



## UNPLEASANT, NECESSARY MERCIES

If you have a pattern of having someone share their *Story of Faith* (life before Jesus, encountering Jesus, life since/lately with Jesus) and/or sharing *Evidences of God's grace*, begin with that, followed by a time of thankful prayer for Christ's work in the individual's life/the grace in your lives.

---

### OPENING COMMENT

Just because something is unpleasant doesn't necessarily mean it's not good. As we conclude the Gospel of John we learn much from the way in which Peter is restored and commissioned. Discipline and suffering are tools of mercy that Jesus uses.

---

### READ THE TEXT: John 21:15-25

<sup>15</sup>When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Feed my lambs." <sup>16</sup>He said to him a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Tend my sheep." <sup>17</sup>He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" and he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep.

<sup>18</sup>Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you used to dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go." <sup>19</sup>(This he said to show by what kind of death he was to glorify God.) And after saying this he said to him, "Follow me." ... *cont. through v.25.*



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Share some memorable parental discipline stories you experienced as a child or parent.
2. Why is it mercifully loving of Jesus to discipline Peter thoroughly in a number of ways in this scene?
3. What does Hebrews 12:5-11 say about *who* the Lord disciplines and *why* He disciplines His children?
4. How have you experienced the Lord's merciful discipline in your life?
5. Of these three common myths about suffering, which have you wrestled with the most?  
*Myth #1: Suffering is easy for mature believers; Myth #2: The amount we suffer is based on what we deserve; Myth #3: Suffering is outside of God's control.*
6. Why is it *good news* that God is in control over suffering in your life?
7. Read verse 19. Does the phrase about a death that glorifies God sound odd to you? Why is it so critical for Christians to discover that our lives can *most* glorify God through suffering?
8. How has the cross made it possible for Christians to endure suffering?

## CONCLUSION

In verses 19 and 22 Jesus tells Peter, *"Follow me"*. Have you ever heard anything so beautiful, simple, profound, and difficult in your entire life? John wrote his gospel so that we would *believe* in and *follow* Jesus. He called Peter to awesome and costly things and supplied his every need along the way. The same is true for you. *Follow Jesus* and He will send you the Spirit, help you fish for souls, shepherd sheep, bear fruit, go to the ends of the earth, and see Him in glory.

## SHARE & PRAY

- Share how you can pray for each other in light of this study.
- Pray compassionately for perseverance and hope for those in your group experiencing discipline or suffering.
- Pray for faith and courage to respond to Jesus' call to *"follow me"*.
- Conclude by spending some time praying for one another, for the areas of growth and grace you are seeking, and the needs among you.

