

1 Peter 3v18

Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God.

Today in the UK we celebrate the 75th anniversary of VE Day, when at 3pm the prime minister Winston Churchill announced the end of the second world war in Europe. It is right that we look back and give thanks for those who suffered and gave their lives for our security.

In the two minutes silence at 11am let us pause and thank God for them. And let us, as Christians, look back and give thanks for the suffering of Jesus Christ who gave his life for our eternal security.

A verse worth learning, for it brilliantly sums up the heart of the gospel, is 1 Peter 3v18. Five short phrases, for the fingers of one hand, give us the best news we could ever hear.

Christ suffered – Jesus, the man from Nazareth, suffered and died

Once – because Jesus was not just a man but the eternal Son of God made flesh, his one death was sufficient for all God's people, for all time. God's wrath, his anger at our sin, fully, finally satisfied!

For sins – Christ's death was as a sin-bearing sacrifice. The blood of bulls and goats in the temple sacrificial system were pointers to the one perfect lamb who would die as a sacrifice for our sins.

The righteous for the unrighteous – the swap – Jesus, the perfect righteous human who fully obeyed God swapping places with us, unrighteous sinners. He lived the perfect life we cannot live and died the death that we deserve.

To bring you to God – the reason Jesus suffered and died was to bring sinful rebels, enemies of God – you and me – peace with God. We now enjoy eternal security, peace with God by faith in Christ alone!

Prayer: Lord God in heaven, today we remember and give you thanks for the millions of men and women who suffered and died to win us the peace and security we enjoy.

We are sorry that so often we take for granted the freedoms we enjoy. As our lives are now restricted by the coronavirus, we acknowledge that so often we are sinful and selfish in our attitude towards you and others.

We thank you that by Jesus Christ's sacrifice of himself on the cross a full and sufficient payment for all our sins for all time has been made, and we come to you today with thankful hearts. We pray as we remember Christ's death for us, so you would strengthen us to serve you in the cause of bringing this good news of peace with you to all people.

Amen

