
a *Grace Notes* course

1 Peter

Lesson 2

1 Peter 1:8-18

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Contents

1 Peter 1:8-18.....	3
1 Peter 1:8.....	3
1 Peter 1:9.....	7
1 Peter 1:10.....	9
1 Peter 1:11.....	11
1 Peter 1:12.....	13
1 Peter 1:13.....	15
1 Peter 1:14.....	20
1 Peter 1:15.....	24
1 Peter 1:16.....	26
1 Peter 1:17.....	27
1 Peter 1:18.....	30

1 Peter 1:8-18**1 Peter 1:8**

“Whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory”

Whom having not seen you love

The Greek says "toward whom you now do not see." Our faith finds full expression in the direction of our faith – the Lord Jesus. We find joy in a person.

The emphasis in this phrase is upon the person of Christ – "whom." The Greek implies the idea of "toward whom" placing emphasis upon the direction of our faith toward a person.

Joy resides in a person. He is the ground of our joy. God accomplished salvation through the work of His Son Jesus Christ. Joy stems from the possession of that salvation.

The word "seen" means to catch a glimpse. Asia Minor's Christians had not even caught a glimpse of the Lord Jesus on earth yet they loved Him. They never had eye to eye personal contact with the Lord yet they loved him dearly.

We do not need a picture of Jesus to love Him. We do not rely on some artist conception of Him to appreciate what He has done for us. However, we cannot love someone unless we have a clear conception of who that person is. We must know a person before we can love him or her properly.

1 John 4: 7-10, "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 8He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

To know Him is to love Him; to know Him better is to love Him better.

The Old Testament's saints had not seen Him either yet they lived by faith (Hebrews 11). The Holy Spirit paints a vivid portrait of Him in the Word. Without the Holy Spirit's revelation of Him in the Word, we cannot love him. Romans 5: 5

says, "Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us." If you do not know the Lord Jesus you are missing out on life with a capital "L."

Napoleon made a powerful point about the Lord Jesus when he said, "An extraordinary power of influencing and commanding men has been given to Alexander (the Great), Charlemagne and myself. But with us the presence was necessary, the eye, the voice, the hand. Whereas Jesus Christ has influenced and commanded His subjects without His visible bodily presence for eighteen hundred years."

One day we will see Jesus: "They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads," (Revelation 22:4). Do you anticipate the day that you will see the Lord Jesus Christ? Unless we have the eye of faith in time, we will never see His face in eternity.

Principle

The more we know the Lord Jesus the more we love Him.

Application

We did not fall in love with our spouses before we saw them! A marvel is that multiplied millions have fallen in love with the Lord Jesus without ever seeing Him. Very few people saw Him during the brief 33 and a half years He spent on earth, yet thousands have given their lives for Him.

When we utilize God's provision for us in time, the result is a wonderful love affair between us and God. The focus of a believer's faith is not on abstract knowledge but on the person of Christ. Yet we cannot know the person of Christ without the Word of God.

Whom having not seen you love

Remember that Jesus challenged Peter to love Him in John 21. Jesus interrogated Him three times about this love. Now Peter expresses his love for Him many years later.

The Bible promises reward for those who love him: "Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the

crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him," (James 1:12).

We should love the Lord because He first loved us; "We love Him because He first loved us," (I John 4:19). Once we come to grips with the fact that Jesus died on the cross for our personal sins (in our place), we cannot help but love Him. It melts our heart. No one ever loved us like the Lord Jesus.

Principle

We love the Lord Jesus because he took the initiative to die for our sins.

Application

If Jesus does not mean anything to you except a name in a history book, then you are not a Christian. You may be religious but you are not a true Christian. A true Christian loves the Lord.

You can always tell when a person loves the Lord Jesus by the way he or she talks about Him. People do not talk about Julius Caesar the same way they talk about the Lord Jesus. Everything we have is because of Him.

"If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed. O Lord, come!" (1 Corinthians 16:22). Do you love the Lord Jesus, yes or no? You reply, "Well, I am neutral. I don't know. I've never heard it put quite like that." But the truth is that if we do not love the Lord, then from God's viewpoint we are "accursed."

Though now you do not see Him

We find the same words "though now" in verse six. The word "now" speaks of present tense. This is the time in which we live. Yesterday is gone; tomorrow we do not yet possess. We have the present right now.

Unlike Peter, the people of Asia Minor to whom he is writing had never seen Jesus face to face. They were disciples of the apostles. We have not seen Jesus, but we will see Him one day (Revelation 22:4; I Corinthians 13:12).

yet believing

The Lord Jesus is worthy of our trust. "Believing" is an issue of the trustworthiness of Christ. Nothing spreads peace over our hearts like putting

our trust in One so worthy. The Greek indicates that this is an active reliance upon Him. We put our trust upon a person.

"Believing" is how a Christian sees. The non-Christian world says, "Show me; seeing is believing." We cannot come to Christ that way. The Bible's idea is "believing is seeing." "I would have lost heart, unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living," (Psalm 27:13).

Principle

Believing is seeing.

Application

We cannot see until we believe. If you do not believe you cannot see, thus you are blind spiritually. When people come to Christ, God removes the scales from their eyes. They see spiritually for the first time. Their reaction is "Why did I not see this before? Why didn't anyone tell me?"

"Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed," (John 20:29). Have you come to believe in Jesus Christ? This is the single requirement to become a Christian:

John 1:12, "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name."

John 3:15, "That whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. 16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. 17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. 18 He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

John 3:36 "He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."

John 5:24 "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life."

John 6:35 "And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst."

John 20:31 "But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name."

you rejoice

Peter uses this word "rejoice" in chapter 4, verse 13. In ancient Greek the word "rejoice" meant to plume oneself in the sense of joyful pride.

Joy is the inner animation of the soul. Biblical joy is not happiness. Happiness depends on circumstances. If we have good circumstances we are happy; if not, we are unhappy. Joy, however, is independent of circumstances. Joy depends on our present relationship to God. Revelation 19:7 "Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready."

We rejoice when we look to God's saving work in Christ. I John 1:3 "That which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. 4And these things we write to you that your joy may be full."

Principle

Present joy depends on our present relationship to Jesus Christ.

Application

Yesterday's faith will not contribute to today's joy. Yesterday's meals will not satisfy today's hunger. Present joy depends on present trust in Christ. It springs from our sense of forgiveness, our appreciation for the cross.

Joy does not depend on whether Caesar stops persecuting Christians; it depends on our relationship to Jesus Christ. What is your relationship to Jesus Christ like at this moment?

Has your faith grown lukewarm? Are you existing rather than living? Maybe you are going through deep trouble as you read this devotional. Is it unbearable? The key issue is how you resolve the problem. Are you merely bearing up under the pain? Are you experiencing the joy of God?

Someone asked J. D. Rockefeller, "How much money would it take to make a person happy?" He answered, "Just a little bit more." All of us have known the staleness of excess and intemperate indulgence. Indulgence is fleeting enjoyment based on things, circumstances and people. These things do not ultimately satisfy.

The Bible has a different system for the possession of joy. We find joy in fellowship with a person.

Joy is not an end in itself, but a result. Joy comes from the fact that we are daily in a right relationship with God through faith in Christ.

"Very well," you say, "I know that my joy comes from God. That is not my trouble. What happens when I lose my joy?" Joy does not rest on us but God. If God planned it and initiated it, He will see it to fruition in our souls. Many failures in the Christian life originate right here. People say, "I'm through, I've failed, I cannot live the Christian life." Nothing could be more true. We cannot live the Christian life. We cannot produce or maintain the Christian life.

God must empower us or we will indeed fail. Joy is strictly contemporaneous with faith. If we tear away an electric cord from its source of energy, the light goes out. The same is true in the Christian life. If we separate ourselves from the person of Christ, we lose the source of our joy. He is our source of power. If we do not plug into Him, we cut off fellowship with him; we cut off our source of joy.

The joyous Christian is not necessarily the one with the least trouble. Often, he is the one with the greatest trouble. He has found the truth that Christ is with him in his difficulty. Nowhere does God promise us an easy path of roses. Anyone can glory in prosperity. To say with Job, "though he slays me, yet will I trust him" is true Christian living.

Did you ever notice that Jesus sang before He went to the garden of Gethsemane? Matthew 26:30 "And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives." On His way to the cross He was singing! He knew that the cross led to the empty tomb and victory over sin. He knew His Father was with Him. These principles transcended circumstances.

Why wait till we get to heaven to receive true joy? We can find joy as we travel along. It is foolish to wait for the heights before we enjoy the scenery. Yesterday's meals will not satisfy today's hunger. Neither will yesterday's faith satisfy today's joy. Present joy depends on present faith.

with joy inexpressible

There are two qualifications that describe joy. These qualifications will help you determine whether you have joy.

Qualification number 1 – "joy inexpressible"
Qualification number 2 – "and full of glory"

The first qualification of this joy is the word "inexpressible." Biblical joy is beyond description. Joy is found in the "whom" of this verse. Joy is found in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. God is the object and ground of the believer's joy.

"Inexpressible" means unable to tell out. Our joy surpasses our ability to describe it. We cannot express properly our joy in God. It passes all human speech. All attempts to circumscribe it will end in frustration. Still water runs deep. This goes beyond personality and psyche. This is not psychology but spirituality!

We can count a poor man's wealth. Often, extraordinarily rich people cannot count their wealth. They have their riches in many forms: stocks, banks, businesses. We cannot count our riches in Christ. He is a limitless resource to our spirituality.

We can cram shallow emotions into the limits of human vocabulary. However, deep emotions cannot be fully expressed. How can we explain the love for our spouse or child? We can broach the subject but we can never fully describe that kind of love. It is impossible to describe to others precisely how much and what kind of love we have for them. In shallow streams, we can see pebbles below the water, but in the ocean there are depths that have never been searched by men. So it is with Christ. "But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him," (I Corinthians. 2:9).

Are you thinking on the things God has prepared for you? The joy of your life depends on the character of your thoughts.

Joy is not an end in itself, but a result of our faith. We reside in right relation to God through faith. We cannot live the Christian life; we need to trust God to empower us to live it.

Principle

Joy is the flag of the heart that shows the King is in residence.

Application

If we fly high enough, we will get into clear skies. The joy of our lives depends on the character of our thoughts. Joy does not depend upon circumstances, so joy is not happiness.

Happiness depends upon what happens to us. "Do I have good health? Do I have congenial company? Am I financially set? Do I have pleasant circumstances?" Happiness then is not joy.

A person may have joy when he does not have happiness. It is possible to lay on a hospital bed with joy. We can have physical affliction and rejoice in it. Happiness and unhappiness do not exist together but joy and sorrow can exist together.

The Lord was called "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," (Isaiah 53:3), yet we read that he held both joy and pain at the same time, Hebrews 12:2 says "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Another example is Paul. Paul was in prison. This is not a very happy situation, but he sang praises to God there. As a result the Philippian jailer came to Christ. It is foolish to wait until we have reached the heights before we view the scenery.

We find joy in a person, not circumstances. Do you remember when you first came to Christ? You could not hold your joy. It burst forth everywhere. You were full and running over. Somewhere along the way it leaked out.

Christian joy is an exulting joy. This is the joy of the prisoner on the day of his release from prison. We breathe out the joy from within. This joy spreads throughout our soul like a newly broken bottle of poignant perfume. The aroma penetrates our proximity until its fragrance moves everywhere we go.

Do you have personal joy? What is your view of Christ and His provisions for you?

and full of glory

The second qualification of our joy is the phrase "full of glory."

There are many ordinary joys of men. For example, "The Yankees won the pennant!!" This kind of joy is fragile and hollow. It is like bubble that breaks on its own accord. This is not the "glory" of this verse.

The phrase "full of glory" means glorified. This phrase should be translated "having received glory." The Christian's body is not yet glorified but his joy can be. Joy depends on our mental attitude toward Christ not on our external resources. This would be an obvious platitude were it not for the fact that 99% of Christians do not believe it!

Principle

The joy that Christians have receives glory when they orient to the Lord.

Application

Christians can radiate with the glory of heaven. The believer is not yet glorified but his joy is if he enters into fellowship with the Lord.

This is not the glory of clapping hands or some overt emotional activity. This is the inner mental joy that comes from exposure to the glory of God. This is the glory of Christ. If we dislodge love for the Lord Jesus Christ based on the Word of God, then inner glory will leave us.

Glory is something we receive. We receive glory only in conjunction with joy in God. This is the glory of inner orientation to God, no matter what circumstance may come our way. God gives glory to everyone who experiences joy in him.

Glory is an overt word. When we come to grips with what Jesus has done for us, then we enter into glory. This is all inside. As a result, God gives us a glory or glamour. Glory and glamour are often synonymous terms that describe the manifestation of genuine Christian living.

"Glory" does not mean to scream and holler and jump around. It is a command to inner animation. We can only experience glory by fellowship with God. A person in fellowship with the Lord is free from attitudinal sins.

If we have a day when things are not going right, glory liberates us from attitude sins. Mental attitude sins produce misery. Envy, jealousy, bitterness, pride, vindictiveness all produce self-induced misery. All this bile will come to the surface at a time we least expect it. When we experience the glory of fellowship with the Lord, it will expel attitude sins.

1 Peter 1:9

"Receiving the end of your faith - the salvation of your souls."

receiving the end of your faith

The word "receiving" means to receive back. The secular Greek language used this word to define the recovery of debts. The tax-collector would go from place to place collecting what was coming to him. In the same way, we collect a whole life in Christ. He meets every need. He fills our soul with joy (v.8).

The word "receiving" also has the idea of acquiring for oneself. In the Greek it means to carry off for oneself, to get what is promised. We need to personally appropriate the end of our faith in order to enter the joy of our salvation.

The secular Greek language used "receiving" to refer to winning prizes in games. "Receiving" is the basis of our joy of verse 8. We rejoice with a joy that has already attained its full perfection. This is the ultimate reception of glory.

Whatever we receive from God we receive by faith (2 Corinthians 5:7; Colossians 2:6). We can develop our faith by exercise.

The word "receive" is present tense. This receiving is not future; it is a present reality. We can receive

the end of our faith right now, the blessing of our salvation. We have already received the end of our faith in the person of Jesus Christ. Joy has already attained full perfection in Christ.

The "end" is the culmination of our faith. This is not the cessation or conclusion but the goal of our faith. Here it refers to the object to which we direct our faith. This word alludes to a prize received in a game. Our salvation is the crown of the Christian life. The end of our faith is the completion, conclusion and consummation of our faith. It is that for which we believe.

Principle

We can enjoy heaven now; we do not need to wait till we get to heaven.

Application

It is foolish to wait until we have reached the heights before we view the scenery. We can enjoy future reward now.

We can enjoy our eternal reward and can receive the goal of our salvation right now. We do not need to wait until eternity to enjoy salvation. God wants us to personally appropriate and enjoy these blessings in time.

the salvation of your souls

The word "salvation" occurs in verses 5, 9 and 10. We live in a day of religion. The Bible uses the word "religion" but never uses it as a synonym for salvation. It is possible to have tons of religion but not one ounce of salvation.

In verses 1 to 12 we read the name of our Lord Jesus Christ seven times. Apart from Him there is no salvation (Acts 4:12). Religion will teach us ethics but not afford salvation. It will give us a veneer of ethics but not eternity. God does not give us heaven on the basis of religious ideals. God's system of salvation pivots around the person and work of the Lord Jesus. These are the facts of the Bible.

Christians rejoice because they are in the process (present tense) of realizing the goal of their faith -- salvation. Salvation in the New Testament has three phases. 1. The past - our sins were once for all cleansed on the cross of Christ (Galatians 1:4) 2. The present - we are being saved from the

power of sin (Romans 8:2). 3. The future - we will be saved from the presence of sin (II Corinthians 5:1).

Salvation means deliverance. God saves the soul in two ways: 1) we are being spiritually saved in the here and now; 2) the soul is physically saved when it receives its resurrection body. The resurrection body is where the soul will be housed forever. So there is both a spiritual and a physical deliverance of the soul. This is positional and ultimate sanctification. Both are involved here.

The "soul" is the central personality of our being. The salvation of our souls brings salvation to the being that lives within our body. Every human body has a soul inside it, which persists after we put the body into the casket and buried.

We are not our body. If we lose a leg we are still the same person. We are not our body; we live in our body. Our body eventually dies but our soul continues forever. If a person dies without Christ he or she goes to hell; if a person dies with Christ he or she goes to heaven.

The present salvation is the salvation from the pain of persecution. When God saves, he does a total job. At the point we accept Jesus Christ as our personal Savior, not only is we're saved from hell but we now have the potential of salvation from daily sins (Romans 6: 6,7).

Principle

We not only have a Savior but a Sustainer.

Application

Salvation began at one point and continues into eternity. We presently possess eternal salvation. Every Christian also daily receives the salvation of the soul. This is progressive salvation. Those in deep distress need to focus on the long-range view of our salvation. God is saving him in the trial he faces.

A wonderful thing about knowing the Lord is having a Savior and a Sustainer. If we fall into sin, there is the temptation to despair. If we feel that we are not getting our share, we do not draw upon the end of our faith. If others say it is not right that we should suffer so, we put our eyes on the wrong place. The Lord both understands, knows and concurs with everything that happens to us.

We need to cast all our heartaches at the feet of the Savior (Hebrews 4:16). Then we can get up from our knees and go out with a life of joy. Troubles have not changed; we have changed. Our vantage point is nowadays different; we now look at problems from God's viewpoint, not our own viewpoint.

If we look at problems, they are mountain high. When God looks at them, the problems are as pebbles. God is still on the throne and Jesus is still seated at the right hand of the Father. Are you open to stage a spiritual comeback?

Do you know you possess salvation? You say, "I hope I'm saved." That is like saying, "I hope I am married." If you do not know whether you are married or not, you are not married! God does not save you without letting you know about it! We cannot be saved without making a definite decision. Just like we cannot be married against our will, we cannot become a Christian against our will. You must make a decision, "I will accept the death of Christ as payment for my sin."

If we wait until we die to find out whether we have salvation we have waited too long (Mark 8:36).

1 Peter 1:10

Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you."

Of this salvation

The salvation mentioned in verse 9 was the object not only of the search of Peter's generation, but also of the Old Testament prophets.

Luke 1:77 "To give knowledge of salvation to His people By the remission of their sins."

The purpose of Jesus' first coming was to forgive sins.

Acts 4:12 "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

The Bible asserts that Jesus is the only way of salvation.

Romans 1:16 "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek."

It is God's power that saves us.

Romans 10:10 "For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

Faith in the suffering of Christ on the cross for our sins is God's way of salvation.

Ephesians 1:13 "In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise."

Trust, faith, believe are synonyms for the way to become a Christian.

2 Thessalonians 2:13 "But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth."

Revelation 7:10 "And crying out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"

Revelation 19:1 "After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, 'Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power belong to the Lord our God!'"

Principle

From eternity God plans our salvation and by faith we receive it.

Application

God plans salvation from eternity past. We can, therefore, can take assurance that our salvation was planned and prophesied centuries ago. It is liberating to know that we do not have to work for salvation but God offers it as a free gift (Ephesians 2:8,9).

the prophets have inquired

Clearly the prophets wrote more than they knew. The Holy Spirit wrote the Bible as well as human authors.

The two verbs "inquired" and "search" are emphatic. Because they're at the beginning of the Greek sentence, there is great emphasis on these words.

"Inquired" means seek to out or after, to search for, to examine, inquire thoroughly, to make a careful search, to seek diligently to learn. So then,

"inquired" has the idea of making considerable effort and care to learn something.

The New Testament uses this word in this word in different ways: Hebrews 11:6 "But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." God rewards those who diligently seek Him by faith. Hebrews 12:17 "For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears." It is possible to diligently seek God with great emotion.

Principle

Positive volition is necessary to understand the implications of salvation.

Application

The prophets dug into the Word of God like someone who digs for gold to understand salvation. They needed to study the books that they themselves wrote. If it is necessary for the prophets to seriously search their own books, it is true for us as well. Are you serious Bible student?

and searched carefully

"Searched" means to look diligently, examine. The general sense is "to search after."

The New Testament uses "searched" in reference to animals who "sniff out" food or other things! The secular Greek language used this word for searching a house or a crime scene. It also carries the idea to investigate, either legally or more generally, and to test, to examine. Plato and Philo used the term for academic, scientific, and philosophical inquiry. Philo used it for rabbinical study of Scripture.

The New Testament mentioned this word in a number of contexts:

Revelation 2:23 "I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works."

Jesus searches our minds and hearts.

John 5:39 "You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me."

This is the search of Scripture with a view to finding its truth.

John 7:25 "Now some of them from Jerusalem said, 'Is this not He whom they seek to kill?'"

This is a statement by Nicodemus as commanded similarly by the chief priests and Pharisees.

John 7:52 "They answered and said to him, 'Are you also from Galilee? Search and look, for no prophet has arisen out of Galilee.'"

The chief priest and Pharisees command Nicodemus to search the Scriptures.

Romans 8:27 "Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God."

God searches the heart of those who pray.

I Corinthians 2:10 "But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God."

The Holy Spirit enables believers to see God's purpose and work. If you have only searched the New Testament, you don't have the whole Bible. You've shortchanged yourself. God invites you to search His Word. We cannot know the New Testament sufficiently without the Old Testament. The New Testament is in the Old Testament contained. The Old Testament is by the New Testament explained. The New is in the Old enfolded.

The Old is by the New unfolded. The New Testament is in the Old Testament concealed. The Old is by the New revealed. In the Old Testament, Job raises the question, "If a man die, shall he live again," (Job 14:14). We must come to the New Testament for the answer – "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believes in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live," (John 11:25). Truth in the Old Testament is germinal. In the New Testament it is terminal. Doctrine in the Old is in seed form.

In the New it blossoms in full harvest (II Timothy 1:10). We find the doctrines of immortality and resurrection in the Old Testament in shadow form. The New Testament sets them forth fully. The prophets were interested in salvation. And more

than that, they inquired about and searched of it in the Word. This is a picture of the Old Testament prophets pouring over the scrolls.

Principle

God expects us to master the Word.

Application

Do you pour over the Word of God? If not, are you better than the prophets?

who prophesied of the grace that would come to you

Salvation by Christ is no new doctrine. God revealed grace in the Old Testament. Our living hope (v. 3) originates not only from the present appropriation of our eternal inheritance but from the Word of God itself.

Peter characterizes our salvation as "grace." He says the Old Testament prophets prophesied that this grace would come. Grace is a person. That grace is the Lord Jesus Christ.

John 1:16 "And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace. 17 For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ." Jesus is grace personified.

Titus 2:11 "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, 12 teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age." Jesus is the grace that brings salvation.

The Old Testament prophets could not understand fully how a Messiah could both suffer and reign at the same time. Some thought there were two different Messiahs and they didn't know the Messiah was to come twice. The cross comes first, then the crown.

The concept of grace surpassed the thoughts of Old Testament prophets. They made an exhaustive inquiry to find what it was all about.

Principle

Jesus is the personification of grace.

Application

Jesus personalizes grace. Christianity is a relationship. When we come to Christ, he conveys God's grace in person.

Grace is all that God is free to do for us because of the death of Christ. God is free to give you salvation. God is free to empower you for the Christian life. You do not have to earn or deserve it.

1 Peter 1:11

"searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow."

searching what, or what manner of time

In this verse Peter picks up the second of the two verbs of verse 10, "searching." The prophets scrutinized their own writings to find the content and timing of the coming of the Messiah.

"What" refers to time (or subject) and "what manner of time" refers to what kind of time. They wanted to know the kind of time that would usher in the period of the Messiah and the character of this salvation.

The prophets searched "what manner of time." They wanted to know when Jesus was going to come, which is set forth in Daniel chapter nine. The Messiah was the subject of their studies.

There are two Greek words for time. One is **chronos** from which we get the word chronology. This refers to a succession of moments. The other word is **kairos**, which is time with an emphasis upon kind of time. This latter word is used in this verse. Kairos carries the notion of suitability and is often translated "season," which may refer to the epoch of Christ.

Both Greek words occur in Acts 1:6 to 8, which says,

"Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, 'Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?' And He said to them, 'It is not for you to know times (chronous) or seasons (kairos) which the Father has put in His own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and

in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

The kairos is an epoch-making season. This has to do with the kind of time, not the time of time. It's the period when all that was maturing through the ages comes to a climax in the coming of Christ.

The prophets wanted to know the relation of the coming of Christ to the economy of God in the sufferings and glory of Christ.

Principle

God rewards study of Scripture with revelation of His future plans.

Application

Christians today often knock the study of the future. However, the spirit of the Old Testament prophets was to understand God's revealed plan for the future. Three quarters of the Bible deals with the future, so God obviously wants us to place focus on this area of study.

Some Christians exclusively study prophecy. This is a distortion. Some Christians completely neglect prophecy. This is also a distortion. What interest do you have in prophecy? Does it match the desire and search undertaken by the Old Testament prophets?

the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating

There are many titles of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament. We find a similar title to the one in this verse in Philippians 1:19, "For I know that this will turn out for my deliverance through your prayer and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ."

We discover another title in Romans 8:9 "But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His." We find other titles of the Holy Spirit in Matthew 10:20; John 14:16,17;15:26; Romans 8:2,11,14,15; I Corinthians 2:12; Galatians 4:6.

There are two types of titles for the Holy Spirit: 1) personal and 2) functional. By saying "Spirit of Christ," Peter is using a functional title of the Holy Spirit. The central function of the Holy Spirit is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ (John 16:14).

The Holy Spirit was "in them." The Holy Spirit wrote the Old Testament enabling the human authors to write God's Word without error. The Holy Spirit was not "in" the prophets like He is in every Christian since Pentecost. The Holy Spirit permanently indwells every Christian from the moment of salvation.

Note the word "who." The Holy Spirit is a person.

This is a picture of the Old Testament prophets scratching around in their scrolls. The Holy Spirit gave evidence beforehand of the certainty of Christ's coming. He gave the prophets success in their inquiry.

God promised the gospel through the prophets of the Old Testament long before the gospel was present in the person of Christ. Romans 1:1,2 says, "Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God which He promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures, concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh."

The phrase "was indicating" means the Holy Spirit took over the personality, vocabulary and mind of the authors of Scripture to write the Bible. That's why fallible men can write the Bible without error.

Principle

The central function of the Holy Spirit is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ.

Application

How do you view the glory of Jesus Christ as your central function of life?

when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ

The words "testified beforehand" mean to bear witness before. The implication states with assurance what is to happen in the future, to predict or to foretell. The Holy Spirit reveals both advents of Christ in the Bible (John 15:26; Romans 8:16,17; I John 5:6,10; cf. Acts 1:8).

There were two things the prophets were trying to find out: 1) the sufferings of Christ and 2) the glories to follow.

Acts 1 tells about His suffering. It says in verse three, "to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." His suffering came first.

Why does the Messiah suffer? How can the Messiah suffer and reign at the same time? This truth seemed like a paradox to them. If He is to suffer and die, how can He be crowned king? Some invented another Messiah to resolve this tension. They postulated two Messiahs, one to suffer and the other to reign. However, the truth is the Messiah was to come at two different times.

The "sufferings of Christ" is one of the greatest themes in the Bible (1 Peter 2:20,21; 3:18; 4:1,12,13; Acts 1:3). The sinless, stainless, spotless Son of God was made sin for us. He took our suffering on the cross. He took our hell that we might have His heaven.

Principle

By His suffering on the cross, Jesus took our hell that we might have His heaven.

Application

The reason Jesus came to Earth in a physical body was to die for our sins. Every person must come to grips with this truth. Have you claimed Christ's death as your guarantee to enter heaven? His death for our sin is the only ticket to enter God's presence. Why not make that decision for yourself right now?

and the glories that would follow

First the cross then the glory. First the cross then the crown. "Then He said to them, 'O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken!' Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?' And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself," (Luke 24:25-27).

The "glory" is future. "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us," (Romans 8:18). We share His sufferings

now but then we will share His glory, (Psalms 73:24).

Some estimate that there are eight times as many prophecies of the second coming than the first coming (i.e. Psalm 22,24,72; Isaiah 53).

Matthew 13 expounds on that period between the sufferings and the glory of Christ, the things that would take place between the two advents (comings) of Christ. The parables in Matthew 13 present a preview of the period of the church. Matthew 13:16,17 says the Old Testament prophets wanted to see the glories of our day. "But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear; for assuredly, I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it." Old Testament prophets did not see the age of grace (Ephesians 3:1f). They only saw the first and second comings.

There is no indication that anyone in the Old Testament had the personal status of sonship before God like New Testament Christians have. "And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, 'Abba, Father!' Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ," (Galatians 4:6, 7).

No one in the Old Testament would call the Father "Abba Father" or "Daddy." They would not pray -- "Father, my spouse is going into surgery next week. If it pleases you, would you bring her through safely."

Principle

God gives the New Testament Christian the privilege of the glories of sonship in this life.

Application

There is no need to change the tone of your voice or assume an unnatural posture for God to hear us. It is normal for a child of God to speak to God as Father.

1 Peter 1:12

"To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit

sent from heaven - things which angels desire to look into."

To them it was revealed that

"To them" refers to the searching prophets of verse 11. They are the human authors of the Bible. The Holy Spirit is the divine author.

God the Holy Spirit revealed to the human authors what to write. The word "revealed" means unveiled. God unveiled Himself by revelation.

not to themselves

The Old Testament prophets were not writing simply for themselves but for future generations as well.

but to us they were ministering the things

The "us" were the believers of the first century. The Old Testament prophets wrote for all generations.

The Old Testament had been consolidated for hundreds of years by the time the New Testament was being written. The Word of God is eternally relevant. The Word benefits all believers of all ages.

which now have been reported to you

This anticipates the writing of the New Testament.

Principle

The Bible is eternally relevant for all generations.

Application

Do you have confidence that the Bible is relevant for your life?

through those who have preached the gospel to you

The prophets wrote for those who would live later. They wrote for our generation.

The last thing that Jesus said while on Earth was, "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:19, 20). The last

thing on Jesus' mind was getting the gospel out to the world.

Sharing the gospel should be the burden of every Christian. 1 Corinthians 9:16 says, "For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel! For if I do this willingly, I have a reward; but if against my will, I have been entrusted with a stewardship. What is my reward then? That when I preach the gospel, I may present the gospel of Christ without charge, that I may not abuse my authority in the gospel."

God deposited into our lives a trust to dispense the gospel to the world. As 1 Thessalonians 2:4 says, "But as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, even so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who tests our hearts."

by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven

The Holy Spirit is the ultimate author of Scripture. Jesus said that the Father would send the Holy Spirit. In John 15:26, He said that He would send the Holy Spirit as well. The Holy Spirit now represents both the Father and Son to us.

Principle

God deposits a stewardship in us to preach the gospel.

Application

The gospel does not commend humankind. Therefore, the gospel does not sit well with those without Christ. The gospel never was popular.

The gospel asserts that we have stark spiritual need. We have violated a holy God. That does not please people. The better people deem themselves to be the less the gospel appeals to them. The more respectable they are, the more they hate the gospel. They think that they are good enough, honest enough, religious enough. They think that they can have an eternal relationship with God based on their good works.

Romans 4:5,6 declares we need to ditch reliance on our good works to become a Christian: "But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness, just as David also describes the

blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works."

Have you come to the place where you trust the death of Jesus Christ and nothing else to give you eternal life?

God wants those who know Him to dispense the gospel to the world by the power of the Holy Spirit.

In this verse we find God's university for angels.

things which angels desire to look into

This section of 1 Peter sets forth three kinds of Bible students: 1) the prophets who searched their own writings diligently such as Daniel; 2) The New Testament believers such as the Bereans who studied the prophecies of the Old Testament; and 3) angels who studied salvation.

The word "angel" means messenger. An angel is one who carries the message of the gospel.

Angels do not comprehend and understand all they carry. They just deliver the message. Angels are incorporeal beings - they do not have a physical body. They also cannot be redeemed because they were individually created. Since angels cannot be saved or converted, the whole area of salvation is curious to them.

Angels cannot know this whole experience of complete salvation. It is a mystery to them. They are not participants of salvation. They are merely spectators (1 Corinthians 4:9).

The word "desire" is passionate desire. Angels have a passionate desire to understand what salvation is all about.

The words "to look into" mean to stoop and look into, to stoop sideways. It means to make considerable effort in order to try to find out something--"to try to learn, to desire to learn." Angels stoop to see what our salvation is all about.

John 20:5 uses "look into" for John when he looked into the tomb through the low entrance. The glance is not necessarily a fleeting one (cf. 20:11). A figurative use occurs in James 1:25 where more than a fleeting glance is at issue--we need to ardently look into the Bible to understand His will.

Principle

The church is God's university for angels.

Application

Angels cannot participate in salvation. They are simply spectators of that salvation. The angels peer into salvation. The church is the university for angels.

Angels watch each salvation of every Christian. They watch and wonder.

1 Peter 1:13

"Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

Peter submits in this section five pointed exhortations:

Prepare your mind for action
Be self-controlled
Set your hope
Do not be conformed to evil
Be holy

God bases these exhortations on the blessings in the introduction.

Therefore

The "therefore" is the platform for appeal to the five imperatives that follow. It gathers up all the wealthy result of vv. 3-12. Commands always come out of privileges.

The word "therefore" draws an inference from all that has been said in the book thus far. The "therefore" also draws an inference from the believer's honor. Because Christians hold distinction, they can live out their privileges. They are elect, sanctified and sprinkled with the blood of Christ (1:2). Therefore, they have a living hope (1:3) and a reservation in heaven (1:4). God himself keeps His salvation (1:5). They have inner peace under duress (1:6-9). We can center our hope on these things.

Christians are now sons of God since they have come to Christ. (Galatians 3:26). If we do not have faith in Christ, we are not a child of God. After we are spiritually born our status before God changes. We now are as a child to a Father. This is a totally different relationship than a creature to the Creator.

Those without Christ are only capable of religious drivel. Their mind is reprobate (Romans 1:28) and carnal (Romans 8:7,8). Therefore they are blind to spiritual things (2 Corinthians 4:3,4). Colossians 1:21 says that one without God is an enemy of God in one's mind (Ephesians 4:17,18).

Principle

Christians live out God's standards because of their status in God's eyes.

Application

Christians, be ready for trials. Be ready to rejoice in the midst of them. Look at your inheritance. Make sure that Jesus Christ is the source of your joy and not circumstances.

We must be ready. We are not ready if fear burdens our minds. If we are fearful, conflict is double: inner and outer. Not only do we face the problem but we face inner turmoil as well.

The only way out of this is to possess an objective philosophy of life based on the Word of God. In this passage that objective philosophy of life revolves around the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, not on our own thoughts about ourselves.

Those without Christ cannot think perpendicularly. They can only think horizontally. They can categorize natural phenomena and think intelligently about mathematics, zoology, biology and physics. They cannot relate to God because they do not have the spiritual apparatus to do so. They have not been born spiritually. They are dead to God. That is why brilliant people talk baby talk when it comes to God (1 Corinthians 2:14).

gird up the loins of your mind

"Gird up" is an oriental assertion. It refers to folding up of the long, loose robes worn by people of Palestine at the time of writing 1 Peter. If someone in that day wanted to run, he had to tuck his long robes in a broad belt around his waist. Otherwise it would impede his speed. It was also difficult to work with long robes. The idea in this verse is "to gird up one's loins," for travel, work, or battle.

The thought is that of vigilant readiness. This is an admonition to be ready and watchful. It is an idiom meaning to bind up the loins of the mind, to

prepare oneself for learning and thinking. This is to get one's mind ready for action, to be ready to learn and to think, to be alert.

Our idiom today would be "pull yourselves together." Pull out of the way anything that impedes free action of the mind. If we harbor hate in our minds, this will impede our progress in the Christian life.

Peter uses "gird up" for the alertness necessary for sobriety and for setting one's hope perfectly on "the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

Principle

God wants us to roll up the sleeves of our minds.

Application

Many people become so engrossed in the affairs of this life that they neglect their spiritual life. They envelop their state of mind with worry and anxiety. Thus their thinking thrusts them into uncertainty. This verse shows us how to deal with impending misfortune and disaster.

We will never put anxiety out of our minds by subjective thinking. We will never change a thing in the world by fear and wishing. If we beset our minds with problems, we will create an artificial world of our own making. We cannot elude an earthquake by fear.

A mentally healthy person is someone who is objective. He can see the problem as it is, not as it might be. He does not say, "Well, you don't know my problems. My children are impossible. Everything I do fails." Someone else may say, "You don't know the situation at my job. The boss will fire me if I don't come through." Again, "That next door neighbor! You have never seen such a witch! She spreads such nasty, baseless rumors about me. How can I help but worry about that?"

We live in an environment of many conflicts. We can react to everything that happens either negatively or positively. We can face the problem or worry about it. Which will it be? Once we come to grips with the problem, once we tackle the problem, then the solution will ensue.

We must remove hindrances before we can serve Jesus Christ. When Olympic athletes prepares for

a race, they wear clothes that will not impede their movement. If we are going to run in the Olympics we do not run with street clothes! We must put off every weight (Hebrews 12:1,2).

gird up the loins of your mind

"Gird up" occurs in Ephesians 6:14 for girding up the truth: "Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness." God wants us to gird ourselves with truth so that our character is guarded from hypocrisy and falsehood.

The Greek Old Testament uses this word in Proverbs 31:17: "She girds herself with strength, And strengthens her arms." This is preparation for serious work.

2 Kings 4:29 uses this word as well: "Then he [Elisha] said to Gehazi, 'Get yourself ready, and take my staff in your hand, and be on your way. If you meet anyone, do not greet him; and if anyone greets you, do not answer him; but lay my staff on the face of the child.'" Gehazi was to prepare himself for an urgent errand.

"Gird up" is a figure expressing vigilance for the coming of Christ (cf. Luke 12:35; Ephesians 6:14). Exodus 12:11 takes this figure from the circumstances of the Israelites as they ate the Passover in readiness for their journey: "And thus you shall eat it: with a belt on your waist, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. So you shall eat it in haste. It is the Lord's Passover."

God wants Christians to have their mental powers alert in expectation of Christ's coming. The verb indicates that the believer will have personal interest in so doing.

Principle

God wants us alert to the expectation of Christ's coming.

Application

Negative thoughts can blot out the anticipation of meeting Jesus Christ one day.

We cannot help what strikes our minds but we can choose what we allow to rest on our minds. We can choose whether we will harbor or foster negative thoughts. A rat may get into our room but

we do not have to feed it and make a pet of it! God wants us to exterminate certain thoughts! Anything that keeps us from anticipating the coming of Christ is a rat in our mind.

be sober

This is the second "mind" word in this verse. Not only must we gird up the loose ends of our mind that hang down but we must also have a wholesome mental state.

"Sober" has a positive meaning--to possess a calm and collected spirit. Sober people are circumspect in their judgments. They are mentally calm, steady, steadfast and solid. They possess a state of mind whereby they are self-controlled and able to see things without distortion. Fear or worry do not distort their thinking.

The New Testament uses this word figuratively--be vigilant against all spiritual dangers and enemies (1 Peter 5:8). Be temperate and modest in eating, drinking, apparel, recreation, business, and in the whole of your behavior.

When the word is used figuratively, the subject is a person. The idea is the opposite of every kind of fuzziness. We value sober judgment in both individual and public life.

Be sober-minded also in opinion, as well as in practice and humble in your judgment of yourselves. It does not in itself imply watchfulness, but is used in association with it (1 Thessalonians 5:6, 8; 2 Timothy 4:5). It means to be free from every form of mental and spiritual "drunkenness" or excess. Rather than being controlled by outside circumstances, we should direct our lives from within (cf. 4:7; 5:8; 1 Thessalonians 5:6, 8).

The New Testament uses the word "sober" in five instances (1 Thessalonians 5:6, 8; 2 Timothy 4:5; 1 Peter 1:13; 4:7; 5:8). It means acknowledgment of the reality of revelation and discharge of the resultant ministry in worship, hope, love, and even conflict.

Principle

God wants us to be sound and balanced in judgment.

Application

For centuries, society has used alcohol for a sedative. Only in the last decade have we begun to face the scope of its deadly impact on human behavior and society. Rampant domestic violence and carnage on the highways are a prime example. At the same time, scientists are discovering new ways which alcohol causes illness and shortens lives.

If we are going to manage our mind under God's standards, we must gird up the loins of our minds. The most mature Christian needs this exhortation. God requires this of a "bishop" (I Timothy 3:2) and aged men (Titus 2:2). God wants leaders to teach young women and men to be sober (Titus 2:2,4,6).

God does not want us to become intoxicated with the latest craze. It is easy to be taken with the latest fashions of this world.

A life free from worry is not a life devoid of the responsibilities of life. Do not cripple your life by worry, hate and fear. If there is a film of dust on our telescope we may miss great dimensions of the heavens. If we cover our spirits with the film of earthly preoccupation, we will lose sight of the glories of eternity.

The allurements of the world can intoxicate our minds. A calm, steady mind will weigh and estimate things accurately. We only have a certain quantity of attention to expend. If we fling it away on things other than God's will, we will have little to offer God.

and rest your hope

God wants hope to predominate our lives. He wants us to live in hope. This was especially true for suffering Christians such as those in Asia Minor to whom Peter was writing. Those who suffer need something beyond their present circumstances. They need a transcendent life.

Christian hope is transforming hope. It opens a new world. It supplies new guarantees. To the Christian, hope is no dream; it is absolute anticipation of certainties. The Christian hope appropriates eternity now. We can enjoy the grace of our eternal future now.

The meaning of hope in the Greek language is not like the anemic English connotation: "I hope it doesn't rain tomorrow." Rather it is the robust idea of confidence in the future (Romans 5:1,2). That is why we call the Lord's return the "blessed hope" (Titus 2:13).

Principle

God gives the Christian confidence about the future.

Application

In life, we often promise according to our hopes and perform according to our fears. The Lord, however, wants us to perform according to our hope. One of the earmarks of the Christian life is that it is a life of hope. This is not hopefulness: it has nothing to do with hope as it relates to length of time. It is a quality of hope. It is no nebulous and vague hope.

The Christian can look death in the face without flinching. No non-Christian can do that. To them, there is nothing as final as death. They are afraid of death (Hebrews 2:14,15). But for the Christian, death is just the room attendant who ushers us into the presence of God.

Anyone can endure suffering if they are certain that it leads somewhere. Athletes will rigidly train for an event if they feel sacrifice will help them win the competition. Students will spend hours in study if they feel they will get better grades. If Christians suffer with a view to fulfill God's purpose, their sufferings have eternal purpose.

God wants us to have hope without reserve for what Christ will bring in His coming. This will bring buoyant hope to present suffering. This is transforming hope. It opens a new world and supplies new guarantees.

Hope is no pleasant dream for the Christian. It is far more than a pretty thought. It is absolute anticipation of the certainty of God's grace when we meet Him. Increased energy and mental health are the result.

Human hope is the anticipation of good without certainty; it is anemic and preoccupied with present problems. The Christian hope is absolute anticipation of certain benefits. The future for Christians is as certain as the past. Their future is

unalterable because God is unalterable. His promises are unalterable. We hope, not because of who we are but because of who He is.

All three commands in this verse relate to mental attitude.

fully upon the grace

It is one thing to rest our hope on grace; it is another thing to rest our hope completely on grace. "Fully" is an idiom meaning "into end." This is a degree of completeness, with the possible implication of purpose or result - "completely, totally, entirely, wholly."

God wants us to hope perfectly. He wants us to develop a mature hope. He wants us to acquire a thorough hope of the grace that Jesus brings by the unveiling of himself. Mature hope rests on grace.

This means to have a hope that is in a state of completeness. God wants us to live in hope. An individual who has this hope is complete. He does not want anything. He has complete expectation based on God's provisions in grace.

Jesus Christ personifies grace. Titus 2: 11 says, "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men." All that we have before God is from the grace of Christ. It is because of Him that we have rights before God.

Principle

God wants us to rest our hope completely on grace.

Application

God does not want us to waver in our hope. The only way our hope cannot waver is to stabilize it with grace. Grace gives our hope a strong base.

It is not enough that we receive grace at the point of our salvation. We need grace for daily living. We need grace to hope for the eternal state. We need to rest completely on grace.

that is to be brought to you

When Jesus comes back again He will bring full grace to us. We will need grace to enter the presence of God. This is the grace of salvation from the very presence of sin.

Jesus brings grace unto us. "Be brought" can translate "is being brought." Eternal life begins at the moment a person trusts Christ as his Savior (v.3). Hebrews 6:18 says, "that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us. This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil."

Principle

When we stand before God at the Judgment Seat of Christ, we will stand in the grace of Christ.

Application

When God judges Christians at the Judgment Seat of Christ we will not stand in our works. We will stand solely on his grace. That is all we will plead.

at the revelation of Jesus Christ

This phrase refers to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. At this time the Christian will receive the fullest possible life. We find the reason for this life in the word "revelation."

"Revelation" means unveiling. Jesus Christ, as in no other point in history, will be unveiled for who He is. We will vitally relate to Him at that time. That will be complete grace to us.

When we meet Jesus, He will give us inexpressible privileges (grace) that we have never know up to that point. In the past He was never fully revealed to us. In that day He will be revealed fully.

God wants us to cultivate the reality of that revelation now! He wants us to experience the reality of Christ now. We do this by cultivating our hope in Christ. This makes for robust Christian living.

I live in the Pacific Northwest. We get weeks of clouds. Many Christians drape heaven in clouds. They do not let the glories of Christ shine through in their lives.

The "revelation" in 1 Peter 1:3 is the same word as the word "appear" in 1 Peter 5:4. God calls us to look forward to the consummation of our salvation. This is a great and glorious hope to a Christian who is blind or paralyzed (Philippians 3:20, 21). Perhaps today the Lord will come and

deliver us from pain. There many not be any cure down here. Jesus may come today--glad day. This is a bright teaching of the Word of God.

Principle

Jesus will be fully unveiled before the Christian one day.

Application

Those without Christ cannot think beyond the grave. They cannot see farther than the casket. They are ignorant of life after death. All they see in death is the bleak, black terminus of all existence. They cannot see beyond that because they have no faith (Hebrews 11:1). Because of that they have come to the erroneous conclusion that there is nothing beyond the grave.

Those with Christ look forward to meet their Savior one day. They see beyond the grave. They hold a blessed hope.

1 Peter 1:14

“as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance.”

If the Christian follows the three admonitions of verse 13, he will not conform to evil desires. In verse 14, we find the fourth responsibility - to conduct ourselves under God's norms.

as obedient children

"Obedient children" is literally "children of obedience." When we come to Christ, we become members of God's family. Our whole attitude changes because we are in a new family. Obedience is the indication of trust in God.

"To obey is better than sacrifice" (1 Samuel 15:22). This was a statement by Samuel after Saul disobeyed the Word of the Lord. The Lord had said, "Now go and attack Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and do not spare them" (v. 3). "But Saul and the people spared Agag and the best of the sheep, the oxen, the fatlings, the lambs, and all that was good, and were unwilling to utterly destroy them. But everything despised and worthless, that they utterly destroyed" (v. 7). The problem here was not obedience but total obedience.

Samuel came to Saul again and Saul said "Blessed are you of the Lord! I have performed the commandment of the Lord" (v.13). Saul tries to make brownie points with the preacher Samuel. He claims personal innocence from this problem but blames the people "for the people spared the best of the sheep and the oxen, to sacrifice to the Lord your God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed" (v.15). He shifts the blame to his people.

Saul also tries to justify his sin by religion, "We are going to make sacrifices with these sheep!" It is to this comment that Samuel says, "to obey is better than sacrifice." Religion means nothing without the right heart. God takes no interest in religion, His interest is in revival. God is not interested our sacrifice but in our soul. The Lord cares very little about our gifts or service if we do not have the proper heart towards Him. Saul obeyed, but only in part. "But I have obeyed the voice of the Lord, and gone on the mission on which the Lord sent me" (v. 20). The Lord is not the Lord if he is not Lord of all. Saul was willing to give to God as long as there was no loss on his part.

Saul repented, "I have sinned, for I have transgressed the commandment of the Lord and your words, because I feared the people and obeyed their voice. 25 Now therefore, please pardon my sin, and return with me, that I may worship the Lord" (vv. 24, 25). This is the original point! God does not want formal obedience. He wants the believer to obey because of personal affinity with Himself. However, God disciplined Saul for incomplete obedience.

Principle

God is not interested in religion but in a relationship.

Application

Is your relationship with the Lord mechanical? Do you have a vital relationship with Him?

Saul did not listen to God. He carried out what was convenient for himself. He was not concerned with God's will. The will of the superior should be the implicit command of the follower.

The attitude in the church today is, "Sure, I'll minister in church - as long as it is convenient for me. I'll lead a small group because no one else will." God does not want that kind of sacrifice. If Samuel were here he would say, "to obey is better than sacrifice." Action based on personal relationship with God is far more important than duty to church.

as obedient children

This verse contrasts what Asia Minor Christians were at this time to what they were before they came to Christ.

The word "obedience" comes from two Greek words: "to hear" and "under." This means to subordinate oneself to the person heard.

Obedience is a response, a refrain. An obedient child of God will listen to God and obey.

"Obedience" is to obey on the basis of having paid attention to someone. Christians who follow God's norms prove their relationship to him. All Christians surrender to lust at times. There was a time when all Asia Minor Christians did was gratify their lusts. They lived without standards and therefore all they could do is accommodate their whims of lust.

We find the supreme illustration of a proper response to the will of God in the person of Christ. In Philippians 2, Paul speaks about Christ's attitude toward obedience, "Let this mind [attitude] be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross."

Hebrews 5:8 says, "though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered." Through suffering Jesus learned to listen to the voice of God.

The will of God should be our command. The test of our love for Jesus Christ is to hear when he speaks, "You are My friends if you do whatever I command you," (John 15:14). "These things I

command you, that you love one another," (John 15:17).

Obedience here is not legal or moral obedience. It is an obedience that results from a relationship. A child obeys his parents because of his relationship to his parents.

God wants us to be children marked by obedience. He wants us to hold that kind of distinction, "Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name," (Romans 1:5).

This is obedience not merely to explicit commands but to whatever may come from His will. This obedience applies even to thoughts (2 Corinthians 10:5).

Principle

God wants our obedience to stem from a relationship, not legalism.

Application

A requirement for living in a family is obedience. Did your parents ever say to you "If you are going to live in this house, you will live by our rules." As parents, that is their privilege.

Our Heavenly Father brings us into His family and says, "It is your responsibility to live up to the standards of my house." The difference between the Heavenly Father and the human father is that the Heavenly Father never loses His temper or gets indigestion. He is never bedeviled by high blood pressure.

The Father is never sloppy in training His children. He never says, "Why should I spoil my dinner with all this commotion?" Some human fathers let their children get away with murder. Not God. He cares about us. He loves us too much not to train us in godliness. He is a faithful Father.

not conforming yourselves

Now we come to the fourth directive. This is no suggestion or hint. It is not good advice but a divine directive from heaven.

The words "not conforming" mean do not be shaped by those desires you had formerly. "Conforming" means to fashion or shape one thing like another, to form or mold after something. It

means to conform one thing to another, to give the same figure or appearance as. This verb has more special reference to that which is transitory, changeable, unstable.

"Conforming" is an act of assuming an outward appearance patterned after some certain thing. This is an appearance that does not come from and is not representative of one's inmost and true nature. Here "conforming" refers to the acts of a child of God shown by habits, mannerisms, dress, speech and behavior from which God saved him.

The believer here masquerades in the costume of the world. He relates to outward, changeable fashion in contrast to intrinsic reality. This verse warns against conforming to something changing and illusory. To fashion our lives after the world means our lives will orient to something fleeting and unstable. If we fashion our lives after the Lord, our lives will be sure and secure.

The word fashion means to make a copy out of a thing. Fashion is the reflection of the lives we lead and the way we lead them. Fashion is like a mirror that reflects the true condition of our face. If our face is dirty, the mirror will reflect that. If a person has a dynamic relationship with the Lord then his life will reflect that. The business of fashion is making norms suit our times and lives. Napoleon said, "A man becomes a creature of his uniform."

Principle

God does not want us to fashion our lives after the fickle fancies of men.

Application

When a disobedient child of God develops a scheme that revolves around lusts, he is not allowing God to fashion him. When the believer masquerades in the costume of the world, he does not give true expression to who he is. He is controlling his life, not God. He assumes the dress of the world. His fashion reflects his life.

God does not want us to control our lives. He wants to control them. As Christians, when we devise own scheme for life, we will make a mess of it. We are then disobedient child. We need to take our hands off the steering wheel of our lives. We should give our lives to Him lock, stock and

barrel; body, soul and spirit. We should let the Lord fashion our lives.

We do not have to pull strings to make openings for ourselves. We do not have to know the right people; we do not have to play politics. All we need to do is commit our lives to God's will: nothing more, nothing less, nothing else.

not conforming yourselves to the former lusts

There was a time when the whole scheme of life for Asia Minor Christians revolved around lusts. They fashioned their lives around lusts. When they came to Christ, He changed their whole orientation.

What is in style spiritually? What is the pattern God wants us to use to trace our spirituality? The next verse says that we are to be holy because God is holy (v.15). We should fashion our lives after Him. God wants us to mold our lives after that which is essential in character and thus complete or durable, not merely a form or outline

The other time the New Testament uses "conforming" is in Romans 12:2, "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

In this verse being outwardly conformed to the things of this age is contrasted with being transformed (or transfigured) inwardly by the renewal of the thoughts through the Holy Spirit's power.

A similar distinction holds good in Philippians 3:21; the Lord will "fashion anew [or change outwardly] the body of our humiliation [earthly body], and conform it in its nature to the body of His glory [resurrection body]."

Fashion is a reflection of the lives we lead and the way we lead them. The business of fashion is the business of making our lives suit our times.

There are two standards by which we may fashion our lives – the world's or God's. To fashion our lives according to the world is to fix them to the "former lusts." In this case the Christian reflects the world with his life. If we fashion our lives according to fellowship with God, our lives will

reflect his life. The next verse in I Peter says "but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct" (v.15).

Before we became Christians, lusts drove us to frustration. We made a mess of our lives, why go back to that life? Ephesians 4:17-19 says: "This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness."

This is a picture of those without Christ. They have no eternal purpose. Their lives are "vain." Their hearts are "blind." This is God's view of those without Christ whether we are good or bad, clean or dirty, rich or poor, fat or thin, black or white, non-religious or religious.

Principle

God wants our dress to be up-to-date spiritually.

Application

Some people keep up with the latest fashions. They buy the latest clothes and the newest cars. They wear the current hair style.

When it comes to being in fashion spiritually, we are often way out of date. Our fashion of spirituality is passé. We live legalistic lives. Our Christianity is not in vogue. We do not embrace the true design of the Christian life. We would rather be religious than own a vital relationship with the Lord. When it comes to spirituality we are old-fashioned. We live by the old man.

to the former lusts

"Lusts" means to greatly desire to do or have something -- to long for, to desire very much, to crave. It means to strongly desire to have what belongs to someone else. It carries the idea of engaging in desires that are morally wrong -- to covet, to lust (Acts 20:33; Matthew 5:28; Galatians 5:16; 1 Timothy 6:9; 2 Timothy 2:22). Ephesians 2:1-3 says: "And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once

walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others."

In Romans 6:12, the injunction against letting sin reign in our mortal body to obey the lust thereof, refers to those evil desires that are ready to express themselves in bodily activity. They are equally the lusts of the flesh (Romans 13:14; Galatians 5:16, 24; Ephesians 2:3; 2 Peter 2:18; 1 John 2:16). "Lusts" describes the emotions of the soul, the natural tendency towards evil things.

Principle

Every Christian has a proclivity to sin.

Application

It is helpful to know that inherent within the Christian is a proclivity to sin. It is the desire that drives the orientation to sin.

Hebrews 12:1 tells us that there are certain sins toward which each Christian aligns himself, "Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us." God wants us to lay aside sin that we lean toward.

as in your ignorance

"Ignorance" here is ignorance of God and His norms. Without God, Asia Minor Christians were vulnerable to lust (1:18; cf. Acts 17:30; Ephesians 4:17-18). They owned no purpose for their existence. Ephesians 4:18 says: "having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart."

God wants to save us from shipwreck. If in our ignorance we go our own way, disaster will result. God expects us to plan and build a future. It is responsible to have well placed goals. However, to set goals without God is to trivialize Him. When we do this, He may let us make a shipwreck of our future. "My times are in Your hand; Deliver me

from the hand of my enemies, And from those who persecute me" (Psalm 31:15).

Principle

We can trust God to work out His will in our lives.

Application

Can you trust God to work out His will in your life? Younger people have their whole lives in front of them. But if they stubbornly plan without God in the center, God will derail their train. The only place we will find lasting satisfaction is in the center of God's will.

Ignorance keeps us from discovering God's plan for our lives. We make plans in ignorance. We chose the university we will attend without consulting God. We plan what we will become without asking the Lord. We dream about the future and do not take God into consideration. Somewhere along the way God will flag us down.

God is interested in saving more than our soul, He wants to save our lives as well (Luke 9:56).

1 Peter 1:15

"but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct."

We come to the fifth of five directives.

but as He who called you is holy

"But" – conjunction of contrast.

"Called" is the point of our salvation. At that point, we received the characteristics of our Father. We received inherent characteristics from Him. God called; we answered.

"For many are called, but few are chosen," (Matthew 22:14).

"And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. 29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified," (Romans 8:28-30).

"God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Corinthians 1:9).

"But to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God," (1 Corinthians 1:24).

"I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel," (Galatians 1:6).

"But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace," (Galatians 1:15).

"Who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began," (2 Timothy 1:9).

"Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus," (Hebrews 3:1).

"But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light," (1 Peter 2:9).

"But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you," (1 Peter 5:10).

"Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble," (2 Peter 1:10).

God is our pattern of holiness. Although we must imitate Him we cannot equal Him. God is absolute in holiness. As the suit is a reflection of the pattern, so our lives should be a reflection of the one who saved us. God does not conform to a standard; He is the standard. God is immediately holy from all eternity. His holiness is not derived.

Principle

God calls us to bear family resemblance.

Application

God is holy and produces holy people. Are you in the process of becoming more like God?

you also be holy

"Holy" means set apart. God wants us to be set apart from sin to God's righteousness. God does not want us to be ordinary. He wants us to fashion our lives after Himself.

When they sew, women use patterns to fashion clothing. If we are going to be in style spiritually, we must fashion our lives after God. He is our pattern. Christians are not to cover up their characteristics as Christians by assuming an outward masquerade, patterned after the costume of this world.

The root of "holy" is different. The believer is to be different from other people. This is the fashion after which we are to pattern our lives. Holy is the way God is. "Be" means to enter a new state. It means "to become" -- "become holy." This is an imperative. We effect our holiness by participating in God's holiness.

"Holy" here is experiential holiness. Creed and conduct are inseparable. We cannot have practical conduct without doctrine. Knowledge and action are inseparable. Without the knowledge of God, humans would have no standard or norm for living.

God gives the title "holy" to his children, Hebrews 3:1 -- "Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus." "Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God," (2 Corinthians 7:1).

Principle

The Christian is exclusively God's.

Application

The basic underlying meaning of "holy" is set apart. This means we are exclusively His. When we came to Christ, God set us apart from the rank and file of humanity. We are now the sons of God.

We are his exclusive property by both the right of creation and the right of redemption. He has the right to curtail our years or lengthen them. He has the right to do with us whatever He pleases. He

has the right to subtract from us or add to us. We belong to Him body, soul and spirit.

If we recognize this, then things will go well for us. If not, then He may have to break us like a wild horse. If we rebel against the Lordship of Christ and resent His authority, then He may break our back.

God wants His children to be malleable, given over to His will. He wills nothing but the best for us. He charts a course for our lives. He knows where the booby traps are and leads us around them. That is why His path is not always a straight line between two points. At times He leads us on a zigzag path. Sometimes He leads up and at other times down. Although His leading may appear erratic to us, He guides us past the traps of life (Romans 8:14).

in all your conduct

"All" means every manner of conduct whether it be work or rest, business or pleasure.

"Conduct" comes from two words "up" and "to turn" meaning "to turn upside down." "Conduct" is our manner of life. God wants us to turn about or go about from place to place with a holy life. This is a mode of life.

"Conduct" is the whole outward life. God wants us to exhibit His holiness in the grubby business of everyday life. The issue here is general deportment or behavior.

What is the outstanding characteristic of your life? Humanly speaking, what is it? How you answer this question depends on your understanding of the phrase "manner of life." Most people answer by what they do. That is not accurate. Your manner of life is what you do based on what you think. What you really are is what goes on in your mind. What you do is a result of what you think. Our manner of life is what you think and do. This manner of life consists of acquired characteristics as well as inherent characteristics.

This is no mere pious fantasy. It is more than a nice idea; it is a divine directive. God wants our lives to match the gospel. So often our lives clash with the gospel. God is greatly exercised about how we behave ourselves with the gospel. He is concerned about the quality of our lives because

our lives reflect on Him. "Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel," (Philippians 1:27).

God wants us to be holy in all our deportment: "And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we do to you, 13 so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints," (1 Thessalonians 3: 12). "For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness," (Hebrews 12:10). "Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord," (Hebrews 12:14).

Principle

God is concerned lest we bring his name into disrepute.

Application

God is concerned about the quality of our lives because our lives reflect Him.

As the centre relates to the circumference, so Christians are to pattern their life after God's holiness. God's holiness is the cause of holiness in Christians.

What our children do reflects on us. At times they embarrass us because they act just like their parents! We can see ourselves in our children. This is not the same with God because He is absolutely holy (set apart from humanity).

God wants us to be like Him. God does not have any bad habits, so this is a big order. Human parents have many faults. Their children walk in their footsteps. They learn the bad things easier than the good things.

If we are leaders and our children act badly, it reflects upon us. It will hurt our place in society or ministry. God wants us to be a credit to Christ. He wants us to be an asset rather than a liability. Everything we do reflects upon the Lord.

God saves us by grace, not works. He keeps us saved by grace, not works. However, if our works are shoddy, he will execute family discipline. His discipline is not punitive. He is not in the business of retaliation. God is not vindictive. His discipline is educational, remedial. He is in the business of building lives that will glorify Him (Matthew 5:16). Good works do not save us. They demonstrate that we have come to Christ.

Some non-Christians put Christians to shame when it comes to works. Many non-Christians work with the United Way, March of Dimes or Red Cross. When we try to challenge some people to give a few hours to the ministry of Christ they say, "Well, I don't have much time. We are busy with our family activities. We are working overtime. We don't have time for ministry."

1 Peter 1:16

"because it is written, 'Be holy, for I am holy.'"

because it is written

The word "because" indicates the reason why holiness is necessary. God effects our holiness by our participation in His holiness. God is absolute in His holiness.

Our authority for believing in absolutes lies in the written Word of God – "it is written." We may argue that our society will crumble without absolutes. However, those who do not believe in absolutes will answer, "Who sets the standards? The standards of society are capricious. Why should I live up to random standards?" If there is no ultimate norm for morality, why should they care about the standards of society?

This is where Christians have the answer. When they receive Christ, they have a new motivation for living. They possess an inherent standard that gives them principles for living. Personal faith in Christ appeals to the written Word of God. This is why Peter uses the formula "it is written."

The Word of God reveals God's essence. It shows His person and character. It declares that He is set apart from human sin and is therefore absolute.

Spiritual birth gives us an affinity with God. We imitate Him as a child imitates his parents. We

cannot imitate our Father unless we know Him. We know Him through the Word of God.

'Be holy, for I am holy'

God says "I," in contradistinction to anyone else, "am holy."

"Be holy, for I am holy" is a quote from Leviticus 11:44. "For I am the Lord your God. You shall therefore consecrate yourselves, and you shall be holy; for I am holy." This is to document verse 15.

Principle

God wants us to be without sin because He is absolute.

Application

The question of absolutes predominates university campuses today: "Is there any absolute?" "What is right?" "If there are absolutes, who says so?" "Is not sex a normal function of life?" "Who sets up these standards anyway?" That last question is a good question. If our authority rests in human values, then there are no absolutes. Practical questions such as "Will we have a baby?" are all that remain.

Everything is relative to the modern mind. Morality is simply personal preference. If someone thinks that it is good for him or her, then that is fine. That's why we hear people say, "what difference does it make if no one is getting hurt?"

The Christian answers these questions from information that comes by revelation. There is no other way to own an absolute.

1 Peter 1:17

"And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear."

And if you call on the Father

Peter further develops the personal relationship of verse 16 in this phrase. The Holy Spirit does not base the appeal of verse 16 "Be you holy" - on duty but on relationship. We are holy because our Father is holy. We appeal to God as a child to a parent.

The word "if" assumes that Christians will call on the Father. The "if" in the Greek indicates the reality of their prayer life. The Greek does not suggest an hypothetical but assumes they do in fact pray. If they do, they will live their sojourn here in awe of God. "Call" is a synonym for prayer.

We should address our prayer to the "Father." We approach the Father through the Son (John 14:13,14) in the power of the Spirit (Ephesians 6:18). Jesus makes intercession to the Father (Hebrews 7:25). Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them."

The Holy Spirit makes intercession for us (Romans 8:26,27). "Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God."

Because the Son intercedes and the Spirit intercedes for us, we should address all prayer to the Father (Matthew 6:6,9).

Principle

Prayer is a relationship with the Father based on grace.

Application

Some people say, "I can't understand why my prayers are not answered. I have not done anything wrong." That, however, has nothing to do with it. Puffing up what we have done for God does not twist His arm to answer prayer.

Many of us have the idea that God answers prayer because we are good, moral or upright. Just because we may impress people, this does not mean that God is impressed with us.

God, however, does respect His Son. Prayer is a privilege of grace. The reason God hears us is because of His own character. God loves without respect. God respects our prayer solely because of Christ. "Let us therefore come boldly to the throne

of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need," (Hebrews 4:16).

And if you call on the Father

God does not answer prayer for these reasons: lack of faith (Matthew 21:22 compared with Romans 14:23) no relationship with God (not a Christian) carnality (Psalm 66:18) selfishness (James 4:2,3) lack of compassion (Proverbs 21:13) domestic difficulty (1 Peter 3:7) pride (Job 35:12,13) lack of filling of the Spirit (Ephesians 6:18) failure to obey God (1 John 3:22) failure to be compatible with the will of God (1 John 5:14)

Effective prayer life comes from understanding who and what God is and who and what we are. It is easy to tangle ourselves in self-pity. When we come to understand that we have nothing to offer God and God has everything to offer us, then we will understand the essence of biblical prayer.

Principle

We pray effectively when we realize that God answers on the basis of his grace.

Application

We should not pray, "As the sun rises across the hills and the wind drifts softly through the trees." God has seen all the scenery anyway! We do not impress God with elocution. He is impressed with the work of His Son and the appeal of His Son for us (Hebrews 7:25).

who without partiality judges

The words "without partiality" mean without respect of persons. Literally these words mean "one who does not receive face." God operates without prejudice. He is impartial and therefore just. He has no favorites. He does not look at the face of someone and then make His judgment.

God is without partiality in judgment. He judges according to the standard of our true behavior. God does not operate on the basis of favoritism. Wealth, culture, social position, family, education, beauty, intellect make no difference to God. "But the Lord said to Samuel, 'Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have refused him. For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward

appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart,'" (1 Samuel 16:7).

There is an impartial character to God's judgment, "But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him," (Acts 10:35). God is consistent in His nature. He doesn't use different standards of evaluation. God does not disregard evidence. He is honest in His assessments, "For there is no partiality with God," (Romans 2:11).

"Judges" means evaluation. God is in the business of objective evaluation of our lives. His judgment is not primarily to find fault. God is not a critical person. He is not in the business of seeking defects merely to criticize.

The strictness of God's judicial process has reward as its primary aim (2 Corinthians 5:10). "What can I give this believer on the basis of his usage of my assets?" God will honestly appraise things. God expects to find in the life of each saint that which He can place His approval. It's just like a parent who loves to approve the life of His child.

Principle

God rewards without favoritism.

Application

God has no partiality toward persons. No one has an "in" with God in prayer. Inevitably people ask clergy if they would pray for them thinking so their prayers have God's special ear. Any Christian in fellowship can pray as any pastor.

God hears our prayers because of His Son. We can never earn His respect. We approach God on the merits of Christ. God judges all our personal sins on the cross.

according to each one's work

"According to" refers to a norm or standard. God judges according to a standard. It is the objective standard of what a believer does in time.

There is a difference between God's judgment of believers and His condemnation of unbelievers. This is the difference between the judgment seat of Christ (Christians) and the white throne of judgment (non Christians).

God will condemn those who do not believe in the death of Christ to forgive their sins. "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil," (John 3:18,19).

God does not condemn Christians. "There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus," (Romans 8:1).

God, however, does evaluate the production of the believer's life. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad," (2 Corinthians 5:10).

The "judgment seat of Christ" is the place of judgment for Christians. At that judgment God will not condemn Christians for rejecting Christ. He will evaluate their production in time.

The primary aim of the judgment seat of Christ is reward. His judgment is not to find fault. God is not critical in His attitude. He does not seek to find fault or defects. God expects to find in the life of each saint upon which He can place His approval--much like a parent who loves to approve the life of his child.

Principle

God will evaluate our life at the judgment seat of Christ.

Application

Since you will stand one day at the judgment seat of Christ, have you taken your spiritual stock lately? Are you continuing to advance in your spiritual life? What is your spiritual inventory like? Are you farther along than you were last year?

Do your children detect any spiritual development in your life? Do they observe any trend toward a taller testimony? Is it easier to live with you than it used to be? Have you taken off some of those rough edges of your character? Is your temper more under control? Are you as quick on the verbal draw? Do you retaliate as quickly as you

did in former years? Are you developing more and more into his likeness? All of these things are evidence that God is working in your life.

"But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord," (2 Corinthians 3:18).

conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here

Christians should view themselves as pilgrims passing through a foreign country (Psalm 30:12; Hebrews 11:13). Our values are under pressure from the foreign culture in which we live. The Christian today lives in changing, relative values. We are strangers to this world because we live according to absolute values. "For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles—when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries. In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you. They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead," (1 Peter 4:3-5).

Christian pilgrims are to keep priority on the things of greatest value. "Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation," (1 Peter 2:11).

The word "conduct" means to turn back, return, to move back to a point or area from which one has previously departed, but with more explicit emphasis upon the return. Hence, it means to move about in a place, to sojourn. The idea is to order one's conduct. It is also an urgent command. "Among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others," (Ephesians 2:3). "For our boasting is this: the testimony of our conscience that we conducted ourselves in the world in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom but by the grace

of God, and more abundantly toward you," (2 Corinthians 1:12). "But if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth," (1 Timothy 3:15)

Principle

God wants us to keep absolute eternal values in view.

Application

This world is not our home. We are in Satan's territory. We must have a clear, genuine, ringing testimony in the face of the pressures of relative values.

"Time" refers to a series of events. How much time do you have left on earth? God wants us to live our lives in view of eternity. Keep eternity always before your life! This will produce a holy life.

in fear

"Fear" refers to the fear of awe. This is not personal cringing fear, nor a phobia. This is not anxiety but awesome regard for God. It is not self distrust or apprehension of a terrible time on earth but an awareness of the presence of God.

God wants us to spend time on earth worshipping Him. This means to accept His authority reverently. God wants us to live every moment conscious of His presence.

"Fear" then is not torment, not a sentiment of emotion towards God. It is the objective appraisal of who God is. Once we appraise God for who He is and see ourselves for who we are, then holiness results. We need the Word of God to do this.

Principle

Reverence for God produces holiness.

Application

Is God trivial to you? Is He a detail of your life? On the other hand, is God the center of your life? Do you hold Him in absolute distinction?

1 Peter 1:18

"knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your

aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers."

Peter adds a second argument for a holy life. The first argument is in verse 17: God has given us the privilege to call on the Father.

Verses 18 and 19 give the second argument-- our redemption. These verses are two of the most precious verses in the Bible for

those who know the Lord Jesus Christ, because redemption is what makes it all possible!

Peter views redemption from both the negative and positive viewpoints here. First -- the negative, v.18.

knowing

The Greek language has a word that does not occur in this translation -- the word is "because." We could translate this phrase "because you know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things." Peter is presenting a reason. The Christians in Asia Minor understood their redemption. They could not plead ignorance.

The Greek word translated "knowing" here is intuitive knowledge. Our salvation is self-evident. Reverence for God (v.17) rests upon knowledge of redemption. Our redemption cost the death of Christ. This is what we "know."

Note that verse 17 did not close with a period: "...throughout the time of your stay here in fear (v.17); know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things... (v.18)." We pass our time here on Earth with a sense of awe because we know about our redemption.

Principle

Redemption is an incentive to holiness.

Application

The appeal to our redemption is an incentive to do God's will. God expects us to live with loyalty to what we know.

The inestimable gain of salvation furnishes a new reason for living. "Lord, make me to know my end, And what is the measure of my days, That I may know how frail I am," (Psalm. 39:4).

We cannot live the Christian life without the Bible. Neither can we live the Christian life until

we have the Christian life to live. We soon learn that there are things not proper for the Christian to do. These things may not be sinful but they are beneath the dignity of the child of God. They may not be sinful but they are a weight, a handicap. They will hold us back and may become superfluous to the priority of our lives.

What we need is the necessary, the indispensable. We learn from the Bible to put priority on the things of greatest value. The Word of God shows us that certain things are good and other things are priority.

that you were not redeemed

"Redeemed" means to release on receipt of ransom, free by paying a ransom. People of the first century would release captives solely on receipt of ransom.

"Redeemed" then signifies to set free by the payment of a price. It is that work of God whereby He himself pays a ransom for those held helplessly in captivity to sin.

The price (ransom) is the blood of Christ. Jesus rescues us from our sin by ransom and releases us from the penalty of sin. Redemption is the means by which God accomplishes our salvation.

Due to lack of funds, someone takes his diamond ring to the pawn shop to exchange it for cash. Because the ring is of such great value he is unable to buy it back. His own ring is beyond his means to purchase back. Someone else sees his plight and purchases it for him. The friend does it simply because he is a friend and loves him. This is redemption.

There is a dual dimension to redemption: redemption from and redemption to. Redemption is from the law, from the penalty of the law, from sin, from Satan and from all evil. Redemption is also redemption to a new freedom in Christ, a new relationship to God and new life in Christ.

God redeems us from:

1. the law, Galatians 4:4,5; Romans 6:14; 7:4
2. the penalty of the law, Galatians 3:13
3. the power of sin, Titus 2:14; Mark 10:45; 1 Peter 1:18,19

4. the power of Satan, 2 Timothy 2:26; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Colossians 2:15
5. all evil, Ephesians 1:14; Hebrews 9:12; Romans 8:23

Principle

God paid the price for our sin.

Application

The wages of sin is death. Every sin necessarily subjects the sinner to the wrath of God. God initiated salvation for sinners by redemption from the curse. Until God did this, sinners were of necessity separated from God.

Christ redeemed men from the curse of the law by being "made a curse" for them (Galatians 3:13). We do not pay the penalty for sin. Jesus did. He became a curse for us. He took our hell that we might have His heaven.

God made all the provision in grace. Our part is to accept the finished work of Christ in paying for our sin. We do this by faith. Have you accepted by faith that Jesus has suffered all that needs to be suffered for your sin? If you have, you have become a Christian. If you have not, will you do it now?

that you were not redeemed

In the first century "redeemed" conveyed the idea to purchase from the marketplace of sin. God sets Christians free as prisoners released from captivity.

In the Roman Empire, "redemption" was used primarily in relation to the slave market. When Rome conquered nations, it sold its citizens into slavery. The only possible way to gain freedom was that someone should buy them out of the slave market. Manumission of a slave necessitated the price of a ransom posited at the shrine of a god.

How did we become slaves to sin? How did we end up in the slave market of sin? Jesus said that if we commit one sin, we become slaves to sin (John 8:32-36). All members of the human race are, therefore, in the slave market of sin (Romans 3:10,23).

Jesus personally paid for our salvation. He came with the right purchasing power. He bought us out of the slave market of sin.

Principle

Jesus personally paid the price for our redemption.

Application

Redemption gives an individual the right to be forgiven because Jesus paid the price for forgiveness. This frees the forgiven person to live for God without strings attached. We love God freely because Jesus paid the price for our sins.

that you were not redeemed

Mark 10:45 sets forth the vicarious death of Christ for our sin, "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." The word "for" means "in place of." Jesus died in our place.

Jesus does for us what we cannot do for ourselves and what no other can do for us. He took our place of suffering for sin. Jesus vicariously suffered death on behalf of those who fall victim to death (Mark 14:24).

Jesus' vicarious ministry involved the necessity of dying. Mark 10:45 does not explain why God requires a ransom instead of just liberating us freely. God does not owe explanations to anyone but follows His own wise and righteous will.

Jesus accepted this. In doing so, He disclosed to us that His death was obedient service to God on the one hand and vicarious service for us on the other, whereby He secured our freedom from sin. By His death Jesus fulfilled the condition of God's standard for eternal life.

"Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood," (Acts 20: 28).

"being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus," (Romans 3: 24).

"But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought

them, and bring on themselves swift destruction," (II Peter 2: 1).

"And they sang a new song, saying: 'You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth,'" (Revelation 5: 9-10).

with corruptible things

Jesus redeemed us by a ransom paid to the Father. That ransom was not paid from corruptible things such as silver or gold. It was the precious blood of Christ that redeemed us (v.19).

"Corruptible" means liable to decay. Silver and gold can become oxidized and lose their value. Pure gold does not oxidize easily but much of the gold of the ancient world was not pure. Often this impure gold oxidized, ruining the beautiful metal by tarnishing. "Your gold and silver are corroded, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have heaped up treasure in the last days," (James 5:3).

Principle

Our redemption is eternal, not temporal.

Application

Gold is destructible but the blood of Christ indestructible. Gold and silver will one day lose their value but our salvation has eternal value.

Are you spending most of your energies on temporal things that will one day oxidize? Why not keep eternal values in view?

like silver or gold

"Silver or gold" were the most precious earthly metals at the time of writing of 1 Peter.

Gold was the most highly valued metal in the ancient world. Terms for gold are widespread throughout the world today even as the presence of gold or knowledge about gold is likewise almost universal. After gold, the next most highly valued metal in the ancient world was silver.

Valuable as these metals are, it is only the blood of Christ that can purchase our salvation. "Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among

which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood," (Acts 20: 28).

No human being other than Jesus Christ could purchase someone else out of the slave market of sin because every human being is in the slave market of sin. Under Roman law only a free person could purchase someone out of slavery.

Jesus is the only truly free man because He was the only man who was never a slave to sin. He was never in the slave market because He never sinned. He did not receive a sin nature because He did not have human father. Therefore, He was not a sinner by nature. Jesus is the only truly free person in God's economy. So Jesus was the only person eligible to purchase us from the slave market of sin.

If Jesus would not, or did not die for our sins, we would be forever lost! But He did die for our sins! If the commodity of salvation of the soul is so high that it cannot be purchased by money, religion or tradition, what is the purchasing power? Verse 19 answers that question: "but with the precious blood of Christ, as a lamb without blemish and without spot."

Principle

Only Jesus is eligible to save us from sin.

Application

We cannot buy salvation with money. Silver or gold are often snares to salvation. No amount of money will redeem us.

If someone kidnaps a child, people will pay any amount of money to rescue their loved one from the abductors. However, in the case of salvation no amount of money will ever purchase heaven for anyone. The ransom price is too high for any human to pay. Only Jesus was eligible to pay for our sins. We owe it all to Him.

from your aimless conduct

God not only redeems us from eternal death but from purposelessness. God's redemption extends to our daily manner of life. If our conduct yields no result, our manner of life is vain.

Acts 14:15 uses the term "aimless" for idolatrous practices: "Men, why are you doing these things?"

We also are men with the same nature as you, and preach to you that you should turn from these useless things to the living God, who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all things that are in them."

The gods of the nations are vain. Only the one true and living God, who is known as he makes himself known, can save us from futility. It is faith in God, however, which enables the Old Testament bluntly to extend the sphere of vanity to all values.

In 1 Corinthians 3:20 the thoughts of the wise are vain: "The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile."

Even Christian faith itself is futile if it does not rest on the historic fact of the resurrection. Our faith is vain if Christ is not risen: "And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins! 18Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished," (1 Corinthians 15:17).

Foolish questionings and strife are vain: "But avoid foolish disputes, genealogies, contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and useless," (Titus 3:9).

Religion with an unbridled tongue is vain: "If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is useless," (James 1:26).

Principle

God gives purpose to our lives in time.

Application

Do you have a clear idea of God's purpose for your life? God's purpose for us is to glorify himself. We do not glorify God if we have a loose tongue or if we live in constant conflict. God's ultimate purpose for us is that His character and work will be reflected in our lives.

from your aimless conduct

There are two Greek words for "vain." The word that does not occur in our passage means the absence of quality. This is the hollowness of anything. It is the absence of what otherwise might be possessed (Mark 12:3; Luke 1:53; 20:10,11; Ephesians 5:6; Colossians 2:8; James 2:20; 1 Corinthians 15:10; 2 Corinthians 6:1; 1 Corinthians 15:14; 1 Corinthians 15:58; Galatians

2:2; Philippians 2:16; I Thessalonians 2:1; 3:5). This is void of result. It marks the aimlessness of something. The vain man in James 2:20 is one who is empty of divinely imparted wisdom. This is a vainly of worthlessness.

The word "vain" in our passage means the absence of useful aim or effect. In James 1:26 vain religion is one that produces nothing profitable. This religion is worthless because it is ineffectual.

"Aimless" implies antithesis to the norm.

"Aimless" indicates that we do not measure up to God's standard. We unsuccessfully attempt to measure up (Romans 3:10,23).

Later Greek thought made little use of "aimless," perhaps because it raised unsettling questions and involved self-contradiction. The Old Testament, however, did not evade the question. Many Hebrew words pour their negative content into "aimless." Human help is vain: "Give us help from trouble, For the help of man is useless," (Psalm 60:11). Proverbs 31:30 characterizes beauty as vain: "Charm is deceitful and beauty is passing, But a woman who fears the Lord, she shall be praised." Controversies and dissension are without purpose: "But avoid foolish disputes, genealogies, contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and useless," (Titus 3:9).

Principle

Christianity gives aim to life.

Application

One reason some people enter into controversy is they do not have a worthy aim for their lives. They live in a vacuum. They do not carry norms that give boundaries to their lives. Anything is fair game.

The Christian who lives to the glory of God falls heir to His boundaries. This gives definition to His life.

from your aimless conduct

"Conduct" means way of life, behavior. Paul uses this term of himself when he says, "you have heard of my conduct when I was still in Judaism," (Galatians 1:13).

God wants us to put off the lifestyle we lived before we received Christ: "Among whom also we

all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others," (Ephesians 2:3). "That you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts," (Ephesians 4: 22) "and delivered righteous Lot, who was oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked," (2 Peter 2: 7)

This is not to say that conduct is wrong in itself. The New Testament uses the word "conduct" in a positive sense many times: 1 Peter 1:15 uses this term in the good sense, "but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct." Phil. 1: 27 Says, "Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel." 2 Corinthians 1: 12 Says, "For our boasting is this: the testimony of our conscience that we conducted ourselves in the world in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom but by the grace of God, and more abundantly toward you."

received by tradition from your fathers

"Tradition" means handed down from the fathers. "Tradition" teaches what has been handed down from ancestors.

Principle

Tradition has no value in our salvation.

Application

Is your Christianity a hand-me-down religion? Have you personally owned the dynamics of Christian living for yourself?

Many people accept what they have been taught without searching it out for themselves. The Bible wants us to find out for ourselves what is true (Acts 17:11).

