

# (Through the Bible) 1 Peter 1-2

by Chuck Smith

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*Chuck Smith's sermon on 1 Peter emphasizes the living hope and identity of believers amidst trials, grounded in God's election and the resurrection of Christ.*

**Duration:** 1:32:27

**Scripture:** Isaiah 53:6, Acts 26:18, Romans 8:14, 1 Peter 1:3-4, 1 Peter 2:2, 1 Peter 2:9, 1 Peter 2:24

**Topics:** "Spiritual Growth", "Gods Word"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of partaking in the Word of God. He explains that relying solely on one's own strength and knowledge will leave them weak and unprepared for trials. However, by immersing oneself in the Word and understanding the goodness and graciousness of God, they will be strengthened and equipped to face challenges. The speaker expresses joy in witnessing new believers eagerly devouring the Word and encourages the audience to desire the sincere milk of the Word for spiritual growth. He concludes by reminding them of their purpose to show forth the praises of God through their lives, as they have been called out of darkness into His marvelous light.

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## Transcript

Tonight let's turn to 1 Peter chapter 1. Of the many disciples that were following Jesus, he chose twelve to be apostles. One of the twelve that was chosen as an apostle was Simon Peter. Simon Peter was, by profession, a fisherman.

He was called by the Lord from fishing for those St. Peter's fish in the Sea of Galilee to become a fisher of men and was a very impulsive person by nature, according to tradition a very big man, physically. He became one of the leaders in the church. And now he is writing his first epistle, introducing himself as Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers, the words translated scattered there is the Greek word dispersed, throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia.

During the beginnings of the early church, there arose persecution against the church in Jerusalem. And as the result of that persecution, many of the Christians were scattered abroad throughout the world. And it is to these Christians who have been dispersed as the result of persecution, which is recorded in the book of Acts, that Peter is addressing this epistle.

Primarily to the Jewish believers, scattered because of the persecution in Jerusalem. But the epistle does also include Gentile believers, as is noted in chapter 2, verse 10. He calls them elect, according to the

foreknowledge of God.

There is the doctrine of election. God having elected those who would be the heirs of salvation. The election of God is based upon his foreknowledge.

You do not read of election apart from the foreknowledge of God. Now if you believe that God does know all things, you should have no problem with the doctrine of election. If you have a limited God that has only limited knowledge, then you could have problems with the doctrine of election.

Paul tells us in Ephesians 1 that we were chosen in him before the foundations of the world. Here, election according to the foreknowledge of God. Now, let's put it this way.

Does God know everything? We believe that he does. Known unto him are all things, James said, from the beginning. If God knows all things, then God can't learn anything.

It's impossible for him to learn anything because he already knows it. If God is ever going to know anything, then he already knows it. You see, the problem that we have is living within this time continuum.

We think of everything as Chuck Missler says in the Linear. But God is outside of our time dimension. And looking down from his vantage, you can see the beginning and the ending at the same time.

And so he knows all things from the beginning. So if God will ever know who is going to be saved, then he has always known who is going to be saved. That's God's foreknowledge.

And as a result of that foreknowledge, knowing those that would respond to his love and to his grace through Jesus Christ, he has elected that they should be the children of God. And so the election according to foreknowledge. And Peter, in several places here, does bring out this idea of called and elected and all, and the foreknowledge of God involved with it.

Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father through the work of the Holy Spirit within our lives, that sanctification or being set apart by the Spirit, unto the obedience and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. So the work of the Trinity in our salvation. Elect according to the foreknowledge of God.

Set apart by the Spirit of God. And then cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ. To those, he said, grace and peace be multiplied.

Keres, the typical Greek greeting, the grace. Shalom, the typical Jewish greeting, peace. Let them be multiplied.

Blessed be God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. He begins his epistle with sort of a doxology. Blessed be God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has begotten us again.

Now this idea is that of being born again. Begotten of God. I've been born again.

To a living hope. Hope is so essential. It's just a part of man's character and it is the thing that keeps you going.

A lot of times we just give up, except we hope that things are going to turn around. And so that hope is the thing that keeps a person going. I hope it's going to change.

So I hold on. The disciples had come to hope in Jesus Christ as the Messiah. When they saw the miracles that he did.

When they heard his teachings, they became convinced that he was the Messiah. When Jesus said to the disciples there at Caesarea Philippi, who do you say that I am? Peter said, you're the Messiah. You're the son of the living God.

Jesus said, blessed art thou, Simon Barjona. Flesh and blood did not reveal this, but my father. They had come to believe.

They were convinced that Jesus was the Messiah. But, the cross changed things. Now, from the beginning they did not understand how the Messiah could suffer and die.

They only took those scriptures of the Old Testament that spoke about the Messiah reigning and they were planning their place in the kingdom when he set up his kingdom and he began to reign as king. And they would even argue among themselves as who's going to be the greatest. I'm going to be this.

I'm going to be that. And of course, James and John's mother came and said, Lord, I want a favor. When you establish your kingdom, let my two sons sit on your right hand.

And they were looking forward to the immediate establishing of the kingdom of God. And whenever Jesus would talk to them about his impending death, they would get upset when Jesus started talking about it just after Peter said, you're the Messiah. And he started talking about his death.

Peter began to rebuke him and said, Lord, you know, be that far from thee. They did not understand the place of the cross in redemption until after the resurrection. So, during those three days when Jesus died, they died.

Hope died. I mean, they were shattered. And when Jesus met the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, and they were walking down the path so disconsolate, Jesus said to them, what's the problem, fellas? How come you look so sad? What happened? They said, you must be a stranger around here if you don't know the things that have been going on lately in Jerusalem.

She said, what things? What are you talking about? How Jesus of Nazareth, a man of God, mighty in the word and in deed, who went about doing good, healing the sick. And we had hoped in him for the salvation of Israel, but they crucified him. They killed him.

We had hoped that he was the Messiah. We had hoped that he was the deliverer, but they killed him. It's all over.

Hope is dead. And Jesus said, oh, fools, it's all of heart. Haven't you read the scriptures? And he began from Moses and on through the Old Testament, began to expound those scriptures that referred to the suffering and the death of the Messiah.

And when they came to Emmaus, Jesus pretended like he was going to continue on. And they said, oh, no, no, it's too late. You come with us.

And so as he broke bread, they recognized him and he disappeared. And they said, oh, didn't our hearts burn within us as he spoke the word to us on the road? We should have known. And they ran all the way back to Jerusalem, some nine miles, to share with the other disciples that Jesus is risen indeed.

We had hoped hope was dead. Now, Peter is saying, thank God. Blessed be God who has.

We've been born again. The hope was dead, but we've been born again. But now it's a living hope.

Because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, you see, the hope that we have tonight is a living hope and the basis of our hope in eternal life, the basis of our hope for the kingdom of God is the fact that Jesus rose from the dead. That's the foundation of the hope that we have tonight. Had Jesus not been raised from the dead, then there would be no Christian church.

There'd be no basis for a Christian church. But his resurrection has made the hope more than just a hope. It's a living hope that we have tonight as the result of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

But it's more than that. It's the hope of the inheritance that is ours as sons of God, joint heirs with Jesus Christ. Paul, in his prayer for the Ephesians, was that they might know what was the hope of their calling.

Do you know what is the hope that God has for you in the future? Do you know the inheritance that God has for you? The plans that God has for your eternal future? Do you know the glories of dwelling with him in his kingdom forever? Paul prayed, oh, that you might know what is the hope of your calling. It's a living hope of an inheritance that is incorruptible and undefiled and fades not away and it's reserved in heaven for you. Now, interestingly enough, the Bible always balances the teaching of the sovereignty of God with the responsibility of man.

And the Bible teaches both truths. We cannot always reconcile them in our minds as we try to follow steps of logic and carry it out to a logical end. Somewhere it breaks down and we lose it.

But the Bible does teach both that God is sovereign. But it also teaches that there is that part of man's responsibility. Man must respond to God.

So there is that human responsibility that counterbalances the sovereignty of God. Here, Peter is telling us of the sovereignty of God. You have been elected according to God's foreknowledge, set apart by the Holy Spirit, cleansed from your sins through the blood of Jesus Christ.

You have been begotten by God unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. There is an inheritance waiting for you. It's incorruptible.

It's undefiled. It fades not away. It's reserved, got your name on it, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God.

Now in this, all up into this point is what God has done in God's sovereignty. It's all God's work. You don't have a thing to do with this yet.

It is all the work of God up to this point. So now he gets to your part, your part of the whole thing, who are kept by the power of God through faith. What is your part? Just believing.

You know, God's done all the work. He didn't leave anything as important as the work to someone as weak as you. You'd mess it up.

So God did all the work and all that is left for you to do is to believe the work of God. They said to Jesus one day, what must we do to do the works of God? And Jesus said, this is the work of God. Just believe on him whom he has sent.

And so God has done the work, God's part. All of this was God's part. Then he finally gets to your part through faith, just believing and trusting that work of God.

Wherein ye greatly rejoice. I rejoice in that work of God in my behalf. I rejoice in the inheritance that I have.

I rejoice in that hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ, the living hope, because he rose from the dead. And I rejoice in it. I greatly rejoice, though now for a season, Paul said, if need be, you are in heaviness because of the manifold trials, Christianity and Jews.

They had two strikes against them. The Jews had rebelled against the Roman authority. Within six years of Peter's writing this epistle, they were to begin another rebellion, which was to bring really the destruction of Jerusalem under the siege of Titus.

And then once more, they were to rebel when they were utterly destroyed during the reign of Hadrian, Bar-Koba holding out in that little village of Bera, which was much like the story of Masada, but there were no survivors or no Josephus Flavius to record it, and so we know so little about it. But the Jews did experience, even in those days, persecution because they were a Jew. Secondly, they received persecution because they were Christians, a Jewish Christian, double jeopardy.

And so they had persecution where they went. And Peter speaks about, you're rejoicing greatly in the future, though at the present, you're going through some pretty heavy trials. But know this, the trial of your faith is actually more precious than gold that perishes when it is tried in the fire, that perisheth though it be tried with fire, that your faith might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

In other words, these were all purifying experiences that you were going through, and God so often uses trials as purging or purifying instruments in our lives. As a fire to burn out the dross, God puts us through the trials in order that we might be refined and purified. The trial of your faith is really more valuable than gold that perishes.

Though your faith be tried with fire, the purpose of God is that it might be found unto the praise and honor and glory at the revelation here, apocalypses of Jesus Christ. Whom, having not seen, ye love, in whom though now ye see him not, yet believing, you rejoice with a joy that's indescribable and full of glory. So we are in much the same condition as these to whom Peter was writing.

We've not seen Jesus, but yet we love him. Whom having not seen, I still love him and I rejoice in this hope, in this inheritance, in this eternal life, in salvation with a joy that is indescribable. I cannot describe to you the joy that is in my heart.

I don't have words. I don't have a vocabulary that can describe the ecstasy that is mine as a child of God. It's a joy indescribable.

It's just full of glory. Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. That's where my faith is going to ultimate in the salvation.

So faith is tried. My life is taken through these fiery trials that my faith might appear when Christ is revealed, the revelation of Jesus Christ and receiving salvation of our souls. Of which salvation? The prophets inquired and searched diligently who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you, searching what or what manner of time the spirit of Christ, which was in them, did signify when he testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow.

Now he is saying here that the prophets didn't really understand all of the things that they wrote. We remember when Daniel was seeking understanding of some of the things that he was writing about. The Lord just said, Daniel, just seal it up.

It's not for now. It's for the future. And in the last days, knowledge will be increased.

They'll understand it then. So you just seal it up. It's not given unto you to know at this particular point.

There is a psalm, and I forget just which one it is now, but it says in Psalm 22, these things are written for a generation that shall come. In other words, I'm writing things I really don't know about. And as I try to understand them, all I know is that I'm writing these things for a generation that is to come.

It's not really something that I fully understand. And so it's not in 22. I forget where it was, but there's a psalm there.

You search it out. 31. All right.

Very good. Which verse? 22, 31. Oh, I was right in 22.

Okay. Yes. All right.

Gotcha now. They shall come and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born that he hath done this. In other words, you know, it will come to pass later on.

And 30, a seed shall serve him. It shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation. They shall come and shall declare his righteousness unto the people that shall be born.

So writing for the future. They really were curious. Now I can imagine the problem that Isaiah had when he wrote of the Messiah for in chapter nine, he says for unto us, a child is born unto us.

The son is given and the government shall be upon his shoulder and his name should be called wonderful counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting father, the prince of peace. And at the increase of his government and peace, there shall be no end upon the throne of David to order it and to establish it in righteousness and in judgment from hence forth, even forever for the zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this. And he's writing of the Messiah and, you know, he's going to reign on the throne of David, this whole thing.

And then in Isaiah 53, he talks about him being numbered with the transgressors in his death, wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace upon him with his stripes, we are healed for all of us. Like sheep have gone astray.

We've turned every one of us to our own ways and God laid on him the iniquities of us all. He was smitten, stricken, and we esteemed him not. And so he writes these things that seem to be totally incongruent, going to be put to death.

And yet he's going to reign forever on the throne of David. Now, Isaiah being inspired, the Holy Spirit had to write with the Holy Spirit. Then imagine Isaiah thought to himself, what in the world am I writing here? This doesn't make sense.

How can he reign forever on the throne of David and yet be put to death? And so the prophets writing of this grace that should come to you, they were searching in their own minds and hearts. What manner of time the spirit of Christ was referring to that was in them when he testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, they themselves did not understand the, their prophecies concerning the sufferings of the Messiah. And in that Psalm 22 that we referred to earlier, my God, my God, why has thou forsaken me? Why are thou so far from the cry of my roaring? I cry in the daytime and now here is not in the night season and am not silent, but thou art holy, O thou that inhabit us, the praises of thy people, Israel.

And then he goes on to describe death by crucifixion. Wondering what am I writing about the Messiah? And yet I'm talking about him being pierced, piercing his hands and his feet. And so they themselves wondered when they wrote of the sufferings of the Messiah, they couldn't put it together in their minds, but the glory that should follow.

He was going to be put to death. He was going to suffer. And yet he was going to enter into the eternal glory, the glory that would follow.

So they did not understand these things. They searched diligently. They sought to know them and understand them, but they were not written for them at that time, but written that later on after the events had transpired, people then would understand the plan of God in redemption and see the necessity of the death of Jesus Christ in order that we might be redeemed, in order that we might be called of God, a holy nation, a royal priesthood that we should bring forth fruit unto his grace through Jesus Christ.

So unto whom it was revealed that not unto themselves, but unto us, they did minister the things which are now reported among you by them which have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, which things the angels desire to look into. So here's the thing that God just sort of kept secret. His plan of grace and redemption through Jesus Christ, even the angels desired to look into these things that were being ministered by the Holy Spirit through the apostles.

Wherefore, gird up the loins of your mind. Now, the idea of girding up your loins, it's a phrase that has a cultural kind of a thing to it. You don't know anything about it in our culture.

But in those days, the men wore these long robes down to their feet. Now, when you want to run or when you really want to go to work, it is cumbersome to have a robe down to your ankles. Hard to run in something like that.

So if you're going to run or if you're going to get out and really do some work, what they would do is pull the skirt up and they would tie it around the waist. So then it's a short skirt. And with that, you can run or you can work.

So it means, you know, get busy. Go to work on this. Go to work in your mind on these things.

Gird up the loins of your mind. Be sober and hope to the end for the grace that shall be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. So gird up your minds, be sober.

This grace that is brought unto you and shall be brought when Jesus again reveals Himself. The revelation, the coming of Jesus Christ. As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lust in your ignorance.

Not living as you used to live when you were ignorant of the truth of God. Not living as you used to live before you were born again by the work of God's Holy Spirit within your life. You see, the natural man is body, mind and spirit.

The mind being ruled over by the body and the body appetites. The born again man is a spiritual man. He's born by the spirit.

And born again means that you are now living a spirit, mind, body existence. Prior to being born again, you lived a body, mind, spirit. Body, mind, spirit.

Mind controlled by the body and the body appetites. Being born again, you now live a spirit, mind, body existence. The body doesn't rule anymore.

You're not ruled by the lust of your flesh. You found that life is more than just eating and drinking. But now ruled by the spirit, you now have the mind of the spirit.

And your mind now is on things of the spirit. They that are of the spirit do mind the things of the spirit. They that are of the flesh do mind the things of the flesh.

But the mind of the flesh is death, but the mind of the spirit is life and joy and peace. So, Peter here is saying as obedient children, don't fashion your life after the former life which was lived after the lust of your flesh. Governed over by your flesh.

Your mind and life governed by your fleshly desires. And as you look around at the world today, the world apart from Christ is a world that is governed by the desires of their flesh. That's what a person lives for.

To fulfill their fleshly needs. That's what the world talks about. But as He which has called you is holy, so be ye holy in all your manner of living.

So, we've been called to live a separated life. A life of holiness. A life of purity.

Not living after our flesh or the desires of our flesh, but living after the spirit. Because it is written, be ye holy for I am holy. God's declaration when He gave the law unto the people.

And if you call on the Father, who without respect of persons judges according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear. That is in reverence of God. For as much as ye know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold from that empty former life.

Again, as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lust in your ignorance. No longer ignorant of the things of God and the things of the spirit. So, we no longer live that empty life after the flesh.

But now the rich life after the spirit. We've been redeemed, set free from the bondage of sin. Set free from the slavery to our flesh.

Not with corruptible things as silver and gold. Silver and gold have only temporal value. There is no eternal value to them at all.

Only temporal value. When you're talking about a man's soul, you're talking about something that is eternal. You cannot purchase something that is eternal with things of temporal value.

You cannot buy salvation. You cannot earn salvation. You do not deserve salvation.

It is a gift of God and is a work of grace. It is something that you receive, the work which God has done. So, we've been redeemed, not with corruptible things like silver and gold, from that empty life that we used to live.

That we receive by tradition from our fathers. And of course, writing to the Jews, he's writing about all of the traditional things that the Jew is even to the present day caught up in. And I mean, they have a lot of tradition.

Now, we do too. I mean, we've got just a lot of traditional things that are deeply ingrained in our culture that it would be better, we would be better off if we could get rid of them. This tradition of celebration of Christmas.

It's only traditional. Scrooge, do away with Christmas. How could you? But you see, how we sort of recoil at the thought of not celebrating Christmas.

Because it's so deeply a part of our tradition. But you see, the church only put a Christian name on a pagan holiday so that the Christians could join in the celebration of the pagan holiday and make it legitimate for Christians to join in. Christians didn't want to feel left out of this pagan celebration of Saturnalia, the passing of the winter solstice.

And so, they put a Christian name to it. They said, oh, it's Christmas. It's Christ's Mass.

And we'll celebrate the birthday of Jesus. Though he wasn't born December 25th. Yet, we'll celebrate the birthday of Jesus.

And so, you can all go out and you can do the things that the world does. You can buy your gifts and you can decorate your trees and you can, you know, join the pagan world in their celebration of Saturnalia. Helping the poor old solstice.

Be sure and put the lights around the house and on your trees and all. So that you can help the sun make it through. You know, after all, we got to help poor old Sol.

A lot of these are about to die. Days are getting shorter. Every day is getting shorter.

It's just about gone. The 22nd of December. Oh, it's almost, you know, this is about it.

You know, it's almost over. Sun is just about ready to flicker out. Get your candles lit.

Get your lights lit. You know, help it out. And all right, by the 25th, it's observable that the days are getting longer.

We helped the old sun. All right, let's celebrate. Let's get drunk and let's pass out presents and let's decorate trees and, you know, have a big celebration.

The sun made it through. Let's legitimize it though for Christians. So it's Christmas.

We'll celebrate the birthday of Jesus. Make sure that your celebration is more Christian than pagan, please. The vain traditions received from our fathers.

Hard to break them, isn't it? But we've been redeemed, not with the corruptible things from that empty life of vain traditions, but with the precious blood of Jesus Christ as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. Redemption. This is all intertwined back in the Old Testament.

The idea, the concept of redemption. The idea of a sacrificial lamb going back to the Passover, the firstborn to be slain in every household. Protect your house.

Take a lamb out of the flock. Let the lamb be the substitute for the firstborn. Take a lamb of the first year without spot and without blemish.

Kill it, put its blood in a basin and with hyssop, sprinkle the blood. Upon the lintels and the doorposts of your house. And when I pass through the land tonight, when I see the blood, I will pass over that house.

I'll know that there's been a sacrifice, a substitute lamb for the firstborn of the house. I'll pass over that house. And so this idea of a sacrificial lamb, God having provided ultimately His lamb, His Son, Jesus Christ, who shed His blood for the redemption of man.

So the price of redemption, the blood of Jesus Christ, who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world. Again, God had planned before He even created the world. Knowing that man would fail, knowing that man would sin, but desiring to prove and to show to man how much He loved Him.

God planned before the foundation of the world to demonstrate His love by the sending of His Son to bear man's sin, to take the responsibility of your guilt and to die in your place, thus proving that God loves you. You never need to doubt the love of God. All you have to do is look at the cross of Jesus Christ.

And there God has declared, manifested His love towards us in that while we were sinners, Christ died for the ungodly. And so was ordained or foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest. Though it was planned of God from the beginning, it was not fulfilled until Jesus came and went to the cross.

Manifest in these last times for you. Who by Him, by Jesus Christ, you believe in God that raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God. Seeing that you have purified your souls and obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that you love one another with a pure heart fervently.

And truly the message of the gospel to those who have received it is that we are to love one another. Jesus said a new commandment that I give unto you, that ye love one another even as I have loved you. By this sign shall men know that you are my disciples, that you love one another.

And Paul describes the kind of love that we're to have for each other. Love suffers long and is kind, it envies not, it doesn't vaunt itself, is not proud, isn't puffed up, doesn't behave itself strangely, seeks not its own, but believes all things, bears all things, hopes all things, endures all things, it never fails. That's the kind of love we're to have for one another.

Loving one another with a pure heart fervently. The greatest demonstration the church can give to the world is the love within the body for each other. Loving one another with unfeigned, that is not that fake love that is so often a part of the whole world seeing.

Oh darling, I love that dress you're wearing tonight. Just phony. People say, oh, I don't go to church because there's so many hypocrites in the church.

Then you should not go to movies. There's more hypocrisy in that crowd than there is in any church crowd. Unfeigned love, not faking it.

Love each other with a pure heart fervently. Being born again, thanks be unto God who has begotten us again. Being born again, not of corruptible seed.

Now, I was born once of corruptible seed. I am the by-product of my dad and mom. Receiving 23 chromosomes from each.

I'm an interesting composite of them both. But the fact that it is corruptible seed is very obvious by the aging processes that have taken place through the years as the catabolic forces have worked and I'm gradually eroding away. Born once of corruptible seed, but I've been born again of incorruptible seed.

The new life that I have isn't going to pass. It's going on forever. Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible by the Word of God.

It was the Word of God planted in my heart that brought forth spiritual life. For the Word of God is alive and powerful. Sharper than a two-edged sword.

Able to divide between the bone and marrow and soul and the spirit. Is a discerner of the thoughts and the intents of the hearts of man. I've been born again by the Word of God.

Jesus said, a sower went forth to sow in the field and he planted his seed. Some fell on the wayside, some fell on stony ground, some fell among thorns, some fell on good ground. And then later on he said, now the disciples said, Lord, explain to us that parable.

What are you retelling about? And Jesus said, the field is the world and the seed is the Word of God. We've been born again by incorruptible seed, the Word of God. That incorruptible seed whereby we have been born into a spiritual life.

And though the old man perishes day by day, the new man is renewed by the Spirit. Hey, I'm stronger, healthier than I've ever been in my whole life spiritually. Though I have more aches and pains and decrepitness in the old body than I've ever had in my whole life physically.

As the old man perishes, the new man is becoming stronger day by day. And one of these days, this old body just isn't going to be able to handle the new man. And so my spirit will move from this corrupting body into the new building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

This inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, fades not away, reserved in heaven for me because I'm being kept by the power of God through faith. So the flesh is like grass, and all of the glory of man is like the flower of grass. The grass withers, the flower thereof falls away, but the Word of God endures forever.

So things that are passing, things that are lasting. We've been redeemed, not with corruptible things that are going to pass away, silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Jesus Christ. I've been born again, not with the corruptible seed, but the incorruptible, the Word of God, which lives and abides forever.

Jesus said, heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away. The universe is gradually wearing down. The sun is giving off 1,200,000 tons of mass every second, gradually wearing down.

That is irrecoverable mass. One day the sun's going to flicker and die. Maybe it will go into a supernova first, flare and die.

They estimate another 15, 20 billion years and the sun's going to have had it. That's all right, the Word of God will still be around. I'll still be around because I've been born by the Word of God into this incorruption, this new life, this eternal life.

Heaven and earth will pass away. My word, Jesus said, will never pass away. I've been born by that Word of God, that Word which abides forever.

The flesh, all flesh is as grass. That is, it's going to perish. It's going to, it's going to, like the flower, it's going to wither and die.

But the Word of the Lord endures forever. And this is the Word which by the gospel is preached unto you. Hey, we've got something, we've got hold of something here that's eternal.

Something that's going to last forever. And I have been born again by that into this eternal life. Wherefore, laying aside all malice and all guile and all hypocrisy and all envying and all evil speaking, set these things aside.

We're to love one another with a pure heart fervently. Set aside the envying, the hypocrisy, the guile, the evil speaking. And as newborn babes desire the sincere milk of the Word that you may grow thereby.

If so be that you have tasted that the Lord is gracious. There are so many people who desire sensationalism. They desire the hot fudge sundaes.

And you can see them advertising the spiritual hot fudge sundaes in the papers every Sunday, you know. Come and see. Come and taste the hot fudge, you know, delicious.

And ours is more exciting than anybody else's. Guaranteed to scintillate your senses, get you excited emotionally. You don't grow by that though.

That's the problem. You see, it may taste good. It may be exciting to eat, but it isn't nourishing.

It doesn't strengthen you. It has very little value when the real testing comes. You'll find yourself weak and anemic.

But if you have partaken of the Word of God and you know from the Word God is good, God is gracious, then when the trials come, you're strengthened by that Word and that knowledge of the goodness and the graciousness of God. So, desire the sincere milk of the Word that you might grow thereby, just like a new baby. And how I love to see these new babes in Christ.

These people have just been born again by the Spirit recently. How I love to see them devouring the Word. I get a thrill every time I go by the tape library and I see people carrying bags of tapes in and carrying bags of tapes out.

I love it. Some people came to me this morning. They said they were going to be here tonight.

And they said, we came from our ranch in Texas. They live 12 miles out of a big metropolis of 1200 people. Now, in Texas, you know, you can get lost way out there in the country.

And these people live way out there. But they said, we've been feeding off of yours and Chuck Missler's tapes. And we just had to come out here and to see you and just to give you thanks.

And we're going to be in Chuck's class on Monday night too, because we want to thank him. I love it. The Word of God going out.

Desire the sincere milk of the Word that you may grow thereby. It's the Word of God that feeds you, that develops spiritual growth. You cannot grow spiritually apart from the Word of God.

Now, I'd like to emphasize that. You can only experience spiritual growth through the Word. It is the food that feeds the spiritual man.

And apart from the Word of God, you cannot experience real spiritual growth. You can experience spiritual excitement through experiences and sensationalism, but you cannot experience real growth. That takes the Word of God.

So, desire the sincere milk of the Word that you may grow as newborn babes. If so be you've tasted that the Lord is gracious, the Lord to whom coming as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious. It's interesting to me.

Here's big old rough Peter, the fisherman. I mean, he's just as tough as nails. You know, he's ready for anything.

Ready for a fight. You want to fight? You know, you want to take Jesus, man. I'll he draws his sword.

He starts to flail. You know, I mean, he's ready for it. Odds against him.

All these soldiers. Hey, you'll see it out. You know, tough, rough guy.

And what seems to be his favorite word when he gets, you know, he's a marshmallow. I mean, you come around the things of the spirit. His favorite word is precious.

Now, that's not a word for a big, tough guy, you know, precious. I love the way the Lord makes marshmallows out of some of these jocks. You know, just it's beautiful to me.

And so all the way through, you'll find Peter using this word precious. I think that's precious. So coming to Jesus, to whom as we come to him as unto the living stone, though disallowed indeed of men, but he is chosen of God and he is precious, precious blood of Jesus Christ.

Now, Jesus is referred to as the stone. In the book of Deuteronomy chapter 32, the song of Moses, God is referred to there as a rock and the gods of the heathen as rock. Their rock is not as our rock, he said.

And there are references to God as a rock. In the book of Daniel, in the vision of our dream of Nebuchadnezzar, he saw this huge image that represented the kingdoms of man, beginning with the Babylonian kingdom and the succession of kingdoms through the Middle Persian, the Grecian, the Roman, until this final world governing kingdom of ten nations. He watched this great image until there came a rock not cut with hands.

And it smote this great image in its feet so that the whole image crumbled and the rock grew into a mountain that covered the earth. Now, when the Lord explained that dream to Nebuchadnezzar, the rock is the coming of Jesus Christ. He is the rock not cut with hands that will bring an end to the worldly governments and will establish God's kingdom that will cover the earth and never end.

When Moses was taking the children of Israel through the wilderness and they cried for water, Moses took his rod and struck the rock according to the commandment of God and water came forth. Now, Paul tells us that that rock that was with him in the wilderness was Christ. That rock smitten, that is, at the cross, whereby the water of life flows out unto man.

They were dying, they were perishing of thirst in the wilderness, ready to die until the water flowed forth out of the rock. The water of life they drank and they were sustained. Even so, we perishing in the wilderness of sin, ready to die.

Jesus smitten for us. The water of life flows forth and we drink and we are saved, we have life. That's why the second time when they cried to Moses for water and he went in to God and God said, speak to the rock and it will bring forth water.

But Moses in his anger went out and he said, must I smite this rock again to give you water? And he smote it the second time. And God said, Moses, that was a mistake that you're going to have to pay for. You see, the rock once smitten never needs to be smitten again.

Jesus doesn't have to die again. He doesn't have to be crucified again. Once smitten, all you have to do to receive the water of life is to speak to the rock.

Just call upon Jesus Christ. So here he says, coming now to this stone, this living stone that was disallowed by the builders, that is, Jesus was rejected by the Jews as the Messiah. But yet he was chosen of God and precious.

Now, you also as living stones are built up as a spiritual house, the church, a spiritual house. You are a holy priesthood will be called a royal priesthood soon, but here a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Now, what are the spiritual sacrifices that we offer up? You remember in the 51st Psalm, even David had a hint.

He said, sacrifices an offering that what is not or that delight is not in another Psalm. He said, sacrifices an offering that what is not. But a body does prepare me in a Psalm.

I think it's 89 in reference to Jesus. But in Psalm 51 sacrifice and offering to take no delight in. But the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit and a broken spirit and contrite heart that would not despise.

So he speaks of a spiritual sacrifice, a broken spirit before the Lord. Then in the book of Hebrews chapter 13, let us then offer unto God the sacrifice of praise. Even the fruit of our lips unto him.

So the spiritual sacrifices that we offer to God are our praises unto him. Coming before him with a broken heart, offering our praises to God as a priest, I have access. And that was the thing of the priesthood.

He had access to God and as a priest, a holy priesthood that I have as a child of God. I can offer spiritual sacrifices. I can come to God and worship him and praise him and offer him these spiritual sacrifices.

The fruit of my lips unto him, which sacrifices are acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. If offered in Jesus name and offered through Jesus, they're acceptable. Wherefore, also it is contained in the scripture.

Behold, I lay in Zion, a chief cornerstone. Elect and precious and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded or confused. Unto you, therefore, which believe he is precious, but unto them which are disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head cornerstone.

Cornerstone. Now, this particular psalm no doubt impressed Peter pretty much because when Peter was called before the council in the fourth chapter of Acts to answer for the miracle that was done to the lame man at the temple, Peter said, if we're examined today because of the good deed done to this impotent or lame man, judge ye. But we, you know, have done it in the name of Jesus Christ.

Be it known unto you and all you that dwell in Jerusalem that by the name of Jesus Christ, this man stands here before you all. And he is the stone, Peter said, which was said of not by you builders. But he's the same has become the chief cornerstone and neither is there salvation in any other.

Now, there is in the psalm this reference, a messianic reference to the Messiah. Psalm 118 of of the stone, which was said of not by the builders becoming the chief cornerstone, the work of the Lord, a prophecy concerning Jesus Christ, a prophecy that he would be disallowed or rejected by the religious leadership. But yet God has ordained that he should be the chief cornerstone.

And of course, he is that chief cornerstone upon which the church is built. Jesus said, upon this rock, I will build my church. What rock? Peter's confession, thou art the Christ, the son of the living God.

The church has been built on that chief cornerstone. Jesus Christ is the Messiah, the son of the living God. Now, there is a story that in the building of Solomon's temple, the stones were all quarried away from the temple site and brought to the temple site.

They were quarried and actually chiseled out so that they were built in such an interlocking way and chiseled out to such perfection that they use no mortar. The stones just sat on each other without even the use of mortar being hewn out so accurately and carefully. And that as each stone came, those builders would just place it in the building.

But no sound of hammer, trowel or whatever went on in the building of the temple. That was all done in the quarry away from the temple. And the story goes that this one stone came and the builders looked for it on the plans.

They couldn't see where it fit into the building. And finally, they just tossed the thing over in the bushes, cast it aside. And when the temple was complete, they were missing this chief cornerstone.

So they sent to the quarry, all right, we're ready now for the ceremony. We want to put in the cornerstone and all and get this thing up. Where's the cornerstone? And the quarry foreman sent back and said, I sent it to you already.

It's been marked off on my inventory. He said, well, it's not here. We don't have any.

He said, well, I've already sent it. It's already gone, you know. And so some fellow went over in the bushes and found this stone that they had thrown away and they realized, wow, this is the chief cornerstone of the whole building.

The one that's been rejected. And so an interesting prophecy then, that experience, the prophecy of what would happen with the temple became the fulfillment with Jesus. The stone disallowed by the builders, but yet has become the chief cornerstone.

And as Peter said, there's not salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. So the twofold effect though, he's made the head of the corner, but yet he is a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense unto those which stumble. Jesus is a cornerstone, the foundation upon which the church is built, but yet he is also a stumbling stone.

The Jews stumble over him because of the crucifixion. They could not understand the Messiah being crucified. And so they stumbled over the stone.

He became a rock of offense to them. Paul speaks of Christ crucified to the Jews foolishness. I mean, to the Greeks foolishness, but to the Jews an offense, but unto us which are saved the power of God.

And so he is a rock of offense, even to them which stumble at the word being disobedient where unto also they were appointed. Now again, the idea of God's four nation and election, and they were appointed unto this disobedience, but ye are a chosen generation. Jesus said, I have chosen you and ordained you that you should be my disciples.

You are a royal priesthood. You are a holy nation. You are a people destined for a possession.

That peculiar people is a poor translation. You know, then you go around with your eyes crossed and tongue hanging out, you know, peculiar people. It's a bad translation.

You are a people destined for a possession. The word in the Greek is possession. You are a people of the possession or you are to possess the kingdom.

Destined to possess the kingdom of God that you should show forth the praises of him who called you out of the darkness into his marvelous light. And so the purpose of God that you should show forth the praises of God through your life because God has called you out of darkness when Jesus called Paul to go forth and preach the gospel as he is relating his experience of conversion unto King Agrippa. And he tells him of that call of God upon his heart.

It was to open the eyes and to turn them from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to God that they might receive the forgiveness of sins and the inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith in Jesus. Turn them. You have been delivered from the power of darkness.

You've been redeemed from the power of darkness and brought into the glorious kingdom of light. Wherein in times past you were not the people of God but are now the people of God which had not obtained mercy but now you've obtained mercy. Time passed.

You weren't one of God's children. Now you are. You hadn't received the mercy.

Now you have. Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims. Now he's talking about your relationship to the world.

The Bible says love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. He that hath the love of the world in his heart hath not the love of the Father. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, the pride of life is not of God but it is a part of the whole worldly system.

You are not of the world. You're a stranger. You're a pilgrim.

As a stranger and a pilgrim abstain from the fleshly lust. All that is of the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and so forth. Abstain from these fleshly lusts which war against your soul.

They would destroy you. Having your manner of life honest among the Gentiles, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works which they behold glorify God in the day of visitation. So live a life that is a witness before the world.

They may say ugly things to you. They may sneer at you. They may mock you.

But let your life be a witness that when the Lord raptures you, they're going to say, wow, that guy was right. You know, he was really a neat guy. You know, he was all right.

He did the right thing. You know, oh man, you know. So yes, they will.

Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake. Now, again, as a witness, as a testimony, there are some laws that are hard to live with. But as a Christian, submit yourself to them, whether it be to the king as supreme or unto the governors as unto them which are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of them that do well.

For so is the will of God that you submit to the ordinances of man. That's God's will for you, that with your well-doing, you might put to silence the ignorance of foolish men. So really, the position that the Jehovah Witnesses take in not saluting the flag and conscience and subjectors and so forth is really not a scriptural position.

We are to submit to the ordinances of man, to every ordinance for the Lord's sake, even though we may grind at it, for the Lord's sake. It's God's will that we not be an offense. We might put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.

As free, I'm free to do it. But not using your liberty as a cloak of malicious maliciousness. Now, coming back to Christmas celebration, I'm free to do it.

I'm free not to do it. That's to me the glorious thing. A Christmas tree, I'm free to have one.

I'm free not to have one. I don't get hung up in a legal kind of a thing. God doesn't want a legal relationship with you.

He wants a loving relationship with you. And so I'm free. But yet, be careful that you don't use your freedom just to cover your own maliciousness and say, well, I'm free in Jesus.

You know, you're not really free to live after the flesh or the lust of your flesh. You're free not to live after your lust of your flesh. That's a freedom the world doesn't have.

You see, they're bound by their flesh. They're slaves to their flesh. The freedom that we have in Christ is that we don't have to live after our flesh anymore.

Thank God. What a glorious freedom. So don't use that freedom just as a cover.

Well, I'm free in Jesus. You know, I'm not under law and grace. I'm free.

Don't use that as a cloak for maliciousness. Honor all men. Love the brotherhood.

Fear God. Honor the King. Now, specifically, servants, be subject to your masters with all reverence.

Not only to the good and the gentle, but also to the mean ones. For this is thankworthy if a man for conscience towards God endures grief, suffering wrongfully. Because of my conscience towards God, I've been wrongfully accused and I suffer the grief of being wrongfully accused.

That's thankworthy. That's praiseworthy. That's grace.

Actually, the word is, this is grace. If a man for conscience toward God endures grief, though he has been persecuted wrongfully. For what glory is it if when you are buffeted for your fault, and servants were often buffeted by their masters.

You make a mistake and he'd come and cuff you, you know. Serve some temperamental master. Yell and cuff you every time you did something wrong.

You're a servant. Well, a lot of times, you know, you walk away and say, boy, if I got a chance, man, I'd really nail you one, you know. And, you know, you go mumbling under your breath of revenge and everything else.

But what glory is it if when you're buffeted for your fault, say you've done something stupid and you get cuffed and you take it well. So what? You had it coming. But if when you have done well, you suffer and you take it patiently.

This proves something. This is acceptable to God. Suffering wrongfully.

How we hate to do that, don't we? You know, if we get punished when we were actually innocent, man, how we cry. I mean, I've had that happen to me. My father was at a short fuse.

I mean, he was very quick to react. He was a reactor. He was a responder.

And then he would think later. And my youngest brother would take advantage of this. Now, he came along some seven years after me.

So he just a little kid. We all loved him. I'm serious.

I mean, my brother Bill, he's just I loved him dearly. But he knew that being the little brother, you know, he was sort of a Joseph in the family. Come lately.

My dad said to my mom, if you will give me a redheaded freckled face, boy, I'll buy you a Cadillac car. Well, he was born and he had red hair. And of course, he developed freckles as he grew up.

My mom never did get a Cadillac, but no promise or anything, but give her our page. He did give her perfume. But my youngest brother would start screaming and my dad would come out peeling off his belt and a belt, my other brother and I. And after building us, then he'd say, what happened? Well, my youngest brother, he just look at us and laugh.

He'd say, I'm going to get you guys in trouble. You know, if, you know, we had done something he didn't like is OK, I'm going to get you and he'd start screaming. Dad, come out, give us a building.

And then he'd say, all right, what happened? What happened? Well, we didn't do anything. You know, well, why was he screaming then? And and then he'd find out. And and well, I'm sorry, you know, but and boy, I mean, we would really make my dad suffer for that kind of stuff.

You know, we were punished unjustly. Oh, man, we would get all, you know, righteous indignation. It just, you know, you did that.

But, you know, in reality, I did so many things I should have got a building for it. And he never found out that I always figured I was still on the plus side, you know. Now, Peter is saying, look, if you deserve a spanking and you get one and you take it patiently, you know, so what? You had it coming.

But if you don't deserve it and yet you get the spanking and you take it patiently, hey, then that's acceptable for God's sake. You accept it graciously. Persecution or or buffeting or things that come your way where you are really innocent.

You don't have it coming rather than getting all upset and threatening and everything else. Taking it patiently for even here and to where you call because Christ left us the example. He also suffered for us.

And in his suffering, he left the example for us that we should follow in his steps. For you see, he did no sin. Neither was any guile in his mouth.

And when he was reviled, he didn't revile back again at them. As the lamb before her shears is done, so he opened not his mouth. When he suffered, he did not threaten.

I'll get even with you. You wait till the day of judgment. You'll fry a man, you know.

He didn't threaten, but he committed himself to him that judges righteously. And this is the thing. When things come our way, we can't understand.

Just commit your life to God. Well, Lord, you know, it's all in your hands. And don't get all, you know, threatening and I'll get even and all this kind of stuff.

But just commit it all to God. Jesus said, if you love those that love you, so what? The heathen do that. You should love those that hate you.

Then that really proves that God's love dwells in you. So if you're persecuted and you got it coming, then so what? But if you don't and you take it well, if you learn to just commit your life to God, well, it's all in the Lord's hand. Oh, but that isn't fair.

That's not right. I know it isn't. But yet, you know, God's taking care of it.

God will take care of it. And if we'll learn to just commit our ways completely to God, then God will take care of it. Now, if you are out to defend yourself, then God will let you.

But if you will learn to just commit the thing to God, say, well, the Lord will take care of it. It doesn't matter. The Lord's going to handle it.

Then the Lord will handle it. He will take care of it. And so learn to just really commit your life to him.

As Peter will tell us in the next chapter or two, if you suffer according to the will of God, just commit the keeping of your soul to him as a faithful creator. Jesus is our example. He suffered wrongfully at the hands of man.

But we should follow in his steps. He didn't pour out guile from his mouth when they were doing these things. In fact, what did he say? As they were nailing him to the trees that father forgive them, they know not what they do.

That's your example. Pray for those, Jesus said, who despitefully use you. And so you are the servant of God.

He threatened not but committed himself to him that judges righteously. Father into your hands. I commend my spirit who his own self bore our sins in his own body on the tree.

It was your sins that Jesus was bearing there. He was suffering wrongfully. He had not sinned.

It was for your sins that he suffered, bearing your sins in his body on the tree that we being dead to sins should live unto righteousness by whose stripes you were healed. I think that it is wrong to limit that healing to just spiritual healing, as some seek to do. I think that it is broader than that.

For ye were as sheep going astray, but are now returned to the shepherd and the overseer of your souls. So he is quoting actually freely from Isaiah 53 chapter. All we like sheep have gone astray.

We've turned everyone to our own way. God laid upon him the iniquities of us all who in his own self bear our sins in his own body on the tree. We being dead to sin should live unto righteousness by whose stripes you were healed.

For we were as sheep going astray. All we like sheep have gone astray, but God laid on him the iniquities of us all. So we have this glorious salvation, the hope, the living hope of an inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled phase, not away.

We rejoice with the joy, unspeakable and full of glory because we are heirs of eternal life through Jesus Christ. And we are going to inherit that eternal kingdom and we will live and reign with him world without end. Oh, what a blessed hope and what a glorious future awaits every child of God as we wait for our king to come and manifest himself.

What good words of exhortation. Go back this next week and read the first two chapters again. Let it soak in.

Let the richness of it just feed your spirit that you might grow and become strong. Father, thank you for your good word. May your Holy Spirit now apply the truths in our daily lives.

Help us, Lord, as we live in the world, not to partake of the world. Help us, Lord, not to live after the flesh, but to live after the spirit, knowing that we are dead to the flesh, to the old life. May we be alive unto you in and through Jesus Christ.

Oh, Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth. Thy glories fill the heavens and they fill our hearts and our lives tonight. May we live to the praise of thy glory.

In Jesus' name, amen. So much food and all to be found there. I feel like I'd like to just start all over right now and go back through these first two chapters with you again, just to, you know, suck out more of the richness that is there.

But we'll leave that for you to do on your own. Go back and review it. Desire the sincere milk of the word that you might grow thereby.

God bless you. Give you a very fulfilling week as you walk in fellowship with him. Anointed by the spirit of God.

May you live after the spirit, that new life of the spirit that is yours through Christ. Being born again by the spirit to this living hope, to this inheritance that is yours through faith. God bless you.

Keep you in his love. In Jesus' name.

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