

Sermon Series: The Silent Witness (whip) Lenten Wed. 3–Lord of Life Lutheran–3/14/2001

Title: “Why Do We Have to Suffer?”

Text: Isaiah 53: 4-6

Introduction: **Illus.: The Stunt Double**

Theme: Jesus suffered so that we would not have to endure the ultimate eternal punishment for our sins but also that he might put perspective and purpose behind the temporal suffering which we endure.

### *Jesus suffered so that we would never have to suffer*

- Jesus carried, endured, and suffered the **crushing (5) curse for our sins**
  1. Word was used for the crushing of grapes until all the juice was squeezed out
  2. *Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us.” Galatians 3:13*
  3. *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; 1 Peter 3:18*
- Jesus carried and endured the **consequences for our sin**
  1. Ever since the Fall into sin the whirlwind of sin’s consequence has impacted us
  2. Jesus bore our consequences—sicknesses (weaknesses), sorrows, death
  3. **ILLUS.: JESUS HAS GONE BEFORE US**
  4. *But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Rom 8:37-39*

### *Jesus suffered so that we can move beyond our suffering*

- In Jesus our suffering is no longer a punishment
  1. *We thought his troubles were a punishment from God for his own sins! (4)*
  2. Often **POST-FAITH** we still think our suffering is a punishment for our sins
  3. **ILL.: JOHN 9 BLIND MAN—WHO SINNED...HE OR HIS PARENTS...THAT GOD’S GLORY SHOWN**
  4. *“Yet the Lord laid on him the guilt and sins of us all.” (6)*
  5. *Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, Romans 8:1*
- In Jesus our suffering is transformed into a blessing
  1. The Father disciplines us so that we reach righteousness
    - a. *“All of us have strayed away like sheep. We have left God’s paths to follow our own.” (6)*
    - b. **ILLUS.: THE CROWN OF ADVERSITY**
    - c. *You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood in your striving against sin...For those WHOM THE Lord loves He disciplines, And He scourges every son whom He receives.. . but He disciplines us for our good, that we may share His holiness. All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness. Heb12:4-6,10-11*
  2. Making the most of our **“redeemed suffering”**
    - a. Driving us to our knees in prayer
    - b. So that we flee back to Jesus, who bore our sicknesses, troubles, persecutions, trials, temptations, calamities, death
    - c. So that *we might have peace* and *we might be healed* (vs. 5)—*physical, emotional, and spiritual*
    - d. **ILLUS.: GOD’S RICHEST GIFT**

## **JESUS, OUR STUNT DOUBLE**

Actor Kevin Bacon recounted when his 6-year-old son saw *Footloose* for the first time:

He said, "Hey, Dad, you know that thing in the movie where you swing from the rafters of that building? That's really cool, how did you do that?"

I said, "Well, I didn't do that part--it was a stunt man."

"What's a stunt man?" he asked.

"That's someone who dresses like me and does things I can't do."

"Oh," he replied and walked out of the room looking a little confused.

A little later he said, "Hey, Dad, you know that thing in the movie where you spin around on that gym bar and land on your feet? How did you do that?"

I said, "Well, I didn't do that. It was a gymnastics double."

"What's a gymnastics double?" he asked.

"That's a guy who dresses in my clothes and does things I can't do."

There was silence from my son, then he asked in a concerned voice, "Dad, what did you do?"

"I got all the glory," I sheepishly replied.

That's the grace of God in our lives. Jesus took our sin upon himself and did what we couldn't do. We stand forgiven and bask sheepishly triumphant in Jesus' glory.

## **JESUS HAS GONE BEFORE US**

In the marines the training for commandos included cliff assaults. The theory was that a commando raid should be a surprise, done as quickly and as silently as possible on the area with the lightest defenses. The lightest defense is at the point where attack is least expected. More often than not, it was the cliffs. They come close to the cliff in our small boats and fire one rocket up through the darkness. Attached to the rocket was a grapnel. Attached to the grapnel was a light rope. When the rocket landed on top of the cliff, the grapnel would lie on the grass. We would then pull it back gently until it caught on something. We hoped it caught on something secure. We had expert climbers. Those guys were like spiders. They would get out of the little boat onto the seaweed-strewn rocks, and scale those cliffs in the dark hanging onto this thin, little rope that was on the end of a grapnel they hoped was hanging onto something secure. A bigger rope trailed behind them. Below, we held onto the rope. When the climber got on the top, he would secure the rope he'd taken up and then give two little tugs on it. The minute the two little tugs came, we jumped out of our boats, cold and wet on the waves and rocks. We would scale the cliffs. It was a hairy experience, except we had utter confidence in the one who'd gone before us. We had utter confidence in the security of the rope he had fastened for us. You could imagine my delight when I discovered that Jesus is called "the one who has gone before," or in the Greek, the "prodromos." The prodromos was a person who headed a patrol in military maneuvers. He was the one who went ahead and made sure the way was open. I rejoice to tell you that many times we'd find ourselves totally secure on those cliffs because of the utter reliability of the skilled climber.

## **THE CROWN OF ADVERSITY**

Christ was despised on earth by men, and in his greatest need, amidst insults, was abandoned by those who knew him and by friends; and you dare to complain of anyone? Christ had his adversaries and slanderers; and you wish to have everyone as friends and benefactors? Whence will your patience win its crown if it has encountered nothing of adversity? *Citation: Thomas a Kempis, The Imitation of Christ*

## **GOD'S RICHEST GIFT**

Pain is pain and sorrow is sorrow. It hurts. It limits. It impoverishes. It isolates. It restrains. It works devastation deep within the personality. It circumscribes in a thousand different ways. There is nothing good about it. But the gifts God can give with it are the richest the human spirit can know. *Citation: Margaret Clarkson in "The Banner"*

## **Isaiah 53: 4-6**

<sup>4</sup> Yet it was our weaknesses he carried; it was our sorrows that weighed him down. And we thought his troubles were a punishment from God for his own sins! <sup>5</sup> But he was wounded and crushed for our sins. He was beaten that we might have peace. He was whipped, and we were healed! <sup>6</sup> All of us have strayed away like sheep. We have left God's paths to follow our own. Yet the Lord laid on him the guilt and sins of us all. (*NLT*)