

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 25TH

DAILY READING ASSIGNMENT: **John 18-21**

"Costly Christianity"

SCRIPTURE John 18:10-11

OBSERVATION

I love Peter. Impulsive, brave, walking on water one minute and sinking the next.

He often said or did the wrong thing, but at least he did something! One thing he didn't do was play it safe. In this case he decides on an "ear-sectomy."

In a misguided attempt to save his savior Peter lops off Malchus' ear. Now it's "game on." Had Jesus not stepped in and fixed Malchus' ear things probably would not have gone well for Peter and the disciples.

Peter's attempted defense of Jesus was a noble gesture on one level. Peter loved Jesus and wasn't about to surrender without a fight. But on another level Peter's response was an attempt to take matters into his own hands – as Jesus clearly pointed out ("Shall I not drink from the cup of suffering the Father has given me?").

It falls into the category,

"It is better to give pain and then receive it."

Peter wanted what many of us want: redemption without repentance, Christianity without a cross, salvation without sacrifice.

But it doesn't work that way. In order for guilty people (you and me) to be let off the hook, someone else is on the hook. If I smash someone's car they may forgive me, but someone still has to pay the price.

In this case Jesus paid. He paid the price for our sin and rebellion...with his life.

His pain = our gain.

APPLICATION

I love Peter but I'd also like to learn from him. How often have I/we responded impulsively to situations we don't like? How often do we try to fix or avoid unpleasant things, when it may well be that the unpleasant things are the circumstances God is at work? Is it possible that we are in a tight spot right now and that God is saying, "Don't run. Don't try to fix it. Don't pull out your sword. Instead, trust me. Lean on me. Lean on me by leaning on each other. I will take you through to the other side."

PRAYER

Jesus, thank you that you did not avoid the cup of suffering. Thank you that your blood was payment in full for my sin. Help me to trust you, honor you and reflect your suffering love to the world today. Amen.

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