

Reflection Guide

1 Peter 3:8-22 Part 2

Only daily nourishment from the Gospel will grow us up! It is not good enough to just get older...we need to grow up!

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL??? (this is probably the most full and concise 1-verse explanation of the gospel) 1 Peter 3:18 *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*

Jesus Suffered (once) For Sins - Why is this necessary???

Ever since Adam and Eve doubted the goodness of God and His Word and chose to believe that they could be 'self-fulfilling'...each person born on this earth has been born in rebellion to God. We choose to reject God's wisdom and rule and instead we pursue our own wisdom with tragic consequences. We are guilty of cosmic treason...and deserving of God's just judgment

Jesus Suffered In Your Place - the great exchange...the righteous / sinless Jesus suffered the wrath of God in the place of unrighteous people like us. Jesus suffering was wholly undeserved for he had no sin. Jesus did not come for righteous people...He came for the unrighteous.

Purpose: Jesus Suffered to Bring You to God - this relationship / access is what we lost in sin in the Garden...Jesus has won this back through His sacrifice and resurrection...

How did this work???

Jesus lived the lives we were called to live and chosen to not live...refused to live. Jesus Submitted Himself to suffer for us on the cross. His death wasn't the end, Jesus was raised victorious over Sin, sin, and death. And this Jesus calls everyone to repent and believe upon Him.

For us to GROW up, our roots (souls) need to be nourished. *Satan wants to cut the roots...create disunity, distraction, friendly fire...seriously pursue* But the Gospel nourishes these roots. As these roots are nourished and strengthened, fruit is produced. Fruit is the visible confirmation that the roots are present and being nourished.

WHAT DOES THIS FRUIT LOOK LIKE? (HOW DO WE KNOW WE ARE BEING NOURISHED?)

*9 Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were **called**, that you may obtain a blessing. 10 For "Whoever desires to love life and see good days, let him keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit; 11 let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it. 12 For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayer. But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil."*

Gospel Nourished Christians...

Pursue Peace vs 11b - they don't expect peace to come to them. Jesus - "Blessed are the peacemakers...for they shall be called the sons of God."

Pursue Holiness vs 11a - turn away from evil and do good there is a passion for holiness or Christ-like-ness

"Avoiding sin involves being alert on all occasions. We should flee from sin as we would from a serpent. We should not toy with sin or go close to it. If you think you have the power and skill to handle evil without falling into danger, you are deceived and destined for pain." (T. Boston)

Have made a sport of finding ways to justify and sanctify our sin.

What are the consequences of this?

Are we actively pursuing following Jesus' goodness or are we just avoiding sin?

Pursue a Controlled Tongue vs 10 Jesus said that we will have to give an account for our words: *"But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken"* (Mt. 12:36). Let's not forget also that Jesus said that it is from the overflow of the heart that the mouth speaks...if the heart is full of God...Word...Gospel...tenderness, sympathy...that is what will come out. Therefore the way to gain control of your tongue is to deal with the substance of your heart.

Seek to Bless Those Who Hurt Us vs. 9 *to this we have been called...ch. 2, 'called to suffer unjustly like Jesus...'* *"Nothing truly shows a spiritual man so much as the dealing with another man's sin."* Augustine

Why do we get reviled? When we call anything "sin". Ironically the only real sin left in this world is to say that there is indeed sin and that it has real implications and that it needs a real remedy of which only Jesus is the remedy.

What should we respond with? *"just toughen up and avoid those folks"..."ignore it"...shake it off...avoid future encounters...demand respect?? No. Rather Bless = "asking God to bestow His favor upon them, wanting to see God impact them. It's being willing to be a tangible agent of God's blessing to the very person who just said the world would be better off if you went on it.*

How do we get the ability to respond this way?

1) Look at Jesus *"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."*

- Jesus didn't demand in those moments to be respected...though of all he deserved it
- if you are one who always seems to be calling for respect, you will live on the edge of bitterness and anger forever...the world isn't set up to meet your requirements

Jesus didn't count equality with God as something to be grasped but made himself nothing...never said "don't you know who I am"...no bitterness at treatment from the hands of those closest to Him...humbled himself by becoming obedient to death...death on a cross. As a result God has exalted Him to the highest place...that at His name every knee will bow...tongue confess that He is Lord to the glory of God.

- when he was sinned against...he returned it with blessing - we are to bless when cursed and throw ourselves on the mercy of God who judges justly
- He has given His Spirit to empower, the same Spirit that empowered him to trust his heavenly Father.

2) Understand Jesus' calling (and ours) to suffer.

- Are we above our King? We serve a 'man of sorrows and acquainted with grief'
- Bible testifies to the reality 'saints rejoiced at being counted worthy to suffer'...Phil 1/3 Paul said it was "granted to you on behalf of Jesus to not only believe but suffer for his sake."

Are you known for suffering well? (personal examples of well or not well?)

How do you typically respond when slandered?

Withdraw? out of fear others opinions. (Peter)

Anger? fight back by slandering them to their face? to others?

Defensive? (justify to yourself what this is no true?)

Is there any difference in your response than those without the Spirit or the gospel?

3) Set affections on Jesus. Peter knows the root to this THORN, so he writes: 14 *Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, 15 but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy,*

- just telling someone not to be afraid doesn't usually work...
- doesn't work to just say 'don't worry what you co-worker will think'...
- **So How can this happen? Set apart Jesus as King - Sovereign - Lord in your heart.**
 - heart is the inner man...thoughts / passions / that compel actions...
 - this isn't mental agreement with facts...this will be evident in your life
 - heart that praises Jesus as King - Sovereign - **Holy** ...proper worship / awe of God *"The praising heart is immune to the fear of others."* (some smart Puritan)

So, what is the hope that helps us suffer in a gospel-nourished, gospel-proclaiming way?

- We get Jesus' record... so we don't have to be defensive when we are reviled or slandered in the church or to the world.
- Jesus was "falsely" accused with your actual sin and he was able to trust God's opinion of him and not lash out in anger or withdraw ("Jesus...save yourself!") His trust in God commends the power and the value of leaning into his heavenly Father.
- We trust God's own work in our lives. He is revealing where we trust in our righteousness and the opinion of others. This allows us to ask "God, what are you teaching me in this? How can I respond to YOU?"

MAKING DISCIPLES 1 Peter 3:15-16 Many of us are afraid to talk to people about Jesus because we might mess up...so we think we have to read more books or take more classes...but we are called to "give a defense for the hope" that's in us. We put this hope on display when we respond to suffering with eternal persecutive and joy!