

Chico Alliance Church

August 16, 2015

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“In His Steps”

Review

Live godly in and ungodly world or live differently because you are different.

What have we learned so far?

- I. Realize your new heritage as specially chosen children of God 1:3-12
- II. Live out your heritage as God’s specially chosen children 1:13-5:11
- F. Practice godly behavior in an ungodly world 2:12
 1. Citizens be subject to governmental authority 2:13-17
 2. Servants be subject to masters 2:18-24

Sometimes serving others involves suffering. Sometimes doing the right thing involves suffering. It always helps to have a model to follow. Watching someone else shows how it is done and enables us to understand better. In the middle of an admonition to submit and to authorities and endure suffering in difficult situations, Peter inserted the example of Jesus’ suffering. He will apply the example of Jesus with a “likewise” for wives and husbands and then everyone. Jesus modeled the godly response to difficult situations.

3. Jesus left an example of faithful service to others

For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls. 1 Peter 2:21-25

This passage clearly reminds us that God included suffering in the call to follow Him and Jesus left us an example to follow regarding the proper response to suffering.

Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same way of thinking, for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, so as to live for the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for human passions but for the will of God. 1 Peter 4:1-2

Peter addressed suffering all through his letter. I will take some time at a later date to expand on this misunderstood topic. For now, I want to focus on the core points of Jesus’ example.

a. The call to suffer for doing good

For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps

Jesus called the disciples to follow His example of suffering for the good.

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| Paul was called to preach | Called to hope |
| Believers are called according to His purpose | Called into one body |
| Called “sons of the living God”, children | Called us in holiness and to be holy |
| Called to be saints | Called to glory, to His own glory and excellence |
| Called into fellowship | Called to an imperishable inheritance |
| Called to peace | Called to obtain (and be) a blessing |
| Called to freedom | |

Here, Peter introduces a mysterious calling. To “THIS” you have been called. To what does the “this” refer? The immediate context refers to suffering at the hands of an offensive authority. The specific example concerns being treated badly for doing the right thing. God calls us to suffer for the sake of others.

Later Peter says...

Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same way of thinking, for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, 1 Peter 4:1

In our present passage, Peter references the suffering experienced in the process of serving others. True ministry is messy. Serving people can be excruciating. This passage focuses on the suffering involved in standing up to and abstaining from the sinful fleshly passions embedded in our flesh. Even later, Peter wrote about the suffering involved in spiritual warfare.

Resist him (the devil), firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world. And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. 1Pet 5:9-10

Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when His glory is revealed. 1 Peter 4:12-13

Paul informed the Philippians...

For it has been granted (gifted) to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake, Philippians 1:29

The same word used elsewhere for a gift of grace or a spiritual gift. You won't usually find this gift listed among the spiritual gifts but it is. At later time we will explore the spiritual benefits of suffering. In this letter, Peter focuses on the suffering that comes about in the course of serving others, especially those who have authority over us. Suffering is part of life in a fallen world. Current teaching tries to draw people to the gospel by promising a life free of suffering and hardship. The appeal to come to Jesus is for deliverance from external negative or uncomfortable circumstances not internal sin.

At a later time I will pull together some of the myriad of passages related to suffering.

God calls us to endure suffering.

pásxō— properly, to feel heavy emotion, especially suffering; affected by experiencing deep, penetrating feeling – literally "sensible" (i.e. "sensed-experience"); "the feeling of the mind, emotion, passion" (J. Thayer).

There are numerous terms related to pain and suffering and trial. This particular one is found 41 times in the New Testament. This one focuses on the capacity to feel deeply.

This term does not strictly mean suffering, but rather "to experience strong feeling" which can involve suffering (anguish). The term itself simply conveys the capacity for intense feeling and hence has a much more positive and redemptive overtone than merely "suffering."

My focus today is the example Jesus left for us as to how to respond to suffering.

"God, who foresaw your tribulation, has specially armed you to go through it, not without pain but without stain."

b. The example of Jesus

For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps.

Peter used the present tense verb of "leaving" indicating an ongoing example to use as a model for our response to suffering. Peter used the word "to write" which is translated example. Jesus left behind instructions written by His life regarding response to suffering.

He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree

THINGS HE DIDN'T DO

Peter first listed four things Jesus DIDN'T DO in the face of mistreatment.

Then he mentioned two things Jesus DID DO.

- **He DID NOT commit sin**

Peter used the word meaning to “miss the mark” “fall short of the standard”. Paul made it clear that all have “sinned” and fallen short of the glory of God. All EXCEPT Jesus! Our most vulnerable time to “fall short of a godly response” would be in the face of unfair treatment or suffering for doing the right thing. In the case of Jesus, he NEVER sinned through any of it. Think of it! At NO time in Jesus’ earthly life did He ever sin against God in thought, word, deed or attitude.

For our sake God made Jesus to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. 2 Cor 5:21

For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. Hebrews 7:26

The precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. 1 Peter 1:19

You know that he appeared in order to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. 1 John 3:5

I will not speak much more with you, for the ruler of the world is coming, and he has nothing in Me; Jo 14:30

Jesus left a remarkable example given the kind of suffering He endured. He suffered verbal, physical, emotional and spiritual trauma yet did not sin through ANY of it.

- **He DID NOT speak deceit**

The term “deceit” refers to “bait on a hook” in order to lure people in. Jesus did not try to manipulate through words. He did not try to diminish His suffering with bargaining or rhetoric. He willingly did what He was called to do.

I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. John 17:4

Everything was out in the open. The Pharisees accused Him of trying to organize some secret organization. He affirmed that He taught publically and it was easy to check out. It is tempting to lie in order to avoid suffering or trouble.

- **He DID NOT revile when being reviled**

To say harsh things (make verbal assaults); revile; to spue bitter (tasteless) statements, using mean-spirited, insulting words to demoralize (humiliate). To speak abusively, revile means using barbaric (even uncivilized) criticisms to insult (reproach, scold).

Here is Mark’s account of what they did to Jesus.

And the soldiers led him away inside the palace (that is, the governor’s headquarters), and they called together the whole battalion. And they clothed him in a purple cloak, and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on him. And they began to salute him, “Hail, King of the Jews!” And they were striking his head with a reed and spitting on him and kneeling down in homage to him. And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. And they led him out to crucify him. Mark 15:16-20

Jesus didn’t engage with those mocking Him. Paul modeled the same response as Jesus.

To the present hour we hunger and thirst, we are poorly dressed and buffeted and homeless, and we labor, working with our own hands. When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; when slandered, we entreat. We have become, and are still, like the scum of the world, the refuse of all things. 1 Corinthians 4:11-13

- **He DID NOT utter threats**

Even in the face of incessant mocking and reviling, Jesus did not threaten them. He could have called for judgment right there. He could have threatened to wipe them all out. He could have said, "Wait till my Dad gets here!" It seems the hardest thing to do is control our mouth in the face of difficulty.

For we all stumble in many ways. And if anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle his whole body. James 3:2

No human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God. James 3:8-9

Later Peter included tongue control in a list of things that enhance life.

For "Whoever desires to love life and see good days, let him keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit; let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it. 1 Peter 3:10-11

What did Jesus do?

but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree (cross)

- **He continued entrusting Himself to the Father**

paradídōmi (from 3844/pará, "from close-beside" and 1325/dídōmi, "give") – properly, to give by turning over ("hand over from"), i.e. deliver over with a sense of close (personal) involvement.

The verb tense used here indicates a regular turning of Himself over to God as the difficult events unfolded. This was certainly evident in the conversation with the Father in the garden and on the cross.

"Nevertheless not will but yours."

"Why have you forsaken me?"

"Into your hands I commend my spirit."

He intentionally shifted His focus from his pain to the Father's purposes. Peter asks us to do the same in a later discussion of suffering.

Therefore let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good. 1 Peter 4:19

The second thing Jesus did

- **He offered Himself for the sake of others.**

He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree

He chose to endure the suffering and focus on serving others. The focus of our life down here is to serve others. Our culture salutes self-actualization as the highest goal. When we keep focused on ourselves, like a lake without an outlet, we become stagnant and the breeding pond for all kinds of undesirable parasites.

The church was designed best to function when each member commits to serving the others. The whole purpose of the spirit gifts is to build up the other members. Paul used the human body as an example of mutuality. The body actually functions best out of three principles.

Unity – all the parts work toward a common goal and draw energy from a common source.

Diversity – there are numerous parts each with their own specific function.

Mutuality – no individual part can properly function without the proper working of the other parts.

It is all about mutual service to one another. Jesus was the ultimate example of service. In fact He offered His very life on behalf of others. The Bible is full of passages that indicate the fact that Jesus died in order to bear our sins in our place. Be clear that Jesus did or had NO sin. Yet he was willing to bear the penalty for OUR sin by dying on the cross.

Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. John 15:13

Peter draws heavily from an Old Testament prophecy regarding the Christ. He makes several direct references to the material in Isaiah 53.

He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth. By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people? Isaiah 53:3-8

Numerous passages of Scripture emphasize the fact that Jesus died as a substitute for us.

For our sake God made Jesus to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. 2 Cor 5:21

but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:8

He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? Romans 8:32

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree” Gal 3:13

And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. Eph 5:2

who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works. Titus 2:14

And by God’s will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. Heb 10:10

For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, 1 Peter 3:18

There is no doubt that Jesus took our deserved punishment.

c. The result of Jesus’ suffering

So what’s the result of Jesus bearing OUR sin?

that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Jesus makes righteous living possible by His death on the Christ. Through the sacrifice of Jesus we were healed. Oh yeah! I don’t feel healed. Please don’t use this verse to claim physical healing. Peter clarifies the kind of healing he had in mind. It is a spiritual change. Whereas we were regularly walking away from God, He has returned us to Himself. The voice of the word “return” is passive indicating and action done to us not by us. Having died to sin in order to live to righteousness through the work of Jesus, God returns us to fellowship with Himself. No longer straying sheep but staying sheep, we enjoy the loving care of a shepherd and overseer of our very soul.

NOTE: Scripture also appeals to Isaiah 53 in regard to physical healing.

That evening they brought to him many who were oppressed by demons, and he cast out the spirits with a word and healed all who were sick. This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah: “He took our illnesses and bore our diseases.” Matthew 8:16-17

What do we do with this truth? Two things

1. Understand and appreciate the wonder of what Jesus sacrificed FOR US.

The context of this passage has to do with following His example sacrificial service.

2. Be willing to sacrifice FOR OTHERS.