

Conformed by Love

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 14 January 2024

Preacher: Jon Moffitt

[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 grace.reformed.org and now today's sermon for those of you that are visiting with us we normally work through books of the bible we have gone through james and john and ezekiel and we are now working through first and second peter but we're going to pick up where we left off last week continuing in verse 13 and following in 1588 the spanish armada with 130 ships sailed toward england they determined to with over 50 000 soldiers they determined that they were going to overthrow england implant the soldiers onto the soil and remove queen elizabeth from her throne one very large obstacle stood in their way between them and their goal the english navy the spanish warships had larger guns but the english ships well they had superior commanders and they were able to maneuver more easily than the spanish the spaniards knew all of this before they set sail so what hope did they have in being victorious and taking over this land it is said that the spaniards believed that god was on their side with this extra power on their side they hoped that the english would expose themselves to the heavy guns and then would allow the soldiers to then engage and fight in the ships and take over the land because they had 50 000 soldiers on their side but as the saying goes hope is not a plan the british kept their distance and they ended up destroying the spanish ships and the spanish paid dearly for their vain hope you see hope is only as good as the source not only did they choose the wrong source but they misplaced it and misrepresented their hope assuming god was behind their mission when we're thinking about the concept of hope hope is often used as if it's its power itself with enough hope produces the results that you want hope it all works out is the optimistic in some of us is there any people who are the typically optimistic about life i tend to be that way gets me in a lot of trouble especially when i do projects around the home i'm very optimistic in how it's going to work out my wife and i don't seem to agree on what is level she's right i'm wrong but if you go back to verse 13 this is what peter is dealing with a misplaced hope a hope that is uh really even lied to about when it comes to their faith in christ and their faith in the world look at verse 13 again it says 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 before peter gets into the instructions on how it is that we are to be holy and resist temptation and resist the world he begins by pointing to this pointing to something that's the complete opposite of the gods of the

city that they're used to hearing he doesn't point to their effort he points to a hope beyond their efforts he points to grace now turn down to verse 21 we'll get to this in a couple of weeks but i want you to see how he ends it he bookends both the beginning and the ending of the instructions of how it is that we are to live holy lives he says in verse 21 who through whom our believers in god who raised him from the dead mentioning the gospel and gave him glory so that your faith and hope are where in god your hope is in god through what jesus christ did in the resurrection from the dead so at the end of this life and at the end of our mission here on earth at the end of our attempts of holiness to which he wants to call us to where do we find our hope and the success of our life in god not in your efforts and not in your actions which is interesting we love to emphasize our works our holiness our ability to resist other gods or resist the flesh it's not where he puts your hope where does he point to he points to the god of gods and the king of kings he will provide our very need this is important because when you're dealing with a subject like holiness this gets very complicated very fast holiness is a weird subject for modern christians is it not how many of you are already kind of cringing like ooh sermons on holiness this could go bad we all feel it we don't seem to either agree either on what is holiness it seems like everybody has their own opinion on what it is that we should or shouldn't be doing and this all produces this bad taste in our mouth i grew up under this kind of preaching and i've seen it all over the world holiness kind of feels at times like a nagging ant the crazy ant who's constantly telling you to sit up straight and tuck in your shirt and wipe your mouth off and comb your hair you're just kind of like can you just leave me alone i think i was fine without your instructions but this is what it feels like and for others holiness is their doom they will never feel the level of assurity and rest in their faith because i just don't think here's the word enough i'm holy enough and so it's the constant predator that hunts them down no matter how you look at it the guard the gods of the dark age of the dark realm sorry have turned the beauty and the wonder of our god's nature and who he is into something we would rather avoid and not talk about altogether let's just not approach that subject see the pharisees often struggled with this as well and they didn't like talking about it so they changed it they added their own code of holiness they required actions that god never intended us to partake in and then challenged the holy one turn to me to john chapter 8 you just got to read how jesus deals with this he's very concerned with our perspective of holiness and how we see it is vitally important so much so if you alter your view of where holiness comes from and why someone should be holy this is what he has to say to you this is what he says the pharisees john chapter 8 and verse 44 these are people who are rejecting the necessity of jesus as their holiness as the messiah and so jesus looks at them and says in verse 44 you are of your father the devil and your will is to do your

father's desires he was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him when he lies he speaks out of his own character for he is a liar and the father of lies i think jesus is concerned about our perspective maybe that if we don't agree with his perspective we're following a liar a murderer a devil notice that the d there is not capitalized because it's a description of who he is to hope in one's power and strength to produce holiness so that god's will aligns with your will is dangerous this is not what he's speaking of if you do if you tend to repulse at the idea of holiness like i do just know that you have been told a lie by a someone who wishes to kill the king holiness is not a bad thing it's not a dirty word you see the devil the evil one the satan he hates our god he hates our king and he wishes to enslave us into his ways and to remove the power of our king out of our life which is total freedom total freedom if you were to travel back with me again to the city that we started talking about last week this is 63 a.d this is the roman empire we're either in the providence of a room or on the outskirts of it and we as the citizens are engaging in life but the difference between us and the people around us is we have a different king we have a different perspective of what worship is we have one god not many and here is our commander he determines how we must live no matter what land we find ourselves in we are his royal subjects and so he tells us how to conduct ourselves and as we walk the streets and live among our neighbors they don't have the same hope we do when we start to engage with them and talk with them their eyes are not focused on our king but on another king and it's called king desire is where they focus see king desire is more powerful than any other king on the planet king desires infiltrates every sensory of our body sight and smell taste touch sound it all is used to strengthen the hunger to fulfill the one demand that we have as citizens of the roman province the desire of the body it's powerful nero may be the ruler of the empire but the real king that drives the people that the gods even speak to and entice them with is their own pleasure their own desire there seem to be good the problem was that with our desires is everyone's desire is different and it seems to be good to us you name the pleasure there was a god there to help you fulfill that pleasure to fulfill that desire you only need to do two things live and sacrifice yourself for that god and they will help you feed the god desire that lives inside of you anything and everything would be sacrificed to fulfill that there was no great there was nothing too great to sacrifice to fulfill one's desire they could have it we cringe at the fact we're going to spend more time in the old testament as we continue to go through peter

because he mentioned so many old testament stories but we cringe at the fact that the children of israel would take their infants and they would sacrifice them before the god of molek so that they could receive the power and the blessings of god we cringe over the idea that they would do such a horrific act yet for the god of desire here in the united states we have murdered over 64 million infants who never even took their first breath see my desire got in the way and therefore i sacrificed this human for my desire don't tell me the evil of this devil doesn't exist in the hearts of all of us you see the streets of rome look similar to the empire of the united states the same gods that ran this mighty city are still employed today running the same schemes just through different means instead of temples filled with idols and factories where they were sold with promises of prostitution and much we don't have temples but we have phones filled with media daily we worship at the feet of these altars offering them our time and our money we drink in the lies of the fulfillment of our desires and the satisfaction of our joy and the evil one knows just how to feed on these desires teaching us to make it our king we all have fallen prey to this we know it but it's innocent it's secret it's private this is what makes the bible so relevant to christian today and for all of eternity the all wise king provided disciples those to whom he would teach and implant the spirit into who would then expose the tactics of the evil one and write it down in words that could be verified and trusted and obeyed and passed down to us there's something powerful about god's word and knowing we're not the first to read it obey it and understand how it works by the way do you like being a guinea pig i don't know thankfully the first church that we're reading of they messed up all the ways in which we could so we don't have to and yet we still do why is that why do we fall prey to that go back to first peter chapter one this is why we're here today church we gather weekly to read from his sacred book to be washed and refreshed and learn his wondrous love over and over again as if we did the first time and whether you walk the streets of rome or pick up your phone you need to be reminded of peter's powerful warning verse 13 therefore prepare your minds for action because that's where the war takes place that's where the attack happens being sober minded one cannot simply carelessly live life without taking precaution we live in a war zone but we don't want to believe that we do you will have to actively be ready to turn away reject and remove the enemy's lies when they come this is why we repulse that the idea of holiness his lies have been implanted into our hearts now if you're like me when peter says something like hey prepare your minds for action and be

sober minded i have this like five-year-old that lives in me never grew up and you know what five-year-olds do they ask why i always want to know if someone tells me to do something i need to know why because i'm a little rebellious person that's why but i want to know if it's logical if it makes sense to me because if it doesn't i don't want to do it why why peter is this important i often don't waste my time and money because i take the time to ask for this question and often i find it fascinating the more i learn of our king and his story and his book the more i love the reason for the why look at verse 14 so he says prepare your mind for action right be sober minded set your hope fully on the grace that is to come and then he tells you why verse 14 as obedient children do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance you could put in their king desire but as he who called you is holy you also be holy in all your conduct so it is written you shall be holy for i am holy first i just want to point out how peter immediately the moment he points you to holiness and to obedience he cannot do so without pointing out a very significant title what does he call you child children of obedience what is he calling you to do he's saying because you're a child you then reflect your father you reflect who he is there's an image that's happening here and i love it children have this natural desire to want to be like their parents my son nox earlier last year kept asking his mom for a golf outfit so that he could look like dad when we went to go hit golf balls he was so proud to come home and show me his shorts and his shirt that were the same color as mine because he wanted to be just like his dad do you understand that when peter calls you to obedience the finger isn't pointed down with fear and a gutter in his voice saying the or else he says hey as children as children who love their father as children who look up and see a dad who loves them obey do you do you see the difference he says you do you know how you used to just live for yourself but it was destructive he says you were ignorant before you didn't know of the father's love you didn't know what he's done for you didn't know what he's done to you but as a child as an obedient child don't go back to those ways because you've been set free from them so peter's not just throwing around a title he's trying to reshape your view of the kingdom he's trying to reshape your view of life often many of us walk around afraid of a god who never wants you to be afraid of him but to see him as a loving father this is what's so powerful about the idea of a parent child relationship is one familiarity two safety and three more importantly love come with me to first john first john does this first john three he does this exact image for us this

[20 : 21] idea of a father's love and how it manipulates not manipulates but it transforms our mind to think as the father thinks this is probably one of my favorite sections of scripture just so warms my heart first john three look at verse one see what kind of love the father has given to us that we should be called the children of god and so we are you need something to encourage you this week just read that again see what kind of love you see what he's pointing to jesus that's the kind of love he died he died for you see what kind of love the father has for us that we should be called the children of god and so we are the reason why the world does not know us is that it does not know him see now we're around people in rome and as we walk the streets of rome they don't have the same view of life what they love is not we we love what they consider to be good we repulse that this is why john has to write this to his flock as well beloved verse 2 we are god's children now and what we will be has not yet appeared that's our king but we know that when he appears we shall be like him because we will see him as he is what a day what a day but verse 3 and everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure why do we clean up our lives do you have something to be afraid of right here do you think the appearance of jesus and his return is something john's worried about oh man i better make sure i clean myself up before he gets here is there a hint of anger or shame at all in john's tone please argue with me because you are going to lose and i want you to lose so that you can feel god's love it changes the way you look at life see what kind of love he has for you it actually produces holiness as nuts as that sounds god's love produces purity this is what peter's getting at this is what he's like set your hope fully on this the return of the king because when he shows up all things are made new and what you are hoping to be you will be but while you wait go ahead and start cleaning it up it's good to act like the king it benefits everybody around you and it glorifies the king you see that's a change for me like that makes holiness logical versus well i'm at the end of my life i'm going to stand before him naked and i'm going to have to show everything that i've done and he's going to judge me which peter talks about here in the next few verses we completely confuse those verses we'll get to those in the coming weeks go back to first peter with me i want you to see a metaphor to demonstrate the amazing love of our king to us he uses it in verse 15 describing god's love he says in first 15

first peter 1 15 but as he who called you is holy you also be holy in your conduct it just kind of flies over it but he's already mentioned it go back to verse 3 it's the phrase here he who called you oh the theology here is so deep and powerful this is what he's referencing your mind back to you're not his child because you chose to adopt yourself that's weird you're his child because he chose to adopt you he called you listen to this verse 3 blessed be the god and father of our lord jesus christ according to his great mercy he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of jesus christ from the dead to an inheritance that is imperishable undefiled and unfading kept in heaven for you who by god's power not yours not your holiness who by god's power are being guarded through the faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last times that's your hope that's your calling that's why you're holy you're not holy to earn what you already have he says i'm holding it for you son daughter i've got it it is secure by god's power now go be holy that's just different you're not earning something you're reflecting it you are reflecting what you already have isn't that so different it's freeing it's like you're learning you've ever watched somebody learn how to drive a car yeah i've got three that i've done that with recently about starting another one you've ever taught somebody how to do a new skill and they're just kind of all over the place if they're receiving affirmation and they understand the goal and there's not a fear of failure what do they do they try again they try again they try again they try again but for most christians we fail enough we're like man i just can't seem to get this i'm gonna quit why would god ever want me because let's see uh turn with me to romans chapter five why would god ever want you to keep trying why would ever god want you in the first place could you be in a worse position than you were before child the answer to that is no romans 5 10 for wild we were what say it that's what you are enemies enemy i want you to think about who he compares you to in john chapter 8 he says you're of the father your devil you cannot have a greater enemy than those who rebelled against the king of kings in the host of heaven and he wiped out and took with him several thousand with him this enemy to whom god hates and this enemy hates god he says that's who you're like you know sometimes we think you know the little splinter that gets in our finger is the enemy he's like no the enemy that i don't to destroy with my holiness for while when you were an enemy you cannot get any worse than this brothers and sisters you pick yourself back up because you've already gone out of the worst state you could be in which was his enemy you cannot be in that status again because those to whom he puts his love on and adopts he does not wipe their name from his books your name is written in his book as adopted child with the blood of jesus christ it's stained there never to be removed that's why you pick yourself back up and try again because for while we were his enemies he

reconciled to us by the death of his son much more it's important this next part we were reconciled by his life meaning all the obedience that you think you need to be performing has been cared for by his son so you don't obey because you're earning you're obeying because you're reflecting what you already have now it sounds easy to do in a gym when everybody in here is agreeing like yeah man we all need to obey but get out in the world where the world starts to beat down and you're like you're an idiot you believe that why would you do that it's different isn't it it's different when your boss and your relatives and your neighbor don't agree with you and then you start to listen to it like man maybe they're right peter says children your father chose you to be holy like him this this changes for me because i've read the scripture and i see what a holy god does i see how he treats people man i want to be just like that to think i could treat you the way god i treats me that would be amazing he goes oh but that's what i'm that's what i'm doing though that's what i've called you to john that's what i've called you to see i rescued you out of the enemy's territory you were only doing what the devil told you to do and then i i brought you into my kingdom changed your name i changed your nature i put myself inside of you gave you a home and now i'm going to teach you to live like me as a free loving gracious person well that sounds like a trip to the candy shop and not a trip to the dentist if you ask me like sign me up that's the kind of holiness that i think i'll wake up and put my feet on the ground and go let's try this again lord help me so when peter says be holy as i am holy don't think that as a command you're here kind of like so we can so that we can do that he's like well yeah you're commanded to do that and here's how by his love by his grace i wish i had more time to walk through these stories but i don't don't so i'll mention them to you what i i mentioned this to the men's group and i mentioned this to the youth this week man we had such just a wonderful time on both those groups and so thankful for we we got you guys just parents you guys have done such an amazing job with your kids man i love i love those young adults they are amazing children um what's interesting about the bible is it's illustrated um i like pictures i've recently been putting things together i put together a bike rack recently and then i put together a um a pull-up bar which i don't know if i'll ever use it but we all have to buy them at one point right so i'm reading the instructions i'm like this doesn't make any sense do you know where i went come on say it with me where'd i go the pictures the illustration oh what i can't see in instructions i can see and this is our god he didn't go hey be holy as i'm holy he showed you what it was like man remember the story of the woman at the well so jesus sends the disciples to go get food he's out in the outskirts of the city and the woman who has had five husbands are now on her sixth she comes during the hottest part of the day because well she is ashamed she's ashamed of herself and everyone in

the city knows who she is she is and Jesus knows exactly where to meet her and treats her unlike any other rabbi because she even says what are you doing why are you talking to me and Jesus completely exposes her catches her in a lie and you know what this woman ends up doing it says she ran into town telling everybody about him she was afraid he was going to send her to hell is that what the story says no she ran in there because she had seen his compassion his love his forgiveness she ran into the town that condemned her her not caring she didn't care what her town thought of her her town was evil her town was secretly doing she was doing publicly and she said I found the king what a story do you remember when Jesus is called into the pharisee's house and they're sitting there scrutinizing him and this woman shows up and without permission which is culturally not acceptable without permission comes into the house and begins to wash the feet of Jesus she's known as a woman of the city not a great title we have other names for them here they stand on street corners woman of the city they knew who this woman was and this woman was able to wash the feet of Jesus with her tears alone this statement is what makes her actions make sense you see you guys she loves me this much because she understands how much she's been forgiven all of it she loves much because she's been forgiven much see when he says be holy as I am holy here's the pictures here's the illustrations right it's not a god with a stick it's a god with an arm it's so different I think of Zacchaeus the man everybody hated and he's up in a tree and in front of everyone points to a man that everyone knows and says I'm going to your house today and Zacchaeus didn't get reprimanded he got loved and what did he end up doing he went and started to give his wealth back and give it away why because of the love he received there's no way church for us to think about holiness and to think about standing up in our world and standing for our God and receiving abuse and persecution and criticism and trying to somehow fight off all of the craziness that we see around us if we don't do it by looking at God's love we have to this is why Peter wrote this letter to a church that had scattered he wants them to see they're going to endure by the power of the encouragement of a loving God and then holiness makes sense because it reflects the love we've received you see you're not going to judge your neighbor or those who are on television or people who are on social media you're not going to judge them why would you judge them see that's how the world sees our holiness we're the goody two shoes who judge them for being different but if they were to look at us if we were really reflecting the

holiness of god they would see something vitally different very different as we bring our time to a close i want to go back to the city of rome for a second the letter of peter are now circulating to the rest of the churches along with letters of paul and some of the gospels have been written by this point what's not available though it's because it's just too much documents the torah the old testament those reside mostly in the synagogues and in temples but that's where the stories the illustrations the pictures of god's holiness come to life and peter so desperately wants them to know the words of their lord he requires them to know the words of the lord and so for them to somehow do their occupation and spend time in the temple doesn't work they can't do that so they commission their elders to do this go please please spend time dedicating yourself to knowing the illustrations of god's love and come back and feed us feed us and remind us of why it is that god loves us and what he did to us while we were his enemies tell us the story of abraham isaac and jacob often these men would have to translate it from the hebrew into the greek to which eventually we all got what's called the septuagint the greek translation of the old testament they would use this to proclaim the goodness of god and as they would receive these letters they would use these letters to remind them that what peter is saying matches with what god has already done in the old so how did the early christians find benefit from the story of their king they didn't see it if you didn't hear anything else i've said in my sermon hear this they didn't see it as instructions to be feared install the story of their king as a story to be loved they loved their king and they understood it was their story as well the holiness is us hearing what christ is and what he's done and then say i want to be like that i want to be like that but i can't so how am i going to do it peter says put your hope in his return and while you wait look to your king that's how that's how often we emphasize areas of the christian life as if somehow that's going to produce holiness according to what we are reading here peter says love and hope in christ produces holiness not self-discipline not self-righteousness nothing of self produces holiness but love and hope in the king so guess what you're going to want more of this week reminders guess what you're going to need each other to encourage and build one another up this is why ephesians i'm sorry hebrews says to the church hey um do not forsake the assembling of yourselves as such as you are doing because it's there that you aren't cleansed and washed i didn't have a chance we'll do this in two weeks romans 2 romans chapter 12 and verse 2 uses the same kind of language as uh

[40 : 35] first peter 1 14 where he talks about our minds being molded and that we need to not be molding ourselves back in our former passions he says to renew your mind in what the work of christ so the gospel becomes the most important part of our pursuit of holiness i'm going to drop this little bit of a hint here and no way unpack it today the point of our life church is to not not sin that's not the point if we wake up every day and say hope i don't mess up today i'm just going to go ahead and get it over with like well i got that out of the way now i can think about something else the point of our life is to wake up and say i have god's power in my hand i can proclaim it with my mouth i can be a light by the way that i love and i'm kind and i'm patient to my children to my wife to my neighbors and they too may one day meet our king every day i wake up and i ask myself who am i going to meet today that i get to love and potentially introduce them to our king now that's something to live for because last night i went to an event and i saw a lot of hopeless parents who had lost their children to brain cancer i can't think of a matter of holiness that will fix that their child didn't die because they lacked holiness their child died because they live in a cursed world what what hope do you give them give them give them the gospel because part of the gospel is he makes all things new amen father there's a hurting dying world around us as crazy as it sounds you use our broken holiness to reflect your love to them it gives us opportunities to proclaim the goodness that you have showed us may those who are weak be strengthened may those who are suffering find hope lord may we all purify ourselves as he is pure 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 to plan a visit or to learn more about us visit our website at gracereformed.org