

What We Are To Be

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Date: 30 October 2022

[0 : 00] Well, we begin our worship this morning by singing to God's praise in Psalm 96 in the Scottish Psalter. Psalm 96, we're going to sing from verse 4 to verse 9, the tune of St. Magnus.

For great's the Lord, and greatly he is to be magnified, yea, worthy to be feared is he above all gods beside. We'll sing from verse 4 to 9 to God's praise.

For great's the Lord, and greatly he is to be magnified, yea, worthy to be feared is he above all gods beside.

For all the gods are idols come, which blinded nations fear.

But our God is the Lord by whom the heavens created were.

[1 : 24] Good honor is before this face, and majesty divine.

Strength is within this holy place, and there does beauty shine.

Glory to you, O Lord, and mighty power has died.

And we'll give thee the glory to the Lord, that to this name is true.

And we'll give thee to this Lord, standing, and offering with you.

[2 : 54] In beauty of his holiness, O do the Lord adore.

Like wise that all the earth through our tremble as days before.

Let's come to God in prayer. Let us pray. Our Father in heaven, as we come before you to this day, we thank you that there is a beauty that shines from you, and that we are to come and adore you as our Lord and as our God, and that your beauty may shine upon us, that we might see your beauty through the person of Jesus Christ, that we would might know more of your beauty through your word to us.

May it speak to all our hearts today. May it help us to see and to know how great a God you are. You are the Lord, and greatly to be magnified, the psalmist says.

And we do pray that as we come to worship you this day, that that will be our longing and our desire, that we would see you as so great and ourselves as so small.

[4 : 24] But yet remember how you have remembered us, and how you have given us all that we need, how you have given us a way to salvation through your own Son, Jesus Christ, how you have done all things that we could not.

And we thank you for the commands of your word. We thank you for every instruction they give to us. And we pray that we would not see them as just something that is a burden to us, or something that is there to spoil our fun or to hinder us in any way, but that we would see all your laws and your commands as there for our good and for your glory.

We thank you that the young ones just now are learning through your word about the Ten Commandments. And may we all come to remember them and to see them as so wonderful for us as a people and as a world.

As we learn all about your truth, Lord, may they instruct us and guide us in our way. But may we see that it's more than just trying to keep your commands. But the greatest command of all that we are to keep is to love the Lord with all our heart, and to love our neighbor as ourself.

And we thank you that that is what these commands guide us to. So we pray, Lord, your blessing on your word to us, young and old today, that we would hear your commands, that we would be obedient to them, and that you would bless us through them.

[5 : 48] Remember us in our homes and in our families and all our different needs. We thank you that you are a God who loves us and cares for us. And we pray that every burden that we have, every care and concern that we carry, that we will be able to bring them to you in prayer, knowing that you are able to help us in all our different needs.

So hear our prayers even at this time. And continue with us through this day. May you guide us and bless us as we ask all things for the forgiveness of our sins.

We ask it for your glory and for your sake. Amen. It's good to see you all again. It's good to have the children here today as well, and especially I'm sure you're all delighted to be back in school this last week.

All delighted to see your teachers again, to hear your parents shouting at you in the morning, to hurry up and get ready to get to school. But do you like being told what to do?

Do you like it when people say to you, do this and do that? Or do you find it sort of just spoils your fun a little bit? Maybe it depends who's saying it to you, does it?

[6 : 59] Maybe it depends if it's a brother or a sister telling you to go and get my shoes or go and get my jacket. You're saying to yourself, go and do it yourself. I'm not your slave.

I'm not here just to do what you tell me to do. But then maybe if it's your mum or dad who are telling you to go and do these things, do you say the same to them? I hope not. I hope you don't even say it to your little brothers or sisters either.

It's not the way we're to speak to people at all. How about when you go to school or Sunday school and your teachers are telling you what to do? Do you listen to them? Do you do as you're told with them?

Do you always, if they say, do your homework, do you always do it, hand it in on time? Maybe we don't always, but we should seek to try and do what they're telling us.

But who's the most important person that we're to listen to? Who do you think is the most important person that you're to listen to who's telling you what to do? Do you think it's your mum? Do you think it's your dad?

[7 : 58] Grandparents? Brothers or sisters? Friends? Do you think that's the most important people to listen to? No, the most important person we're to listen to is God. Because God tells us what we're to do.

Again and again through his word, he reminds us what we are to do. And like I was praying there, you're learning about the Ten Commandments in Sunday school. You're learning about the things that we're to do and the things that we're not to do.

And it's important to listen to that because God is telling you, this is how we're to live our lives. That goes for everybody here, myself included. God tells us what we are to do.

Imagine if there was no laws and no rules. What would the world be like? Everybody would think, oh, it'd be so good if there was no rules. Just do as we want.

Imagine if there was no rules for driving on the road. Imagine some people, how fast they would drive. I mean, there's speed limits in place today, but yet people don't always listen to them.

[8 : 59] They go faster than the speed limit says. But imagine if there was no rules, how crazy people would be on the roads. What about in school if there was no rules? You have rules in place, like times you have to start, times you finish.

What do you just decide for yourself? I'll go into school at two in the afternoon for half an hour and that's it. Would you learn? No. You'd be missing out on so much.

So there's all kinds of rules in place for us because they're good for us. But the greatest rules of all are how we are to live and to love God. And that's really what's at the heart of the Ten Commandments.

God giving us great instructions, how we are to live for Him and love Him with all our hearts and serve Him, but also how we are to love others around us and to be obedient to all the rules that He has given to us.

Today in the service in 1 Peter, we're looking at a command, an instruction that God gives to His people. He says, Be holy. And what does it mean to be holy?

[10 : 08] Sometimes we think of being holy as being good, but it's more than being good. It's about loving God with all our heart and doing everything that He instructs us and commands us because that's for our good and for His glory.

So when you're told to do things, don't see it always as just burdensome or there to spoil your fun, but see it as for your good and especially the instructions that God gives to us through His Word.

See that as for your good, for all our good together, that we would live for Him and love Him with all our hearts. So let's come to God in prayer just now and share the Lord's Prayer together.

Let's say the Lord's Prayer. Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

[11 : 18] For Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever. Amen. We again sing to God's praise just now in Psalm 103.

Again, this is in the Scottish Psalter version, Psalm 103. We're singing verse 1 to verse 5. And the tune is Martyrdom. O thou my soul, bless God the Lord, and all that in me is, bested up His holy name to magnify and bless.

We'll sing from verse 1 to 5 to God's praise. O thou my soul, O thou my soul, best of the Lord, and all that in me is, He's stead of His holy name, to magnify and bless.

O thou my soul, O thou my soul, the Lord my God, I'll not forget to be, of all His gracious benefits, He hath be stoned on me.

O night and air, when Jesus to the most gracious be for Him, will do kidding on me.

[13 : 39] If you will see more than us, I will have indeed to amp ■ please. O thou thy soul, O Lord, who's t colleague and Mark, O wondering the best of all things.

Who do-do ... redeem my life not down to death may not go down who be with all in kindness God and tender as He Wisconsin theëve with the bond and song good does satisfy thy part so that Out in our devil's head, renew it is I am.

Well, can we turn to reading God's word as we come back to our study in 1 Peter? We'll read in 1 Peter the first chapter, the whole chapter, just to remind ourselves where we are with it.

1 Peter chapter 1, we read the whole of the chapter together. Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who are elect exiles of the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ, and for the sprinkling with his blood.

May grace and peace be multiplied to you. 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 are being guarded through faith, for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

[16 : 29] In this you rejoice, though now, for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so the tested genuineness of your faith, more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honour at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now 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.

Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating.

when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories, it was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves, but you, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels longed to look.

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.

[18 : 04] 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.

Since it is written, you shall be holy, for I am holy. And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile, knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but was made manifest in the last times for your sake, who through him are believers in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory so that your faith and hope are in God.

Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart, since you have been born again not of perishable seed, but of imperishable through the living and abiding word of God.

For all flesh is like grass and its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers and the flower falls, but the word of the Lord remains forever.

[19 : 44] And this word is the good news that was preached to you. And so on, and may God bless that reading from his word. We'll again come to God in prayer.

Let us pray. Lord God, as we continue in worship, we continue in our dependence upon you for all things.

For you know our weaknesses, you know how easily we are distracted, you know how easily we can be led astray. And as we think of these words in Peter, and as we come to study them today, we are reminded of the great challenge that is put before us to be a holy people, a people who are set apart for you, a people who live for you in the way that we love you with all our heart, but also as we read, in the way we conduct ourselves, conduct ourselves among one another here, but also in our conduct in the world on a day-to-day basis.

For our worship and our praise of you is not just for a short time on this day. It's not just for the hour that we are together in worship, but our worship, our praise of you is something that we are to be a people involved in 24-7.

So whatever we are doing, we do it for your glory. And we recognize, Lord, our failings in that. We recognize so often in our attempt at holiness and our seeking after holiness how far short we fall.

[21 : 26] So often maybe we don't even consider ourselves holy at all, but as your word reminds us, you have chosen a people for yourself.

You are calling a people to yourself today, and that means a people who will be set apart, a people who will be different. And so we pray that you will help us, Lord, to live as those people, and to seek to be those people for you, to seek to conduct ourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel that we hear, the good news that is preached to us.

And so help us, Lord, to confess our sins before you. Help us to acknowledge them and to know that with you there is forgiveness. And we pray, Lord, that you will help us to bow the knee before you, to confess from our hearts that we have sinned against you and against you only in thoughts, word, and deed.

We are guilty to all ends. But, Lord, help us that you may lift us up too, that you will place our feet on the rock that is Jesus Christ, and that through him we will be able to live as those who are your redeemed people and are called people.

Help us to go into the world, to go into the week ahead of us, Lord, to be a people who will conduct ourselves in the right manner of your calling.

[22 : 56] Help us to love our neighbor. Help us to live for those around us. Help us to share the good news of the gospel with others. Help us that in all that we would do, we would seek not our own building up, but that your name would be praise.

So, Lord, humble us in your presence and under your holy arm today. Humble us under your word and your truth, that they may build us up. We thank you too, Lord, that as we come, we come as those who are fully dependent upon you in all things, but thankful too that you hear our prayers, that you know every thought of our heart, you know every burden that we carry, be it for ourselves, be it for our families, be it for those around us in our communities, in our homes, in our own families, be it for our nation or the nations of the world.

Lord, we thank you that we do not carry everything alone for it is impossible for us, but we come to bring our burdens to you. And so we ask, Lord, that you will deal graciously with us and those we love and care for, be gracious towards those who struggle in different ways at this time, those who are weighed down with sorrow and sadness in their hearts, those who mourn the passing of loved ones even in this week and the last few weeks, Lord, as there has been grief and loss in the midst of our people here.

We thank you, Lord, that you are a God of comfort. And when things come upon us, when our lives are changed so quickly in the midst of these things, we thank you that we are known to you, that you are a good shepherd who cares for his sheep.

You are the one who so often will come and carry us and uphold us in our times of great need. And so we pray, Lord, for your comfort and your blessing to those who are heavy in heart today, for those who mourn and grieve, for those who are anxious over loved ones, for those who are anxious of themselves.

[25 : 05] Lord, we pray that you will draw near to them. We give you thanks too, Lord, that you are a God of great blessings as well, that you are the giver of life. We thank you for a new life in our midst as a people as well.

And we pray and thank you, Lord, for the good news of a new birth in our midst. We pray your blessing over families, upon children born into this world and born to families who will love them and care for them.

Lord, we pray for all our young ones, that you will look after them, that you will bless them, that you will keep them. We see the great challenges around them in these days.

And we thank you, Lord, for your word and how it instructs a people from a very young age into old age. We hear your word and your truth speaking to us.

And so we pray, Lord, for our children, that they will grow up in this world, knowing your great love and compassion, knowing your great concern for them. And we pray for those who seek to instruct them and guide them in day school and also in Sunday school and also the clubs and events that go on through the week as well.

[26 : 17] We thank you for the resumption of the Explorers group in this past week. Thank you for all who came to that and pray you continue to bless and to watch over them there. We thank you for the toddler group that meets on a Monday and for all parents and children who attend there.

We pray your blessing over them as well. So we thank you for the conference over this weekend, for young people and for the big YF this evening. We pray that it will be a blessed time of guidance and instruction for young but also old alike.

That we would learn from the challenges that we face in these days. Learn how to approach them in a godly manner and seeking your wisdom and your guidance in them. Remember our land as well, Lord, and the nation of the world as we hear of the tragedy in South Korea yesterday, Lord.

So many lives lost, so many young lives lost there. We do pray for comfort, for mercy upon all who need you at this time there. You know, too, the many difficulties throughout our world.

Wars and conflicts going on, famine and natural disasters all around us. We see it so often. We hear it in the Philippines. We've seen it in America. We see it on every continent, Lord, how there is disaster after disaster.

[27 : 38] And we just pray, Lord, have mercy upon us. Come with your healing power. Come with the power of your Holy Spirit. Come and draw near to us as a people and help us in all things.

We ask your blessing on us now as we continue in our worship, as we turn to your word and we continue to sing your praise. May we sing from our hearts, rejoicing in the hope of the gospel, thankful for the redemption that is ours through Jesus Christ, the one who has paid the ultimate price.

We thank you that in all things we can look to him, that we can trust him and that we have hope in him through faith. And so we pray, Lord, that you will give us that faith and dependence upon him.

So hear our prayers and go before us. We ask all things for the forgiveness of our sins and for your glory alone. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen. We're going to sing to God's praise before we turn back to that first letter of Peter, singing in Psalm 49, page 64 of the psalm books.

Psalm 49, singing from verse 1 to verse 10. Listen to me, all you peoples, all who in the whole world dwell, low and high, both rich and needy, hear the message I will tell.

[29 : 04] Then at verse 8, it says, to redeem, a life is costly, none sufficient, price can pay, so that one should live immortal, free forever from decay.

But it's a reminder to us that there is forgiveness and redemption in Jesus Christ. Let's sing from Psalm 49, verse 1 to 10 to God's praise.

Psalm 49, verses 1 to 10 And this is part of it to Jesus Christ.

And this is part of it of the psalm commemorative and Michael's chosen against Jesus. This is part of it and this is part of it avoir ads klass cheyed I will speak with understanding, wisdom from the heart I'll preach.

I will listen to a proverb, speak as with the harp I'll teach.

[30 : 21] What should I fear, days of evil, when the wicked end be in?

Those who boast of their possessions, by their trust and wealth they save.

There is no one who is able to redeem a soul from death.

Man can pay to God their ransom to prolong another's bread.

To redeem a life this costly, none sufficient price can pay.

[31 : 29] So that one should live the mortal free forever from decay.

For we all can see life ending, wise and foolish all will die.

They must leave their wealth to others. God, God is demand defied.

Can we turn back to 1 Peter chapter 1?

We can read again at verse 14. Let's continue our study in this letter. As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance.

[32 : 32] But as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct. Since it is written, you shall be holy, for I am holy.

As we pick up our study in this letter once again, we've seen in the introduction to it in these opening verses, from verse 1 to 12, where Peter is writing to a people, God's people who are in a situation where they've been scattered far and wide, a people who are suffering and struggling and with many different things.

And at the same time, a people who are being reminded that they are precious to God. That's Paul's. Peter's reason for writing to them is to remind them of whose people they are and the great hope that is theirs through Jesus Christ.

To that end, he's reminding of the many different precious truths that they have. That there is this eternal hope. That there is an inheritance for his people. An inheritance that will never fade or perish.

A reminder that a day is coming when Christ will return. And a day that they are to be prepared and ready for. And that through faith in Jesus Christ, they have that outcome of their faith, the salvation of their souls, as it says in verse 9.

[33 : 58] So there's many great promises and many great truths that they are to hold on to in the midst of all the challenges that they are facing. But as we've been going through in this introduction, the question that they might have as we move into the body of the letter, the thought that might be theirs is, how is all of this going to help me now, here in my need?

The people may have been thinking that in Peter's day in the same way that many of us may be thinking that today as well. How is all of these truths, how are they going to help me on a day-to-day basis?

What difference do they make to my life in the here and now? How does or how can it make a difference to my life just now?

Well, from verse 13 and through the rest of the letter, he is going to show the difference that this makes. He's going to show us just how, in a practical way, the outworking of all of these truths affect our lives on a day-to-day basis.

And the great difference that they make to us, not just how we are to live in this world, as our people who are very individualistic, or how we are to live in this world just for ourselves, but more how we are to live for one another.

[35 : 22] And above all, how we are to live for God. Knowing that even in the midst of everything that we go through, and as the people here in Peter's day, we're going through all these different trials, and perhaps feeling, you know, where is God in the midst of all this?

Has he left us? Has he abandoned us? That God is not far away. And we are to remember that for ourselves too. God is with us.

God is near and near to help. Remember, he's writing here, not just to help them to survive in this world, and to get by in this world. He's writing to help them to thrive in this world.

And that's what we want for ourselves too, isn't it not? That we will be a people who thrive for God and for his kingdom in this world through knowing him.

And what is at the heart of this life that they are to live, and the way that they are to live, is really these verses that I've just read to you. That we are to be a people who are called and who live a holy life.

- [36 : 33] It revolves, it hinges on these verses. Verse 15 and 16, as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct.

Since it is written, you shall be holy, for I am holy. This is not something new to the people. It's not a new command to the people.

It's a command founded in the Old Testament in the book of Leviticus, where this is quoted from. As it says there, since it is written, you shall be holy, for I am holy.

He's quoting there in Leviticus chapter 11, verse 44, a command that God gave to the children of Israel as they were coming out from being under the bondage of Egypt.

He told them, you be a people who are holy, for I am holy. But what does it mean to be holy?

- [37 : 32] That's perhaps the key question here. Maybe you think of holiness as something for others, something for the elite of God's people, something I could never achieve, something that is a standard that is too high for me to attain.

Well, the word holy at its root has the idea of a people or a being set apart. And in particular, being set apart for God.

A people who love him and live for him. That's what he is calling us to be as a people. A people set apart for him.

Living for him. And that's what we see in this section is about being obedient to God. Not being pulled back into our former ways or the past ways of our life.

Losing hope of faith in God. Thinking that he's left us but instead striving more and more for this holiness, this living for him.

- [38 : 44] It's what Peter called the people to then. It's what he's calling us to now as well. It is something that we are to strive for.

Something that every one of us should pursue with all our heart, with all our being. To be a holy people. A people set apart and living for God.

But in all honesty, who of us feel holy today? There's so much that goes on around us in that our holiness seems that's something that cannot be attained.

There's a book written by Kevin DeYoung. It's called The Hole in Our Holiness. And in the first chapter, he says that the hole in our holiness is that we don't care much about it and seldom pursue after it.

He says the sadness is that we can focus on what Christ has saved us from, which is great, but we have lost sight of what Christ has saved us to.

- [39 : 54] A pursuit of a holy life. And that's what we're called to. Not just to recognize the wonder of what Christ has saved us from, but more so as we go on, what he has saved us to in our way that we live.

And you see here how holiness is linked to our conduct in verse 15. He has called you to holiness. He who called you is holy.

You also be holy in all your conduct, in everything that you do. This impacts everything in your life.

And so, from verse 13 through really the rest of the letter, he gives us practical ways to live this holy life.

Set apart for God and living for Him. And there's three things that we're going to think about as we start this next section today. One is being ready.

[41 : 00] What we are to be. The first thing, being ready. The second thing is being responsive. And the third thing is remember we are being redeemed. We are being redeemed at a great price.

And it's grounded in what is said in the opening of this letter up to verse 12. Because you notice in verse 13 the first word there is therefore.

So in other words, in light of everything that we'd said up to this point, therefore, this is how you are to live. Therefore, this is what you are to do.

So he's reminded of them of the hope. He's reminded them of the inheritance. He reminded them of all these wonderful promises, the outcome of their faith, the salvation of their souls.

He's saying these are not just things that are at a distance from you. These are things that you take with you every day of your life and everywhere that you go.

[42 : 02] Therefore, he says, hold on to these truths and take them into every aspect of your conduct in this world because they affect everything about you.

And the first thing he says here is, therefore, be ready. Be ready. A preacher once told his congregation a story.

He said to them, I'm not a connoisseur of great art, but from time to time, he said, I like to go in and see in museums and different places, galleries, paintings and paintings that give a clear picture of something that really speak a powerful, a strong message to me.

And he said, some time ago I saw a picture and it was a picture of an old burnt out mountain shack. A place that was a people's home.

But all that remained of it was the chimney and there was charred, burnt out debris all around. But in the picture there were two people.

[43 : 15] one was a man who looked quite old, dressed just in very little clothes, dirty clothes, worn out clothes. And beside him was a little boy clutching what looked like a patched up pair of overalls.

And the child was crying. And beneath the picture there was the words which the artist felt spoke of what this picture illustrated.

Simple words the preacher said that presented profound theology and philosophy for life. And the words were this hush child God's not dead.

And the preacher took it in this way as a reminder that so much in life just seems like a burnt out ruin. A picture of despair and of hopelessness.

And yet there is still that great truth. God's not dead. And as Peter is writing to his people here and as he writes to ourselves today our impression in this world can be one that's full of chaos.

[44 : 32] But we need to be reminded too God's not dead. In fact God is reigning. He is alive and he is in control of this world.

And as we think of the challenges that people faced in Peter's day and the many challenges that we face ourselves you could look at Peter's day and say it would be easy for them to give up and to say what's the point to throw in the towel and say yes I have my faith but I may as well just hide away and avoid all the hassle of this world if all that my faith brings to me is persecution and suffering.

I can do my duty and that's it. And it may be the kind of impression that we have in this world that we live in today.

What's the point? Even if I have faith what difference does it make? What impact can it make in this world? Well Peter is writing to remind them and us of the great difference that it makes to be a people who are holy.

A people who are set apart for God. Who can be used by God. And so the first thing he says is be ready. In verse 13, 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.

[46 : 12] So one of the truths that he's already told them of in the introduction, the revelation of Jesus Christ, that speaks of in verse 5, you who by God's power are being guarded through faith for our salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

And he speaks about it there again in verse 7, the glory and honour at the revelation of Jesus Christ. So now he's saying you take this into your life on a day to day basis, preparing your minds, girding up the loins of your mind, it says in the AV, and in the footnote at the bottom of the ESV.

And the people in that day would have been familiar with this phrase, gird up the loins of your mind. The kind of clothes that they wore in those days were long tunics and gowns that went right down to their feet.

And if they were called to action, if they were called to work or to war or to battle, any of these things, they had to prepare. And they prepared by rolling up their gowns, their tunics, and tucking them into their belt.

That is what is meant by gird up your loins for action. So here he is saying prepare your minds, gird up the loins of your minds for action.

[47 : 39] He's saying be ready for action. This is how you are to live, prepared and ready for anything that's going to come your way. Be ready.

He is saying that there will be and there have been challenges in your life, but prepare yourselves. when we ask ourselves is that how we live?

Is that how you live today? Do you prepare for the battles of this world on a daily basis? Did you prepare yourself for coming to church today?

Or did you just rush into the day? We're all guilty of it, aren't we? Just rushing on with the day where we don't prepare ourselves by coming to God, preparing our minds for action by being sober minded, setting our hope fully on the grace that will be brought to us at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

What a difference it would make if that's how we started our day. Yes, we're going to go into the challenges of this world. We're going to go into worship and fellowship with God's people, which is wonderful, but then on the Monday and the Tuesday and the Wednesday we go into each day with the challenges that it brings, but do we go into it prepared, setting our hope fully on the revelation of Jesus Christ, that great hope that we have.

[49 : 09] Don't live in your former ways, don't slip back into them, put them away and instead prepare yourselves with the holiness of God.

Like Paul says in Ephesians 6, we prepare by putting on the whole armor of God. So are we ready?

The danger for the people then was they just sat back idly. What's the point? The danger for ourselves today is to have that same kind of attitude.

What's the point? Well, hope in Jesus Christ gives us that point. Martin Luther once said that through living faith which the Holy Spirit instills into the heart simply cannot be idle.

It's a living, it's an active faith and that's the way that we are to live. Kevin de Young in his book says the best looking Christian is the one growing by the Spirit into the likeness of Christ.

[50 : 21] That is what we are to strive for by being ready, by preparing our minds for action, to strive after holiness. The second thing we see here is that we are to be a people who are responsive.

In verse 14 it says, 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.

We are to be a people who are obedient, who are responsive. How are you when it comes to being told what to do? What's your response like when it happens?

Just like we were thinking with the children, if someone tells you to do something, do you go and do it immediately or does it depend on who says it to you? It sometimes does depend on who tells us.

If we know that person, if we love that person, want to do good for that person, we respond immediately perhaps. But if that person hasn't been good to us, if that person has mistreated us, do we respond in the same way?

[51 : 40] Are we obedient to God? If we say, well God hasn't remembered me, God hasn't loved me, why should I respond to him? Because of all that he has done for us, which we'll see in a moment.

But we are to be a people who are obedient to God. God gives us a call here to holiness, and it's a call that demands an instant response.

In all our conduct, this is how we are to live. Thomas Kempis once said, instant obedience is the only kind of obedience that is.

Delayed obedience is disobedience. Whoever strives to withdraw from obedience withdraws from grace. Again, we think of the command and the situation of the people here.

They were experiencing hard times, perhaps even questioning what God was doing for them and where he was. Why should I do something for him?

[52 : 52] Their focus was gone. It seemed their hope was gone. But yet God calls them to holiness. Be holy because I am holy.

Is that the case for you today? Are you saying, how dare God make demands of me? The devil will put into your head the same doubts and fears and concerns that the people had in Peter's day.

Where is God? You can become blind to the fact that he is there. What's happened? Paul, writing to the church in Corinth, he tells us what's happened.

He says that in their case, the God of this world has blinded the minds of unbelievers to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel in the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

There is another one at work who blinds us to seeing this. And in our blindness we lose hope. But as we looked at last time, we are to have eyes of faith.

[54 : 03] We are to fix our eyes on God. And in the previous chapter in 2 Corinthians, in chapter 3, Paul speaks to them there of the one who opens their eyes.

He says in chapter 3, verse 16, but when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. He was talking about Moses and the veiled glory of God.

But when we turn to God in faith, this veil is removed and we all with unveiled face behold the glory of the Lord as being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory.

to another. So the more we fix our eyes on the Lord, the more we are transformed by Him. We are transformed into the same image, one degree of glory to another, bit by bit.

And that is the way our holiness develops. Seeing God, seeing Jesus. Kevin again in his book, he says, it may sound boring and out of date, but it just happens to be true.

[55 : 15] The way to grow in your relationship with Jesus is to pray, read your Bible, go to church, all of these things, things that people will say we do not need, we do, to see the glory of God and to fix our eyes on Him.

So are we fixing our eyes on Jesus? Is our hope of salvation in Him, are we coming to the foot of the cross?

Because when we do, we behold His glory more and more. And that's what Peter thoroughly goes on to show us here. the wonder of our salvation and the way that we have been purchased.

In verse 18, knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ.

We are being ransomed. What are we looking to? Are we looking to the cross? That hymn that when I survey the wondrous cross on which the prince of glory died, my riches gain I count but loss and poor contempt on all my pride.

[56 : 42] Closing words of that hymn are, love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all. What does it mean today for you to be ransomed?

are you redeemed? Perhaps you say, well what need do I have of being ransomed? A ransom is something that happens to people who are taken hostage or kidnapped, but you say, I am free.

But are you? That is a big question for our world today. Are we free? Are we free from every law and demand of this world to just do as we please?

Well the Bible speaks to us about being slaves, enslaved to sin, held hostage by it, but it also speaks at the same time about the cost of being set free.

Romans 6 is a wonderful passage on this. I am just going to read a few verses from it. When you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. In other words, it meant nothing to you.

[57 : 58] But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life.

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus, our Lord. So do you know this freedom?

That is what Peter is pointing us to here, knowing that you were ransomed from the futile wastes, not with perishable things such as silver or gold. Just like that psalm we sang, Psalm 49, to redeem my life is costly, none sufficient price can pay.

none of us can pay for our salvation, and we are slaves to sin, we are held ransom and hostage by sin. How can we possibly be free?

Because we are ransomed, not by silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ. And that is what we are to hold on to, what a price has been paid for our freedom.

[59 : 19] as we approach the time of year when we remember the many who gave their lives in conflict, when we think of the great cost of our freedom through war and the shedding of blood of many, here we are reminded of the cost of our freedom from sin, a price none of us could pay, but a price that has been paid for us.

And this is how we are to live. As verse 21 says, who through him are believers in God who raised him from the dead and gave him glory so that your faith and hope are in God.

Is that true for you today? He says to be holy. He goes on, as we'll see, to outwork this in every aspect of our life and our conduct, but it begins with this hope that is found in Christ.

It is not something that is just a theology that is taught, something that we can read in a book. It's something that is in our heart and goes with us every day of our life.

We are to take it with us from here today, to tomorrow, into every day that lies ahead as a command. Be holy, for I am holy.

[60 : 49] Be set apart. It's not something we cannot be. It is something we are to strive for. So may God enable us and help us to see what has been done for us, but we have been saved to.

The more we see the beauty of Christ, the more we see our need to live for him and love him who gave himself for us through the precious blood of Christ that has redeemed us, that we would live through faith and hope in God.

Let us pray. Our Father in heaven, may you instruct us and guide us through these words to be a people who strive after holiness, to live for you and to recognize, yes we fall short, but yes too, you lift us up and you help us, you strengthen us to go on.

So may you do that for each of us, we ask in Jesus' precious name. Amen. our closing item of praise is Psalm 16 in the Sing Psalms.

Psalm 16 at verse 8. Again, just reminds us where our focus is to be. Before me constantly, I set the Lord alone, because he is at my right hand.

[62 : 24] I'll not be overthrown. We'll sing from verse 8 to 11 to God's praise. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[65 : 18] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen.