



KING'S CHAPEL

Daily Devotional - 1 Peter Study

Week 1 - Day 4

Approaching God

Read Matthew 13:16-17

But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. For truly, I say to you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.

Yesterday we saw that Christians can rejoice in their inheritance, regardless of whatever suffering they may face in this world. But not only that—Christians can rejoice because they live in a privileged time and have experienced a privileged salvation. Though the Christians scattered throughout Asia Minor in Peter's time were sojourners and exiles devoid of an earthly home and status, they were privileged to live during a time when the promised Messiah has been revealed, and they were privileged to enjoy a salvation that the OT prophets, and even angels long to see. Take some time to reflect on this privilege. Then thank God for his grace, the time in history in which you now live, and for the Spirit's power to illuminate his word & make it alive in your heart.

Bible Reading, Study & Meditation - 1 Peter 1:13-16

Passage Introduction: *Peter now enters the more practical matters of obedience and endurance under hardship. And yet the grounding of the gospel is his ever-present offering of help in these matters. Believers are first commanded not to set their hope on their own efforts or their own strength but "fully on the grace" that will be completely and finally manifested when Christ returns (v. 13). We are granted grace here and now; and yet this grace will be publicly displayed before the whole world upon Christ's second coming.*

Study in Context:

The commands of verses 14-16 flow from "knowing that you were ransomed" (v. 18). And what precious value is this grace! The "precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb" (v. 19) makes "silver or gold" (v. 19) seem like rubbish. We have been ransomed by the imperishable blood of Christ, which affords for us eternal life. Therefore, the entire set of instructions to holiness is sourced in verse 23's "since you have been born again."

1 Peter 1:13-16 - 13 Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. **14** As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, **15** but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, **16** since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."

Start with Engaging the Text: Take a few minutes to highlight, circle, or underline key words. What words or ideas are repeated, related, compared, contrasted?

Daily Study Questions

You may find it helpful to read through the commentary in “Resources for Further Study” at the end of today’s study to answer these questions.

Questions for Study

- What are 2 or 3 things you can observe or learn about God from this passage? (The Father, Son or Holy Spirit?)

- What are 2 or 3 commands that are given in this passage? How do they build upon or relate to each other?

Questions for Meditation & Application

- Why might God be showing you this passage today? What might be happening in your life that he would want to reveal this truth?

- Think of an area of your conduct where you often fail to obey God. Can you discern how your thinking, and your choice of what to hope in, might be askew, which leads to that disobedience?

- How is the love of Jesus and the grace offered in the gospel crucial to helping you apply these truths?

Close in Prayer:

This is the rhythm of Christian living - being comes before doing. Having been redeemed, we are freed to live a life of glad obedience. This is our true joy. Having been loved so well, our delight is to love in return. We are not loved because we obey; we obey because we are loved: **“knowing that you were ransomed”** (vs. 1:18). Take some time to ask the Lord to help you become more firmly rooted in who you are in Christ, that obedience and love might overflow.

Resources for Further Study

1 Peter chapter 1 notes

Commentary & Notes on 1 Peter 1:13-16

How Shall We Now Live? - There are seemingly fewer and fewer places in the world where Christianity is culturally accepted. In more and more places hostility against Christians and Christianity is on the rise. If you are a Christian living in a place hostile to your faith, and hostile to you, what do you want to hear from an apostle of Jesus Christ? What guidance do you want concerning how to conduct yourself in such a world?

Truth be told, when life gets hard we are constantly looking for someone or something to place our hope in—to be the answer that will right our lives and give us what we most need. If what you most want is to escape poverty, you set your hope upon education as a way out. If you live in a war-torn country you may be tempted to set your hope upon emigrating to another, safer country to find peace. Perhaps you're a lonely single mother, desiring to be cared for and protected; your greatest hope could easily rest upon finding a good man. Or it could be that you and your spouse find out that for some reason you are unable to have children; you might be tempted to place your hope upon for having a child in reproductive technologies. Or maybe you recently received a terminal diagnosis; you place your hope in modern medicine or a particular doctor.

It is only natural that when we find ourselves in difficult circumstances, we seek to find that something or that someone who will rescue us. And none of these things—education, peace, love, children, healing—are bad things; they are all good. But when they become our greatest goal, so that our greatest hope is the thing that will deliver that goal, that thing or that person becomes a functional god or savior to us; we bow down at their altars willingly, offering whatever sacrifices they may require. When we make a good thing an ultimate thing, we are crushed when it doesn't deliver. When we place our greatest hope in the wrong place, we set up a false god. And doing this is never more tempting than in testing circumstances, and testing circumstances are part of ordinary life for the Christian. So we need help in our thinking. And this is precisely how Peter encourages his readers—by helping them think rightly about God and about their circumstances.

Certain Hope for Uncertain Times - We have already seen Peter pointing us towards “living hope” (1:3)—in verse 13, he directs us to set our hope on the certainty of God, his character, and the salvation described in verses 1-12, which is to be fully and finally revealed at the return of Christ. Again, we need to remember that this is no false or uncertain hope; it's not like saying, I hope my team wins the championship this year. No! Peter is calling Christians to set our hope on the absolute certainty of God and his promises for us in Christ. And what we hope in determines how we live now (and how we live now demonstrates what we truly hope in).

As we face the uncertainties and difficulties of life in this hostile world, we are to “set [our] hope fully on the grace that will be brought to [us] at the revelation of Jesus Christ” (v 13). Unlike the many religions of the world that direct their adherents to do certain works in order to be accepted by their deity, Peter reminds all Christians that our hope is in a God who has already worked on our behalf to save us through his Son Jesus. And having had this salvation applied to us through the Holy Spirit in the new birth, we now have the same hope of resurrection just as Jesus was raised from the dead. So when Peter directs us to set our hope on this future salvation, he is not asking us to look to something that is uncertain; he is calling us to look forward in hope to that day when Christ will return and we receive our “inheritance that is imperishable” (v 4). In fact, Peter declares that we are to “set [our] hope fully” on that future grace to be revealed at Christ's return (v 13).

When our hope rests on what we need to do in order to be accepted by God, then such false hope drives us to work in order to earn our salvation. Such distorted hope will lead to self-righteousness if we feel able to live up to the standard we believe is acceptable to God. More likely, though, this misplaced hope will lead to utter despondency at the realization that we will never be good enough. But when our hope is rooted in the great salvation that has been accomplished on our behalf, then that hope will drive our

actions—not in order to be accepted by God, for we have already been accepted by God on the basis of the “sprinkling [of Jesus’] blood” (v 2), but in order to glorify and please God now and not be ashamed on that last day. Our obedience will not be desperate or grudging, but joyful.

How do we learn to set our hope on the grace of God? Peter says it is through “preparing [our] minds for action, and being sober-minded” (v 13). “Preparing your minds for action” is literally “gird up the loins of your minds.” Peter paints a picture of a man preparing to run or do some exercise. He would have to gather his robe between his legs and tuck it into his belt. Peter is saying, “*Setting your hope fully on God requires mental preparation and resolve. Setting your hope fully on the grace to come is an act of faith that requires renewed thinking, disciplined thinking.*” In other words, if we are to set our hope fully on the grace yet to be revealed, we need to prepare ourselves with the proper mindset, with mental resolve.

Are You Different than this World? - Our new birth has changed our identity. “The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” (v 3) is now our Father (v 17), and we are his children. As sons and daughters, then, we are to bear the likeness of our Father. As the saying goes, “Like father, like son.” Since God our Father is holy, we are to be holy (v 16). With this reference to Leviticus (11:44; 19:2; 20:7-8, 26), Peter applies what he has already explained in 1 Peter 1:10-12. Peter’s readers are living in a time of fulfillment, but the Spirit-inspired Old Testament is still authoritative for them. So, just as Israel was to be holy because Yahweh is holy, New Testament believers are to be holy as well, for the same reason.

The concept of holiness in the old covenant related to those things which were consecrated or dedicated to God for his service. In this sense, when God declares himself to be holy, he means that he is dedicated to himself, to his own service; everything he does is for his own name and glory. He alone is uniquely distinct from all else; he alone is an uncreated being; he alone dwells in unapproachable light; therefore, nothing common or unclean can come into his presence. Consequently, only those things or persons which are made clean and consecrated to God for his service—that is, made holy—can approach God’s presence. By implication, that which is holy is taken from or separated from that which is common or unclean. That which was unclean could become common through cleansing, and that which was common could be made holy by consecration.

God chose Israel as his special treasure out of all the peoples of the earth (Exodus 19:5). In other words, God separated them from all the other nations to serve him only. By obeying all of God’s law, Israel would be distinct from the surrounding nations, showing that they were solely dedicated to Yahweh in all of life. Their diet would be different; their clothing would be different; their ethics would be different; their relationships would be different; their worship would be different.

This matters because this Old Testament background underlies all of Peter’s letter. As the new covenant people of God, who have been set apart by the Holy Spirit for sprinkling with Jesus’ blood and for obedience to all his commands (1 Peter 1:2), we have been set apart from this world to serve God only. “As obedient children” then, we are not to be “conformed to the passions of [our] former ignorance” (v 14). Instead, we are to “be holy in all [our] conduct,” as he who called us out of this world is holy himself (v 15). How we conduct ourselves in this world reveals to whom we are dedicated—just as it did for Israel.

Yet, while the Old Testament is still authoritative for us, we are no longer under the old covenant. So, our distinction is not reflected in what we eat or wear; it is not reflected in worship located in a central sanctuary where animal sacrifices occur repeatedly. For us, obedience to Jesus, *motivated from and flowing out of our hope* in the finished work of Christ and the hope to come is what makes us shine.

Obeying Jesus in all things in this way shows where our hope is really anchored. “*Am I becoming more like him and less like this world, or not? What does my conduct show about my true hope, and what I have made my real god? And, where my answer may not be the one I would wish it to be, I need to look back to verses 3-5, and ask myself, “Which other object of my worship gives me an inheritance such as this? In whom else or where else will I place my hope, and who else or what else will I allow to direct my conduct, rather than “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ”?*”