

1 Peter 1 Expositional

by Chuck Smith

This sermon by Peter emphasizes the importance of being chosen and sanctified by God, highlighting the Trinity, predestination, and the need for faith in God's sovereignty and human responsibility. It delves into the concept of being born again through the incorruptible seed of God's Word, leading to unfeigned love and a transformed life. The message encourages believers to pass their time on Earth in reverence of God, living holy lives and loving one another fervently.

Scripture: 1 Peter 1:2, Romans 8:29, 1 Peter 1:23, 1 Peter 1:22, 1 Peter 1:3, 1 Peter 1:4, 1 Peter 1:7, 1 Peter 1:18, 1 Peter 1:23

Topics: "Chosen by God", "Living a Transformed Life"

Description

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Transcript

First, Peter, as we pick up now our journey through the Bible, chapter one, he introduces himself as Peter and an apostle of Jesus Christ. Peter is one of those who was called of Christ from being a disciple to being an apostle. You remember he chose 12 that he called as apostles.

And Peter was one of the 12 called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ. He is writing to the strangers, that is, they are strangers in the land where they are living. They are Jews, but they've been scattered abroad for different reasons, persecutions and other things.

And they are in the area that he is listing here of what is the present day Turkey. And so they are scattered through Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. But he calls them elect according to the foreknowledge of God, the Father, and through the sanctification of the Spirit, under the obedience and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.

So there you have, again, one of the places in the New Testament where the Trinity is mentioned. Now the word Trinity is not in the Bible, and there are many people that make a big deal over the fact that the word Trinity doesn't exist in the Bible. In reality, the word Millennium is not in the Bible, but that is in our

English Bible.

It is in the Latin Bible. Millennium is in Latin, millianum, and it is a thousand years. And so we do read in our English Bible, you know, the thousand-year reign of Christ.

But the Trinity is spoken of and mentioned throughout the Bible. And so here you have, you're elect according to the foreknowledge of God, the Father, sanctified by the Spirit, and then the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, grace unto you and peace be multiplied. Elect according to the foreknowledge of God, whom he did foreknow.

He does also predestinate. One of the attributes of God is that he is omniscient. By omniscient, we mean that God knows everything that is to be known or can be known.

Knowing everything, he can't learn anything. If he could learn something, then he is not omniscient. As James said, known unto him are all things from the beginning.

He's God, knows all things. So if God will ever know who is going to be saved, God has always known who is going to be saved. And so we're elect according to the foreknowledge of God.

Now, that doesn't take away from the fact that we have a responsibility to accept Jesus Christ. The Bible says there are many called, few are chosen. God has called all to repentance.

Not all do repent. God does know those who will repent. God knows those that won't repent.

And no man can say, well, God has ordained that I should be lost. Because all you have to do is believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved. So you can't throw it off on God and try and blame God for your condition.

We are each one responsible to respond to God as that is our responsibility. And God just knows those that are going to respond to him. You get into something like this and it just, you know, you have a brain that weighs about eight ounces.

And there are limitations. Trying to understand an infinite God with an eight ounce brain is just an impossibility. And to understand all of the nuances and all, it just, it's not within our capacity or ability.

And so in this business between the sovereignty of God and the responsibility of man, and I wrestled with that when I was in Bible college and I was reading a book on the sovereignty of God. And I became so confused and upset, I actually threw the book across the room. Sort of like when Martin Luther threw the inkwell across the room, I threw the book across the room.

I was frustrated. I said, I can't understand it. And because I believed in human responsibility, but here I was reading about the sovereignty of God and it just was so confusing.

I was frustrated through the book and with, I just can't understand it. And I felt that God spoke to me and said, I didn't ask you to understand it. I only asked you to believe it.

I said, well, I can do that. So I believe in the sovereignty of God. I do believe also in the responsibility of man.

You say, how do you reconcile that? I can't, but I believe it. So believing what you can't reconcile or understand is the place of faith. You only need faith where you don't understand.

If you understand it, you've got logic, reason. And isn't it interesting how we hate faith? I want to understand it. I want to be able to logically figure it out in my mind.

But to me, I can't figure it out. So I just believe it. And you say, well, you've got a mixed kind of emotion.

Well, yeah, all right. Say what you want. But I believe them both, though I can't reconcile them in my mind.

But we are elect according to his foreknowledge. Now, this predestination and foreknowledge and election and chosen and all are all tied with the foreknowledge of God and sanctified by the Spirit. That is, the word sanctified means to be set apart.

And here, God has set us apart for his purposes. That's what sanctification is all about. The Holy Spirit has sanctified us, set us apart for his purposes unto the obedience and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.

So grace unto you, and peace be multiplied. Grace and peace, they're a part of Paul's salutation in most of his epistles. They are referred to sometimes as the Siamese twins of the New Testament because they are always coupled together, grace and peace, coupled together.

They're always coupled together in that order. You never read peace and grace be multiplied. But it is always grace and peace.

Grace always precedes peace. And that's because grace precedes peace. Until you understand the grace of God, you can never know the peace of God.

Until you understand the grace of God, you're always going to be struggling. You're always going to be trying to do a little better, to do a little harder, and you won't have peace because you'll always be sort of dissatisfied with your present development. Until you realize that God accepts you as you are, and his grace has been manifested unto us, and the blessings of God are predicated not on my worth, my deserving, because I don't deserve it, but they're predicated upon his grace.

For years, I sought to earn the blessings of God. I sought to sort of obligate God to bless me. In fastings and in many different ways, I was trying to sort of obligate God to bless me.

And when I was trying to earn the blessings of God, they were few and far between, because I was always conscious of my own weakness and failure. When I discovered the grace of God, that God will bless me and does bless me, though I am not deserving, though I am not worthy, but he just loves to bless me because he loves me. When I discovered the grace of God, the blessings have never stopped.

They are constantly coming my way because I am just believing God to bless me because of his grace toward me. And now I have wonderful peace. I'm not struggling and trying to please God by my efforts.

I'm just enjoying the grace of God, and thus I have that peace of God. Grace and peace be multiplied. Now he gets sort of into the letter itself.

That's the opening salutation. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his abundant mercy has begotten us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the

dead. Paul here is, I mean, Peter here is talking about this abundant mercy of God.

Now, we had in the previous verse the grace of God. Now we have the mercy of God. Blessed be God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his abundant mercy.

How great is God's mercy? In Psalm we read, as high as the heavens are above the earth, so high is his mercy over us. How high are the heavens above the earth? We really don't know, do we? 15 billion light years. That's what some of them are estimating.

Pretty high. As high as the heavens are above the earth, so high is mercy. That sort of amuses me because sometimes people feel that they have exhausted the mercies of God.

Sometimes I see people that I think surely they must have. But as high as the heavens are above the earth, oh, the mercy of God, so great. According to his abundant mercy, he has begotten us again.

This is talking about being born again. As Jesus said to Nicodemus, you've got to be born again if you want to see the kingdom of God. And this new birth, the birth of the spirit.

As Jesus was talking to Nicodemus, he said that which is born of the flesh is flesh. That which is born of the spirit is spirit. You've got to have a spiritual birth.

And thus, blessed be God, who by him, we have been begotten. We have this spiritual birth. And it brings to us a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

When Jesus was ministering with his disciples, a hope had developed within them for the kingdom of God. They had become convinced that Jesus was the Messiah. They were looking forward to him establishing the kingdom of God.

They were looking forward to the fulfillment of those Old Testament scriptures that spoke of the glorious kingdom of God. When they would beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks and they would study war no more. Where the lion and the lamb would lie down together and a little child would lead them.

And the kingdom of God would be established here upon the earth. And Jesus would reign in righteousness and in peace. And that is the Messiah.

And they thought that this is it. Jesus is the Messiah. He's going to bring peace and he's going to establish God's kingdom here on the earth.

And they were excited. But then when Jesus was crucified, suddenly that hope that they had died. They were discouraged.

They were confused. As the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, as Jesus joined with them incognito, and they began to talk to him about how that Jesus of Nazareth, he went around doing good. He was healing people and we had hoped in him for the salvation of Israel.

But they crucified him. The hope was gone. They were discouraged.

They didn't know what they were going to do. And so Jesus said, oh foolish, slow of heart to believe all of the things that the prophets have spoken. And he began with Moses and he went through the prophets

and gave to them all of the scriptures that dealt with the suffering of the Messiah, the death of the Messiah.

He opened up the scriptures to them. I only wish that God would have inspired Cleopas, one of those who was on the way to Emmaus. If the Lord would only have inspired him to write a book in the Bible, the book of Cleopas, where Cleopas would give to us that discourse of Jesus, where Jesus opened up the scriptures and showed them all of the scriptures that related to his suffering and his death and all.

Oh, would I love to have had that. But that's because I'm lazy and I don't want to just search them all out for myself. But the hope that was dead is now alive.

When Jesus rose from the dead, it brought new life to the hope that they had for the establishing of the kingdom of God here on earth. We still tonight have that hope, that blessed hope of the glorious appearing of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who is coming to establish the kingdom of God. The idea of a new earth in which righteousness reigns in which the beauties that are described of the new earth will be realized, where sin will be banished and we will live in harmony and in love without wars and strivings and all.

That hope is still alive and we are waiting for the fulfillment of that hope. And the darker the conditions of the world become and I don't know how they can become much darker, the brighter is that hope that we have of the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, to establish God's kingdom here on the earth. So the resurrection from the dead.

As Paul said to the Corinthians, you know, if Christ isn't risen, then we are of all men most miserable. Those who have died in faith in Christ have perished. And if our hope is in this world only, it's just sad.

We have a hope of a future world in which Jesus will reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. He has also given to us an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and fades not away and is reserved in heaven for you who are being kept by the power of God through faith. This glorious inheritance, if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ.

Jesus said in that day, he will say to those on his right hand, come ye blessed of the Father, inherit the kingdom that was prepared for you from the foundation of the earth. When Jesus comes to establish his kingdom, he will be coming with the saints to establish the kingdom. We'll be coming with him to establish God's kingdom upon the earth.

And so we will inherit this glorious kingdom of God that is incorruptible, undefiled, and is not going to fade away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. As we mentioned this morning, relationship is twofold. There is a responsibility in a relationship towards each other in the relationship.

In developing a relationship with God, there is God's part and there is our part. Peter here tells us God's part. He has begotten us again.

We are born again by the Spirit of God. I can't create a spiritual birth. I can't produce a spiritual birth.

I'm born again by the Spirit of God. And so we have been begotten, God's work, to this living hope by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. God did that.

I had nothing to do with raising Jesus from the dead or his being risen from the dead. That's God's work. The inheritance, that's God's work again.

And I am an heir because I am now a child because I've been born again. But that's all God's work. It fades not away.

It's reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God. I can't keep myself. God keeps me.

Now unto him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. And so we are kept by the power of God. That's God's part.

Now he gets to our part through faith. That's all God requires for that relationship. It's a relationship of faith.

I believe what God has said. I believe that God is who he says he is. I believe that God will do what he said he will do.

And that's my part, just believing. No works that I can do to be accepted. Jesus Christ has done the work.

It's a finished work. God has kept his part. I must keep my part.

I must just simply believe what God has done. Through faith, revealed, ready to be revealed in the last times. We're in the last times, won't be long.

We're gonna see this glorious kingdom of God. We're in, we greatly rejoice. Though now for a season, if need be, you're in heaviness because of the many trials or tribulations that you're going through.

We rejoice in the hope of the future. We look at the world today and the conditions in the world today and the problems of the world today, and it causes a heavy heart. It causes heaviness.

But this is only for a time. The glorious day of the Lord is coming and we're going to enjoy this wonderful inheritance of the saints in light. So the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

We are told not to despise the fiery trials that are to try us or not to look at them as though some strange thing has happened to us. And we as Christians do experience testings fiery trials. You remember when John the Baptist was baptizing and many came and they were wondering who John was.

Is he the Messiah? And he said, no, I'm not. I'm just the voice of one crying in the wilderness. I'm here to prepare the way of the Lord or the way for the Lord.

But John, the Bible said, did baptize, but John said, there is one who is coming after me. He is mightier than I am. And he's going to baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

Now, there have been people that have misinterpreted that fire as a great emotional experience. And they talk about, well, I have the fire of the Holy Spirit what's God, hallelujah and all that. And they interpret that as the fire that is being referred to of the baptism of Jesus with the Holy Spirit.

The fire is a purifying fire. It doesn't make you want to stand up and shout and raise your hands. It really just burns out the dross.

And it's the testings that God has designed for purification, burning out the dross in our lives. And it's an important for us. And so here he talks about gold purified by the fire, heating the gold until the dross is burned out and the gold then is pure.

And so the trial of our faith is that of purifying us. And so if God has you going through a hard experience, a testing, we're told that we're to rejoice in it because it has its effect of purifying our lives for the Lord and for service. Throughout the New Testament, there's a lot that has been written concerning the purifying effect of the testings that we go through.

Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount, blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when men revile you, persecute you, say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice, he said, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so persecuted they the prophets that were before you.

So trials, tribulation, persecutions, God is using them in our lives to purify. Jesus in Luke said, blessed are you when men shall hate you. They'll separate you from their company.

They will reproach you. They will cast out your name as evil for the son of man's sake, but rejoice in that day. In fact, leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven, for in like manner did their fathers to the prophets.

In Acts 5.41, after the disciples were beaten and commanded not to speak anymore the name of Jesus, it said they departed from the council rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. That's what Jesus told them to do, rejoice in that day, leap for joy. And you know, you're in good company.

That's the prophets of God in the Old Testament went through those same experiences. Paul tells us in Romans 8.17, if we are children, then we are heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. If so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that's going to be revealed in us. Our present trials, which are for a moment, he said, works in exceeding eternal weight of glory. They used to sing, I'm so glad that trouble don't last always.

There was this lady who was in the church where they had opportunity to stand up and testify. And she was testifying of going through this real heavy trial. And she just said, Lord, I need a scripture to help me.

And she said, I just opened up my Bible and it opened up to Luke chapter two. And I read the first verse. And she said, I was just so blessed.

I'm just thanking the Lord. He gave me such comfort and hope from Luke 2.1. Well, the pastor, knowing that Luke 2.1 said, and it came to pass in those days that there went on to decree from Caesar Augustus that the whole world should be taxed. He thought, how in the world can this scripture bring a blessing to this lady? I mean, she's so excited and so happy.

And so he said, sister, set up a moment again. He said, you said that it was through Luke 2.1 that the Lord spoke to you and you're so blessed and all because you were going through all of these heavy things and that gave you hope and excitement. How does that happen? She said, well, I opened it up and I just read and it came to pass.

She said, that's all I needed. It didn't come to stay, it came to pass. The Lord said, it's just come to pass, you know.

It is true. Our present trials, which are but for a moment, they've come to pass. They work an eternal weight of glory.

So Paul said that the Lord said to him and through all of his trials, my grace is sufficient for you. My strength is made perfect in weakness. So Paul responded most gladly, therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities that the power of Christ might rest upon me.

Therefore I take pleasure in my infirmities and reproaches in the necessities, in the persecutions, in the distresses for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then am I strong. Back in James, our last book that we just went through, chapter one, James said, my brethren, count it all joy when you fall into diverse temptations.

Here in first Peter, when we get to chapter four, we'll read, if you are reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye for the spirit of the glory of God rests upon you and on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part, he is glorified. So here, the trial of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes though it's tried with the fire might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Christ. When we get down to verse 19 tonight, but with the precious blood of Christ as a lamb without spot and blemish.

We, why did I put that in? I don't, what was my thought when I jotted down that one? Well, maybe when we get there, I'll remember. Okay, whom having not seen, you love. I love this one.

We've come to love Jesus Christ, though we haven't seen him. Having not seen him, we love him. And though we do not see him now, yet believing, we rejoice with joy that is unspeakable and full of glory.

Loving him, haven't seen him, but I love him. And I rejoice in the hope of the kingdom of God, a joy that is unspeakable or indescribable, and it's full of glory. It's interesting that the emotions that we experience as Christians are so intense that they have to be described with superlatives.

It just doesn't talk about joy. Oh, he gives you such joy. No, he gives you joy that is indescribable.

It's full of glory. He doesn't just give you love, but he gives you overflowing love. He doesn't just give you peace.

He gives you peace that passes human understanding. And so the rejoicing with joy that's indescribable and full of glory, receiving the end, the end result of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. Of which salvation? The prophets have inquired and searched diligently who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you.

They were searching what or what manner of time the spirit of Christ which was in them did signify when he testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. The prophets in the Old Testament, they were writing by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. All scripture is given by inspiration of God.

And thus inspired by God, they were writing these things. But as they were writing these things, they wondered, what does that mean? Because they were writing of the death of Jesus, the Messiah. They

were writing of the suffering of the Messiah.

And yet they were writing of his glorious rule and reign. And they couldn't put it together in their mind concerning the Messiah. How is it that they are writing of his suffering, his death as Psalm 22, Isaiah 53 and other passages, being despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrow acquainted with grief, submitting his back to the smiters and they're plucking out his beard, pulling out his beard and so forth, the abuse of the Messiah.

But yet talking about that he's going to sit on the throne of David, he will order it and establish it in righteousness and in judgment from henceforth even forever. And how do you put these things together? They wrote them because God was inspiring them to write, but they were writing things that they didn't understand themselves. They were trying to figure it out.

How can this be? Of course, we have the advantage of looking back. We can now see how it all fits together. We can see how that Jesus did suffer death, that by his suffering death, he might bring life to all of us.

We do see that there are two comings of the Lord. His first coming to give himself as a sacrifice for our sins. The second coming to reign in glory over the kingdom of God that he will establish upon the earth.

So now from our standpoint, we understand it, they didn't. And thus they were just writing and not understanding the things that they were writing about, trying to figure it all out. So they inquired and they were searching diligently as they prophesied of the grace that should come to you.

As they were searching, what manner of time the spirit of Christ, which was in them, did signify when it testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed that not unto themselves, but unto us, they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them which have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven, which things the angels desired to look into. The Bible tells us concerning angels that they are ministering spirits.

They've been sent forth to minister to those who are heirs of salvation. Creation of God, when God made man, he made us a little lower than the angels, but they are servants of God. And we know very little about them, but we know that he has given his angels charge over us to keep us in all of our ways, to bear us up lest at any time we should dash our foot against a stone.

But they can't quite understand the grace that God has bestowed unto us. The Old Testament writers, when they wrote of it, they didn't understand it. But the angels desire to look into it.

I've often wondered about these angels as they are observing us, what they must think as they see us fretting and worried and filled with anxiety and all over our conditions. And they, I think, are just sort of saying to themselves, what's wrong with them? Don't they have the scriptures? Don't they know what God is going to be doing? And why are they so upset? Why are they so worried? And I'm sure that we are a real enigma to the angels. Now, I don't know why God placed the responsibility of preaching the gospel to man.

I think that angels could have done a much better job. And I think that Gabriel would probably say, okay, Chuck, just step aside, let me explain it. But yet God has chosen that, you know, through human instruments, his love be brought to man, his word be brought to man.

And so we do our best to share the truths of God, but yet so limited. And angels desiring to look into it. Now, we have a great advantage over the Old Testament prophets and the men of the Old Testament.

They couldn't see what we see today. As the revelation of God has been a progressive revelation, and as Jesus did come according to the scriptures, died according to the scriptures, rose again according to the scriptures, ascended into heaven according to the scriptures, and is going to be coming again. Now, we're in this sort of valley between the two peaks, the peaks of the first coming of Christ and the peak of the second coming.

We're in the valley in between the two peaks right now, but, you know, it's going to happen and it's going to be glorious when it does happen. So, wherefore, and wherefore always leads you back to what he's just been telling you about, this message that God revealed to the prophets they couldn't understand it, angels desire to look into it, but wherefore, gird up the loins of your mind. In other words, get serious about your study of the word.

Gird up the loins of your mind. Be sober and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you by the revelation of Jesus Christ. Looking ahead, looking forward to what the Bible promises God is going to do and the revelation of Jesus Christ, that is, when he comes again and is revealed, that we need to be looking forward to this, this glorious hope at the end when Jesus comes again and establishes his kingdom.

As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lust in your ignorance. Before the birth of the spirit, because of the fact that the spirit of man died when Adam sinned, by one man sin entered the world and death by sin so that death passed unto all men for all sin. And because of Adam's sin, the spiritual death and Jesus saying to Nicodemus, if you wanna enter the kingdom of heaven, you gotta have a spiritual birth.

That which is born of the flesh is flesh, that which is born of the spirit is spirit. Don't marvel that I say you've got to be born again. So until we are born again, the spirit is dead, we are just a twofold being, body and mind.

And our mind is occupied with our body needs. Our physical bodies have certain needs. They call them drives.

And the natural man, unregenerate man, does not understand the things of the spirit, neither can he know them, they are spiritually deserved. But he is living according to the needs of his flesh or the desires of his flesh. And that is just the way he is and he can't be any other way because the spirit is dead.

And so that frustration of trying to satisfy the lust of the flesh. The worst thing you can do for lust is to feed it because as you feed it, it only grows. You don't satisfy, but it only creates a greater lust.

If you have a lust for wealth, and that is what you are pursuing and seeking after, the more you get, the more you'll want. You'll never satisfy that lust, it will only grow. And so with any lust of our flesh, if you feed it, it will grow.

Paul said, if we by the spirit do mortify the lust of the flesh, then we'll live. Or put it to death, deny it. But here he talks about as obedient children, not fashioning ourselves according to the former lust, not living after these former lusts, as we once did in ignorance, thinking that we could satisfy, thinking if I can just have a little more, I'll be satisfied.

But as he which has called you is holy, you be holy in all manner of conversation. Now, this word conversation will be used a lot here in Peter's writing, and it is a word that doesn't mean let's have a conversation, let's sit down and have a, it means the total manner of living. It's sort of a description of the way you live, your manner of life.

And thus, he is telling us that we need to be holy in our whole manner of living, living in holiness, because it is written, be ye holy, for I am holy. Now, if you call on the Father, who without respect to persons, judges according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here on earth, while you're here, pass it in fear, or in reverence of God, awe of God. God, when he judges, is going to judge without partiality.

Man's judgment is fallible. There are certain people who because of their fame or whatever, those that are in judgment are fallible in their judging because they have respect to persons. I think a classic example was O.J. Simpson.

And I don't think that there's any doubt in people's mind concerning his guilt, and yet we know that he got off free from the murder of his wife and the fellow she was with. But I think that most of us would agree that he was guilty, but yet respect of persons. And of course, she had said, he's gonna kill me and he's gonna get by with it because he's O.J. Simpson.

And so hard for us to have impartial judgment, not for God. No one's going to fool God. No one's going to impress God with who they were while they were here on Earth and what they may have accomplished while they were here on Earth.

That won't impress God one bit. He will judge and will be holy in judgment. There's no respect of persons.

He judges everyone according to truth, according to our work. And thus, while we're here on Earth, pass the time in reverence of God, in awe of God, knowing that one day we will be judged by God. For as much as you know that you were redeemed not with corruptible things like silver or gold from the vain conversation or the vain manner of living received by tradition from your fathers.

And so he's again writing to the Jews and of course their religion was full of traditions. Jesus rebuked them because they were teaching for doctrine just the traditions of man. And they've been redeemed, Peter said, not with corruptible things.

Silver and gold are corruptible things from this vain life, empty life that they were living. But they were redeemed with the precious blood of Jesus as a lamb without blemish and without spot. So this vain manner of living, very descriptive.

Solomon was a man who sought answers by feeding the lust of his flesh. Solomon amassed more wealth than any man before him. And Solomon sought by many different means to satisfy this emptiness that he felt inside, trying to fill the lust of his flesh.

And he talks about the various things that he did, the various things that he acquired in order to satisfy his life, this manner of living. And when he had done it all, he said, there wasn't a single thing that I withheld from myself of all that I desired, didn't hold back. He had the money, he had all that was necessary to fulfill every possible kind of dream.

Having done it, what was his conclusion? Vanity, vanity, or emptiness, emptiness. Everything is empty and frustrating. He did it all and ended up totally empty.

Vain manner of living. If you live after the flesh, it's a vain manner of living. But we've been redeemed from that, not with corruptible things, such like silver and gold.

You know, it would not be a meaningful thing if God redeemed you with silver or gold. Because God can create all of the silver and gold he desires, he's God. All of the silver and gold that does exist, he created.

What is so precious here, the silver and gold, is asphalt in heaven. They paved the streets with it up there. So what is so valuable and all here, you know, has no value up there.

And thus, because he can create all of the gold he wants to redeem you with gold would be meaningless. I believe that when we get to heaven, and we have the opportunity to take the universal tour, and we travel around through the galaxies, that I believe that as we are traveling through the galaxies, we'll come to a galaxy and the angel will say, the next galaxy that we're approaching with its hundred million stars and planets and all, is all pure gold. It's called the golden galaxy.

And we'll see that God created a whole galaxy of gold. I think there'll be another one of diamonds. And they'll say, you know, this next galaxy is the diamond galaxy.

And those things that are so valuable or precious to us here are just things. God couldn't redeem us with those because he created them all and he can create all he wants. He created or he redeemed us with something far more valuable.

There's only one. He is the only begotten son of God. And he gave him to redeem us.

The most precious thing because of the rarity. There is only one, no more created, just one existing with the father and the father sacrificed him in order to redeem us from our sin. And so we know that we were not redeemed with corruptible things such as silver and gold from that empty life that we were living, but with the precious blood of Christ as a lamb without blemish or without spot.

In the Old Testament, where God had set up the law and the sacrifices for sin, if you sinned, you would have to bring a lamb for a sin offering. The priest would inspect the lamb. It had to be without blemish or without spot.

Blemish was an acquired impurity. Maybe the lamb had been attacked by the wolf and there were scars. You couldn't use it as a sacrifice for a sin offering.

Maybe it had a birth defect. You couldn't use it because the spot was a birth defect. Had to be without blemish and without spot to be the sacrifice.

Jesus was born without sin. He did not acquire any sin. He lived a sinless life.

He was without blemish. He was without spot, a perfect life. And thus he was sacrificed for us as the perfect sacrifice without blemish or without spot.

Who verily was foreordained when? Before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you. The Bible speaks of Christ being crucified from the foundations of the earth. It was God's plan from the beginning to send his son to be the sacrifice for our sins.

He knew that Adam was going to fail. God wasn't taken by surprise, but God wanted to manifest how much he loves us though we failed and though we were in sin. He wanted to manifest to us the depth and the immensity of his love.

And thus he allowed Adam to sin. He allowed sin to have its devastating effect in the world in which we live. So that when he sent his only begotten son to die for our sins, we would realize the depth of God's love for us.

Never question God's love. If ever there is the question and you might say, God, do you really love me? And sometimes when things are going bad, we have that question, God, do you really love me? All God does is just point to the cross. There's the proof of his love for you, allowing his only begotten son to suffer for you, to die for you, to take your sin upon himself and die in your place.

So we've been redeemed with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish and without spot because he was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in, as Peter said, these last times for you, as Peter was, of course, writing of the death of Christ during their lifetime. Who by him do believe in God that raised him from the dead and gave him glory that your faith and your hope might be in God. So God's eternal purposes, God's eternal plans, that you might have your faith and your hope in God.

Seeing that you've purified your souls in obeying the truth through the spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren. Unfeigned love. There's a lot of feigned love today.

God wants us to have unfeigned love, true love, Valentine's Day, true love. There's a lot of feigned love on Valentine's Day. Things that are said on the Valentine's and so forth is often not really sincere.

It's not true love, but it's sort of a faked love. We're to have unfeigned love for each other. And seeing that you've purified your souls in obeying the truth through the spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that you love one another with a pure heart fervently.

Now, it's interesting to me that when Jesus was questioning Peter there at the Sea of Galilee after his resurrection, his question to Peter was, Peter, lovest thou me more than these? Whatever the these were, the other disciples or the 153 fish that were flopping in the net. Do you love me more than these? Jesus used this word agape, which is a divine fervent love, a supreme love, ultimate love. Do you love me ultimately above everything else? Peter in his answer said, yea, Lord, I love you.

But Peter used a different word for love, phileo, which is a love in a lesser degree. It is a love of fondness and it could be translated, you know I am fond of you. Jesus asked the second time, Peter, do you love me? Again, using the word agapas or agape.

And again, Peter said, yea, Lord, you know that I phileo you, I am fond of you. The third time Jesus said, Peter, lovest thou me? And he used Peter's word. He said, are you fond of me? And Peter was grieved because the third time, Jesus said, are you fond of me? And he said, Lord, you know that I am fond of you.

You know all things, you know I'm fond of you. It's interesting that as Peter is telling us to love, he's using the word agape. He couldn't use it when he was with Jesus there at the Sea of Galilee.

But throughout his epistle, he doesn't use this fond phileo word, but he uses the agape word as he tells us of the love that we're to have, that unfeigned love for the brethren, love one another with a pure heart,

fervently. Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible by the word of God, which lives and abides forever. We are born again by this incorruptible seed, which is the word of God.

Now, a seed is very interesting because a seed is encapsulated DNA, which has the pattern, the design, to reproduce, to bring forth after its kind. It's a very complex thing, but the potential to reproduce the peach is in the peach seed. Plant it, you get a peach tree, and it produces peaches.

All of the information for the tree, for the fruit and all, is all encoded in the DNA in the peach seed, or whatever seed you might be having, the encoded information to reproduce itself. The word of God, incorruptible seed, has in it the encoded information to reproduce Christ in you. And that, to me, is exciting.

As you plant the seed in your fertile soil of your heart, God's word in you will reproduce the likeness of Christ through you. And that, to me, is just an exciting, exciting thing. The incorruptible by the word of God, which lives and abides forever.

For all flesh is as grass, and as the glory of man, and as the flower of the grass, the grass will wither, the flower will fall away, but the word of the Lord endures forever, and this is the word by which the gospel is preached unto you. So the power of God's word. Jesus said, now you are clean through the word that I have spoken unto you.

David said, thy word will I hide in my heart, that I might not sin against you. The power of God's word in us is just an exciting, wonderful thing. It's come to me, the scripture that I was reading earlier out of place.

First Peter 1.7, the trial of your faith being much more precious. Verse 19, with the precious blood of Christ. Now precious is really, to me, a feminine word.

I mean, you can understand women talking about, oh, isn't that precious? It's not really a word in my vocabulary. I have other words I would use to describe things, but women, they seem to like that word precious. Oh, that's so precious.

Peter is a big, rough, rugged fisherman, fisherman, and yet he seems to like this word precious, and he uses it seven times in his epistles. Big, old, tough Peter talking about, isn't that precious? That's great, only the Lord can do that. I'd like to read a poem.

I needed the quiet, so he drew me aside into the shadows where we could confide. Away from the bustle where all the day long I hurried and worried when active and strong. I needed the quiet, though at first I rebelled, but gently, so gently, my cross he upheld.

And he whispered so sweetly of spiritual things, though weakened in body, my spirit took wings. To heights never dreamed of when active and gay, he loved me so greatly, he drew me away. I needed the quiet, no prison my bed, but a beautiful valley of blessings instead, a place to grow richer in Jesus to hide.

I needed the quiet, so he drew me aside. Sometimes the Lord has a purpose in just sort of drawing us aside, weaknesses that we might feel in order that we might just become more intimate in our fellowship and in our relationship with him. Father, we thank you for, again, the opportunity of reading and studying the word tonight.

And we thank you for the word that it is like a seed planted in our hearts. Let it bring forth fruit in our lives, Lord, the precious fruit that will be pleasing, Lord, to you. And so, Father, guide us, strengthen us, use us this week in a special way.

Manifest to us your presence, your love, and your power in our lives. And Lord, when we are weak, may we learn to rely upon your strength. Guide us, Lord, in your wisdom.

Let us become instruments, Lord, through which you can accomplish your purposes in this sinful world. May our lives shine with the light of Jesus Christ, illuminating the darkness of the world around us. In his name we pray, amen.

Shall we stand? May the Lord be with you. Watch over and keep you in his love. Cause you to abound in all things in Christ Jesus.

Pastors are down here to pray for you if there are any needs in your life. We invite you to come on down and let them pray with you, pray for you. The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much, and God can meet your needs tonight.

Just give him that opportunity to do so. May the Lord go with you, keep his hand upon you, cause you to abound in all things in Christ Jesus, our Lord. I love you, Lord, and I lift my voice to worship you.

Oh, my soul, rejoice. Take joy, my King, in what you hear. May it be a sweet, sweet sound in your ear.

God bless you.

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