

Good Friday Service 2021

1 Peter 2:21-25

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Personal Introduction

Hi everyone. If you don't know me, my name is Eric and I'm one of the pastors at HMCC of Jakarta, and it's my privilege to preach the Word of God to us today.

So let's get right into it.

Sermon Introduction

Today is Good Friday. This is the day that Christians around the world remember Jesus' suffering and death.

But if we're honest with ourselves, in the day-to-day trenches of our lives, most of us probably think more about *our* suffering rather than *Christ's* suffering.

The reality is that we face all kinds of suffering in our lives—in our families, in our schools and workplaces, and in the world around us. There is not an area in our lives that is not marked by some kind of suffering. And so, what probably encompasses much of thoughts in our everyday lives is not *Christ's* suffering but our *own* suffering—and the people and circumstances that surround it.

So today, as we remember Jesus' suffering and death, we need to ask ourselves the "So what?" question. We need to ask ourselves, "Does following Jesus make any difference in how I think about and respond to my *own* suffering?"

Or in other words, "Does Jesus' suffering and death have anything to do with *my* everyday suffering?"

And the answer of Scripture is a resounding "Yes!"

The One Thing

Follow Jesus in his suffering.

Scripture Introduction

Turn your Bibles to 1 Peter 2:21-25.

Just want to give a bit of context before jumping into today's passage.

This letter was written in the first century by the apostle Peter to encourage and instruct Christians living in Asia Minor (or modern-day Turkey) who were facing hostility, slander, and persecution for their faith in Jesus Christ.

In the midst of such unjust suffering, Peter encourages them with the great salvation and hope that they have through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ—and how *that* should *radically* change how they live and *especially* how they respond to suffering.

Scripture Reading

So let's read 1 Peter 2:21-25.

²¹ For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. ²² He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. ²³ 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. ²⁴ He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. ²⁵ For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

This is God's Word.

Overview

From this passage, we'll see two truths regarding who Jesus is that enable us to follow him in his suffering.

- I. Jesus is our suffering example (vv. 21-23)
- II. Jesus is our saving shepherd (vv. 24-25)

I. Jesus is our suffering example (vv. 21-23)

Here, we must come to terms with the fact that...

A. Christians are called to endure suffering for doing good.

There's a lot of talk these days about *calling*. "What am I *called* to? What's my *calling* in life?"

And verse 21 starts off by saying this:

²¹ For to this you have been called...

So what is the "this" that we've been called to?

It's defined in the previous verses.

1 Peter 2:19-20 = For **this** is a gracious thing, **when, mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly**. For what credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure? But if **when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this** is a gracious thing in the sight of God.

So "this" in verse 21 is enduring suffering for doing good.

Just let that soak in for a moment. As Christians, God *calls* us to endure suffering for doing good.

I don't think this is what any of us would *naturally* want when we think about God's calling in our life.

We want to be called to health and wealth. We want to be called to comfort and popularity. But who among us wants to be called to endure suffering?

When your love for family members is met with harshness, when your hard efforts at the workplace are met with condescension, when your vulnerability is met with slander or judgment, the *natural* inclination in all of us is *fight* or *flight*.

We either retaliate, returning evil for evil; or we run away, burying ourselves in isolation or distraction. But neither of those responses is what God *calls* us to do; rather, God calls us to stay and endure suffering for doing good.

This is not *mature* Christianity, but this is *basic* Christianity.

Jesus said, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me” (Matt. 16:24). There is no followership of Christ without a personal cross. There is no followership of Christ without enduring suffering for doing good.

But when God calls us, it is always a *purposeful* call, which means that there is *meaning* in our suffering.

The whole of verse 21 says this:

²¹ For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps.

So what is God’s purpose for calling us to endure suffering for doing good?

So that we would *follow* Christ in *his* suffering. So that we would *share* in Christ’s suffering (cf. 1 Pet. 4:13). Or in short, God’s purpose for our suffering is so that we would become more like Christ.

And part of the reason Jesus suffered for us was to leave us an *example* for how we ought to *endure* suffering for doing good.

That’s an important distinction. We are *not* simply called to suffer, *period*. There’s actually nothing distinctly Christian about that. Because of the Fall, because we all live in a broken and sinful world, every single person *will* suffer. There’s nothing special about that.

Rather, as Christians, we are called to *endure* suffering for doing good; we are called to *follow* the *example* of Christ in how *he* endured suffering for doing good. In other words, as Christians, we are called not simply to *go through* suffering, but we are called to a certain standard for how we *endure* suffering for doing good.

So next, we’ll see that...

B. Christ exemplified how to endure suffering for doing good

So how did he do that?

Verses 22-23 say this:

²² He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. ²³ 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.

To “revile” means “to criticize in an abusive or angrily insulting manner” (New Oxford American Dictionary).

The natural *sinful* response of being wrongly abused and insulted is to try to get even, or to “revile in return”; if they hurt you, you’ll find some way to hurt them back. And if you can’t get even with them in the moment, you’ll at least “threaten” them with getting even later.¹

Just think about any time you’ve been wrongly abused, insulted, mocked, or shamed. How did you respond? I would wager to say that 100% of us wanted to retaliate in some way. It may have been through *active* retaliation with your words and actions or *passive* retaliation with your apathy and withdrawal. But there’s *something* in all of us—or *sin* in all of us—that wants to return evil for evil.

But Jesus “committed no sin”; when he was reviled, he did not revile in return, and when he suffered, he did not threaten.

<pause>

¹ Wayne A. Grudem, *1 Peter*, TNTC 17 (Nottingham, England: IVP, 2009), 138.

Just consider the kind of unjust suffering that Jesus endured and his remarkable lack of retaliation. I know this is a familiar narrative for many of us but *remember* that this was not just a character in a story, but this occurred to a *real* person, Jesus Christ. So just begin to imagine the physical and emotional trauma that he experienced and think about how *you* might have responded in the midst of it.

So Jesus is betrayed by one of his closest disciples (Mark 14:10, 43-46), and when he's arrested, all of his closest disciples "left him and fled" (Mark 14:50).

He's brought before the high priest and the religious leaders and he's falsely accused by multiple false witnesses. "But he remained silent and made no answer" (Mark 14:61). When they finally ask if he is the Christ and Jesus affirms that he is, "they all condemned him as deserving death" (Mark 14:64). "Then they spit in his face and struck him. And some slapped him, saying, 'Prophesy to us, you Christ! Who is it that struck you?'" (Matt. 26:67-68).

Peter, one of Jesus' closest disciples and the very writer of this letter, who had followed at a distance, ends up adamantly denying three times that he knows Jesus at all, and Jesus is right there to turn and stare at the face of his beloved disciple and friend in his blatant denial of him (Luke 22:61).

When Jesus is brought before the governor Pontius Pilate, and "when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he gave no answer. Then Pilate said to him, 'Do you not hear how many things they testify against you?' But he gave them no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed" (Matt. 27:12-14).

Even when Pilate declared Jesus innocent of the charges brought against him (Luke 23:13-15, 20, 22), he still gave in to the crowd and delivered Jesus over to be unjustly scourged and crucified (Luke 15:15; Matt. 27:24).

To be scourged was to have your hands tied to a post only to be publicly whipped with multiple leather cords with sharp pieces of bone and metal embedded throughout. It was meant to inflict maximum pain and blood loss, as each lash would have ripped out large pieces of flesh and left skeletal muscles completely exposed.²

And after this immense torture, Jesus is then brought to the governor's palace to be mocked and beaten some more by the Roman soldiers. They clothe him in a purple cloak, twist together a crown of thorns, and press it down til blood begins to run down his face. They mockingly kneel down to him as king before they spit on him and strike him on the head, only to drive the crown of thorns deeper into his temples and forehead. Afterwards, they strip him and then lead him outside the city to be crucified (Matt. 27:27-31).

Jesus is forced to carry his own cross through the streets and up a hill only to die a horrific death on a cross. Having already endured such physical torture, he collapses on the way, so a stranger carries his cross the rest of the way. At the top of the hill, he's thrown on his back, exacerbating his already open wounds, and giant nails are driven through his hands and feet into the cross.

And after he's lifted up, he can no longer properly exhale with the entire weight of his body hanging by his wrists. So over the next few hours, every breath Jesus takes is excruciating as he's left there to hang and die a slow, agonizing death. And even as he's hanging on the cross, those who pass by, the religious leaders, and even those crucified with Jesus continue to revile him with more insults and mockery (Matt. 15:21-32).

Yet, having endured all this unjust suffering, what does Jesus say from the cross?

He does not revile in return; he does not threaten. But he says, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). <repeat>

<pause>

How in the world could Jesus *endure* suffering like that?

² Kevin Kleiman, "The Suffering of Jesus," July 22, 2018, <https://www.citieschurch.com/sermons/the-suffering-of-jesus>.

Verse 23 says it was because he “continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.”

In the original language, the object “himself” is actually not there; it simply reads that Jesus “continued entrusting to him who judges justly.” Jesus entrusted himself, he entrusted the wrongdoers, he entrusted his followers, he entrusted the entire situation to God who judges justly. Rather than trusting in his own abilities to retaliate, which Jesus “who committed no sin” could have justly done, Jesus *as our example* entrusted himself, every person that wronged him, and the entire situation to God the Father, knowing that he would judge justly and ultimately vindicate him.³

That means that how we endure suffering is not simply about what we *do* but what we *believe*—or who or what we’re trusting in.

For example, you could stay silent in the midst of such unjust suffering only to therapeutically lash out at a pillow or vent to a friend or unleash your anger at some other unsuspecting person or thing. Or you could try to hold in your anger and try your best to suppress it by your sheer willpower.

But none of that is entrusting yourself to the *God* who judges justly; that’s entrusting yourself to *yourself* and all the ways you can come up with to somehow make yourself feel better. But there is no lasting peace in that. And surely, by doing that, you cannot *genuinely* say, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”

Ultimately then, to endure suffering for doing good comes down to *faith*. What do we *really* believe about *God*? Do we believe that he has *called* us to endure suffering for doing good? Do we believe that he is *forming* us into the likeness of Christ as we “follow in his steps” of suffering? Do we believe that God will judge justly and ultimately vindicate us?

If we *truly* believe those realities about God—his call, his purpose, and his character—it’s only *then* that we can endure suffering for doing good, following the example of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

<pause>

Here is...

Life Application #1: Entrust to God every aspect of your suffering. <repeat>

Let me just offer a few gauges of whether you’re doing that or not.

First, are you lamenting to God? Are you turning to God, bringing your complaint, asking boldly for help, and choosing to trust him in your prayers? Are you praying at all about your suffering? If not, it’s hard to say that you’re trusting God and following in Christ’s steps as you endure suffering. If you want to learn more about lamenting, you can find a previous sermon called “Learning to Lament” on our website.

Second, are you enduring suffering with fellow members of Christ’s body? God’s Word says, “If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together” (1 Cor. 12:26).

Here, the basic assumption is that fellow members *know* when we’re suffering or when we’re honored, so that we can suffer or rejoice together. But most of the time, and all the more during this time of pandemic, your fellow brothers and sisters in Christ simply will *not* know that you’re suffering unless you resolve not to endure suffering in isolation and you *share* with them.

None of us were meant to live the Christian life alone, but we were meant to “bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ” (Gal. 6:2). So please open yourself up to be ministered to by others in your local spiritual family by sharing openly about what you’re suffering, so that we can help each other to entrust every aspect of our suffering to God.

<pause>

³ Wayne A. Grudem, *1 Peter*, TNTC 17 (Nottingham, England: IVP, 2009), 138.

So first, Jesus is our suffering example; and now second...

II. Jesus is our saving shepherd (vv. 24-25)

Here, we must understand and treasure the fact that...

A. Jesus suffered and died for the salvation of sinners.

Now if *we're* called to endure suffering for doing good, what exactly was the "good" that *Jesus* did?

In one sense, his entire life was "doing good"; he treated the marginalized with dignity, he healed the sick, he raised the dead, he exposed hypocrisy in religious leaders, and he taught and lived perfectly in accordance with God's Word.

But more specifically, what was the *purpose* for his suffering and death? If the purpose for *our* suffering is to follow in his steps and to become more like him, then Jesus' death needed to *mean* something; it needed to *accomplish* something. Otherwise, he suffered and died a meaningless death, and there'd be nothing praiseworthy and good about that. If that were the case, why in the world would we want to follow such an example?⁴

With that in mind, the beginning of verse 24 says:

²⁴ He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness....

So what was the good purpose of Christ's suffering and death?

In short, Jesus suffered and died for the salvation of sinners. *<repeat>*

And here, Peter highlights two aspects of our salvation: justification and sanctification.

[²⁴ **He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree**, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness....]

Justification is the gracious, legal act of God in which he forgives sinners of their sins and declares them righteous in his sight by virtue of them being united to Christ by faith in his death and resurrection.

We see this in the first clause: "He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree."

In justification, by God's gracious provision, Jesus stands in our place as our substitute and makes a "great exchange" with us on the cross; God counts *our* sins as *Christ's* and he receives the *penalty* of sin we deserved, and God counts *Christ's* righteousness as *ours* and we receive the *benefit* of righteousness we don't deserve.

So that's justification. Now...

[²⁴ He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, **that we might die to sin and live to righteousness....**]

Sanctification is the gracious act of God in which he definitively (once-for-all) and progressively (more-and-more) makes holy those he has justified through applying the death and resurrection of Christ unto them until they are conformed completely into the likeness of Christ.

We see this in the second clause: "that we might die to sin and live to righteousness."

⁴ Mark Dever & Michael Lawrence, *It is Well* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 201.

In sanctification, God's grace enlivens us and empowers us to more and more flee from sin and to more and more pursue greater devotion to God.

Justification and sanctification are the "double grace" (Calvin, *Institutes*, 3.11.1) we receive in salvation. Those two aspects of salvation are *both* graciously provided in the salvation that Christ died to give those who believe in him.

So that's the big picture. The good purpose of Christ's suffering and death was to save sinners—*justifying* us by taking the penalty of our sins upon himself on the cross and *sanctifying* us by enabling us to more and more die to sin and live to righteousness.

For the sake of time, we won't be able to dive deeper into *both* justification and sanctification, so we'll just dive deeper into that first aspect of justification and what it means for us.

Let's look more closely at the first clause in verse 21: "He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree."

[²⁴ **He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree**, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness....]

One of the first things we need to come to grips with to truly treasure what this means for us is the fact that there is a day of judgment that awaits all of us. And on that day, if we are not forgiven our sin and declared righteous before God by faith in Jesus Christ who already took our punishment on the cross—that is, if we are not justified by faith in Christ—then we will stand guilty before God and we will face God's active judgment for our sin against him in a place of eternal, conscious torment called hell, which is eternal death.

<pause>

Many of us choose only to reflect on how "God is love" (1 John 4:16), but we must not ignore how God is also our righteous judge (Ps. 50:6; Isa. 33:22; 2 Thess. 1:5-10; 2 Tim. 4:1, 8; Heb. 12:23; James 4:12; 2 Pet. 3:1-13; Rev. 20:11-5).

In fact, we won't even begin to understand God's love unless we first understand that his righteous judgment is coming.

If we think that God is too loving to judge people for their sins, then we actually have a *less* loving God and a *less* personal God than we realize, because it costs him *nothing* to love and embrace sinners like us. But when Jesus came and began saying to people, "your sins are forgiven" (Luke 5:20), he was fully aware of what it will cost him to give us that forgiveness (Luke 5:23-25; 9:22, 44; 18:31-33).

When Jesus hung on that cross, he was being completely crushed—body and soul—so that we would *never* experience that for our sin (Isa. 53:5, 10); and when he cried out, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46; Mark 15:34), he was experiencing hell itself.

Nobody likes to be rejected. If an *acquaintance* rejects you, it hurts. If a *friend* rejects you, that hurts even more. But if a *spouse* rejects you, that's one of the most painful experiences. The longer and more intimate the relationship, the greater the suffering of rejection.

From eternity past, the Son enjoyed the most intimate relationship with the Father; it was infinitely greater than even the longest, most intimate human relationship. So when Jesus was cut off from God as he hung on the cross in our place, taking the punishment we deserved for our sin, it was the most excruciating suffering that we cannot even begin to imagine.

And yet, he did it *voluntarily* for us—for the joy that was set before him he endured the cross (Heb. 12:2).⁵

⁵ Tim Keller, "Preaching Hell in a Tolerant Age," Christianity Today, October 1, 1997, <https://www.christianitytoday.com/pastors/1997/fall/tim-keller-preaching-hell-tolerant-age.html>.

That's what it meant when verse 21 says, "He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree." *That's* what it cost Christ for us to be forgiven and declared righteous before God—to be justified by faith in him.

And it's only when we come to grips with God's judgment of sin that we can *begin* to realize how costly, personal, overwhelming is the love of God for us. Without God's judgment of sin, the love of God is simply some conceptual, impersonal, unmoving sentiment.

When we come to grips with God's judgment of sin, we begin to realize what Jesus saved us *from*. He did not save us from *temporary* suffering in this life, but first and foremost, he saved us from *eternal* suffering in the life to come.

In the Apostles' Creed, one of the earliest Christian confessions that we have from the second century, there's a line that's often misunderstood. After the Creed states that Jesus "was crucified, dead, and buried," it says, "he descended into hell."

The Heidelberg Catechism, from the 16th century, asks the question: "Why is there added: 'He descended into hell?'" And then it gives this answer:

That in my severest tribulations I may be assured that Christ my Lord has redeemed me from hellish anxieties and torment by the unspeakable anguish, pains, and terrors which he suffered in his soul both on the cross and before.⁶

In short, when we dwell on the fact that Christ suffered "hellish anxieties and torment...on the cross and before," we may be assured that even in our "severest tribulations" or sufferings, we will *never* experience the hell that we deserve because Christ has already borne it on our behalf on the cross. The cross and the hellish suffering that Christ bore on our behalf puts all our other temporary suffering in proper perspective.

Because we are justified by faith in Christ, because "He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree," we will *never* actually get what we deserve for our sins.

<pause>

Next, we'll see that...

B. Christ has indeed saved (or healed) us from our sin if we have turned (or returned) to Christ as our Shepherd and Overseer.

The rest of verse 24 and verse 25 says this:

²⁴ ... By his wounds you have been healed. ²⁵ For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

"By his wounds you have been healed" is another summary of the *salvation* that Christ accomplished for sinners in *his* suffering and death on *our* behalf.

By virtue of the suffering and death of Christ, those who believe in him are *healed*. Given the context that Christ "himself bore *our sins* in his body on the tree," this means that *we've* been *spiritually* healed. We were once sick with cancerous sin with certain death looming over us, but Christ suffered and died in our place so that we may be healed of the *penalty* and *power* of sin in our lives.

But how do we know if this is true of us? How do we know if we've been *truly* saved or healed of our sin?

Notice that it does *not* say that we know that we are saved or healed because we stop sinning.

⁶ Mark A. Noll, ed., *Confessions and Catechisms of the Reformation* (Vancouver, British Columbia: Regent College Publishing, 2004), 145.

No, though we are saved from the *penalty* and *power* of sin, the *presence* of sin still remains in us on this side of heaven. Yes, those who are *justified* by God are also *sanctified* by him; God empowers us to die to sin and live to righteousness *more and more*, but sin will still be present in our lives until we see God face to face and are only then fully conformed into the likeness of Christ.

Rather, it says that we know that we have been healed by Christ's wounds—his suffering and death—“for [or *because*] you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.”

So we know that Christ has indeed saved or healed us from our sin if we have indeed *returned* to Christ as the Shepherd and Overseer of our souls.

The word “returned” can also be translated as “turned” and it's the same word used in other places in the New Testament to refer to being *converted* (Acts 3:19; 9:35; 11:21; 14:15; 15:19; 26:18, 20; 1 Thess. 1:9).

That means that we have *turned away* from sin (that's repentance) and we have *turned towards* Christ (that's faith). Repentance of sin and faith in Christ are two sides of the same coin encompassed in that word “returned” or “turned.”

And “Shepherd” and “Overseer” are two terms or functions that refer to the same office of authority (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:2); in this case, Jesus is the “*chief* Shepherd” (1 Pet. 5:3; cf. John 10:1-16; 21:15-17; Heb 13:20) and Overseer over his sheep. He has the position of *highest* authority over our lives.

So we have confidence in our salvation from sin if we are no longer straying sheep—each going our own way apart from God—but we have repented (or turned away) from our life of straying and have believed in (or turned towards) Christ and have received him as the highest authority in our lives.

Though Jesus is rightly called Lord and King, he also comes to us as Shepherd. “Lord” and King” describe more *majestic* authority, but “Shepherd” describes much more *humble* authority.

The late James Montgomery Boice, an American pastor and theologian, provides helpful background; he writes this:

In Israel, as in other ancient societies, a **shepherd's work was considered the lowest of all works**. If a family needed a shepherd, it was always the youngest son, like David, who got this unpleasant assignment. **Shepherds had to live with the sheep twenty-four hours a day, and the task of caring for them was unending**. Day and night, summer and winter, in fair weather and foul, they labored to nourish, guide, and protect the sheep... **Left to themselves, sheep lack everything**. They are the most helpless animals.⁷

Left to ourselves as straying sheep, we lack everything. But when we turn to Christ as the Shepherd and Overseer of our souls by repenting of our sin and believing in him, he will *never* cease to care for us; he is with us *always* to the end of the age (Matt. 28:20).

Jesus is “the good shepherd” who “lays down his life for the sheep” (John 10:11).

<pause>

Here is...

Life Application #2: Turn (or return) to Christ alone as your saving Shepherd and Overseer. <repeat>

If you're *not* a believer in Jesus Christ, I urge you to repent of your sin and *turn* to Christ alone as your saving Shepherd and Overseer. There is a day of judgment coming where every one of else will stand before our holy Creator and give an account for our lives—and none of us will be able to stand; there is none that is righteous (Rom. 3:10-11).

⁷ James Montgomery Boice, *Psalms 1-41: An Expository Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2005), 207-208.

But “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16). The day of judgment is coming, but *now* is the favorable time; *now* is the day of salvation (2 Cor. 6:2). So, repent of your sins, believe in Jesus as your Lord and Savior, and commit to follow him in his suffering, death, and resurrection for the rest of your life.

Now if you’re *already* a believer in Jesus Christ, I still urge you to repent of your sin and *return* to Christ alone as your saving Shepherd and Overseer. Trust that Jesus is the good Shepherd who laid down his life for you. Trust that he endured the worst unjust and unimaginable suffering for your sake, and so he is able to sympathize with you in your *own* suffering (Heb. 4:15). Trust that left to yourself, you lack everything; and that when you come to Jesus as your Chief Shepherd, you lack no good thing (Ps. 34:10; Rom. 8:32). In the midst of your suffering, trust that Jesus is personally leading you through the valley of the shadow of death that he himself has endured before and that he will lead you all the way through it to dwell in the house of the LORD forever (Ps. 23:4, 6).

Whoever you are and whatever you’re going through, Christ calls out to you: “Stop straying and *turn* (or *return*) to me as the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.” He is seeking you and pursuing you as a good shepherd. And he is waiting to carry you on his shoulders back home to his flock (Luke 15:4-7). That’s why he went to the cross for us—because Jesus is our saving shepherd.

<pause>

As we close, I want to turn our attention to what God spoke through the prophet Isaiah 700 years before the coming of Christ. As soon as you hear it, you’ll know that Peter undoubtedly had this passage in mind. And on this side of the cross, we know that God spoke of *Jesus* as the Suffering Servant to come for his people.

Isaiah 53:4-6:

Surely he has borne our griefs
and carried our sorrows;
yet we esteemed him stricken,
smitten by God, and afflicted.
But he was pierced for our transgressions;
he was crushed for our iniquities;
upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace,
and with his wounds we are healed.
All we like sheep have gone astray;
we have turned—every one—to his own way;
and the LORD has laid on him
the iniquity of us all.

So Jesus is our suffering example, Jesus is our saving shepherd, and once again...

The One Thing

Follow Jesus in his suffering.

Let’s take some time now to respond to God’s Word.