

# A BETTER WAY

WHEN EVERYONE IS RACING TO GET BACK TO NORMAL

## SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

**Message Series** >> A Better Way Part 3 - Jesus Won't Waste Your Pain

**Message Date** >> June 14, 2020 (Rick Lawrence) \*\*online service

### BIG IDEA

During this Co-Vid 19 pandemic season, there are a lot of us who can't wait to get our lives back to "normal". We are racing to get back to normal, but what if "normal" wasn't working? Could it be that one of the gifts God has given us during this time is the understanding that how we were living wasn't the best for us? What if God has allowed us to slow down and gain a new perspective? In this season, let's begin to seek God and allow Him to show us a better way to live.

*"Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me." - John 15:4*

### DISCUSSION

Simon Peter was one of Jesus' disciples. He was the owner and operator of a fishing company before he met Jesus. He was a guy that was in control, successful, street-smart, and had a lot of things going for him. Then Jesus invited Peter to another direction in life. To get a snippet of Peter's life with Jesus, read the following passages in order...**Matthew 4:18-19, Matthew 26:31-35, Matthew 26:69-75, John 21:1-19**. As you read this quick snapshot, notice the pathway of Peter's life from..."I'm in control"...to "I'm not in control"...to "Jesus is in control". As you reflect on Peter's experience with Jesus, what word(s) would you say describe his feelings in those moments? When have you felt those same feelings?

This experience for someone like Peter can be painful...from control expressing itself in self-effort to lack of control resulting in dependance upon Christ. Yet even though it was painful, Jesus always wanted to re-direct Peter's pain into something that benefited him...and Jesus wants to do the same with us. But first we must give Jesus the raw material of our pain. We need to give him the control we've been addicted to...dependance from us to Jesus. Why is it so important for us to give Jesus the raw material of our pain? How is this a great first step in allowing Jesus to re-direct our pain into something that is good?

As God allows us to travel through the painful process of being in control to allowing Him the control in our lives, it is imperative that we simply begin to act and live as if we actually believe He loves us, He is good, and we are safe wherever He directs us. What would be one thing you would act upon now if you actually believed these things...even if your circumstances surrounding you felt bleak?

### NEXT STEPS

Read **John 15:4**. Jesus is communicating to his disciples and even us 2,000 years later, that as we travel through life, and especially as we travel through pain, we need to stay connected and attached to Jesus. Some practical ways this could look like are...

- Reading the book of John in the Bible and looking for the heart of Jesus throughout the story.
- Taking a risk with something Jesus has been putting on your heart that makes you dependent upon Him.
- Journaling your conversations with Jesus.
- Taking some walks and using that time to talk with Jesus.
- Listening to online sermons and podcasts, taking notes, and using it as another opportunity to grow.

What is one next step you can take to stay connected and attached to Jesus? How can your small group help you?