Different - **wk 14 – Following Jesus 101**

**Letter to Christians running from persecution. Refugees – to areas where many never heard Jesus.**

**Oppression followed them everywhere they went.**

**Peter walked w/ Jesus… saying you’re not alone.**

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

**Last wk Peter started talking about the dark reality of following Jesus. Millions suffering for following Jesus. Hard to compute.**

**Maybe you have given your life to Jesus – maybe there is a tug in your heart to know Jesus – realize this… It is not going to be easy**

**Following Jesus is a lot like a Tye Dye shirt - lot of stress, twisting, stretching, tying tight, boiling water. But the result…**

**1 Peter 4:1 Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, (if you have seen the passion of the Christ – you’ve seen this suffering) arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because whoever suffers in the body is done with sin. 2 As a result, they do not live the rest of their earthly lives for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God. 3 For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do—living in debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry. 4 They are surprised that you do not join them in their reckless, wild living, and they heap abuse on you. 5 But they will have to give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. (then another strange verse) 6 For this is the reason the gospel was preached even to those who are now dead, so that they might be judged according to human standards in regard to the body but live according to God in regard to the spirit.**

**You have given your life to Christ or you are thinking about it…**

**FOLLOWING JESUS 101 – 6 verses – 4 New Things that follow**

**1. New attitude: Following Jesus will include potential pain**

**1 Peter 4:1 Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, (new attitude toward suffering) because whoever suffers in the body is done with sin. (Sometimes doing the right thing w/ Jesus will bring grief and anguish)**

**Those who stand strong in the faith, know suffering comes w/ the deal Imagine we pitched Jesus with: come to Jesus, you too can be left out, ridiculed, looked down on and potentially attacked or killed – who’s in?**

**…because whoever suffers in the body is done with sin.**

**Embracing the reality of suffering is proof that you are Christs – you’re not just here for the donuts and goosebumps. Followers of Jesus globally have traded safety and reputation for suffering.**

* **A follower of Jesus knows - It’s better to suffer than to sin**

**Romans 6:1-14, Matthew 4:1-11, Luke 22:42, Genesis 3:1-6, Philippians 2:13**

**It is better to suffer, be mocked, accused, attacked – than to sin.**

**A new attitude – I am more concerned with what Jesus says than what you say or think. \*Vs those who bail at first sign of opposition**

**2 Corinthians 4:16** **Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. 17 For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us (working in us) an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. 18 So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.**

* **As a follower - The end reward is greater than a now pleasure**

**As you grow you understand this more in life - sometimes the return comes later. Pain now, reward later / pleasure now, no reward later.**

**Marshmallow video - When you thinking of following Jesus, will you choose the short-term gain & potential pain for the long-term reward?**

**Mom, was having a child hard? Why did you have more than one? Why go through that twice, or more? For the joy set before you. The reward was greater than the pain & fear.**

**Hebrews 12:2 – Fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. (his reward – was you – he saw you)**

* **Once we lose the fear of suffering, sin loses its power over us**

**The fear of suffering, fear of missing out, fear of being broke = is what often leads to bad and often sinful decisions.**

**Pro 16:8 - Better a little with righteousness than much gain with injustice.**

**Pro 19:22 - What a person desires is unfailing love; better to be poor than a liar.**

**Pro 28:6 - Better the poor whose walk is blameless than the rich whose ways are perverse. (expense reports, taxes, have a friend, have a date, get promotion)**

**Do we read it or live it? Do we believe it or ignore it? Do you really believe that? Are you afraid of being alone, poor?**

**2. New direction: Following Jesus means following God’s will**

**1 Peter 4:2 As a result, they do not live the rest of their earthly lives for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God.**

**“as a result,” When you follow Jesus there’s a direction change. Simply - followers, follow – a new and different direction.**

**The truth is if we trust Jesus – we will emerge – chasing different things. A life with a greater purpose / value / meaning and it’s exciting!**

**1 John 2:3-5, 2 Corinthians 13:5, Romans 12:1-2**

* **Trials have a way of bringing clarity of God’s will**

**Like those Peter is writing to and those around the world today who face death daily – they look at those who hate them in the eyes w/ love – there is crystal clarity of what is important and valuable.**

**The Tye Dye - The trials that follow a follower of Jesus have a way of bringing life into focus. Jesus followers have a different way of viewing this life - a new motivation – a new desire. We can see the color, beauty, and purpose in our pain.**

**3. New lifestyle: Following Jesus means no longer living for the flesh**

**1 Peter 4:2 As a result, (of following Jesus) they do not live the rest of their earthly lives for evil human desires, (live according to the flesh) but rather for the will of God. 3 For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do - living in debauchery (lack of moral restraint), lust (lack of sexual restraint), drunkenness (lack alcohol restraint), orgies (lack of excessive restraint – wild parties), carousing (lack of consumption restraint), and detestable idolatry (lack of affection restraint).**

**What does “live by the flesh” mean? Simply to be guided by your impulses & desires – by feelings. Following your heart.**

**When we follow Jesus – we no longer seek to follow our impulses.**

**We no longer chase our physical, emotional, and personal drives.**

**But I have needs- marriage not satisfying, I’m single, sexuality, I have urges. We are not animals, we are not led by our impulses & desires, but by God’s will. I am not a racoon…**

**Following Jesus means we develop restraint - Proverbs 25:26 - Like a muddied spring or a polluted well are the righteous who give way to the wicked.**

**Following Jesus starts off as “come as you are” but then turns into “don’t stay as you are” as God matures and grows us.**

**Some of you are the ultimate fixer upper. Like moving into a fixer upper. The HS cleans house after the move in.**

**1 Peter 4:3 For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do - living in debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry.**

**You've been there, done that and - you don't want to go back - you're done with it! Those shackles of sin are gone.**

**Spent enough time there! I am done with it - it is so unappealing! You understand the profound foolishness of it.**

**Some feel like they need to experience the wild side of life before they come to Jesus – you don’t understand what you are missing.**

**You think you’re going to miss out on the world, but you’re the one really missing out - on God.**

**Something powerful jumps out about this - Christ can change anybody**

**He's talking to people who this was their story, but God moved in and changed them forever. Don't give up on anybody.**

**Wherever you've been, or done, or are doing- Jesus says come**

**4. New response: Following Jesus means many won’t accept you**

**John 3:19-21, John 15:18-21, Eph 5:8-14 – They won’t understand / reject you**

**1 Peter 4:4 They are surprised (think it is strange) that you do not join them in their reckless, wild living, and they heap abuse on you. (speak evil of you)**

**When we live unashamed for Jesus and go against the flow - some people will not get it - Family, friends, co-workers.**

* **Rejecting this worlds way of life will result in rejectionsmile**

**There is a likelihood of being mocked and belittled for not following the crowd - even from other so called "Christians".**

**I remember telling friends, they looked at me as a weirdo - they mocked, belittled, make fun of… I lived it and loved them – and they still mocked & uninvited me… until that one friend…**

**Matthew 7:13 “Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. (the crowds – the popular) 14 But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it. (the few – at times the unpopular)**

**This echoes back to the end reward is greater than a now pleasure – there will be lonely nights, neglected moments, false accusations, feeling left out…**

**1 Peter 4:5 But they (those that attack you – and everyone) will have to give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. 6 For this is the reason the gospel was preached (past tense) even to those who are now dead, so that they might be judged according to human standards in regard to the body, but live according to God in regard to the spirit.**

**3 Possible meanings: (1) dead is a figurative sense, “dead in spirit” (2) Peter is referring back to 1 Pet 3:19, Christ in Sheol after the cross. (3) refence to Christians who are now dead but believed when alive. All of us will stand before God.**

**Some might ask, "Why waste your whole life doing God's will, being looked down on if you're just going to be dead in the end? You only live once (YOLO!) - get all the pleasure you can!" Peter insists life is more than what you see!! There is another…**

**\*There is more to life after this, and we will all give account for this one**

**And those who persecute you will have to give account. (Heb 9:27)**

**Followers of Christ be encouraged and continue to encourage each other (Heb 10:24–25), our suffering for Christ and commitment to Him is not in vain. This is not the end!**

**Tye Dye Shirt - We don’t know what kind of trials we will face, but we do know God is tie-dying us to bring something good in us and thru us – we are learning to die to self.**

**James 1:2 Consider it pure joy, whenever you face trials of many kinds,” Because you know, that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. 4 Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.**

**God’s not satisfied with us being spiritual toddlers. He’s glad we’re born again – but God wants us to grow and develop maturity.**

**God is faithfully working in us – tye dying us.**

**Our greatest seasons of growth – were in seasons of pain.**

**My life has had its struggles – disfunction, drug & alcohol addiction in my family, isolation, abuse, divorce, mistreatment in ministry, deaths, my battle w/ cancer…**

**I wonder God why are you taking me through this tie dyed experience. I don’t like the twisting, the rubber bands, the pressure – I feel boiled - Why?**

**He says (Put on shirt) - So you can wear it – for others to see - It’s given me the chance to identify w/ others going thru pain.**

**Drug addicts, those abused, cancer victims, divorced, single parents, loss of loved one**

**My temporary trials and pain give me opportunity to help others through similar trials – God is using my story to help & heal others and to know the healer JESUS. He can do the same as you follow Jesus.**

**Next week – Peter still talking about the storms of life and suffering - we take a look at the myth that God wants us happy.**