

March 31, 2019

Sermon: Following Jesus on the Road of Suffering
Text: 1 Peter 2:18-25

Discussion Questions:

How easy is it to ignore those often heard or read “What to Do in the Case of an Emergency” (WTDITCOAE) speeches or messages? Why do you think that is?

Create a list of all of the places where you’ve heard or seen a WTDITCOAE—

Did you include in your list the “speech” that is always given after they close the door of the airplane and before you take off?

- Have you ever heard a version of this speech that was intended to make it funny or lighthearted? Why do you think flight attendants do this? What is a possible HUGE drawback to delivering this very serious and important information in a lighthearted and comical way?

Did your list include the little maps that are often posted next to the doors of classrooms or other locations, showing you what path to take to get out of the building in the event of a fire (Emergency Evacuation Map)?

- What is some pertinent information that these signs ought to include?
 - What should these signs tell you with respect to stairs vs. elevators?
 - Should these signs include any information regarding wheelchair accessibility?
 - Should these signs indicate where all of the various exits are located?
- Be honest—have you EVER stopped to look at one of these maps, and given any thought to the path that the map directs you to go?

Why are we SO GOOD at basically IGNORING any and all WTDITCOAE messages that constantly surround us (far more than any of us would think)?

Examination:

Peter is addressing three major issues in this letter: 1) Who am I in Christ? (Identity); 2) How do I live my life in the face of opposition and persecution? (Response); and 3) Where is my true home—or where am I headed after this life is over? (Future).

We saw last week how **1 Peter 2:11-12** is the PIVOTAL passage in the entire letter:

“Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul. Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day He visits us.”

Our passage today moves us into a specific application—instructing slaves how they are to respond to their masters, even when they are treated unjustly or inappropriately.

- Read **1 Peter 2:18-20**
 - We just discussed those ubiquitous “What to DO in the Case of an Emergency” notices that we see and hear all around us—but almost always **ignore**. In what ways might we respond to Peter’s instructions to slaves in much the same way?

- A closer look at the culture that existed in the Roman Empire in the 1st century paints a bit of a different picture of what we might think of when we think of slaves. It is estimated that in the cities, up to one-third of the entire population were slaves. It was often a temporary thing, and usually didn't involve manual labor. In fact, non-Roman citizens would at times choose to become a slave, as it was one of the ways people could earn Roman citizenship status. It formed the basis of the Roman economy.

° Does knowing this impact the way you read Peter's instructions?

° What if Peter called for all slaves to rise up and resist? What if he implored them to rebel, and fight back? How might that kind of instruction impacted the spread of Christianity?

° How does what Jesus taught in Matthew 5:10 and John 15:18 apply to Peter's instruction to suffer for doing good?

° Peter talks in verse 19 about bearing up under the pain of unjust suffering because "they are conscious of God." What are some practical ways that we can be conscious of God throughout our day? Is it harder—or easier—to be conscious of God when we're experiencing pain or injustice?

° Have you ever thought to yourself: "OK, God—I'm storing up treasure in heaven by enduring this horrible situation and not lashing out or cursing you!"? Is that what you think Peter means here by our being "conscious of God"? Are we to literally think of our eternal reward in that moment?

• Read 1 Peter 2:21-25

- Peter shifts gears, and calls us to think about Jesus. He tells us in verse 21 that Jesus left us an example" that we should follow. What was that example? In what ways did Jesus suffer?

- Every Sunday, we conclude our services with the phrase, "OK, Church—Go live the call!" The NIV version of verse 21 says, "To this you were called..." What is this calling? Do you ever think of the call to suffer when you think of living the call in your own life?

- How does what Peter says in verses 22-25 connect with the words of Isaiah the prophet in **Isaiah 53:1-6**?

- How does the suffering of Jesus create a general pattern that believers are to follow? What is that pattern?

- If you look real close, you see that Peter moves from the pattern of Christ's suffering in vv. 22-23, to the BENEFITS of Christ's suffering and death in verses 24-25. What are those benefits?

- What do you think it means to "return to the Shepherd and Overseer of your soul"? Does suffering make this happen? Is this something that happens when we die, or while we're still alive?

Application:

Think of all of the ways that your life might be different if you gave of yourself in self-sacrificing surrender to other people? What would change in your marriage, your parenting, your work?