

Paradigm Shift

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Date: 02 June 2024

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- [0 : 0 0] You're listening to the sermon podcast of Grace Reformed Church in Spring Hill, Tennessee. To learn more about us, visit our website at gracereformed.org.
- And now, today's sermon. We are about to finish chapter 3. We spent two weeks ago some time explaining Peter's point.
- I'm really glad that we're making use of these tables for the kids. This is awesome. Maybe we'll keep them up. But we were working through some of the more complicated areas of Peter's theology.
- And working through why is he using the story of Noah and the giants and these seeds and all this stuff. And we're going to pick some of that back up next week. But at times it's really healthy to stop and review what we've already covered so we don't get lost in the weeds.
- These letters originally were designed to be read in one sitting. So the churches would receive the letter and they would read through it at once. And so you would receive all the information at once. And we break it down into segments, sometimes single words.
- [1 : 0 9] And spend time studying it. We lose the context. So this morning what I want to do is go back and really review the first three chapters. So that we can connect it to what Peter is talking about in the end of this chapter as he goes into the fourth chapter.
- And we don't lose all the benefits of that. And for those of you that might be new to the church, this would be a great update to where we're at. I've really broke this down into three points this morning.
- So for those of you that like to take outlines, get your pens ready. Not only do I have points for you, Aaron, but I also have sub points for you. Big old smile. I have sub points for the points.
- So to help us really give us a structure to what's going on with Peter. In the beginning, Peter is writing to a suffering church. Just the whole point of the letter.
- The church is scattered. It says it's in the dispersion. Which means they have left Rome. They're on the outer skirts of Rome. And many of them are feeling the weight of their faith on top of living in a pagan city.
- [2 : 1 0] There's already complications with that. But on top of that, proclaiming faith to one God, which is not Caesar or their gods, but to the king of kings. This was not easily done without feeling the ramifications of it.
- And so what Peter's doing in the first 12 verses of this letter is he's giving them a new perspective. A new way of thinking about their faith. And so we're going to just pick up in verse 3.
- And this new perspective is really broken down. He breaks it down in three areas of where they need to be thinking differently. Now that they're in Christ, their faith is in Christ, this is how they view their life, which is very different from the world that's around them.

The first way that they think about or the new perspective that they have is that it's on the source of their hope. This is where he begins. What is the source of their hope? They have to think differently about where they put their hope.

This is verse 3. So if you're in 1 Peter 3, you're going to turn back to 1, chapter 1. And we're going to look at verse 3. It says this. I think Peter means to connect the first two of his points here.

[3 : 32] The hope that we have is connected to the fact that Jesus is the one who conquers death. It is so important that when we say the word gospel, when we talk about what is the good news for sinners, is that we get all of the gospel correct here.

And in this, he first starts with, it's mercy. That means God looks upon you as a lawbreaker, as one who rebels against him and rejects him. And instead of his hand of wrath coming upon you, he says mercy.

He removes his hand. But he doesn't withhold the wrath. He still has to bring it upon someone. And that is right here, upon the death of Christ.

The wrath of God came down upon Christ. So it's important for us to understand that the gospel is not about God just saying, it's okay. God never says, it's okay.

If he does that, he's a bad judge. And he's a bad God. And we don't want anything to do with him. Trust me. You don't want to be a part of a universe where sins are swept under the rug.

[4 : 40] That means that it's going to come and get you one day. Instead, God says, I remove the penalty and I place it on another. That's what it means to have a replacement.

Or to have your sins forgiven and applied to another. The reason why our hope is not destroyed is because our hope is not based upon a trial period.

The full weight of our sin was placed upon Christ and he rose from the grave. This is why we were just singing with Anthem. It was so good to hear your voices. He rose. Why is it so important that he rose?

Because he not only took on our payment, but he conquered it by raising from the dead. And so Peter is using this. If I say Paul, you know what I mean. His brother Peter is who I'm really talking about. Peter is using this to encourage them of where they're putting their hope.

Death does not stop. We are the only human beings on the planet who truly don't have a reason to fear death. Because we will not truly die. Right?

[5 : 45] Death is a mere transportation for us. We are moving from this body of death into an everlasting glorified body. And so our hope is not how long can...

I was listening to a podcast yesterday and they were talking about lifespans and how long people live. Right? And I just saw that Clint Eastwood was 95. He looks better at 95 than I do at 42.

I was just saying. But they were talking about living into the 120s and 130s. Right? And this is where all... Why is it... Well, first of all, we want to live longer mostly because we are...

Death is so fearful. Right? We are afraid of death because we don't understand it. We don't know what's there. But for those who have hope in Christ, death is not something to be afraid of.

The only thing about death that I am afraid of is the pain that is associated with it. So maybe the Lord and I can work something out there where I have a painless death. But besides that, I am ready to go. Like, take me home. Beam me up.

[6 : 44] Scotty, if there is an angel named Scotty. You know, it is like, let's get this on. So he begins with the perspective of saying, you don't have a reason to fear death. Because your hope is in the mercy of God who conquered death.

Verse 4. To an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you. Who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed at the last time.

So this is the second part under the new perspective. And not only is he giving them the source of their hope is outside of themselves. Has something to do with God's work and his death on the cross.

But then he gives them a new source of their value. The reason why he has to mention inheritance and where it's kept. Because the inheritance is, we don't use, did anybody, has anybody ever received an inheritance?

That's of, like, significant value where you don't really have to work? Okay. Two of you. Everyone else is like, an inheritance? That's awesome. What is that called?

[7 : 49] We don't live in a culture where we receive an inheritance. What he is saying is, what you need to function safely in life, what will protect you and guide you for the rest of eternity, has already been accumulated and it's protected by a power that is outside of you and anything else in the universe.

Because not only does he say, your entire existence, your inheritance, is secured, listen to this, by verse 5, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready.

So he's the one who's guarding it. What this is saying is, the value of yourself does not have to be found in your current existence or whatever wealth that you have or whatever inheritance that you might try to gather for yourself or for your children.

He's saying, for those who are in Christ, all of that has been taken care of and it is not possible for you to lose it. This point is important because at times we believe that, yeah, I'm saved by faith and God, he's forgiven me of my sins, but man, my works here are what's going to make sure I either make it or have something of value when I get there.

I was teasing this week on vacation with my brother and sister-in-law. I was trying to always do the dishes or take out the trash. I was like, you're not going to take my reward. I'm going to have more rewards than you. I'm going to have a bigger house than you. I don't know why it was my joke this week.

[9 : 18] It's probably because I was thinking about this sermon. But it's foolish when we start thinking about how somehow God is wanting us to do actions, thinking that those actions changes our status in the next world.

He says, your status is set, the inheritance is allotted, and it's protected, and nothing you do or anyone else does will change that. That is freedom. That is a whole, we don't function this way, right?

I have to make the money, put it in the bank, and make sure that bank isn't going to do anything with it or anyone else, right? I was listening to some people have conversations about their crypto wallets and how they have like all these wallets hidden all over the place.

I'm like, yeah, well, my crypto is hidden with God, so I'm good. It's his power that preserves it because there's no guarantees in this world. And we have all felt that at some point.

We have all felt the frailty of our life where it's either a loved one has died or we have felt death or we have felt loss. And what Peter's wanting for this church is that what you lose here is nothing because it's of no value for eternity.

[10 : 26] So my, when you start thinking about your life and you're like, well, my life is a mess. I tried so hard to accumulate and I can't.

I've tried to protect. I live hopeless. This is who Peter's writing to. The people who are a mess, who have no hope because they look at their circumstances and they say, it doesn't seem as if God is prospering my life.

This came up with a new word. That God is helping my life succeed in the ways I think. I said this two weeks ago. The greatest lie that Satan has caused humanity to believe is that there's nothing wrong with this world.

And what you put into it, you will get out of it. It doesn't work. It does not work. Life does not work fair in this way. I think at times we maybe shun and pull back from the work of the kingdom and think that our lives are significant in value because we're not the most successful people.

At least I'm not. We don't have much to accumulate or much to look at and impress the world. If you want to write this down, this is 1 Corinthians chapter 1. Paul is writing to encourage the believers who are feeling the insignificance of their life.

[11 : 52] How is it that God's going to use me? I'm a nobody. I'm a nothing. The culture around me mocks me and laughs at me. This is what he writes to them.

1 Corinthians 1.27. But God chose. It's such an important word. It's not that we found our way in by some kind of means, but God looks down at all of us and says, these are the ones that I chose to be my servants.

But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise. God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong. God chose what is low and despised in the world, even the things that are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God.

I mean, this isn't just like a statement that Paul makes. Think about the stories. One of the most famous leaders in the Old Testament, he somehow even convinced God to use his brother to be a spokesperson.

He's like, I can't talk. Moses. He's like, I stutter. Right? Or you think about Gideon, who has got this massive army. What does God keep doing? He whittles it.

[13 : 05] He whittles it. Why? Gets it down to 300 people, because it's not the power of Gideon's army that makes the difference. Right? God ends up making the entire nation wander through the wilderness for 400 years.

Sorry, for 40 years. Ooh, 400 had been a long time. 40 years because they didn't want to go into the land of Canaan, and we're going to get here. You know why they didn't want to go in the land? Because there were giants in there that were eating the people in the land.

You have to stop for a moment. They had just come out of Egypt, and they had just seen God do these massive plagues. They divided the waters. They walked on dry land, and then all of a sudden they're like, oh yeah, there's giants in there.

God, we can't go in there. So God says, because you don't trust me, I'm going to make you wander in the desert for 40 years. Right? God has always used our weakness to display his power.

For when I am weak, then he is strong. Peter is writing this saying, God is not looking at your strength and guaranteeing your future based upon your strength. He sees your weakness and says, but oh, your future is secure, because my power secures it.

[14 : 15] And so he's giving them a new perspective of their hope, of their value, and then lastly, he gives them a new perspective on the source of their joy. Notice how Peter points to where joy will be experienced.

In verse 6. Not in the freedom from pain, not in from being delivered from suffering, or in the moment of progress or success. He says, now look what God was successful in your life.

There, I said it right that time. He says, in this you rejoice. What? In what you've been given. Your mercy, your inheritance, by God's grace.

Look at verse 6. In this you rejoice, though for a little while, if it's necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith, more precious than gold, that perishes through it, is tested by fire, might be found to result in praise, and glory, and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Though you have not seen him, you love him, and though you do not see him, you believe in him, and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

[15 : 36] The joy comes from what we've already received, and the promises that wait us. Now listen to this. In the middle of your pain.

Because he says, you're going to suffer. Life will be hard. But that does not remove the reasons for rejoicing.

Because your joy is not connected to your performance, or your experience of what's going on around you.

It's so hard to think, my life's a mess, God must be upset at me. This sickness is in my life, because I must have done something. No, you live in a cursed world, and there's an enemy that wants to attack you, and he says, in the midst of a cursed world, in the middle of a war, you actually can have joy and rest, if you remember where it comes from.

It comes from a love that's outside of yourself, and a grace that is unconditional, and an inheritance that is already protected. In that, you rejoice. So because of all of this, it's true, this new perspective he's giving them as believers, as the church, he gives them, point two, a new purpose.

[17 : 00] He gives them a whole new purpose, and this covers, we're going to have to make some big leaps here to get through this. So this is chapter 113 through 225. What is the only place, that the cursed world, and the enemy cannot touch you?

Your hope, your value, and your joy. Where is it they can't get to you? It's here. It's in our minds. They don't have control of our minds. We do.

We know we will suffer both physically and spiritually, and this is why we can find joy that's outside of our circumstances. This is how Peter mentions it this way.

If you look at chapter 1, verse 13. So this is your first sub-point underneath this new purpose. Your new purpose is to prepare your mind for battle.

Prepare your mind for battle. Listen to how he says it this way. Therefore, preparing your minds for actions, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

[18 : 08] I love how simple Peter makes his letters at times. He tells you what you should protect your minds for.

He's like, this is what you're going to be setting your mind towards, which is what? The hope of the grace that is to come. So not the healing now, not the freedom now, not the success today.

It's at the resurrection. So he says, anything that will cause your mind to think opposite of that truth, prepare your mind to fight it off. Prepare your mind to fight it off.

Look at verse 14. He contrasts it with those who occupy the world around us, the world's way of thinking, and our former life.

Verse 14, it says, as obedient children, do not conform to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in your conduct. In all the years of my counseling people in the various churches and marriages, I have come to conclude that Christians who struggle to pay attention to what Peter is saying, they really don't understand the power of what happens in our minds and how it can rule them, their entire body.

[19 : 36] I think all conflict in relationships, at the root of it, is based upon selfish desires. When you think about it, you are either preventing me from my pleasures, my desires, or you are not the sufficient source I thought you would be to please me.

It's selfishness. Why would we have this perspective? Because this is how the world is trained to think. We use people for our own ends, for our own pleasures.

They are but a pathway to gratification. This is what caused so much problems in the early church. Even our own children, at times, can be used for a pathway of significance and gratification.

We see the adorations that other people give. And listen, I love it when people praise my children for the things that they do. I definitely fall into the proud dad syndrome. It's like, yeah, that's my kid.

Peter says, don't be comforted by your passions.

[20 : 54] Don't allow them to fool you. Where do passions get their genesis? Where do they get their beginning? In our minds.

What we think about is what eventually becomes reality. Jesus made this point abundantly with the spotlight on it clear.

In Luke 6.45, he says this, the good person out of the good treasures of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of the evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

Another way of a heart, I mean, we don't really carry data in our heart. Here's the processor. Here's the data bank. It's another form of speaking from the desires and the passions of the mind.

So if you don't think that the enemy wants to worm or worm itself into our hearts and our minds through these subtle temptations so that our desires and our perspectives change to be earthbound versus spiritual, then we're not paying attention to what Peter and Paul and the writers of the Bible are saying.

[22 : 12] When we are thinking about, because when he says, prepare your mind for action, right? If I were to tell you, I need all of you to get ready.

We just heard, there's a fire in the bathroom, and we all are going to need to exit the building. So I need you to prepare yourself to take that action of getting up and going out the door.

All of a sudden, your adrenaline's going to spike. What are you going to start doing? You're going to start smelling? Is it already close? And you're going to start looking at the back door, right? Awareness.

Are all the children out? Is everybody safe? Why? Because there's a legitimate threat upon the safety of not only you, but other people. When we read this, we don't have the spiritual alertness.

Why? Because we've been lulled to sleep to think that, no, the world we live in is fine. There's nothing wrong with the world. Well, the world that Peter lives in, in my mind, I don't think it got better between that point and today.

[23 : 13] Do you? I was just on Twitter this morning. Sorry, X. And I was appalled by what basketball players are doing to each other right now. I mean, it's horrendous what our world is doing to each other because they're being controlled by their passions and Peter is like, we aren't controlled by our passions.

We're being controlled by the love of Christ, the gospel of his mercy and grace in our life. So we have to prepare our minds for the battle that's going to take place of lies versus truth, which then leads us to the second point when we're thinking about this new purpose.

He's giving us a new mission for our life. I think a lot of us struggle with the idea of advancing the gospel of being missionaries in our local homes and towns because we are too intoxicated with the world to think that we need to actually rescue people from it.

We enjoy it too much to think that there's a problem. It's like, I don't know, it's pretty good. I'm enjoying life. This is great. Maybe we need to step back and say, what part of life is great?

If it's not the joy we have in Christ, then we might be listening to the passions of our flesh again. You know, when we're thinking about the purpose of our life being this new mission, which we'll get into here in a minute in chapter two, if you turn with me to chapter two, it's easy to see what occupies our minds if we've actually taken the time to be ready to remove that which is a lie based upon what the mission and purpose of our life is.

[24 : 47] Like, what do we exhaust our energy on? Satan has done a work on the modern church leaving most people ignorant of their faith and completely occupied with anything other than their eternity.

I think a lot of people suffer from the idea that church is something we do for community and to really to help my psyche on the days that I'm down and I'm really not performing well but it is not the mission and the purpose of our life.

Listen to it this way. This is 1 Peter 2.9. But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness and into his marvelous light.

In other words, our entire lives are built upon that mission. He pulls you out with his mercy, he pays for your sins, he takes care of your future and then he walks over and places a robe around you and says, I want you to identify yourself as a whole different person.

You're my representative. That's what a priest is. A priest is the representative of a deity. You represent me now. And guess what you're going to tell people? I love this.

[26 : 13] You represent the amazing excellencies of God. This is important, church. We are not to be angry priests.

Sometimes I just want to walk over to a Christian, hug them, and in their ears say, you know, you're free. You're loved. You're forgiven.

Why are you so angry? Why are you so mean? Stop being mean. Stop being nasty. And stop tweeting stupid stuff.

Kids, don't say stupid. Not okay. It's unreal how mean Christians are. Peter says, you've been set free and God chose you to be the representative of himself to proclaim the wonder of who he is.

We're in a month where there's a lot of horrendous things that are said because we're celebrating something in our culture that God has spoken out against in horrendous ways.

[27 : 20] But we're not the judge and we're not God. We represent the law. This is what's holy and right for God. And let me tell you how he frees us from our sin.

Let me tell you how grace can cover you too. How mercy can set you free too. And you too can experience a joy unspeakable.

But no. What are we doing instead? We're comparing ourselves to other sinners. Don't ever do this. You will always have a reason to find yourself righteous in the eyes of another because the standard is not other people.

The standard as we read this morning is the law of God and the law is perfection. He requires us to be perfect. Therefore, don't ever compare yourself to another person other than God.

That is what gives you compassion. You're a failure. You're a sinner. You've broken God's law. You've loved something other than God just like I have. And let me tell you about the excellent mercy and kindness he can have towards you as he has towards me.

[28 : 33] You see, that's the new purpose. The problem is if we're not finding our joy in the gospel, then we're not going to have the compassion and the power necessary to share it with other people. Why do I preach the gospel and the elders?

I mean, Eric absolutely hit a home run last week. If you didn't hear it, go download it. Eric just gospelized us. It was great. Why? Because we need that refreshing energy to say, how do I function in a world that hates my God being reminded of his love?

He says, I chose you to be the very light for the nations. Look at verse 11.

Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your souls. Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.

Peter's perspective is that, hey, look, once you hold this new identity, you're no longer going to fit. You don't fit in the world because this world is governed by passions that are fed by the evil one.

[29 : 48] We're not governed by those passions anymore. So therefore, we have to see ourselves as sojourners and exiles and do not allow the passions of our former flesh to govern us once again.

And so this new purpose is to protect our minds because this is where he's going to get into our head and get us off so we're not carrying out our mission. Our new mission is not self-preservation.

Our new mission is to expend ourselves so that we can, what, be amongst people who are not like us. I think this is fascinating. Christians are not to seclude themselves from the culture, to go and hide and run in bunkers, right, and fill ourselves with ammunition and MREs.

Is it MREs? I don't know whatever they're called. I don't know. I don't own one. When I was a kid, we had people that came back from the Gulf and they brought all these MREs and my brother and I thought it would be so fun to go out in the woods and eat them and we cracked one open and we're like, never again.

That was horrendous. There's a reason why it's in a package that does not expire. I don't even know why I told you that. So we're not waiting, preserving ourselves until the king comes.

[30 : 59] It says we're actually expending ourselves. The reason why the church is experiencing suffering is that they're in the midst of the people around them as priests so that they can share this good news.

And so he gives them this mission and the mission really is this new purpose of their life. I put it on my notes. He's preparing us for the suffering of evangelism.

See, we think of evangelism as the crazy guy on the corner of the street or the people who live tracks and toiletries. So weird. Don't leave tracks on toilets. But, this is not how he tells the church to evangelize.

He tells the church that the way in which they respond differently than the world becomes the light. Just look at verse 19 with me. I'll just show it to you from here. For this is a gracious thing when mindful of God one endures sorrow while suffering unjustly.

But even if you should suffer for righteousness sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them nor be troubled. But in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you.

[32 : 17] Yet do it with gentleness and respect, having a good conscience so that when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may put you to shame.

the conduct of the believer is what causes someone to go, you have a hope I don't have. You need to tell me about this. It's how we live, believe it or not, that can draw someone in.

They're slandering you, they're attacking you, they're accusing you, and it's your compassion and your patience and your consistent hope in the gospel that someone finally goes, please explain to me why you are this way.

So he's giving them a whole new purpose built upon the new perspective of the gospel. Sometimes people ask me, okay John, I understand, what does it mean to rest in Christ?

What am I to do now? Those who have sufficiently rested can sufficiently suffer. This is why James and Paul say, hey count it a joy when you suffer.

[33 : 23] Why? Because you know why you're suffering. You've said no to the flesh, you've said no to the world's ideologies, you've embraced Christ and those around you are attacking you and the strength to do that is resting in the sufficiency of Christ, this new perspective that we have.

This brings us to our last point. So he's given them in the first section, he's given them a whole new way of thinking about the gospel, a new perspective. Now because we have this new perspective, he's given them a whole new purpose.

Right? To battle the mind, we now live lives of mission and in this mission we're gonna suffer as we share the gospel. He gets to where we're at now and this is where as a church I want to spend some more time but he gives them a new paradigm of thinking.

It's a whole new paradigm. I'm gonna tell you I worked really hard for that last P. I get into it and I'm like why do I do this?

Just pick different words. But no, he gives them a whole new paradigm and the paradigm he's introducing them to is this. He's already walked them through it. This is how those of you who are living in the spirit, the spiritual world, you have to still function in a physical world.

[34 : 46] That's the paradigm. Paul literally says you're a new kind of creature that's never existed before. The world's never seen creatures like you. Creatures who are in a fallen body but yet the spirit lives in them and they're alive.

It's never existed. It's all new. He's trying to help them understand our capacity to say no to the flesh. These people don't have it. You see the world around them they indulge themselves in what is horrendous because the God of this world has blinded their eyes.

He is continuing to feed their lust and he uses them to self-destroy themselves and to discourage us. That's why he says it makes sense to me now when James is like hey when you suffer it's a good thing.

That means you're actually making a dent in the spiritual realm. They're attacking you because you're actually doing something of value. It's a good thing he says to suffer for the sake of the Lord.

And so this new paradigm is what we're working through right now where Peter points to the story of Noah and the ark and all the stuff that happened within the angelic realm and he says Jesus defeated that coup that attempt to stop him.

[36 : 04] You're still in a spiritual war today. In the next letter he says that Satan is a prowling lion a roaring lion seeking who may be to devour. Yes he rose from the grave he is now in charge of all things but the spiritual rebellious realm is still at work.

They have not come to their final judgment day just as we have not come to our final judgment day. So how is it that we have a new hope that it's not based upon our experience and it's not based upon our performance but it's a joy based upon the truth of Christ.

How do we live in that world and the spiritual war that's happening? That's the paradigm shift that he has for them. I wrote an article this week put it up yesterday if you want to go read it it's in the app of understanding this paradigm that many of the church would have had of understanding the spiritual realm understanding the gods of the universe like what does Paul mean when he says the god of this world has blinded the eyes of the man like there's other gods what is he talking about?

So that article will help explain some of that in preparing us for the coming weeks but for the next few weeks I want us to work through this paradigm shift where Paul is helping us find joy in the spiritual realm to be lights and priests in the physical realm.

You see we don't we don't go to our flesh or this world to find hope anymore. What does Paul say about our bodies? He says it is a prison of death.

[37 : 36] who will free me from this prison of death? Romans says that the earth is groaning waiting for the curse to be set free. This is not a good situation but for those of us who are in Christ in the gospel we have both of these intentions.

So Peter is encouraging them saying if you do not allow the spirit side of your faith to strengthen and guide you you will become encapsulated once again into the passions of your flesh.

So listen how this is a little bit of an introduction in the next couple weeks of what's coming but turn with me to chapter four so we can kind of tie this all together and then we'll kind of unpack it as we go forward.

First Peter four he says this since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh arm yourselves with the same way of thinking.

There's that language again he's constantly warning us of this fight since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh arm yourselves with the same way of thinking for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin so as to live for the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for human passions but for the will of God.

[38 : 56] This is that paradigm shift. We don't live to please ourselves. We have the joy of God's love and his grace and his mercy and that is the way we think.

We arm ourselves with it. Paul says it this way that he says to put on the full armor of God that you might ward off the fiery darts right? Keep reading. for the time that is past suffices for doing what the Gentiles want to do living in sensuality passions drunkenness orgies drinking parties and lawless idolatry with respect to this they are surprised when you do not join them in the same flood of debauchery and they malign you.

Oh this is important. It should be normal for the world to get upset at us for not embracing what they want. This whole month is what this is about.

The whole month. They say you cannot say you love me unless you accept what I am doing. That's called malign. When we say no we are not going to indulge in that.

With meekness and gentleness and patience we say no that's what I used to be but I am not that anymore. You see I have been freed from that.

[40 : 20] You have been freed from how I was born? You have been freed from how I didn't choose this? This is not a sermon on that. But it was happening here in Peter's day and it's happening in our day.

It's the same source. It's the evil forces. He is saying arm yourself with the gospel because the paradigm of evil versus good is in the world.

It's evident in the passions of their flesh. We show that we're not underneath the kingdom of darkness anymore because we say no and we say no with meekness and gentleness. We're not their judge.

We're not condemning them. We're saying you can be set free as I was set free. It's a whole paradigm shift. So the gospel is absolutely the foundation for this entire book for all of our actions.

And if we do not proclaim the goodness of Christ week in and week out in our songs and our prayers and the way in which we receive the table, you will not have the energy to say no to your flesh and say yes to the spirit, to be a priest, to be ready to give an answer of the hope that is within you.

[41 : 29] I skipped over this comment because I thought I was running out of time but I've got time so I'm going to go back to it. Or my watch died. Sorry. But that did happen once.

That was a long sermon. I'm too afraid to ask you what time it is. So last comment. When it says be prepared to give an answer, there's three ways that you're prepared.

First of all, you have to believe the right gospel. It's not your wit or your wisdom that transforms the heart from death to life.

I'm not smart enough to outwit anybody and I'm pretty good at arguing. But I can't argue somebody into the kingdom. So the first thing is believe the gospel is the only power to transfer someone from life to death.

Number two, be prepared. That means that your heart actually has to believe this is necessary. We need to be in the church being trained up in the word to know what the evil really is and know what the good is in response.

[42 : 37] We don't think that we need to be prepared but this is what he's saying. And then number three, in order to do this, to be ready, you actually have to prioritize it in your life. Where the church and the means of grace and the function and the teaching of the body become what our schedules dominate instead of our schedules are first and then we'll pepper in the church as it fits.

what a weird note to end on. So we won't end there. But why? Because of the paradigm.

We've all felt it. We've all felt it this week when we gave in to the flesh. I know we all have. If you were angry, if you lusted, if you desired any of that, you didn't love your neighbor, your spouse, your children as you should, all of this, we gave in to the flesh, then how is it that we find the strength to keep fighting?

It's prioritizing the gospel in our life. It's prioritizing the people that God is putting in our lives as the means. Consider how to build one another up. Why? Because the war is real.

So, and every week, this is why we come to the table and we receive in our hands the visible sign of what it is that Christ has done. The gospel is preached into our ears and according to what the Bible teaches us, that the presence and the spirit of God comes into the means, not only of the preaching of the word, but into the means of the juice and the bread, and through that, God encourages our souls.

[44 : 07] Now, listen up, church. I say this every week, but I want you to make sure you understand what I'm saying. There is a promise in the preaching of the word and in the table. This is what we're talking about at GRN, that God's spirit's presence comes and encourages your soul.

That's the paradigm shift that Peter's talking about. Both of them, the Bible. I want you to know that this is why he says do not forsake gathering and receiving because it's for the sake of the health of your soul.

If you get anything out of this, we believe the gospel truly does save us and sustain us in the preaching and the teaching of his word. Amen? Amen.

Let's pray. Father, I thank you for people who love the gospel and want to hear all of God's word. May we not skip one period or one letter, but may we be encouraged by the truth of the gospel.

In Christ's name, amen. Thanks for listening to the sermon podcast of Grace Reformed Church in Spring Hill, Tennessee, where everyone is in equal need of grace.

[45 : 16] To plan a visit or to learn more about us, visit our website at gracereformed.org.