



1 Peter

The Journey Home

In His Footsteps

1 Peter 3:13-22

Message #9 of 13 – S686

Sermon given on April 24, 2016



Sunday Morning Service

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In His Footsteps

1 Peter 3:13-22

Opening Comments

- Turn to **1 Peter 3**
- Today, we continue our series through the first letter from Peter – **The Journey Home**
- Certain names are famous
- Christopher Columbus, Lewis & Clark, the Wright brothers, Neil Armstrong
- They are famous because they were the first ones to do something
- They were the trailblazers, the pioneers
- 12 men walked on the moon
- You might remember the second person, but I'll bet you don't remember who the 12th man was
- We don't remember them because after the first one, the trail is marked, the path is cleared
- And the more people that walk the path, the clearer it becomes
- That doesn't make the path easier, it is still pretty hard to get to the moon, but we know the way
- We have been describing the Christian life as a journey
- And as we walk this journey sometimes it might feel like we are going where no man has gone before
- But, in fact, we are journeying on a well-travelled path
- If we are Christians, we are guaranteed by God to make it to the destination, heaven
- But God doesn't want us to just make it – He wants us to be good travelers
- Because when we make this journey well, it glorifies Him, blesses others and grows our faith
- Today, to journey well we are going to look at three things: What Path to Follow – How to Walk – Who to Follow
- If you are able and willing to do so, please stand as we read today's text as a sign of reverence for God's Word
- Read **1 Peter 3:13-22**

- **Pray**

Teaching

- **In His Footsteps**

- It probably isn't going to come as a surprise to anyone that Christians are called to follow Jesus

- When He called His disciples **Matthew 4:19-20**

Then He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." They immediately left *their* nets and followed Him.

- To call yourself a Christian is to suggest that you intend to follow Jesus

- What many Christians seem to miss is that Jesus said that wasn't always going to be easy **Matthew 16:24**

Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me."

- But just because it is not easy, that doesn't mean it is the wrong path

- The right path is the one that Jesus walked

- He blazed a trail through this life for all to follow

- And according to Jesus that path is the only way to heaven

- To walk in His footsteps - first thing – need to know **What Path to Follow**

- **1 Peter 3:13-14**

- The path we are to walk is the path of righteousness

- Righteousness has two dimensions – horizontal and vertical

- The horizontal has to do with the things that we do

- To walk in Jesus' footsteps we should be 'followers of what is good'

- Do what is right and good

- And Peter says, 'Who would mess with you if you do what is good?'

- Just like it is natural to return evil for evil, it is natural to return good for good

- But not always – in fact, the Bible says that the closer we get to the Return of Christ, the more our good will be called evil **Isaiah 5:20**
Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

- And it is possible that we can suffer for doing the right thing

- Read yesterday about a doctor in Georgia who was hired, then fired two days later because it was discovered that as a lay pastor he had preached against the homosexual lifestyle, among other sins
- It is an obvious case of discrimination, but the case will likely be tied up in the court system for years, and this Christian doctor will probably have a hard time finding a place to practice
- But Peter says, if that happens, ‘You will be blessed’
- Which reminds us about verse 12
- **1 Peter 3:12**
- We may not experience a material blessing in this life but we can by faith know that God is going to bless us in heaven for our faithfulness
- Doing the right thing is always the right thing to do, even when negative consequences result from it
- The other dimension of holiness is the vertical - our relationship to God
- last week I said that we are righteous based on two conditions
- We have accepted Christ and have repented of any sins we are aware of
- The path we are to follow is the path of righteousness
- Do the right thing and be in a right relationship with God
- The next thing we need to know to walk in His footsteps - **How to Walk**
- **1 Peter 3:15-17**
- Verse 15 is the foundation verse the area of theology and ministry called apologetics or defending the faith
- It seeks to answer all the questions and objections raised by unbelievers - often used for evangelism
- There is a place for modern apologetics, but that is not the first application of this text
- In context, Peter is addressing people who are suffering because of their faith
- Peter is making an assumption- that his readers have something - 'the hope that is in you'

- The hope that Peter is referring to is the hope of salvation **Titus 2:11-13**

For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ...

- To walk in Jesus' footsteps, means that my hope is based upon the threefold realities of salvation
- First, I have been saved from the penalty of my sin, my guilt is taken away
- Second, I am being saved from the power of sin in my life today
- Third, I will be saved from the presence of sin someday when Jesus comes and gets me and takes me to heaven
- It is the second one that many people are struggling with
- You see, Jesus is not just saving me from the power of the sin in me, He is also saving me from the power of sin that touches my life from others
- This is the hope that believes that Jesus can save me out of any suffering
- It is the hope that believes that He can through the Holy Spirit help me to endure and persevere until He delivers me
- It is the hope that hopes when the world sees my circumstance as hopeless
- This is not having hope in hope
- verse 15 began with 'Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts'
- That means making God the biggest thing in your heart
- Bigger than your suffering, your hurts, your circumstances
- Few things get the attention of a hopeless world like a Christian who walks through hopeless circumstances with real hope
- It is to these kinds of Christians that Peter says 'be ready to explain to them about the hope' that only Jesus can give
- Walk in righteousness, putting God in the highest place in your heart and walk in the hope of His salvation
- God may allow some suffering into the life of a believer

- That shouldn't surprise us - especially if we want to walk in Christ's footsteps
- Our third point - **Who to Follow**
- Before we are too quick to say we are to follow Jesus, we need to remind ourselves what that entails
- **1 Peter 3:18-20**
- 'Christ also suffered' - Jesus lived a perfectly righteous life, obeying the Father always, and suffered at the hands of the unjust
- The unjust will always persecute the just
- Evil will always resist and come against righteousness
- And if we choose to follow Jesus, the unjust will come against us

John 15:20

Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you.'

- His suffering had a purpose 'for sins' 'that He might bring us to God'
- Our suffering has a purpose also – if we are walking with Jesus – walking in righteousness, putting God in the highest place in our heart, and manifesting the hope that is in us during our difficult times – then through our suffering 'He might bring them to God'
- **1 Peter 3:21-22**
- Baptism is one of the sacraments that Jesus left for us to do as Christians
- But without the death, burial, resurrection of Jesus, without the imputation of our sins upon Him, without the imputation of His righteousness on us, baptism is an empty, meaningless exercise
- Jesus suffered more than any man alive
- What He endured physically was terrible
- But the suffering that we can never understand was the suffering He endured on the cross as the sins of the whole world were placed upon His holy person
- We cannot imagine the suffering of that and the rejection of the Father while He died for our sins
- Suffering will come into the life of all true believers

- It is part of our journey home to heaven
- And it is encouraging to know that our Savior Jesus understands what that feels like
- When we come to the rough parts of the road, we need to keep something in mind
- Jesus walked the path before us, and he has reached the destination that we are headed toward ‘gone into heaven’ and ‘angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him’
- Jesus, on the cross defeated the power of sin, and in His resurrection defeated the power of death
- Jesus, our Savior, our pathfinder, our pioneer has been victorious
- And because He has been victorious, we can be victorious **Romans 8:37-39**

Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- If there is suffering in your life right now
- Walk in righteousness – do the right things, no matter what the consequences might be – and be in a right relationship with God – accept Jesus and repent of your sins
- Keep God in the highest place in your heart and cling to the hope that Jesus saved you, can save you, and will save you through your suffering
- And then never lose sight of the fact that Jesus won through suffering
- And with Christ in us, we are victorious through suffering
- It is my prayer that you never have to experience suffering, but if you do, let the world see Jesus, and you will be victorious
- Amen – **Pray**