

MOMENTUM BUILDERS

DIGGING INTO THE HEART OF THE MESSAGE.

AFSHIN ZIAFAT

"SUFFER. DIE. RISE AGAIN."

God has a high calling on your life, but the doorway to that life is often suffering. Will you follow the pathway Jesus has for your life even if it is uncomfortable?

MESSAGE OPENER:

There is a legend which recounts the return of Jesus to glory after His time on earth. Even in heaven He bore the marks of His earthly pilgrimage with its cruel cross and shameful death. The angel Gabriel approached Him and said, "Master, you must have suffered terribly for men down there." "I did," He said. "And," continued Gabriel, "do they know all about how you loved them and what you did for them?" "Oh, no," said Jesus, "not yet. Right now only a handful of people in Palestine know."

Gabriel was perplexed. "Then what have you done," he asked, "to let everyone know about your love for them?" Jesus said, "I've asked Peter, James, John, and a few more friends to tell other people about me. Those who are told will in turn tell other people about me, and my story will be spread to the farthest reaches of the globe. Ultimately, all of mankind will have heard about my life and what I have done."

Gabriel frowned and looked rather skeptical. He knew well what poor stuff men were made of. "Yes," he said, "but what if Peter and James and John grow weary? What if the people who come after them forget? What if way down through the centuries people just don't tell others about you? Haven't you made any other plans?" And Jesus answered, "I haven't made any other plans. I'm counting on them." Twenty-one centuries later He still has no other plan. He's counting on you and me to continue His work of reconciling the world to Himself, to continue the work so many have faithfully carried out before us. Will we do so well?

Text Illustration shared by Kevin Higgins, First Baptist Whitewright. March 2003 <http://www.sermoncentral.com/illustrations/sermon-illustration-kevin-higgins-stories-sharingmytestimony-evangelismfearof-12619.asp>

READ: Luke 9:18-24

WATCH: Afshin Ziafat—Momentum 2014. 43 Minutes. <http://onmissioninsights.com/SufferDieRiseAgain>

KEY POINTS:

Who do you...and you alone...say Jesus is? A fan goes along with the crowd. A fan has a crowd mentality about a person. But who you and you alone say Jesus is, matters. What you do with your life should reflect this belief daily.

Suffer. Die. Rise Again. Jesus' purpose followed the pathway of suffering, death, and resurrection. Do you think the call of Christ is just to believe he exists? Or is it deeper? Luke 9:23-24—Follow me. Follow my pathway. Follow me is the call of God on your life.

The call of God. God has a great call on your life, but the doorway to that life is your death. It is not comfortable or cushioned. But it is a true definition of what it means to Follow Christ.

CLOSING CHALLENGES:

Fishing for men. If you are not fishing for me, you need to question if you are following Jesus. When was the last time you went fishing? Are you seeking to renew your perspective so you see fishing opportunities, or is your vision self centered?

Suffer. Die. Rise Again. If we are called to follow the path of Jesus, there is a high cost. Many of us may not die physically in following Jesus, but there are other parts of our life that will need to die. What part of your life do you need to surrender? (Popularity? Being liked? Your reputation? A boyfriend or girlfriend? Forgiveness? Dealing with an Addiction? Surrendering anger/bitterness?)

God denied the prayer request of Jesus. God the Father did not grant Jesus his request to avoid the cross. Is there a prayer request you have asked of God and he hasn't given you? Are you battling bitterness or anger over that? What areas of your heart need softened so there is not a wedge between you and him?