

What is Holiness?

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[0 : 0 0] Let's turn together to 1 Peter 1, verse 14. 1 Peter 1, verse 14.

As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct.

And since it is written, you shall be holy, for I am holy. Last week we looked very briefly at the concept of worldliness, and tonight we're going to the other side of the issue, looking at the matter of holiness.

Now of course you'll be immediately aware that holiness is something in a sense that is indefinable. It's very difficult to pinpoint holiness of life and what exactly it is, what exactly makes a holy life to be a life of holiness or a holy life.

But nevertheless it's important that we look at that concept, because having started this short series of topical studies, what we said last week was that we're going to look at some topics or subjects that are commonly spoken about, such as worldly or wordliness, as we saw last time, and holiness as well, because it's commonly in the Bible of course, but we also use the words in our description of spiritual things, and of people who are Christians, or somebody who may be eminent in godliness, as a holy person.

[1 : 3 9] And holiness of course is tied up with all of that sort of thing. But what is holiness? Somebody came and asked us directly, explain to me as far as you can what holiness is, what is a holy life, a Christian's holy life.

Is it a state? Is it a condition? Is it an activity? Is it something other than that? Well it's really all of these, I'm sure, and we'll see some of them in the study tonight, but holiness, you have to begin with, is something that is itself a reflection of the holiness of God.

That's where we begin any definition of holiness, not looking at the person and asking ourselves, what's he doing, or what's she doing, what sort of language does he use, what sort of speech.

To define holiness of life, we have to begin with the holiness of God. And as you look at the holiness of God, and the Bible's teaching on the kind of life and lifestyle that the people of God are exhorted to live, it is then that you begin to understand that holiness is in fact a reflection of the holiness of God.

It is in the life of God's people, as he brings it about himself, and as they are engaged in pursuing it, it is in their life that the holiness of God is reflected.

[3 : 1 3] Of course it's found in the scriptures, it's described in the scriptures, it's mentioned in the scriptures, there are so many references in the Bible. to God being holy, and the implications of God being holy.

But one of the implications is, that we live a holy life. And really that's what Peter is setting out for his readers here. As obedient children, don't be conformed to the passions of your form and ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also, or so you also be holy, in all your conduct.

So what can we say about God's holiness? And again, of course, it would be dishonoring to God to pretend that we can describe that adequately, or that we can, within a brief study such as this, really do full justice to the biblical revelation, all that's in the Bible about the holiness of God.

All I can do tonight is just set things out in a very general overview, and then you can follow out, hopefully, strands of that in your own Bible study, and in your own reflections afterwards.

Well, the holiness of God, you could say in one sense, it's the sum total of all that God is, and all that God does.

[4 : 41] The very being of God, as we understand from what he has revealed of himself to us, is, of course, an eternal being, without beginning, uncreated, but it's a being that has attributes.

And the attributes of God are usually mentioned, they're usually called attributes, but things like his power, his grace, his love, his mercy, his wisdom.

All of these and other attributes are what he has revealed, if you like, make him God. And in all of these together, and in each of them, God is holy.

In other words, he is morally, and in every way, perfect. There is nothing in God, but perfect life.

In other words, when you think about the holiness of God, and the absolute perfection of God, whether you think about his power, and the way he uses his power. When you think about his wisdom, and what his wisdom lies behind, his plan for the whole universe.

[5 : 57] When you think about his love, or his mercy, his forgiveness, his great acts of power and creation, in redemption, every single thing about God, that you can think of, and that's revealed to us in the Bible, is marked by absolute perfection, by moral purity.

There are no dark spots at all in God. Never have been, never will be, in any of his thoughts, in any of his, anything of his plan, any of his works, in the whole entirety of his being.

He is perfect. He is holy. And that means, that on the one hand, you have to look at it negatively, and say, there is no such thing in God, as imperfection.

There is no such thing in God, as what we regard, as our moral imperfections, bad thoughts, wrong conclusions, mistakes.

And of course, in us, all of these are attached to, sin, which is entirely absent, from the being, and the works of God.

[7 : 11] But you have to also say, that the holiness of God, is not just, the absence of certain things, that you and I find in ourselves. The holiness of God, is positively, the presence, of things in perfection.

It is not just that, he does not have sin, it is also that, he does have, perfect righteousness. In other words, when you look at, something like, let's say, the love of God, you cannot find, more love, or better love, than you have in God.

You cannot find, more power, than you have, in God, in his attribute of power. It is, morally perfect, and complete.

There is nothing, that can be added to it, and you need not, take anything from it. In every way, it is perfect. And every one of his attributes, is like that.

Whether you think of, his wrath, his, his, wisdom, they are all the same, in that respect. There is no more wisdom, anywhere else.

[8 : 23] There is no wisdom, above the wisdom of God. Everything there, is as full, as it can be. There is nothing, more full, than you have in God.

So, that is, what sets God apart. That he is, morally perfect, in every way, in all his attributes, in his being, in his works, he is set apart, from all other life.

He is, as he describes himself, in his word, I am the Lord. I am the High, and Holy One, who inhabits, eternity.

A description of, how God is so, other than we are. How God is, separate from us. How God is, entirely, above us, distinct from us, in terms of his, moral, perfection.

He is, the Holy One. And there is no, other, Holy One, the way God is holy. We, as we will see tonight, just at the end of our study, we will come, to be perfectly holy, and will perfectly, reflect, the holiness of God, in the state of glory.

[9 : 44] But that is a holiness, that is given to us. That is a holiness, that is brought to completion, in us, by God. God's holiness, doesn't have a beginning.

It is not a created holiness. It is a holiness, that has always, from all eternity, been his, and always will be. And of course, that is one of the great things, that you find in the Bible, in our expression, in the, in the expressions, in the Bible, of worshipping God, which passes into, our own worship of God.

One of the chief things, that we constantly, refer to, very rightly, is that our worship, is a worship, of a holy God, of the holy God. In other words, as the psalmist puts it, it is a really, really beautiful phrase.

Worship, the Lord, in the beauty, of holiness. The beauty of his holiness, as it is revealed to us, but the beauty of holiness, as we seek to be holy, in worshipping him too.

The holiness of God, holiness is a reflection, of the holiness of God, and that is, so very briefly, just one or two, small points, about the holiness of God, how we should think of it.

[11 : 08] But you see, what he is saying here is, as he is holy, so, you be holy. And that is what he is saying, verse 15, as he who called you is holy, so you also be holy, in all your conduct.

Now that is, that is really saying to us, something quite remarkable, and very important. God's holiness, or God in his holiness, is the template, for our holiness of life.

Because, the end result of grace, is to become perfectly like God. And that is what John, has in mind, when he wrote, that, it does not yet appear, what we shall be, or what shall be.

But we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be, like him. For we shall see him, as he is. That is God's, plan for his people.

That is God's, aim and goal, which will be achieved, that we will be like him. He is the template, for us. In other words, you could say that, what's found in the passage here, is that, it's not just saying, since he who called you is holy, you also have to be holy.

[12 : 33] That's part of it. It's saying to us that, because God is holy, we his people, have to be holy, and seek to be holy, in the way that he is holy. But what is emphasized there, is not because he is holy, but, as he is holy, like he is holy, so you be holy, also.

Our holiness, is patterned, or to be patterned, upon his. And, wherever you find, the holiness of God, described, or brought home to us, in the person of Jesus, in other descriptions, in the Bible, there's something, always there for us, that calls to our attention, the kind of holiness, that we ourselves, have required of us, by God.

It's to be a reflection, of the holiness, of God. And in fact, that really corresponds, doesn't it, to, what God, in his grace, plants within, each one of us, who knows his salvation.

He plants in you, as he makes you, into a new creation, he plants in you, desires, which were not there before. In fact, he plants in you, desires, and aims, and aspirations, and urges, which are entirely, the opposite, of what was there before.

Look at what Peter is saying. As obedient children, do not be conformed, to the passions, of your former ignorance. That's what drove, the life of these people, before the Lord, saved them, before they came to know, this holy God, in Jesus Christ.

[14 : 11] They were driven, by the passions, of that form of ignorance, as it is now, as he's writing to them. The ignorance they had, in the darkness, of their mind, in the way that, they in fact, followed, as we all did, our natural inclinations, our hearts, by nature, as sinners.

Now, Peter is saying, no, no, as obedient children, you are now, driven by, a new purpose, and a new desire, and a new drive, which is in the opposite direction, entirely, of what you were once, driven by.

Now, instead of that, as he who called you, is holy, you also be holy, in all your conduct. Isn't that, one of the things, that persuades you, that you're a Christian?

Not that you're perfectly holy. Not that you don't come to him, every day, with your sin, to confess it, and seek help with it, and seek that he will, put you back on your feet again, when you need to.

All of these things, are still with us. What persuades you, that you are a Christian, is that you are not satisfied, with less than, the holiness, that reflects his.

[15 : 29] That the desire, of your heart, is to be like your God, like your Savior, like your Father. And that desire, is planted in your heart, by the workings, of God's Spirit, by his grace.

It's been there, since you were born again. It's part of, that new creation. And it means that, what God requires of us, corresponds to the desire, that he's placed within you.

To be holy, to be like him, to reflect the holiness, of God himself. Ephesians 4, and verse 24, refers to, to that as well, in the way that, the apostle there, writing to, Ephesians, in terms of, the whole product, and result, of grace, where he's saying, there be renewed, put off your old self, which belongs, to your former manner, of life, and is corrupt, through deceitful desires, and be renewed, in the spirit, of your minds, and put on, the new self, created, after the likeness, of God, in true righteousness, and holiness.

You know, we're saying, that is, that is what your, desire is, that is what your life, as you seek to live it, as a holy life, is about. It belongs to that, new creation, which is patterned, after the very righteousness, and holiness, of God.

There's something wrong, in a Christian. If that person says, why am I Christian? But, I've, not really got much time, for this holiness thing.

[17 : 18] Because, a Christian is somebody, whose great aim, in life, is to be holy, and not just to be holy, in any sense of it, but to be holy, as he is holy, as God is holy, as the God, who saved them, is holy.

So, it's a reflection, of the holiness of God. Let's move on, secondly, to say that, holiness is applicable, to everyday living. That is, itself, an important point.

Just consider, as you read through, 1 Peter, the number of times, he refers, to the way, that they're living, in surroundings, that are hostile, to them. The way, that they actually, have to conduct, themselves, in the presence, of a watching world, in other words.

For example, chapter 2, and verse 12, there, keep your conduct, among the Gentiles, honourably, honourable, so that, when they speak, against you, as evildoers, they may see, your good deeds, and glorify God, on the day of visitation.

Or, chapter 3, verses 13, to 17, there, talking again, about, those who, intimidate, intimidate, or some even, who ask, a question of them, of the hope, that is in them.

[18 : 37] So he says, that, when you are slandered, those who revile, your good behaviour, in Christ, may be put to shame. Now you cannot have, any of these references, if holiness, is about, isolation.

If our idea, of holiness, is that we cut, ourselves off, from that, which we might say, is unholy, in the sense of, the world, around you, and living, in the world, around you, you know yourselves, that people down, through the ages, and even today, speak about, holy people, but what they mean is, people who have, entirely detached, themselves, from, everyday living, in the world, and cloistered, themselves, either in a cell, or in a group, that's isolated, entirely from the, outside world, and are striving, after living, a holy life, by various, things that they, themselves, are engaged in.

That's not, the holiness, of the Bible. The holiness, of the Bible, is a holiness, that is, lived out, and seen, by the world, with whom you, interact.

It doesn't make you, like the world, it does mean, however, that holiness, is a holiness, applicable, to, everyday living, in your, everyday context, God, God is really, saying to us, that is where, your holiness, must actually, be worked out, must be exercised, must be seen, in your home, in your relationships, in school, when you're doing, your homework, when you're relaxing, when you're watching, television, it doesn't matter, what aspect it is, here is what, Peter is saying, you also be holy, in, all, your conduct, so that, the holiness, that is required of us, in being like God, in, in, deciding, what is, and isn't acceptable, for us, to, to, to say, to do, to watch, to read, to hear, all of these things, are in the ordinary, course of life, which is, what our holiness, is for, as we live, our lives, in this world, that's a very, important thing, that holiness, is not about, isolated, exclusion, it's not, that you, by meditation, and reading the scripture, sitting on your own, or in a group, as we've said, that you come to arrive, at holiness, that's not, what the bible's, view of holiness is, it's rather, where you are placed, by God, all the way, through your life, is for holiness, of life, to be lived there, holiness, is applicable, to everyday living, and it's not, isolated, exclusion, it's applicable, to everyday living, secondly, because it's the outcome, of sanctification, for the young ones, these are some, some big words, but, sanctification, if you remember, your catechism, is, the work of God's grace, and the catechism, speaks about, being renewed, in the inner man, that's the same, as saying, the new creation again, but, the outcome of that, is, the rest of that catechism, number 35, says that, we are, enabled, to, die, unto sin, more and more, and to live, unto, righteousness, whereby, we are enabled, more and more, to die, unto sin, and to live, unto, righteousness, that's exactly, what Peter is saying here, you are not, to be conformed, to the passions, of your former ignorance, your holiness, means, that you die, to that way of life, every day, you put more distance, between yourself, and that old way of life, and you say, about your present way of life, as a way of holiness, that it has no part, whatsoever, of the old life, that's gone, that's behind, that's something, that needs to be, put away, at a distance, more and more, what, the catechism, is reminding us of, that, as we die, more and more, to sin, and live, to righteousness, it's the same here, that, you don't be conformed, to the passions, of your former ignorance, in other words, we are called, out from, the kind of lifestyle, that's mentioned there, the passions, of your former ignorance,

God takes us out of that, God actually then, puts us into, he doesn't leave us, in between, he takes us out, of the old lifestyle, and he puts us, into the new one, what's the new one, it's holiness, you be holy, as he, is holy, in all, your conduct, and it's the sanctification, that God himself, is working by his grace, that, produces, holiness of life, you don't have, holiness of life, separate from, God's work of sanctification, God's work of sanctification, is a work, that goes on, steadily, just one caveat, one, thing in passing there, that's important for us, to remember as well, that, that, certainly, in terms of our, sense of things, our, holiness of life, is not a steady, climb upwards, without any dips, if it were, many of us, would, feel, very despondent, if we thought that, holiness of life, and our, living a holy life, went up steadily, every single day, we're adding to the holiness, we had yesterday, and there's absolutely, no dips in that at all, that's not how it is, there are dips in it, because, some days, we fail more than others, some tests, we fail more than other tests, sometimes, we spend more time, without repenting, of something, we know we've done, or thought, or said, that's wrong, before we come back to God, and express, and confession, our sorrow for it, or to somebody else, or whatever, all the failures of life, mean that, there are dips, in our experience, at least, of holiness, but the fact of the matter, is that,

[25 : 15] God's work, of sanctification, still goes on steadily, and the difficult thing, really, for us to understand, although it's true, is that, God actually makes use, of our failures, even while he doesn't, excuse them, he still makes use of them, in sanctifying us, and all of that, adds towards, our progress, in holiness, and understanding, what it is, to follow the Lord, and to seek, to be more holy, than we are, it's the outcome, of sanctification, so holiness, is applicable, to everyday living, it's not, an isolated, seclusion, neither is it, anything short, of the outcome, of sanctification, and that then, means, that it involves, here's another big word, it involves, mortification, okay, now that word, basically means, putting something, to death, to mortify something, is to kill it, to put it to death, and it's a word, which, theologians have used, and Bible writers, and commentators, have used, it's come into our, theology, and to our thinking, of salvation, and our Christian experience, because, mortification, means, essentially, putting, sin, to death, putting every aspect, of sin, as we know it, to death, and you think there, of Romans, in chapter 8, and verse 13, where he says that, if you, by the spirit, do mortify, the deeds, of the body, you shall live, begins by saying, if you live, according to the flesh, or after the flesh, you shall die, but if you, by the spirit, mortify, the deeds, of the body, by that he means, sin, as it expresses itself, including our, bodily functions, your eyes, and what they see, your ears, and what they listen to, what you read, what you do, what you say, what you speak, you can't think about, these things, without, some aspects, of our, our body, our physical side, but if you, mortify, the deeds, of the body, by the spirit, you shall live, in other words, holiness, involves, dealing with sin, in a way, that, puts it to death, that doesn't mean, that, the sin, you deal with today, the specific sin, that you deal with today, that you bring to God, that you, confess to him, and ask, forgiveness over, that's it gone, that it will never, resurface, in this life again, that's not, our experience either, of, of, dealing with sin, because sometimes, you think it's gone, and then it grows up again, it's a bit like, the weeds in your garden, the only way really, to, get rid of them completely, is to take them up, by the root, that's essentially, the same thing, as mortifying, sometimes, we find, that it's, more like, just cutting them, above the surface, and, they flourish back, again sometimes, but that's another point, the fact of the matter, is though, that, mortification, is putting sin, to death, when we know, that we've done something, that we know, is sin, then, in mortification, what we say is, that's something,

I must be determined, not to do again, I must put that, to death, I must do away with it, it's contrary, to the life, that God wants me to have, even if it's a bad thought, about someone, you have to say, then of yourself, well Lord, help me to put, bad thoughts away, entirely, not just bad thoughts, about this person, or that person, but bad thoughts, wrong thoughts, sinful thoughts, they don't belong to, my holiness of life, they don't belong to, my progress, in holiness, and that means, that, in holiness, or in, following holiness, or practicing holiness, doing holiness, whatever word you call it, words you call it, there is a contribution, from us, think of that text again, Romans 8, if you, by the spirit, mortify the deeds, of the body, you shall live, you see, the two sides stood, it's by the spirit, you can't do it, on your own, you can't even do it, in your own strength, you have to do it, by the spirit, you have to enlist, the help of the spirit, of God, and you have to do that, prayerfully, because God's spirit, as God's spirit, lives within you, is the spirit, for which you pray, in terms of the exercise, of that spirit's power, and leading, and guidance, and teaching, as you pray to God, for his spirit, to work in you, you're asking him, and pleading with him, that his spirit, will enable you, to mortify, the deeds of the body, but you see, the other side of it, that's also important, if you, by the spirit, mortifies the deeds, of the body, you shall live, it doesn't say, if the spirit, mortifies the deeds, of the body, for you, you shall live, you have to do it, you have to do it, depending on the spirit, by the power, of the spirit, but Paul is saying, and God is saying to us, holiness, is a matter of, you're doing, in mortifying, the deeds of the body, we're the ones, who have to kill sin, those by the spirit, of God, that we're enabled, to do it, and it's interesting, that, in the Bible, you never find, the phrase, holiness, holiness, by faith, you find a lot, about justification, by faith, indeed, justification, by faith, alone, because it's, by faith, in Christ, that we come, to be justified, which means, forgiven, and accepted, with God, and made righteous, before God, that's that side, of things, but to live, a holy life, is never just, by faith, that doesn't mean, that faith, doesn't come into it, of course it is, it's the holiness, of life, of a believer, but the Bible, never encourages us, to think, that it's by faith, without effort, on our part, like our justification, is, because our holiness, is a holiness, where we, have to be busy, mortifying, the deeds, the deeds, of the body, well, we have to be busy, striving against sin, pursuing, the kind of lifestyle, that more and more, we trust, matches up, with the holiness, of God himself, we have to put effort, into that, we have to work, at that, we have to expend, a lot of energy, doing that, we have to go back, over and over again, perhaps, to redo things, but we have to, mortify, the deeds, of the body, by the spirit, and,

the more, we are actually, led along that way, by God, and the more, we are engaged, wholeheartedly, and meaningfully, in following, holiness of life, the more, sensitive then, we become, to sin, see, it bothers, a lot of people, myself included, that the more, our Christian life, goes on, the more sinful, I find myself, to be, there are sins, which bother me, that never used, to bother me, and perhaps, at times, I may think, that my conscience, when I became, a Christian, was more sensitive, and more tender, than I find myself, now, that may be the case, in some respects, but, the fact is, that God, makes us, sensitive to sin, the more, he brings about, an understanding, of what sin is, and the nature of sin, and who that sin, is against, and what that sin, actually is about, and what it does, and you can only have that, through time, and as God, gives us to see, more and more, into the workings, of sin, which really is, the workings, of your own heart, so, it's just like, a light, that shines, gradually, more and more, into the recesses, of your heart, and shows up, things that weren't, obvious to you, before, so that, the more you see, in one sense, the more, you're amazed, at how sinful, you are, but it's because,

God, has made you aware, of far more, of sin now, than when you started, life as a Christian, that means, you're sensitive, to sin, and your sensitivity, to sin, increases, as your holiness, proceeds, it used to be, the case, that, I've heard certainly, it, illustrated, by, a, a, a, pure, quite as far as possible, in this life, a pure, white gun, let's say, a bride, on her wedding day, with her, white, outfit, top, from, the top of her head, through to, the, bottom of the bridal dress, glistening, white, and you just, flick, a spot of ink, onto it, it's very obvious, far more obvious, than a grey one, or on a different, coloured outfit, why is it more obvious, because the rest of it, is so pure white, or, when you actually, look at a field of, freshly fallen snow, and then you find, maybe smoke from, a chimney or something, drifting along, and it leaves a residue, on the top, far more obvious, than, on that ground, before the snow fell, you don't see it at all, and so it is, with holiness of life, it's the person, that is most holy, that feels, the weight, the weight, of a single sin, more than anyone else, if you and I tonight, were so holy, that there was only, one sin, left in our lives, to be dealt with, that one sin, would feel, much heavier to you, than someone, who was not concerned, about sin, and had many of them, in their life, because, it conflicts, with, the holiness, of life, that you aim for, that God is bringing about, by the sanctification, and the more, along that road, you've come, the more, you feel the weight, even, of a single sin, were it to be so, the sensitivity, to sin, increases, as God brings us along, in our holiness, of life, so, holiness is a reflection, of the holiness, of God, holiness is applicable, to everyday living, it's not isolated, it's seclusion, it's life in the world, it's the outcome, of sanctification, therefore, it includes, mortification, of sin, thirdly, and finally, holiness is perfected, only in the state, of glory, you don't find, perfectly holy Christians, in this life, the only, perfectly holy life, in this world, that continued, as a perfectly holy, human life, was the life, of our Lord,

Jesus Christ, flawlessly, and right through, the whole, of the time, of his life on earth, he never sinned, there wasn't a flaw, anywhere in him, but our holiness, is only perfected, in the state of glory, now of course, the state of glory, what is the state of glory, well it's not just, when you leave this world, and your soul, goes to, be with God, the Catholicism, does mention that again, for us, the souls of believers, at their death, it's one of the, answers to, to what are the benefits, that Christ's, what benefit, do believers, receive, at their death, and it mentions, the souls of believers, at their death, are made, perfect, in holiness, and do immediately, pass, into glory, and that's, perfectly true, the person, that has left, this world, has left their body, behind, and the soul, that's gone to be, with God, or as Paul puts it, to be with Christ, which is far better, that's what he described it as, that's a perfectly, holy soul, but it's missing, the body, it doesn't mean that, there's any disturbance, of peace, because of that, of course, we don't really, rightly, fully understand, these things, this side of death, but only, when, when, the body, is finally, joined again, to the soul, and that will only be, after the resurrection, only then, will that person, body and soul, as they're meant, to be together, will they be, perfectly holy, perfectly, reflecting, the holiness of God, the image of Christ, that final, state, is a state, that awaits, that state of glory, awaits the resurrection, too, question, that,

[39 : 28] I could leave it with you, really, I think we've mentioned, asked it before, so, you should know the answer, what, why is there, such a thing, as, physical death, for a believer, the condemnation, is taken away, so, why should there be, physical death, there's no spiritual death, God has, taken that away, Christ has actually, taken that for them, separation from God, that's all gone, that's, Christ has paid, the price of sin, and all of that, dealt with by him, so, that being the case, and then being right, with God, and made acceptable, to God, in that person, why is there a death, to the extent, that their body, and soul, are separated, and the body, for a time, has to, return to the dust, Christ, why is that, well, one of the reasons, is that, it is through, resurrection, that our physical side, has, in God's way of it, it's through resurrection, that our physical side, has every single, vestige, every trace, of sin, removed from it,

I don't know, and you don't know, what a body, is like, in a person, without sin, it describes, the Lord Jesus Christ, for us in the Bible, once he rose, from the dead, he rose, with a true body, and he still, had a reasonable soul, a human, being, but what is that, what does a body, look like, what does a person, look like, in the resurrection state, we don't know, we can't understand, what we do know, is that resurrection, is necessary, for us to enter, fully into, the state of glory, where we will be, perfectly holy, there will be no unholiness, in your body, or in your soul, when you're glorified, with Christ, you will, perfectly, reflect, the holiness, of God, in your body, as much as, in your soul, what a destiny, that is, and as Peter, also puts it, we can finish with his words, in second Peter, he's been telling them, in second Peter, the day of the Lord, and how it comes, suddenly, and without, expectation, on the part of those, who are living carelessly, in chapter 3, of second Peter, and at verse 11, he's saying, he's been talking about, the day of the Lord, coming like a thief, the heavens will pass away, and all the rest of it, since, he says, in verse 11, all these things, are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people, ought you to be, in lives of holiness, and godliness, waiting for and hastening, the coming, of the day, of God, and that's, verse 14, beloved, since you are waiting, for these things, be diligent, to be found by him, without spot, or blemish, and be at peace, in other words, seeing we know, the future to that extent, that Christ is going to come, as the judge, that the day is appointed, when we must all appear before him, what Peter is saying is, what manner of people, ought we to be, in holiness, and righteousness, of life, may God bless these thoughts, to us, let's pray, gracious Lord, we confess, that we, are ourselves, unable to express, and to, fully understand, the concepts, of holiness, and of righteousness, and of likeness, to you, as your word describes, we are this side,

O Lord, of death, not made perfect, in holiness, our minds, are still darkened, to the extent, that we cannot, fully comprehend, so many of the wonderful things, that your word speaks of, and Lord, we ask, that you would continue, to teach us, to enlighten us, to direct our minds, further into your truth, we pray, especially, that you would enable us, by your spirit, to walk, in a way, that would pursue holiness, because, your word assures us, that without holiness, no one shall see the Lord, we pray, that holiness, may be daily precious, to us, and increasingly so, Lord, as we live, in a life, that is so unholy, in a world, that is so unholy, a life, that is, holy in the midst, of a world, that is so opposed, to you, and to holiness of life, grant your blessing, we pray, to follow, all that we have sought, this evening, to apprehend, from your word, before us, and accept us, for Jesus sake,

Amen.