Different - **wk 13 – Suffering**

**They grab what you can hold, careful not to be caught, hiding, trying to keep their babies quiet. Crying, older parents are left behind… There homes burned down, family are killed, mutilated, decapitated, property and possessions taken from them and kicked out of communities – they run!**

**Map 2 kicked out of Israel / rejected Map 2 - exiled / lonely / persecution**

**Letter to Christians moving into new communities and new questions. Many of their new neighbors had never heard of Jesus. The persecution is following them…**

**Peter says remember we are being watched, live a life that points to Jesus - live gracious, humble, considerate lives. We are Different!!**

**1 Peter 3:15 But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. (Live a life that begs a question) But do this with gentleness and respect, (this was last week – being ready to share your faith with others – live it, love them, tell them, live it)**

**Peter turns a corner – it is about to get dark…**

**3:16 keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. (why would anyone speak maliciously about good behavior? The world lives with incredible distrust – especially distrust of church and Christians) 17 For it is better, if it is God’s will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.**

**What about option C. No suffering at all… apparently, we don’t get that option – and \*\*\* sometimes it is God’s will to suffer**

**If you are a Christian realize people will not like you regardless of what you say or do. Living for Jesus will bring suffering.**

**What? No Way! There are some who only seek God to get a blessing or find success. They want God sprinkles. Thousands fill churches weekly who don’t want to be right with God, or want to live for God, or embrace the suffering that come with following Jesus – they only want to the sprinkles. Many seek favor instead of faithfulness.**

**Understand this - the sprinkles God gives come w/ suffering.**

**A few things about – Suffering**

**1. Let’s be honest – Most of us here never really suffer for Jesus**

**We may get mocked, made fun of, looked down on, not given the same promotions or opportunities, or at school left out – you may be the only Christian in your family… but is that suffering?**

**We have cars, homes, TV, food, opportunities, friends…**

**The suffering the early church was experiencing was real and extreme.**

**2. Millions of Christians now face real suffering every day**

**The Hard Reality - Suffering of Christians occurs around the world**

**\*\* Voice of the Martyrs / Open door USA / AID to the church in need**

* **327 mil Christians worldwide experience high levels of persecution**
* **1 in 9 face the daily threat of life for following Jesus (torture/ beating)**
* **Yearly - 4000 Christians killed simply for following Jesus. (11 a day)**
* **Yearly - 3000 additional Christians are imprisoned for following Jesus.**
* **Monthly – 105 Christian churches are burned down or vandalized.**
* **More Christians have died for their faith in Jesus over the last 100 years than in all prior centuries since Jesus’ time combined.**
* **The 50 most persecuted Countries**

**They embrace the suffering - Foxe’s Book of Martyrs – Follower of Jesus, bound to a stake to die for Christ; calm and quiet, till his legs burned away - bystanders watched as his body burned in the chains as black as coal, not a feature discerned. Silence - But one who was near was surprised to see his poor black carcass open its mouth, and two words came out… ‘Sweet Jesus!’ And then he fell over the chains, and at last life was gone.”**

**3. If we do suffer, make sure it’s for the right reason**

**17 For it is better, if it is God’s will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.**

**You get to choose why you suffer**

* **Some suffer the consequences for poor or sinful choices**
* **Some suffer because they are a jerks for Jesus**
* **Some suffer because they love Jesus and stand for what’s right**

**Sometimes we will suffer for doing the right thing… We respond to evil with good, but in this life, some respond to good with evil.**

**If you’re going to suffer – may it be for doing what is right…**

**Peter then says - let me remind you the only reason we have hope and eternal life is because of suffering – A Christian because of suffering.**

**3:18 For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit.**

**Imagine it’s 30 yrs after Jesus, a disciple who walked w/ Jesus writes to you: you’re not alone in pain, Jesus suffered too, for you!**

**3:18 For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit.**

**The perfect sinless lamb of God, for our sin. A great exchange.**

**Jesus was tortured, beaten, nailed to a cross and murdered – but thru that suffering and death – we are made alive!!**

**Suffering that Saves**

* **We can’t out suffer Jesus - 3:18 For Christ suffered…**

**No one has endured what he endured - not only beatings, scourging, crucifixion, and asphyxiation – he also bore the weight of sin and shame upon his shoulders of all mankind - past, present, future.**

**Isaiah 52:13 See, my servant will act wisely; he will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted. 14 Just as there were many who were appalled at him — his appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any human being and his form marred beyond human likeness, 15 so he will sprinkle (splatter) many nations…**

* **We can’t out sin Jesus suffering**

**1 Peter 3:18 For Christ also suffered once for sins, (once and for all – he is no longer on that cross!) the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God.**

**That sin and shame he carried is able to carry every sin & every shame. No person is beyond His grace! You cannot out sin Jesus.**

**No matter who you are - speak to people - Once and for all! That cross – that blood – that violence – was for you! Why would he do this? To bring YOU to God! To bring you home!**

**Peter then gets a little confusing - 3:19 After being made alive, (referring to Jesus being alive after his death / but before the resurrection) he went and made proclamation to the imprisoned spirits - (peter gives an example of who was in paradise that weekend) 20 to those who were disobedient long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water… (diff views… this is what I think this means…) (see Eph 4:7-10)**

**What did Jesus do between the cross and the resurrection?**

**He did not go to hell and duke it out with the devil. This false teaching is taught but nowhere backed up in the bible. Jesus had already won on the cross – the price was paid and full.**

**Luke 23:43 - on the cross told the thief, “I see you today in paradise (place of the dead, not heaven) Where was Noah, Abe, Isaac, Jacob, Adam, Moses… not in heaven. They were in paradise. Jesus shows up, “Hey guys the waits over!” After 3-day party, “follow me!”**

**Here is what we do know – because of Jesus suffering…**

* **For Christians, this life is as close to hell as we will ever get**

**The proclamation Jesus made is – salvation has been won!**

**We all fall into two categories: Christian and non-Christian**

**\* For Non-C the sad news is – this life is as close as you’ll ever get to heaven – and as good as it gets**

**\* For C – good news is – this life is as close to hell as you’ll ever be – and this is as bad as it gets (worst it will ever be or ever experience)**

**\*\*\* Born twice die once – born once die twice.**

**1 Peter 3:21 …and this water (flood waters of Noah) symbolizes baptism that now saves you also - not the removal of dirt from the body (the actual act of baptism) but the pledge of a clear conscience toward God. (our faith in Jesus)**

**He is not saying baptism saves you – we are saved through faith alone (Gal 2:16, 3:24, Ro 3:20-28, 5:1, 4:3-5, 11:6, Eph 2:8-9, John 1:12, 3:16)**

**Just like Noah and his family were saved from judgment in the ark as the waters cleansed the earth. We who are in Christ are saved and cleansed by God. Are you in the ark – of Jesus? Washed clean by God’s power!!**

**Baptism is a symbol that declares – I belong to Jesus! I am in him and He is in me! I am cleansed from the dirt of my sin – through Jesus!**

**Are you baptized? Have you made that declaration?**

**He says this is “the pledge of a clear conscience toward God.” (Because of Jesus - I can stand before God with confidence)**

**Peter is saying just as Noah and his family were in the minority and persecuted and mocked for following God – so will we at times.**

**They did what was right in an evil world – they entered the ark and the waters cleansed the earth – The ark (Jesus) kept safe!**

**1 Peter 3:21b It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, (it’s not the water that saves – it is the cross & resurrection that saves) 22 who has gone into heaven and is at God’s right hand – (where Jesus is now - this is place of all authority and all the power of God is his) with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.**

**Peter is saying one thing is for sure – every person from eternity past who has passed on – every demon, every angel, every unseen spiritual power and spirit – knows who Jesus is!**

**Jesus in Heaven - Our connection is like the little boy whose kite flew so high in sky that he could no longer see it. Someone asked, “How do you know it is still up there?” The boy answered, “I can feel it pull.” We can’t see Jesus enthroned in heaven, but we can feel Him pull us toward Himself.**

**For those of you who are Suffering… Jesus almighty God is on the throne and is fully in charge… don’t worry.**

**1 Peter 4:1 So then, since Christ suffered physical pain, you must arm yourselves with the same attitude he had, and be ready to suffer, too.**

**Suffering will come. Many live it already every day. Whatever you go through – if you are Christians this is the worst it will ever be…**

**Why do we not suffer as much as other Christians?**

**I will tell you – God gives us each a different part of His plan.**

**Luke 12:48 From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.**

* **The reason we are blessed, is to bless other**

**Get involved! Support / pray / write…**

**Video or Slide - Voice of the Martyrs / Open door USA / savethepersecutedchristians.org/**

**For our brothers and sisters truly suffering – let’s pray for them right now. How to get involved.**

**Wk 14 work**

**Reason for suffering 3:13-4:6**

**Reactions to our suffering 4:7-19**

**Embrace the plan**

**Embrace the pain**

**Embrace the power**

**Embrace the P**

**How to respond to suffering – 3:13-4:11**

**Mission Trips 2020**

**Haiti – in August**

**Honduras in December**

**Mission trip story… You will be amazed…. Crammed in a van and luggage oiled 12 feet high. Dirt floors, tarantulas, questionable food, lack of water and toilets. Why we were there and what we were to do – overrides the conditions and expectations.**