

The Suffering Of Christ

By Ron Boatwright

Jesus gave up the glory and joy of Heaven to come to this earth of sorrow and sin to redeem man. "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man" (Hebrews 2:9 KJV).

One of the reasons Jesus came to this earth was to take our punishment so God can be just in saving us. "Who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree that we, having died to sin, might live for righteousness, by whose stripes you were healed" (1 Peter 2:24).

There are certain similarities between the suffering that Christ endured on the cross for us, and the eternal punishment of those who will be lost in Hell. Christ suffered intense agony and torment. The suffering and death on a cross is the worse form of punishment that man has ever devised. Those in Hell will be "cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever" (Revelation 20:10, 15). Those suffering in Hell will be weeping, wailing, and gnashing their teeth in pain (Matthew 8:12, 22:13). But it will never end. We cannot imagine how horrible the pain will be, but those who end up in Hell will know.

Christ was treated as a criminal and suffered along with two thieves, just as the lost will be told by Jesus on Judgment Day to "Depart from Me, you cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matthew 25:41). Those lost in Hell will have the devil and his angels along with all the lost as their companions.

While Jesus was on the cross we read, "Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land" (Matthew 27:45). Just as those who are lost will be cast "into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matthew 25:30).

God will not be around sin. Christ represented our sins. "For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Corinthians 5:21). While Jesus hung on the cross and was made sin for us, God deserted Him and Jesus cried out "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" (Matthew 27:46). Those lost in Hell will never see God, because "These shall be punished with everlasting

destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power" (2 Thessalonians 1:9).

While Jesus was hanging on the cross, Jesus said, "I thirst" (John 19:28). Those lost in Hell will be crying out in thirst just as the lost rich man in Luke 16:24, "Then he cried out and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame". But he got no water.

"For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit". Christ has already suffered and taken the punishment for the sins of all people (2 Corinthians 5:15). But Christ is only "the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him" (Hebrews 5:9). If one does not obey Christ then the suffering of Christ is rendered useless for that individual. Christ died for all men (2 Corinthians 5:14-15), but only few will be saved and many will be lost (Matthew 7:13-14). If one is lost in Hell, he will only have himself to blame.