

# Our Great Redeemer

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Preacher: Chris Trousdale

[ 0 : 0 0 ] Turn your Bibles up to 1 Peter. 1 Peter chapter 1. Last week we covered verses 17, 18, and 19. So that this week we're going to cover verses 20 and 21. However, in reality, verses 17 through 21 in the original language in Greek are one sentence.

And so I did honestly feel a little awkward last week in my own mind dividing and sort of cutting my sermon short there at verse 19. Even though I know based upon our English translations that most of us wouldn't have any way of knowing that there was really no break there in Peter's mind as he was writing.

And so what I want to do this morning is I want us to read verses 17 all the way down through 21. Even though we're focusing on verses 20 and 21 so that we can remember and understand and see the context in which Peter begins to teach us about who Christ is.

So you guys stand. I'm going to begin reading in verse 17. Peter says, He says, Father, Father, I ask that your spirit would now come and take the word that he inspired and help us to understand it and help us to respond in obedience and gratitude to it.

I ask this in Christ's name. Amen. I told you last week that Peter in these verses is in the midst of giving us motive and means for becoming more holy, becoming more like God.

[ 2 : 2 1 ] He gives us the command there in verse 16, You shall be holy for I am holy, quoting from the book of Leviticus. So Peter's aim in these verses is to help us and to motivate us to become more holy, to become more righteous, to be holy as God is holy.

Or as Peter says, that we should in all our conduct be holy as he who called us is holy. So Peter's trying to help us. He's trying to provide us with the motive and the means by which we might become more obedient people, more holy people, more righteous people.

And he told us in the verses that we looked at last week, one of the methods that he used to motivate us was telling us to be afraid. And that seemed like a strange thing because he tells us, Be afraid, if you call yourself a Christian, if you say that God is your father, be afraid, live your life in fear because you know that you were not ransomed.

You were not redeemed with perishable things like gold, silver, things that will fade and ultimately be of no value someday. But you were ransomed, you were ransomed, you were bought out of slavery by the invaluable blood of Jesus Christ, by the precious atoning blood of Jesus.

And it is a dangerous thing to take that payment for granted, to take that ransom for granted. It is a great payment that God has made on our behalf.

[ 3 : 5 8 ] And Peter warns us, lest we should live our lives in such a way that we treat it with contempt. Because we saw that Jesus not only died to set us free from the guilt of sin, but Peter is here telling us that Jesus died to set us free from the power of sin.

We have been ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers. We've been ransomed from not only the penalty of sin, we've been ransomed from a sinful way of living.

So that as the Apostle Paul tells us in Romans chapter 6, we are no longer slaves to sin or slaves to unrighteousness. We have been set free from those things.

And Peter says it was at a very high cost that you were set free from the way that you used to live. So do not treat the blood of Christ with contempt by continuing to live in the ways that you inherited from your forefathers.

Do not continue to live the way you lived before you came to Christ and treat the blood of Christ as if it's of very little value. Be afraid of living that way. It's as if you imagine, in your mind, a bank heist.

[ 5 : 13 ] And a banker, president, CEO, owner of a local bank, stands there as the robbers come in. They break in with guns. And they grab one of his tellers.

And they hold her hostage. And they say, You will give us, you will open the vault. You'll give us the combination. You'll give us everything that you have in this bank. We want every bit of it.

And the catch is that the teller is the banker's new bride. It's their first day back at work after their honeymoon. They're newly married. And so he's willing to pay whatever price they demand in order to set her free.

So he says, I'll give you anything you want if you'll just set her free. And he opens the vault and he gives them everything in it. Everything that they have is now in the hands of the criminals.

He reaches out to take the hand of his wife, who then laughs at him, locks arm with the criminals, and walks out. As if the price that the banker was willing to pay was meaningless and worthless.

[ 6 : 20 ] And what it would have revealed is that all along, she was a part of the plot and a part of the plan, which means that she was never really intending to marry him. Never really his in her own heart.

And I think that one of the things that Peter is getting at here is, if you treat the blood of Christ in such a way that you live as if you, in the same way that you always lived, and you do not consider that price paid to set you free from that way of living as sufficient motive to live righteously, you should be very afraid, because that will prove that you never really were his in the first place.

Live in fear, Peter says, of treating the blood of Christ in this way. So that the motive that Peter is giving us for holy living is to understand, to see, and to cherish the great worth and value of the blood of Jesus.

To understand the cost of your redemption. And if you understand the cost of your redemption, that will become motive for holy living.

But, you will only really fully understand the value of the blood of Jesus if you know who he is and what he has sacrificed.

[ 7 : 39 ] You must know who he is. You must know what he has set aside so that he might lay his life down for you. And that's what Peter aims to help us to see and understand in verses 20 and 21.

He has spoken of the blood of Christ in verse 19. And in the Greek, verse 19 ends with the word Christ. So that you would pick up in verse 20, verse 19, the blood of Christ, who was foreknown before the foundation of the world.

And here we're seeing five things that Peter reveals to us about who Christ is that ought to cause us to esteem the blood of Jesus as of greater value than if we didn't know these things about Christ.

And so here we see the first one, that he has been foreknown before the foundation of the world. Now this is not the first time that we've come across this business about God foreknowing people.

We saw it at the very beginning of this book in verse 1. Peter addresses this letter to those who are the elect exiles of the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia according to the foreknowledge of God the Father.

[ 8 : 49 ] Peter addresses the recipients of this letter as those who have been chosen, those who are elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father. And when we covered that verse, I told you that the foreknowledge of God here is not simply his looking into the future and seeing what will be.

The foreknowledge of God is his setting his love upon his people. It is his choosing to love a particular people in eternity past.

Just as the Old Testament says that God knew Abraham. It doesn't mean that God knew about Abraham. It means that God loved Abraham in a special way that he set his love upon him.

Or when God tells Jeremiah, Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you. That does not mean that God knew about Jeremiah before he created Jeremiah. It means that God set his love upon Jeremiah and chose him and called him to be a prophet before he was ever born.

And as we covered verse 1 of this book, I said that's exactly what Peter is telling us. Peter is telling us that God, before the foundation of the world, God set his love upon us.

[ 9 : 56 ] He loved us. And now Peter says that the same thing is true in regard to Christ. Christ was foreknown before the foundation of the world.

The love of the Father for the Son existed before anything else existed. Now, God's love for his Son is not exactly parallel to his love for us.

Because God's love for us is a love that he has in mercy and grace set upon us. But the love that he has for his Son is a love that has flowed naturally throughout all eternity between Father and Son.

God does not love Christ because he has mercy on him. God does not love his Son out of his abundant grace. God loves his Son because his Son is infinitely worthy of his love.

The Father for all eternity looks into the Son and sees a perfect mirror reflection of all his infinite perfections and glory. And he loves him for it.

[ 11 : 04 ] He loves him for all eternity. He has loved the Son. In fact, if you hold your place there in 1 Peter and turn over to John chapter 17, I'll show you where Jesus bears witness to the love that he has, that the Father has for him.

John chapter 17, verses 4 and 5, Jesus is praying to the Father and he says, I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do.

And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed. And then you move further down.

And Jesus says in verse 22, The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one. I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.

He says, Father, I desire that they also whom you have given me may be with me where I am to see my glory that you've given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.

[ 12 : 17 ] There is a love that exists between Father and Son that is unparalleled. It is the basis for the love that God gives to us.

And when Peter says that Jesus has been foreknown before the foundation of the world, I think what he means for us to see is a glimpse of this love relationship between Father and Son.

Because it's not until you understand, it's not until you comprehend from whence the Son came when he came to earth, until you understand that, you cannot understand the great sacrifice of Jesus and simply becoming a man.

Never mind the cross, never mind the crucifixion, never mind the ridicule and the mocking. If you can only understand the sacrifice of Christ merely in leaving his Father's side to walk upon the earth, you'll have gone a great way to appreciating what Christ has done for us.

Which is in fact what Peter highlights next. He says that he's not only been foreknown before the foundation of the world, but he says, but he was made manifest in the last times.

[ 13 : 34 ] He was made manifest. Now don't be thrown off by that term, in the last times, because sometimes we hear phrases like that and we think that this is about the return of Christ, this is about the end of the world, and it's not.

Actually, frequently in the New Testament, if you see something like the last time, many times that will refer to the second coming of Christ, to Judgment Day, and all those sorts of things. But if you see the last times, it refers to the entire church age, from the first coming of Christ up to the second coming of Christ.

And in fact, we see the last time mentioned earlier in 1 Peter, but it's a completely different word. So the Peter is signaling here, the last times means the church age.

It's the same kind of thing that we find with the term the last day or the last days. The last days in the New Testament refers to this entire age, this entire period. But the last day refers to the very end of this period of history.

So when Peter says that Christ has been made manifest in these last days, he means now, in this final period of human history, in the beginning of what will become known as the church age, Christ has come to the earth.

[ 14 : 42 ] He has now been made manifest. He has now been made known. And to be made manifest means that something that was once in the darkness or something that we once could not see and could not fathom has now been revealed to us.

Now we can see light has been shed upon something that once we did not understand and could not see. You can see the meaning of this word if you look in Mark chapter 4 where Jesus tells a parable about a lamp.

He says, Is a lamp brought in to be put under a basket or under a bed or not on a stand? Then he says, Nothing is hidden except to be made manifest, nor is anything secret except to come to light.

So for something to be made manifest, it's the same verb that we find here in 1 Peter. For something to be made manifest is equivalent to something that was once secret being put into the light so that we can now see.

So Peter is saying that Jesus, who is foreknown before the foundation of the world and has this eternal love relationship with the Father, has now made himself known in a way in which he was not known before.

[ 15 : 53 ] What does he mean by that? Look back just a few verses in verse 10 where we read this, that concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched, made careful inquiry, inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicated when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow.

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.

Peter says in these verses that the prophets of the Old Testament, the prophets of the Old Covenant era, they knew some things about the Messiah. They made predictions about the Messiah, but they wanted to know more.

They wanted to know, when is he coming? They didn't know all the details surrounding exactly what he would do and exactly who he would be and exactly what he would be. They didn't know all the details and they longed to know, they longed to understand the salvation that the Messiah was going to accomplish.

Peter says though that now, in this age, in these last times, now Christ has been made manifest. Did you understand how privileged we are to live in the New Covenant era?

[ 17 : 18 ] We have the writings of the apostles that testify to the life and ministry of Jesus. The prophets of the Old Testament could only hope for such a thing.

They could only dream of that kind of knowledge and we have it at our fingertips every single day. All of this information about who he is and what he's done and what he's going to do, we have it right here.

He has been made manifest. It is an incredible privilege to live in this age. Most people have this mindset where things in the past were in some way better.

Sometimes we think of that in terms of the good old days of when I was a kid or when I was a teenager or when I was a young adult or whatever. We look back and we think, those were the good old days.

I wish that things now could be like they were then. Or we look even beyond our own lifetimes. Maybe you're a history buff and there's a certain period of history and you think, if I had only lived during that time, I heard someone on the radio the other day saying, I wish that I had been born during the days of the founding fathers.

[ 18 : 30 ] I was not born when I should have been born. I wish I had lived back then. We have this way of looking at the past, whether it's recent in our own lives or further back in history, and assuming that things were better then.

Things operated more efficiently or things operated according to the principles that we wish they would operate now. And the past in our minds is always better than the present. But when it comes to this, the past, the old covenant era, do not envy the Israelites because they saw the Red Sea parted.

Do not envy them for that. Do not envy them because they saw water flow out of a rock. That rock pointed toward Christ and now we see Christ, not a rock that's supposed to give us some idea of who the source of living water is.

Do not envy the prophets it's because Elijah called fire down from heaven. Do not envy that. Jesus stands in the midst of the temple and says, I am the light of the world.

All the pillars of fire and all the fire falling down from the heavens in the Old Testament was meant to teach us and point us to Christ. And now under the new covenant, we stand and know that he has been made manifest.

[ 19 : 43 ] We have the knowledge of who Christ is. It's not a secret anymore. Light has been shed upon him and we can see him. We can see him clearly in his word.

Do not envy the past but be thankful that you live in these last days when he has been made known to us. But there's something else here that takes you aback if you pay close attention to what Peter says.

Because he says not only that Christ has been made manifest in these last times. He says Christ has been made manifest for the sake of you.

Literally on account of you. Christ was made manifest for us. It's not an accident of history that we live in the new covenant era and others lived in the old covenant era.

That's not an accident. Christ has now been made manifest for us. Think about that. This is a very personal thing.

[ 20 : 55 ] He has been made known for your sake so that you might see him, so that you might know him, so that you might believe in him, so that you might love him. He has been made known for your sake.

Do not distance yourself from Jesus just because you see how glorious he's revealed to be in his word. Do not distance yourself from him because you think that you must stand at a distance.

Understand he came to this earth for our sake. He died on the cross for our sake. He rose from the grave for us.

For you, Peter says, he came. He was made manifest for the people of God living in this age. And we are among, if we are followers of Christ, we are among the people of God in this age.

And he has been made known for our sake. Not just in a vague, general way, but made known for us. Consider the great sacrifice that Christ has made for us.

[ 21 : 58 ] Consider where he came from, where he came to, and then consider for the sake of you.

Think of it. Hold your place. I want you to really get a feeling for this. I want you to turn over to Philippians chapter 2. It's a passage that you're probably familiar with.

But I want you to see from Paul's description of the incarnation of Christ, the coming of Christ into the world, the being made manifest of Christ.

I want you to see what Christ gave up. Start in verse 5 of chapter 2. He says, Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who though he was in the form of God, he is God in his very nature, who though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing.

Taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men, and being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

[ 23 : 16 ] The divine Son of God, the creator of all things, making himself nothing, taking upon flesh, becoming our servant, dying our death, may manifest for the sake of you.

That's what Peter means by that. You can't understand the great worth of the blood of Jesus unless you understand first what it took for blood to flow through his veins. You cannot understand the tearing of his flesh unless you understand the great sacrifice it took for him to even put on flesh.

He's foreknown before the foundation of the world, but he has been made manifest now, in this age, for your sake, he says. And then, he describes those about whom he's talking when he says, for the sake of you, and he describes them as those who through him, that is through Christ, 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.

Understand this, that Peter says that it is through Christ that we become believers in God. That it is through Christ and faith in Christ that our faith and hope can legitimately be said to be in God.

so that, apart from Christ, whatever faith you might have, whatever hope you might have, is not really faith and hope in God, it's faith and hope in something else.

[ 25 : 10 ] Whether it's a God of your own imaginings, or whether it's just, or whether it's some hope for the future that someone else has promised you, or that you've thought up, apart from Christ, apart from faith in Christ, your faith and hope are not in God.

Your faith is in God. Your salvation is secure in God only if your faith is in Christ. It's just as Peter says in Acts chapter 4 in one of his sermons.

He says that there is no other name given among men by which we must be saved. Only the name of Christ saves. And salvation only comes to those who trust in Christ.

And in no other way may we obtain eternal life or the hope of heaven, but through faith in Christ. Jesus himself says, I am the way and the truth and the life.

And no one comes to the Father except through me. There's no plan B. There's no other route. There's no other way to get there. There is one way to the Father.

[ 26 : 17 ] And it is only in Christ that we find our salvation. Listen to this. Through Christ, through Him, you are believers in God.

Notice the emphasis not only upon the centrality of Christ for salvation, but upon the centrality of faith. Twice he mentions it. You're believers in God and then your faith and hope are in God.

It's not simply that, well, if you believe in Jesus, if you have some sort of faith in Jesus, that's like an automatic switch. It is that only faith in Jesus saves.

Faith alone in Christ rescues us and saves us. Not faith plus something else. Or not something else in the place of faith.

But faith alone. You are believers in God through Him. Your faith is in God. It is only through that faith that you can be made right with God and put in a right relationship with Him.

[ 27 : 30 ] That's the only way. Some of you may have seen in the news this week some of the recent comments by Pope Francis.

He was delivering a sermon, delivering a speech, and in it he addressed the issue of what shall we think about atheists and what shall we think about non-believers.

And the sum of his message was that what really matters and what really counts is that so long as they do good, so long as they do good works and they live good lives, Pope Francis said that he believes that he will see them there, there being heaven.

He will see them there, whether they be atheist or Muslim or anything else. He expressed his hope that he will see them there so long as they do good works. You say, how does he arrive at that point?

How do you arrive at the place where you're willing to say that? The truth is, it's not a far leap from salvation is obtained by faith plus works.

[ 28 : 42 ] It doesn't take much to move to salvation is obtained by works. It's not a great move. It's not a big shift. It's not a great leap to get there. And for centuries, the Roman Catholic Church has affirmed that faith is essential to salvation, but not sufficient for salvation.

And you must, you must perform good works with the hope of perhaps being justified by God on the last day. No assurance of it, but the hope of perhaps if you perform good works and you believe, and it does not take long before those good works take precedence over faith altogether, and you wind up with the hope that those who don't know Christ or don't believe Christ or have outright rejected in Christ, so long as they do well, they do good, you believe that you will see them in heaven.

It's not a giant leap. It is absolutely essential that in a day and age in which we are told that what counts is not what you believe, but only that you have sincerity in your belief.

And in a day and age where we are told over and over what counts is not your religious label or the object of your worship, but the only thing that really matters is that you're nice and kind to people around you.

In an age where that is put forward as good news, it is essential that we cling to the real and true good news that only by faith alone in Christ alone can we legitimately claim that we have faith in God.

[ 30 : 28 ] In no other way. When you see the centrality of Christ and the necessity of his centrality in your salvation, you begin to understand his great work and his great value.

Last thing Peter tells us about Jesus that will help us to value his blood. He says that through him we are believers in God and then he says that God raised him from the dead and gave him glory.

It's important that you know that not only has Christ died a redeeming, ransoming death for you and in your place but that he has not remained in the grave.

So many times we we preach the cross to the exclusion of the resurrection. I mean, our name is Church at the Cross. We have a definite focus upon the cross and all that Christ has accomplished for us there at the cross.

But if the cross is not followed by the resurrection, the cross is emptied of its power. Because in the resurrection God declares I have accepted and received the sacrifice of my son on the cross.

[ 31 : 52 ] In the resurrection God has declared he is truly my son. His death counts for you in your place. He has been raised from the dead.

That's a source of great hope for us. He's been more than raised from the dead. He raised him from the dead and gave him glory. Now, Jesus spoke in John 17 of two kinds of glory.

I don't know if you noticed it when we were reading earlier. He spoke in verses 4 and 5 of the glory I had with you before the world began. Eternal, everlasting glory that is his by the nature of who he is.

It just, it is his. just like heat flows from a light, glory flows from Christ. It's just who he is. But then towards the end of his prayer he spoke of the glory that you have given.

What does that mean? How do you have glory for all eternity past that you share with the Father and then receive, he gives you glory as if you were lacking?

[ 33 : 07 ] How does that happen? What does that mean? It means that there's two kinds of glory being talked about here. One that's his by divine right and one that is his by merit. He's earned it. You and I, we don't, we don't earn glory.

We can't. We're sinners. We're fallen people. Everything that we do is stained by sin. It's all tainted by sin. But Jesus lived a perfect, obedient life.

That's what the high priestly prayer in John 17 is about. I've accomplished your will. I've done everything you told me to do, Father, and now I come worthy and deserving asking you to do for me and for the people that I'm about to die up on the cross.

I'm asking you to do something for them because I've earned it. I've done everything you've asked me to do. It's his by merit. It's his because he's earned it.

He has a glory that belongs to him because of his transcendent goodness that he displayed in his perfect, sinless life. This is why Peter, when he describes the blood of Christ, describes Christ like a lamb without blemish or spot.

[ 34 : 20 ] He has a glory that's been given to him and that he's earned because he went to the cross as a perfect, spotless, sinless sacrifice on our behalf.

And do you understand that in order to receive that glory he had to live that kind of life? He had to resist every temptation that came his way?

He's the second Adam. The first Adam gave it up at the first sign of temptation. Alright, sure. Okay. Eve says it's good. I guess I'll eat it.

No, God said not to. The second Adam, day after day, temptation after temptation, in a world riddled with sin, not a perfect garden, in a world riddled with sin, surrounded by fallen people in a fallen world, the second Adam earns his glory.



He earns it. and he earns it so that he might lay it down and take upon himself the inglorious punishment that we deserve.

[ 35 : 35 ] If you see, if you understand who your Redeemer is, you will begin to value and esteem the precious blood of Christ.

And if you value and esteem the blood of Jesus, you will learn to fear bringing reproach upon his blood. You will learn to fear treating his blood with contempt.

And through that fear, God will begin to work within you a new kind of righteousness, a new kind of holiness, a new level of obedience that was not previously possible.

But you have to see him. You have to know him. And you have to treasure him. Let's pray. If we could gather together every week to do nothing but treasure Jesus, I would count us a successful church.

If we could come together every week to do nothing but sing the praise and honor of Jesus, behold his beauty in your word, we would have done in these moments together what we will do for all of eternity in your presence.

[ 37 : 12 ] Pray that you'd enable us to be a kind of people to treasure Jesus above everything else and we come to give you thanks.

We thank you Father for sending your son and for being willing to pour out your wrath on your beloved for our sake.

Thank you for that. Lord, let us never ever take for granted the cost of our redemption and let us never, Father, forget that we have been redeemed not so that we might remain the way that we are, that we have been redeemed from those ways set free to live to the honor and glory of Jesus.

we pray in Christ's name. Amen.