

Redeemed for Holiness

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[0 : 00] I want you to open up your Bibles to 1 Peter. We're still in chapter 1. It's taking us a little while to get through chapter 1, but that's only because it's a gold mine of truth.

There is a treasure of truth in these pages, and I don't want us to miss out on any of it. And so this morning, we're going to begin where we left off last week.

We went through verse 16, so we're going to pick up in verse 17 and only go through verse 19 this morning. So as you turn there, 1 Peter chapter 1, I'm going to ask you guys to stand with me as we read from God's Word.

1 Peter chapter 1, 17 through 19. 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.

Father, let us see and let us marvel at the precious blood of Jesus this morning. We pray in Christ's name. Amen. There are, throughout the Scriptures, there are a number of scenes, of moments in which God interacts in a very close, very direct, very powerful manner with His people that if you've read through the Bible or if you've heard those stories in Bible study or in worship enough times, they just sort of imprint themselves on your mind and on your heart.

[1 : 47] And any time you begin to think about the greatness of God or the power of God or the majesty of God, there are certain events in Scripture that leap to mind out of the Bible.

So, for instance, you might say that Genesis chapter 1, the creation account itself, is one of those moments in which the power of God is on display in such a spectacular way that to even think of Genesis 1 is to think of the power of God who can simply speak and light comes into existence, who can, with a word, bring things that did not exist beforehand into existence.

It's not as if God is somehow gathering together various molecules and atoms and then forming things out of it like light. They did not exist.

There was nothing to be gathered together and yet God speaks and then they're there. What a great display of the power of God. I often think of God's revealing Himself to Moses there on the side of the mountain as He was shepherding His sheep and the burning bush appears and God speaks to Moses and as Moses questions God and says, If I go to the people as you tell me to go, who am I supposed to say what God is sending me to them?

What am I supposed to tell them? To which God replies, I am who I am. Tell them that I am sent me to you.

[3 : 15] And that's an incredible display of the power of God that He, by virtue of who He is, He can only be described as the God who exists. He is. There is no other beside Him.

He is the one and only true God and by Himself He has existence. He needs and depends upon no other. That's a great display of the majesty of God.

I also think, because it makes such a great story when you sit down and tell it to your kids, it's so dramatic of Elijah's encounter with the prophets of Baal at Mount Carmel.

That's one of my favorite images to picture in my mind as I think of the power of God. To see God answering Elijah's prayer and pouring fire down out of heaven to consume not only the sacrifice but the altar itself and everything there and all the water that was surrounding it.

An incredible display of God's power in the face of the non-existent power of non-existent false gods to whom all these other prophets are crying out. It's a display of God's great power.

[4 : 18] But if I had to single out, particularly from the Old Testament, if I had to single out one passage for me that in my heart helps me to see and treasure more the great majesty of God and

the beauty of who God is, it would be Isaiah chapter 6, which we read earlier, where God's holiness is on full display.

Because I think for me, Isaiah chapter 6 sums up in the words of the angels of the seraphim, it sums up for me what all of those other passages are teaching us about who God is.

God speaks and things come into existence. No one else does that. God exists simply because of who He is. Everyone else is a created being. God, not all the false gods of the world, God alone can rain down in fire upon the earth.

All of those things speak to God's singular, unequalled power. He is not like us. He is holy. He is separate. He is other.

Father. That's what we saw last week as we considered the meaning of the word holy. Because Peter, in verse 16, gives us a command here in chapter 1.

[5 : 32] He quotes from the book of Leviticus where he says, Be holy. God says, Be holy, for I am holy. And if you have in your mind a picture of God's holiness in which flaming angels sing about His holiness, powerful angelic beings who recognize that God is so holy that they themselves must cover their own eyes as they stand in His presence, whose prophet, whose chosen prophet, when he comes into contact with God's holiness, his response is only to say, I'm a sinner.

I'm falling apart in the presence of a holy God. When you begin to see holiness in terms of that picture from Isaiah chapter 6, and you understand that that is really and truly who God is, He is holy, He is beyond our comprehension.

To come into His presence is to die if you are a sinner. If that's how you understand God's holiness, and it's how we ought to, then the command that Peter gives us is a fearful, frightening command.

Be holy because I am holy. which helps us at least a little bit to understand why the next command that Peter gives in verse 17 is a command that pertains to fear towards God.

Take a look there in verse 17. He says, 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.

[7 : 15] Be afraid, Peter says. But I find it interesting that he introduces this command by identifying the people to whom he's giving it as those who call upon God as Father.

If you call Him Father, if you name God as your Father, be afraid. Now that does not strike us to call God Father as a strange thing or an odd thing at all because Christianity has had such an influence over the centuries on our culture that we've now become familiar with thinking of God as our Father. If anybody knows any prayer from the Bible, it's the Lord's Prayer. Okay? Which begins by addressing God as Father. And so we're comfortable and we're familiar with the concept of God as our Father.

But that was not a common notion in the first century, particularly among the Jewish people. It was not a common thing to think of the Holy God of Israel as your personal Father.

That was not common at all. In fact, it was so uncommon that when Jesus frequently referred to God as His Father throughout His ministry, it greatly upset the religious leaders of His day.

[8 : 32] So that you can read in John where Jesus addresses God as Father, the religious leaders hear of it, and they come to Him and they confront Him in the Gospel of John chapter 5, and they're upset with Him saying, He calls God His Father?

They accuse Him of blasphemy. You dare to call Him Father? Who do you think you are? John chapter 5, verse 18. This is why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him.

Because not only was He breaking the Sabbath, that's bad enough, but He was even calling God His own Father. So, so insulting was that notion to the Jewish religious leaders that they would rather kill Jesus than to allow Him to continue to walk around and refer to God to the I Am as His Father.

It is blasphemous in their eyes. So it's not a common notion in the first century, particularly among the Jewish people, to call God Father.

And yet Peter says, if you call God your Father, your Father. Father. Now, now we have to recognize at the start that in the New Testament, oftentimes, to call upon God in any way, whether you call, whether it's, you're saying, if you call upon the Lord or call upon God or call upon Christ, however it might be worded, over and over throughout the New Testament, what we find is this calling upon the Lord or calling upon God is another way of talking about believing in Jesus.

[10 : 16] It's another way of talking about putting your trust in God and in His Son. So we see it, for instance, Peter, using this kind of language about calling on God in Acts chapter 2.

I want you to turn there. Acts chapter 2. Just hold your place there in 1 Peter. In Acts chapter 2, on the day of Pentecost, Peter is delivering his great Pentecost sermon.

After the Holy Spirit has fallen on Christ's disciples and they've begun to preach the gospel, now Peter is going to preach his first recorded sermon in the New Testament.

And in that sermon, he quotes extensively from the prophet Joel, what we know of as Joel chapter 2. And if you look in verse 21, Peter is quoting Joel chapter 2 and he says this, verse 21, It shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Everyone who calls upon Him shall be saved. And then you say, what does that mean to call upon Him? At the end of Peter's sermon, he gives us an idea. Verse 38, Peter said to them, Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

[11:36] And then he says, for the promise. What promise? The promise of Joel chapter 2. Call upon the Lord. The promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord calls to Himself.

To call upon the Lord is synonymous with trusting in Christ. Paul quotes the exact same verse. You probably are more familiar with it in Romans chapter 10 when Paul quotes it.

But in Romans chapter 10, beginning in verse 12, we read, that there is no distinction between Jew and Greek. The same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing His riches on all who call on Him.

For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. So this business of calling upon God is another way of talking about professing faith in Jesus.

And Peter puts a slight twist on it by reminding us that to call upon Jesus and to put faith in Jesus is to call God your Father.

[12:37] And this kind of language is embedded within 1 Peter throughout. So that not only is God addressed as Father as early as verse 2 where he talks about the foreknowledge of God the Father, he says in verse 3 that God is to be blessed who, according to His great mercy, has caused us to be born again.

He says in verse 14, as obedient children, do not be conformed. Over and over this relationship of believers in Christ to God as a father-child relationship is emphasized by Peter.

And it comes to us by way of faith in Christ because when we put our faith in Jesus, that faith unites us to Jesus. Jesus becomes, in a real sense, our spiritual brother.

We are united to Him. And if He becomes our spiritual brother, His heavenly Father, by adoption into His family, becomes our heavenly Father.

That's salvation. That's what it means to be a follower of Christ. It means to have God as your Father. And the world cannot rightly claim that.

[13:49] I know. I know most people think of God as a kind of heavenly Father. Father. And most people, even non-Christians, if they address God in prayer, they will address Him as Father or in some similar language.

And they will think of themselves and perhaps all of humanity as the children of God. And yet, that's not true according to Scripture. The children of God are those who have trusted in Jesus and through faith in Him have been adopted into God's family so that now God is really and truly their Father.

Now understand that. Keep that in your mind because Peter says, if you call on God as Father, if this is the kind of relationship you have through Christ with God, then be afraid.

That seems like a strange way for Peter to argue. Particularly in light of what he goes on to say.

Look at what he says. Let me just kind of, let me paraphrase it for you, okay?

He essentially says this in verses 17 and 18. If you call on God as Father, if you're a Christian, then be afraid because you've been ransomed or redeemed by the blood of Christ.

[15:00] If God is your Father, be afraid because Christ has redeemed you. Now I would think, just thinking through this logically, I would think that I would probably say the exact opposite.

Wouldn't you? I mean, if you're just thinking through it, wouldn't you want to say, if God is your Father, if you've trusted in Jesus, then don't be afraid because Jesus has redeemed you.

Isn't that how you think that the argument might work? And yet it works the opposite. God is your Father. You call upon Him as Father. Be afraid because Jesus has redeemed you by His blood.

What's happening there? What's the logic that's being worked out there? What is Peter showing us? More importantly, what is the Holy Spirit revealing to us about the very nature of what it means

to be a redeemed person and how it ties back into fear of a holy God?

How is all of this tied together? Well, before we can untie that knot and figure it out, first we need to ask ourselves what it means to be ransomed or redeemed. What precisely does that language mean?

[16:10] Verse 18, knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers. Ransomed, redeemed. It means, it means quite literally to be bought.

To be bought out of slavery. It was a term that was often used in the ancient world to describe literally the paying of someone's debt who had been a slave previously because of that debt so that you could then free them from their slavery.

It's freedom from slavery. It's being bought. It's being purchased. And so when the Bible says that we have been redeemed by Christ, what the Bible means is Christ has paid a price to set us free. But freedom from what? Freedom from sin. He has redeemed us from our sin. redemption. That's exactly what Paul says if you turn over to Ephesians chapter 1.

In Ephesians chapter 1, Paul talks about redemption in verse 7. He says that in Christ we have redemption through His blood. It's a related term, same root word.

[17:21] We have redemption through His blood. And then he describes the redemption as the forgiveness of our trespasses. Redemption is?

redemption results in? The forgiveness of our sins. The forgiveness of our trespasses. We see the same thing over in Colossians chapter 1.

Verse 13 says that He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Redemption is the forgiveness, the remission of sins. And you remember the debt that sin puts us in. A debt to God.

The wages of sin is death. The wrath of God is revealed, Romans 1.18, against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness.

[18:28] Sin puts us in debt and means that we owe our lives.

More than that, we deserve eternal condemnation, eternal destruction, the very wrath of God hangs over us because we're sinners.

And to be redeemed from that means that you no longer are expected to in any way try to pay a price, which is good news because we cannot pay the price for our sins.

It is too great. You cannot relieve the debt that you owe, yet God says that by His blood, Christ has redeemed us.

He has set us free from our slavery to sin and death and hell. We have been released by the payment of Christ's blood in our behalf.

[19:33] We are free from guilt. We are free from condemnation. And yet, I'm not quite sure that that's exactly what Peter has in mind when he says that we have been redeemed in this verse.

He does mean that we have been set free from sin. I think that that's what the word generally means consistently throughout the New Testament. But I think Peter is looking at it from a slightly different angle than we find there in Ephesians 1 and Colossians chapter 1.

Peter is coming from a slightly different angle and you'll see it if you read carefully. Verse 18, knowing that you were ransomed, there's the word redeemed, knowing that you were ransomed, not from, he doesn't say from the guilt of sin, but ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers.

Ransomed from a way of living. What he refers to, if you'll look back, down in verse 14, as obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance.

That's what he means when he says that you have inherited futile ways from your forefathers. He means that you have a way of living. There's a conduct that you have inherited from your forefathers that is yours by birth and that you live out every day.

[21:00] There is a sinful way of living, a sinful lifestyle, and it is not merely the guilt of sin that Christ has redeemed us from.

It is the indwelling power of sin to continue to cause us to walk in it from which we have been redeemed by Christ. Not only has the blood of Christ secured our justification before God, the blood of Christ has secured our sanctification by God, we are not only set free from condemnation, we are set free into obedience.

It's the same kind of freedom that the apostle Paul talks about in different language, but the same concept in Romans chapter 6. And I want you to listen carefully to the ways, to the way in which Paul talks about this kind of freedom.

I'm going to begin reading in verse 5 of Romans chapter 6. Just listen carefully. He says that if we have been united with Christ in a death like His, we shall certainly be united with Him in a resurrection like His.

That sounds like Peter. We have the hope of the resurrection. Okay? And then he says, we know that our old self was crucified with Him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.

[22 : 29] For the one who has died has been set free from sin. We've been set free from sin. If you have trusted in Christ and therefore died with Christ and been raised up with Christ, you are now set free from sin.

I think that's exactly what Peter has in mind when he says that we have been redeemed from the way of life that we inherited from our forefathers. It is not merely that we inherit Adam's guilt as important as that is.

We inherit a sinful nature from Adam as well. And we are all born, as Paul says, by nature children of wrath. We come into this world wired for sin.

All of us. It's who we are. It's expressed in various ways in different people. So that for you, the sin that indwells in you may express itself in lust towards people of the opposite sex.

That may be the way in which it expresses itself and you find it almost impossible for you to control that. Or it may express itself in pride, in this overwhelming pride that continually bubbles up within you.

[23 : 45] It may express itself in unwarranted anger towards people that you care about around you. It may express itself in innumerable ways in your lives.

But make no mistake, you are born a sinner and sinners have dwelling within them sinful desires. That's what Paul means when he says the old self.

That's what Peter means when he talks about the futile ways we've inherited from our forefathers.

That's what Peter means when he says to not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance.

those things, those desires, that nature rules us until the day of our redemption.

It rules us. And it may be very, very obvious in some who do not know Christ that sin rules in them.

[24 : 41] For others it may be expressed in much more subtle ways so that externally they appear to be good and nice people. But the essence of sin is not how you treat other people and what you say to other people.

The essence of sin is a failure to do all that you do for the honor and glory of God. And all of us, Paul says, have fallen short of the glory of God.

We are a sinful mass and sin lives within you and expresses itself within you in innumerable ways. And it is your master unless you are bought out of that slavery. The only way to ever experience any practical real victory over sin in your life is to be redeemed by the blood of Jesus.

There is no other hope for sinners. Now, what does it mean then for Peter to tell us God is your Father and you have trusted in Christ?

[26 : 08] be afraid because you have been redeemed by the blood of Jesus from your sinful ways.

What does that mean? Why should we be afraid? We should be afraid because whether or not we really have been redeemed freedom hangs upon whether or not we are really in our lives practically experiencing freedom from sin.

Make sure you catch that. Whether or not you really are a follower of Jesus, whether or not you really have been saved, is born out, is given witness to by your practical freedom from the indwelling power of sin.

If there is no freedom from sin in your life, if you are no more free now from the passions of your former ignorance than you were before you began to call God your Father, then God is not yet your Father and you should be very afraid if you call Him Father because the redemption you claim is costly and you need to experience and have the freedom that was so very costly.

Be afraid. Lest by your life you show that you do not possess that freedom and therefore you do not possess God as your Father and therefore you do not possess freedom from the guilt of sin and therefore you will stand before a holy God with nothing to cleanse you from your sin and on that day

you will understand why Peter said be afraid very very afraid that's the logic of this passage now to the goodness what what are we supposed to do with this sort of thing because we know we saw last week the entire context of really the rest of chapter one and moving into chapter two is Peter is trying to show us how we can live in the freedom that we now have in Christ.

[28 : 39] Peter is trying to show us how do the children of God live in this world? How do we conduct ourselves? How do we practically experience the freedom that Christ has provided for us?

and we saw last week that there is a connection between the command to be holy in verse 16 and the command to hope in Christ in verse 16 and the command to hope in Christ in verse 13.

There is a connection between those two commands because one of the means by which we become more holy, one of the means by which you become more obedient to God, by which the freedom that you have in Christ expresses itself.

One of the means that God has provided for us is through a future forward focus on all that Christ has secured for us in eternity.

He has bought it for us. He has won an inheritance for us. Look back again. We keep coming back to these verses, but look back again. Verses 3 and 4.

[29 : 48] God 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, reserved, guarded in heaven for you who by God's power are guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

There is stored up for us a great inheritance which is called resurrection life, eternal life, everlasting joy in the presence of God is kept and reserved and guarded for those who have trusted in Christ.

And one of the means by which you achieve practical holiness now is to rivet your eyes on that promise and on that hope rather than wallowing in all the sin that comes at you now.

You need to really believe that that future awaits you and when you begin to think upon and meditate upon and focus upon that future, you begin to prepare your mind for battle against sin.

Verse 13, 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. How do you set your hope?

[31 : 12] on Christ and the future that he has. By being sober minded, by preparing your minds for action, you are prepared and ready for the battle that lies before you every day if you keep your eyes focused on the inheritance that he has won for you.

That's one of the means that God provides for us in this battle against sin and in the war to live out the freedom that Christ has bought for us.

That's one of the means. But another means that he gives us here in these verses is not simply to look forward at what is yours, but to look backward to the past and what Christ has accomplished in the past and seeing the great value and great worth of what Christ has done for you on the cross and understanding that, having your minds transformed by that as well so that you are further ready for the battle.

Let me show you what I mean. Verse 18, Knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers. This is how he describes the price of your redemption. Not with perishable things such as silver or gold.

Now nothing is more valuable, particularly in the ancient world, than silver and gold. They are currency. They are money. And they are the highest value of money.

[32 : 51] Pure gold, pure silver, smelted down in the fire, can get you anything that you need in this life in the ancient world. He will buy you whatever you want and whatever you need.

And he says, it's not with pitiful, filthy things like silver and gold. It's not with silver and gold.

It's worthless next to the price that's been paid for your redemption. It's not. God did not mine the mountains for gold. He put his son up on a hill.

Slaughtered him there. Not with silver and gold. But with the precious blood of Christ.

Like that of a lamb. Without blemish or spot. You remember the story of the Exodus, I'm sure. And of the Passover in particular.

[33 : 54] The institution of the Passover toward the end of God's redemption. His buying of his people out of slavery in Egypt. God had sent nine plagues.

Nine plagues. Demonstrating his great power over Pharaoh and all the false gods of Egypt. And yet at the end of it all, Pharaoh continued to harden his own heart against God and against God's people and refused to listen to the voice of God.

Let my people go. He refused over and over. So finally God brought the tenth plague upon the land of Egypt. In which God warned the Israelites through Moses, I'm going to send the angel of death. He will come. He will pass through the land of Egypt. And he will kill all of the firstborn in every household. He will kill them. He will take them.

That's a holy God for you. That's a God beyond approaching. He will do it. He's going to do it. But, I'm going to provide a way to rescue you, my people, from my own wrath.

[35 : 06] I want you to take a lamb. And not just any lamb. I want you to take the favored lamb. The best, small, little lamb that you have.

The best one. The one that, if you had a pet, he would have been the pet. If there were any that your kids loved, it would have been this very one. I want you to take the best lamb that you have and slit its throat and pour its blood out on the ground in front of your whole family.

And then take the blood, spread it around your door. And when I see that blood, I will deliver you from my wrath.

Have you ever wondered, in reading the Old Testament? Why it is such a bloody book? And I don't mean simply, I don't mean the battles. You know, there are lots of people killed in various battles. I don't mean that. I mean in the things that God, the things that God commands of his people. Has it ever occurred to you, if you've ever read through Leviticus, or Exodus, or Deuteronomy, those books in which the sacrificial system is detailed, and taking notice of all the blood?

[36 : 29] It's disgusting. It's constant. It's everywhere. There are days of the year, Day of Atonement, Passover. There are certain festivals celebrated according to Old Testament law, that if you celebrate them according to the law, the tabernacle or the temple, the floor would have run with blood.

It would have been solid everywhere. It's not just running from all the throats that are slit, and the birds that are killed, and all the various animals that are slaughtered. It's that blood is taken, and oftentimes it's sprinkled upon the people.

It's everywhere. It's bloody, and messy, and gross. It's worse than any slaughterhouse.

Slaughterhouses today are humane. They do things cleanly as best they can, and the clean things need, and they have drains, so all the blood is not too visible, and it's not everywhere.

That's not what they're doing. They're putting on a show of blood, a display of blood, year after year, festival after festival, for century after century.

The temple is filled with blood running everywhere, and you think to yourself, this is a disgusting religion, and there are people today who will say that about ancient Judea.

[37 : 44] They will look at the religion of the Jews as it was practiced under biblical law, and they'll say, that's a gross religion. We are so glad that we have evolved beyond that, and we are more sophisticated than that, and we no longer think of God as a God who demands sacrifices.

We think of a God of God who's loving toward everyone. People are glad to be rid of that sort of system, but that system was there for a reason. It was to show the cost, the heavy, inestimable cost of our redemption.

It is a bloody, bloody mess to be redeemed, and all of those sacrifices throughout all of those centuries were there to help us to understand the value and the worth of the blood of Jesus, like a lamb without spot or blemish who shed his blood for our redemption.

Do you want do you want power for obedience in your life? Do you want another means by which God might sanctify you and make you more holy and help you to overcome sin?

Meditate on the blood of Christ. Think. Think. Think. Think about the great cost of what it took.

[39 : 22] Because sin stands ever ready, ready at all times to spring into action in your heart and in your life to drag you down. And in those moments, you will need more than future hope to sustain you.

You will need to understand the cost of your freedom. because doing battle with sin is always a matter of the mind.

It's a matter of your thoughts and desires. Always. But we want to say it's a matter of the heart, but the heart is the mind. Correct? The heart is the mind.

It's the same. It's the same thing. The same word in the Bible can be used especially in the Old Testament. Lave, heart, means mind. Okay? It always is a battle of the mind and a battle of desires. That's what sin is. And it comes down to in every situation what is your strongest desire in that moment?

[40 : 27] In that moment, what do you most desire? What do you most want? Sin.

Obedience. There are competing desires at all times. That's why Paul in Romans 7 speaks of this war, this battle of desires going on in his own heart. We always have competing desires. The old man has been dealt with and yet he still continues to come back. The old self continues to come back and exert itself. The sinful nature continues to exert itself even though it's been defeated.

And so there will always be within us a battle of desires until the day of our final redemption, our glorification in which our sinful nature is completely eradicated. But in this life, Peter says, as long as you're in exile, as long as you're here in this world, this battle will be taking place for you. In this life, there will always be a battle in your mind between your desires of obedience or of disobedience. And so the real question comes in the pursuit of holiness, how might I destroy sinful desires and strengthen godly desires?

[41 : 40] How can I do those sorts of things? And it has to do with what you think about. Think again, ponder again what Peter says.

Verse 13, therefore preparing your minds for action and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that we brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

And here we go again. As obedient children, do not be conformed to the desires. Literally, the word is desires. Do not be conformed to the desires of your former ignorance.

You didn't know Christ. And then he says that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers.

Desires, ways of living, ways of thinking that have become ingrained in you throughout your life. Peter says, you want to experience the freedom that you have in Christ for which he paid a heavy price?

[42 : 43] Your desires must be transformed. They must be fundamentally changed from the inside out. And how do you change desires?

How do you change them? Change the way that you think. You change the things that you focus upon. And if you doubt me in the importance of desire and the life of the mind in your own holiness, all you need to do is turn back a page or two in your Bible to the book of James.

And James says, in James chapter 1, verse 14, each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire.

And the desire, when it conceives, gives birth to sin. And sin, when it is fully grown, brings forth death. The desire lurks and waits for an opportunity to grow and strengthen and push you into sin. And you must combat those sinful desires with greater realities, greater truths. And Peter says, not only must you focus on the future to overcome the power of sin, you must, you must, you must think about, you must know and remember and continually think upon the great cost of your redemption.

[44 : 20] It's a powerful, powerful tool in the war against sin. So, the next time that you're confronted and you recognize that you're confronted and you see welling up within you a desire to do something you know you ought not to do, you can allow that desire to grow and if it grows, it will produce sin.

Which, if it's allowed to fester, it produces death. Or, or, you see that desire. You feel it. Maybe you're driving down the road and you see a billboard with someone who doesn't have enough clothes on.

And in the back of your mind, as you pass it, a desire is clicked on. And it begins to function and it begins to work and you know it's going to grow.

and you think the blood of Jesus was shed. The infinitely valuable, precious blood Jesus was shed that I might not think those thoughts.

And it will eradicate lustful desires. It will eradicate. or, perhaps, perhaps, you are in a conversation with someone else and they say something that hits a nerve with you.

[46 : 03] Something that, something about someone else or something that someone else said or maybe it's even something that they themselves have done. they say something that hits a nerve with you that just begins to produce within you a kind of visceral anger, real anger that would, unchecked, lead to sinful actions.

and you feel it in the moment you hear, you know it's clicked on. There's no denying it. And you think, Jesus died so that I would not have to act on this feeling.

He died for that. It is a battle of the mind and it will take a reshaping of the way that you think, preparing your mind for action and being sober-minded and overcoming the desires of your former ignorance and remembering, remembering, remembering the cost, the price that was paid to set you free from those old patterns of life.

remember the cost. Remember the infinite value of the blood of Christ and you will have one of the most powerful weapons you could ever imagine in the fight for holiness.

Let's pray. It is a high calling to be called to be holy.

[47 : 46] as the standard for holiness is your own moral perfection, Father. And we sit so far beneath it. But we come, we come with hearts of gratitude knowing that Christ has set us free from all the things that would pull us away from holiness.

holiness. And we know that none of us will fight this battle perfectly. None of us will always arm ourselves in the ways that we ought.

None of us will always devise the right strategy against every temptation. But Father, I pray that you would give us incrementally every day more and more experience of the freedom from sin that Christ has bought for us.

and that in six months or a year or ten years we will look back and we will think what great freedom I have experienced because of the blood of Jesus in these last years and how much he has caused me to grow in the pursuit of holiness.

holiness. That we know only happens by the power of your word and the work of your spirit within us.

[49 : 21] And so we ask as desperate sinful people we ask that you would work holiness into our hearts and transform our minds.

It's in Jesus' name that we pray. Amen. Amen.