

Rock of Ages- In the face of injustice.

Sermon Notes

April 26, 2020

***Illustration-** Standing up for the right thing has cost you a job or promotion. Choosing to not tote the “party line” that might be asking for unethical practices. Doing the right thing financially only to have an illness take everything due to insurance not covering the costs. Having built a business, not cutting the corners, only to have a pandemic put it in jeopardy. Seniors in high school or college having bided their time to start in their sport or experience the joys of accomplishment only to have this season shut down to protect others. Children not being allowed to play on a playground outside, while adults can go walking.

In a season of global injustice due to a pandemic, how we handle ourselves right now is a testament to who or what is in you?

“Peter is cautioning Christians to keep clear consciences when facing injustice, to endure the inevitable suffering with Christlike courage.” BKC

Conduct testifies. **1 Peter 3:8-12**

- Harmony with fellow believers. (8)
 - Requires being in relationship with other believers.
 - Requires being part of the local church.
 - Requires being in the Word and prayer together.
 - Requires following the Spirit of God’s leadership.
- Sympathy, compassion, and humility become the markers of your attitude. (8)
- Repay with blessing not retaliation towards those who treat you poorly. (9)
 - Retaliation you win and God’s name is absent at best, and distorted at worst.
 - Blessing those who treat you poorly glorifies God and God will bless you greatly!
- Guard your speech. (10)
 - Your words are an account that can come back and defend you or sink you.
- Pursue peace. God loves that and despises evil actions and responses.

Courage requires taking risks. 1 Peter 3:13-15

- Avoid calculating the risks of conduct that is godly. Good conduct will stand. (13)
 - Risk aversion generation.
 - Don't do anything that might get you hurt.
 - That mindset can subtly affect faith.
- Live with courage to do right and not in fear of the risks. (14)
- Courage communicates hope that gives opportunity. (15)
- Prepare for successful response. (15)
 - Gentleness—spirit.
 - Respect—attitude of humility in common human standing.

Conscience being clear gives peace. 1 Peter 3:16-17

- Accusations against our courage won't stand as the conduct of our lives glorify God. (16) [Example: Paul and Felix and Festus]
Comedian Ken Davis described this situation with this *"Paul's adversaries wanted to punish Paul for speaking about Jesus and he said 'great, I consider it a privilege to suffer for Jesus' name'. Well, his adversaries discussed this among themselves and said, 'we certainly don't want to him to be privileged, so let' kill him. Paul said 'great, I consider it a promotion to die for Jesus' name'. His adversaries didn't care for this either saying 'we certainly don't want to promote him' so let's release him. Paul seeing the opportunity appealed to Caesar forcing the privilege and promotion in the name of Jesus."*
- It is better to suffer for glorifying God than to suffer for our stupid mistakes. (17)

Choice- choose who you are going to serve. 1 Peter 3:18-22

- Christ suffered unjustly to bring you to God. (18)
- God is in the business of saving lives through Jesus. (19-21)
- Choosing to submit to him as Lord gives life. (22)

Discussion Questions:

1. Have you chosen to truly trust the Lord with the outcomes of your life by letting him lead? Consider taking some time to get real with God in response to this question and consider choosing this day who you will serve.
2. Which of the following is most difficult for you to live out as a follower of Christ: humble spirit, avoiding retaliation against someone who treats you poorly, speaking words that glorify God, harmony with other believers? Why is this one so difficult for you? How can God and others help you in this area?
3. What risks do you avoid in living a life that glorifies God? How can you be more courageous in that area?
4. Who can you bless that would be shocked to receive it from you? Send them a text, Facebook message, mail something, deliver something to their home!