

Christ's Work and Ours

1 Peter 2:24

This text calls you to let your works be motivated by Christ's work.

Theme of the verse: Christ's death secured your righteousness

1. Christ bore our sins (i.e. was wounded)
2. We have died to sins and may live to righteousness (i.e. were healed)

Outline of the verse – Cause-effect relationship given through alternating parallelism

A₁: He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross (cause)

B₁: So that having died to sin, we may live to righteousness (effect)

A₂: For by His wounds (cause)

B₂: you were healed (effect)

I. As the Lamb of God, Jesus single-handedly atoned for your sins

- A. **1 Peter 2:24** and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.
- B. See also 3:18 – Why did Christ die for sins?
- C. Why was He the only one that could?

II. Christ, the righteous One, did this by counting Himself guilty on your behalf. As such, He endured the full penalty for your sins on the cross.

- A. **1 Peter 2:24** and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.
- B. Although Christ bore our sins, He had no sin of His own → cf. 2:22
- C. The word “sins” as a metonym which substitutes the cause (sins) for the effect (wrath)
 1. In this sense, the true meaning of the phrase is “He bore our *wrath* in His body” as a result of the imputation of our sins
 2. This is seen in the parallel between “*bore our sins in His body*” and “*by His wounds*” → bearing sins = bearing the penalty for sins
 3. Christ bore the penalty for our sins, not the sins themselves, in His body

4. “Indeed, Christ ‘himself bore our sins in his body on the tree’ (2:24), a way of looking at the cross that is found elsewhere in the New Testament only once (Heb. 9:28). The concept is found frequently in the Old Testament, however, where bearing sins clearly means bearing the penalty for sins. The Israelites, for example, are told that they would bear their sins by wandering in the wilderness for forty years (Num. 14:34, the NIV translation ‘you will *suffer for* your sins’ is a rather idiomatic rendering of what literally reads ‘you will *bear* your sins,’ as in the KJV).”¹
 5. All of the sins of the elect were imputed to Him, and He bore the wrath of God for them → This speaks strongly of substitution. See Isaiah 53:4-7 and 2 Corinthians 5:21
 - a. “What happened to Him was penal; and the function which He fulfilled was in some sense substitutionary, or instead of others to whom the penalty was due.”²
 - b. God the Father counted our sins against Christ. “Christ was a substitute for his people, one who stood in their place.”³
- D. The term “*bore*”
1. Range of meaning → took, offered up (as a sacrifice), brought up, carried, bore, assumed
 2. Should be understood as “*bore*” or “*assumed*” since it is qualified by “*in His body*” and per Isaiah 53:4, 11-12
 3. Compared with Hebrews 9:28, we find that He offered Himself, not our sins
 4. Thus, He bore our sins in the sense that (1) they were imputed to Him, and (2) He bore their just penalty, God’s wrath

III. In so doing, He successfully destroyed sin’s power in your life

- A. **1 Peter 2:24** and *He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.*
- B. Better translation of “*we might die*” is “*having died*” → Believers have died to sin through union with Christ’s death
- C. To understand the phrase “*you were healed*”
 1. Know that this is a finished action in the past and not done by us (i.e. He healed us; we did not heal ourselves)
 2. See Isaiah 53:5 and Galatians 2:20

¹ D.A. Carson, Douglas J. Moo, and Leon Morris, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI.: Zondervan, 1992), 429.

² Alan M. Stibbs, *The First Epistle General of Peter* in The Tyndale New Testament Commentary Series, ed. R.V.G. Tasker (Grand Rapids, MI.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1959), 120.

³ Wayne Grudem, *1 Peter* in The Tyndale New Testament Commentary Series, ed. Leon Morris (Grand Rapids, MI.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1988), 131.

IV. As a result, you can now live righteously

- A. **1 Peter 2:24** *and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.*
- B. Christ died not just so that we may be counted as righteous (via the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us), but also that we may live righteously → See Hebrews 10:14
- C. See also 1 John 4:9, Romans 6:18, and Galatians 5:24-25
- D. Side note: Here, Peter clearly states the fulfillment of what Isaiah wrote about 700+ years earlier. The promised, sin-bearing Messiah came and did exactly what Scripture said He would do.

V. Therefore, let your works be motivated by Christ's work

- A. **1 Peter 2:24** *and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.*
- B. In terms of the significance of this verse in the original context, Peter exhorts his readers to patiently endure unjust suffering (2:19-25). To do so, one must recognize God's favor toward patient endurance (2:19-20), see Christ as the supreme example/model (2:21-23), and be motivated as a result of blood-bought empowerment to live righteously (2:24-25)
- C. "Christ did not just set an example but suffered for our sins. That ought to be the supreme motivation for living in holiness."⁴
- A. If you are a believer, then understanding and remembering that Christ's work on the cross (i.e. bearing God's wrath for your sins) gave you victory over sin and secured your righteousness should motivate you to perseverance
- B. We ought to be motivated by the gospel of Jesus Christ
- C. Therefore, let your works be motivated by Christ's work

⁴ Robert Johnstone, *The First Epistle of Peter* (Minneapolis, MN.: The James Family Christian Publishers, 1978), 182.