, points to His efficacious, substitutionary, sin-bearing death. His redemptive suffering as one sacrifice for sin has no parallel in His followers’ suffering. But, there are features in His suffering that provide an example for us in our own sufferings.

**** *Jesus is the perfect substitute in suffering since He suffered for our sin. (1 Peter 2:24)***

Peter moves us to the core of the matter. No one has suffered like Jesus in that He is our substitution. He took the penalty of all sin on Himself.

Redemption is substitutionary because it means Jesus paid the price we could not pay. He paid it in our stead, and we go free. Justification interprets our salvation judicially. Jesus took our legal liability. Jesus made reconciliation between God and us by bringing peace and making us one with God. Propitiation points us to the removal of the divine wrath, and Jesus did this by taking that divine wrath on Himself.

**** *Jesus is the perfect shepherd who guides us through suffering. (1 Peter 2:25)***

The phrase, **continually straying like sheep**, describes by analogy the wayward, purposeless, dangerous, and helpless wandering lost sinners. The verb rendered **have returned**, carries the connotation of repentance, the turning from sin and to faith in Jesus Christ.

All who trust Christ are saved and come under the perfect care, provision, and protection of **the Shepherd and Guardian of their souls**.

Shepherd is a perfect title for Jesus. It conveys His role as feeder, leader, protector, cleanser, and restorer of His flock. We are like sheep because sheep are gullible, dumb, clueless, dirty, and defenseless.

Guardian is a synonym of **shepherd** and describes the spiritual nurturing of Jesus via the Holy Spirit. By His death and resurrection for His flock, the Lord has become the **Shepherd and Guardian** of our eternal souls. In His suffering, He is our example: our standard, our substitute, and our shepherd.

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