



**Series:** Refined

**Sermon:** Part 6: The Risks of Following Jesus

**Date:** Sunday, March 23rd, 2025

*“Whoever wants to be My disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow Me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for Me will find it.” (Matthew 16:24-25)*

Jesus is explicit in saying that following Him has a \_\_\_\_\_ and yet is the best thing that someone can choose to do.

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

### **Suffering As a Result of Following Jesus:**

#### **1. The \_\_\_\_\_ of suffering**

*“Get away from me, Satan! You are a dangerous trap to me. You are seeing things merely from a human point of view, not from God’s.” (Matthew 16:23 NLT)*

*If you suffer, however, it must not be for murder, stealing, making trouble, or prying into other people’s affairs. (1 Peter 4:15 NLT)*

Many who have decided to follow Jesus have the underlying \_\_\_\_\_ that if we follow Jesus then God will spare us from suffering in this world.

#### **What is the suffering that comes from following Jesus?**

##### **a. Suffering comes from our self-denial**

##### **b. Suffering from non-conformity to this world’s culture**

*For if you have suffered physically for Christ, you have finished with sin. You won’t spend the rest of your lives chasing your own desires, but you will be anxious to do the will of God. You have had enough in the past of the evil things that godless people enjoy - their immorality and lust, their feasting and drunkenness and wild parties, and their terrible worship of idols. Of course, your former friends are surprised when you no longer plunge into the flood of wild and destructive things they do. So they slander you. (1 Peter 4:1-4 NLT)*

#### **2. The \_\_\_\_\_ life**

*The end of the world is coming soon. Therefore, be earnest and disciplined in your prayers. (1 Peter 4:7 NLT)*

\_\_\_\_\_ is also the place where we learn to align our will to God’s will even in the midst of suffering.



*Most important of all, continue to show deep love for each other, for love covers a multitude of sins. Cheerfully share your home with those who need a meal or a place to stay. God has given each of you a gift from His great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another. Do you have the gift of speaking? Then speak as though God Himself were speaking through you. Do you have the gift of helping others? Do it with all the strength and energy that God supplies. Then everything you do will bring glory to God through Jesus Christ. All glory and power to Him forever and ever! Amen. (1 Peter 4:8-11 NLT)*

We cannot deal with the impact of suffering by ourselves. We need community.

**3. \_\_\_\_\_ in suffering**

*Dear friends, don't be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you. Instead, be very glad - for these trials make you partners with Christ in His suffering, so that you will have the wonderful joy of seeing His glory when it is revealed to all the world. If you are insulted because you bear the name of Christ, you will be blessed, for the glorious Spirit of God rests upon you. (1 Peter 4 12-14 NLT)*

Meaning making: Understanding what one has gone through, finding new meaning for it, and integrating the experience into the understanding of our lives and who we are

*“God blesses you when people mock you and persecute you and lie about you and say all sorts of evil things against you because you are My followers. Be happy about it! Be very glad! For a great reward awaits you in Heaven.” (Matthew 5:11-12 NLT)*

*So if you are suffering in a manner that pleases God, keep on doing what is right, and trust your lives to the God Who created you, for He will never fail you. (1 Peter 4:19 NLT)*

*Though He was God, He did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. Instead, He gave up His divine privileges; He took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When He appeared in human form, He humbled Himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross. (Philippians 2:6-8 NLT)*

**Bottom Line:** *Following Jesus involves suffering but it leads to glory.*

**Questions to reflect on this week or with others:**

1. *In which ways have I actively avoided suffering for following Jesus?*
2. *In what ways do I need to change my expectations about what it means to follow Jesus?*
3. *In which ways am I living a life shaped by the cross and what is God's invitation for me today?*

*Songs used in service: The Jesus Way (Phil Wickham), In Christ Alone (Stuart Townend), Christ Is Risen (Matt Maher), God and God Alone (Chris Tomlin)*

**Any prayer requests?**

-----Tear Here -----

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**What can we be praying for you about?**