

I Peter 4 – Living Like Him

Preface

There's a couple of things I want to think about with you before I get into the text this week.

1. Grief and Biblical Appropriation: When I am facilitating, I want to begin to more deliberately include specified time for us to share our feelings about the way theologians and organizations have used certain words and phrases found in the Biblical text for their own goals that have nothing to do with understanding the meaning of Biblical writers or the principles they were trying to share. I think those issues are different than a study of what the author meant in the context in which the author wrote.
2. Principles: Policies: Practices: Present Truth – lenses to use in understanding Biblical texts.
Principles from the origin stories include:
 - a. Power is to be used to serve, nurture, and care for other living beings.
 - b. All relationships are sacred.
 - c. We will need to choose between love and power.
 - d. Sin is the willingness to cause harm to get what you want.

Policies are an effort to put the principles into practice at specified times, cultures, and places in history. Principles are eternal. Policies are not.

3. I Peter 2:4-10 – My thinking, at the moment, is that this text is absolutely core to everything he writes afterwards.

My understanding of this text is based on Matthew 16:18 – Jesus is using a play on words here: The Greek is petros – small stone. And then Jesus says upon this Petra (large stone that can be used as a foundation...I will build my church. The smaller stone is part or from the Original Foundation. Jesus, despite knowing Peter will betray him...and do other stupid things...says Peter is a part of Him....the foundation

stone. And my understanding of what Peter is saying in his first letter is that he would like other followers of Jesus to be part of that Foundation Stone...to have the qualities of that foundation stone...and everything Peter is asking of the people to whom he wrote the letter is to live out the principles in their context.

The other analogy in that text is to the Hebrew Levitical Priesthood – and it's a powerful one...The Levites had lost their inheritance, because of their violence, and then were transformed, because of their loyalty, to being the representatives of God. To put it in New Testament terms...they became pebbles part of a cornerstone. These new believers are becoming followers of Edenic principles.

Now, on to 1 Peter 4

I am going to read and discuss in sections and we'll ask questions based on them.

1. In vs 1 – when Peter talks about Jesus suffering in the flesh and tells his readers “with the same attitude” – to what suffering at that time might he be referring?
2. Note Peter's comparison with finished with sins and following the will of God. Practically, what might that look like?
3. Vs. 3-5 look at that list and compare it with the concept of “sin is the willingness to cause harm to get what you want”. What might that have meant in behavior? What harm might be being caused..and to whom?
4. Why do you think Peter used the iteration of God “my God is Salvation and has been anointed to be the suffering Messiah” to be the judge?
5. How does this compare with the picture you find in Zechariah 3: 1-7
6. How would you explain vs. 6...that makes judgement a very different thing.
7. Why do you think Peter wrote “love covers a multitude of sins”.
8. In 1st Century CE in the diaspora, why would practicing hospitality be important.

9. Vs. 11 We will be strengthened by what God (notice nomenclature) supplies and and because to that God Lohim will be glorified (self sacrificing love the Jesus Christ...the names..and glory...are all important...How does this fit together for you?
10. Vs. 14 ...this reminds me of Jim saying...well if you get hate mail, you are doing something right. What do you make of it?
11. What do you think it means to bear the name of God.
12. And what do you think it means to trust your soul to a faithful Creator?

See you soon!

Catherine