

1 Peter 1 (Part 4) :10-25 • Concerning This Salvation

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We're going to get back into the Word here this morning. We're going to continue with our study in First Peter, so if you need a Bible to follow along with our study, the guys are coming down the aisle with some extras and they will get one to you. If you just get their attention, put their hand up and they'll get you a Bible.

Well, where we will finish out this last portion of First Peter, chapter one. First Peter, chapter one, this is our fourth part. We actually took three different messages to get through the first nine verses because I told you at the beginning, it's my goal to still be teaching first Peter, when Jesus returns.

I'm going to just hold it, hold the course here and so anyway, here we go. But we are going to finish out the chapter this morning. Look with me, beginning in verse 10, follow along with me as I read,

¹⁰“Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, ¹¹inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. ¹²It 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 long to look.

¹³Therefore, 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. ¹⁴As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, ¹⁵but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, ¹⁶since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.”

¹⁷And 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, ¹⁸knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, ¹⁹but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. ²⁰He was

foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you ²¹ 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.

²² Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart, ²³ since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; ²⁴ for “All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, ²⁵ but the word of the Lord remains forever. And this word is the good news that was preached to you.”

Let's pray.

Father, we thank you for giving us this time today to spend in the Word. And Lord, we ask for your grace and insight to help us, Lord, in understanding and laying hold of what you're saying to us here. And we pray, God, that you would give us ears to hear. A heart to truly receive your Word today.

We look to you, Father, to accomplish these things because we believe that apart from your Holy Spirit, we cannot lay hold of this Word. So, we trust in you today to guide us and direct us into all truth. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen.

You guys probably remember, those of you that have been around when we first started, first Peter, which really wasn't all that long ago. I asked you what you would say in a letter. If you were writing like Peter, a letter to people who were enduring some pretty rough persecutions because of their faith. People who were being tormented, in some cases, by their neighbors and other people just simply because they were believers in Jesus.

What would you say if you wrote a letter to them? And one of the reasons I asked you that question back then, and I'm asking it again, is that I think it's a good thing for us to think about because in our modern sort of understanding of life and the life that we're living, on this earth, we, and I'm kind of speaking for us as Christians. Okay.

We have become so entrenched in the here and now that I think that if we were to write a letter to believers in some part of the world who were enduring some painful trial, there would be a great temptation on our part to talk to them about what they were going through. And kind of limit our letter to that.

This is, hey, I'm really sorry for what you're going through. I'm sorry that this is happening. I'm sorry that your ability to make money for your family and feed your family is being taken away. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. But that's not what Peter does. And I think this is important for us to see as believers.

We've already seen as we went through some of the earlier studies here in first Peter, that what he is doing, his goal in writing this letter is to lift their eyes up and away from what they're experiencing. And get them onto the Lord, but not just the Lord, but onto what is to come. The glories that are to come.

That's the point. That's what he's trying to do. Because the fact is, we live in a very fallen world, and if your eyes are on this fallen world, it's going to be a pretty depressing sight. Have you found that out to be true in your own life? Living in a fallen world with fallen people, where sin is constantly corrupting everything.

If you sit in your focus on this life and sin and all the junk that we have to go through, you're going to be depressed. I'm just telling you right now. In fact, it's interesting. I got a note from a young gal just yesterday who said that she had an opportunity to speak for about 45 minutes in front of a group of unbelievers who were depressed.

And so she said to me, what do I say? Well, the first thing I thought of before I even responded to her note was, wow, what an opportunity. I mean, Peter's writing to believers, right? And you can always appeal to the Word of God related to what they have already embraced. But it's kind of a different thing, to speak to unbelievers.

I'll be honest with you, I don't have a whole lot hopeful to say to unbelievers, apart from Jesus. You know what I mean? Because there isn't really a whole lot that is hopeful in life apart from Jesus. He's the only good news I know. But what good news He is. What good news He is. So, she said to me, so she wrote me back.

I just said, so that's what you need to do. You need to tell these people that if they're going to keep their eyes focused on this life, they can expect more depression. And more discouragement, and more disappointment, because that's what this world is. Let's just face it, you guys, that's what this world is. So, if they're going to have their eyes fixed on this world, they can expect more of the same. Isn't that good news?

I said they need to get their hope on the Lord. So, she wrote me back and she said, well, what Scripture can you give me to share with them? I said, John 3:16. Keep it simple, right? *“For God so loved the world that He gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him, (which of course means to embrace what he did on the cross in a personal and intimate way) will not perish but will have everlasting life.”*

It doesn't get any better than that, right? It doesn't get any better. And that is the foundation of our hope, the Gospel. And that is what Peter is doing in this letter. He is laying out the foundation of the Gospel to people who are enduring great difficulty, great persecution, and painful trials, so that they would get their eyes off what they are experiencing and onto the glories that are to come.

And that's why Peter begins in this section, in verse 10, with the simple words. “Concerning this salvation.” And I, thought long and hard on just that phrase concerning, in fact, I made it kind of the title of this teaching today, this section of one Peter, concerning our salvation.

Because what hit me is that Peter doesn't say in this letter, concerning your troubles or concerning your painful trials. See, that's what I would be tempted to do, because I think like a human being who's anchored to this earth. And if I heard about all the things they were going through, my natural temptation and tendency would be to say, I am so sorry.

And so, concerning all these trials that you're going through, right? You've got to just love Pete. He says, *“concerning your salvation. Concerning your salvation.”* And then he goes on to speak of the incredible importance of the Gospel message. Notice he goes on there in verse 10 to talk about the fact that the Old Testament prophecy says, ¹⁰“...*who prophesied about this grace that was to be given to you (through the Gospel, he says) they searched intently or inquired carefully.*”

So, he tells us that the Old Testament prophets, they got little bits and pieces of the Gospel. They were told just little Isaiah something here, Jeremiah something there, and Daniel over here, and there were clues, that they were trying to piece together God's redemptive plan.

But it was kind of that he's like, well, I don't know. There isn't enough to really put the puzzle together. It's missing a lot of pieces. But even so, they searched, they searched, to know what is this plan? Who is this? Who is this person that he's referring to? And that's what they sought to know.

And then in verse 11 he says that they, what they were actually seeking was that ¹¹ “*what person or what time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories.*” They just wanted to know. It's like I just, Lord, this is, this sounds like an amazing plan you've got here, and I'd like to know more about it.

But they were really kind of kept from understanding. One thing they did understand is outlined for us in verse 12. He says, ¹² “*it was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you.*” And that's something that the Lord made clear to the Old Testament prophets. He's basically told them this is a plan that is going to be revealed in later days.

And it's not, the full revelation of this thing is not in your day, it's in the day to come. And he's talking about when Christ would be revealed, and the Gospel would be understood in a sort of a complete way that we understand it. Now that doesn't mean people in the Old Testament weren't saved or couldn't be saved.

I get that question a lot. I've shared with you on several occasions that people ask me often, if we're saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, how were people saved during the Old Testament? And a lot of people just default to the idea, well they were saved through the animal sacrifices that they offered.

But that's actually not true. Because Paul tells us in the New Testament, in the book of Romans, that the blood of bulls and goats can't take away sin. And so, how were people saved in the Old Testament? I mean, we're saved through Jesus Christ, his death on the cross. How were people saved in the Old Testament?

By grace through faith. Same way you're saved. They were looking forward to God's plan being revealed and fulfilled and understood, but they just put their faith in God. And they didn't understand how it was going to happen. We can look back and we can see. Look at how God did this. We look at the Gospel, look at how it unfolded.

He sent His Son God in human flesh to become a man, and because He was without sin, He was worthy to bear our sin on the cross. We see it. It's amazing. It's just, it's flat out amazing. They couldn't see it, but yet they put their faith in God. Because we're saved by grace through faith. Isn't that funny? You can be saved without understanding. You can be saved without fully understanding. You can also have peace without fully understanding.

I had somebody write me recently tell telling me that they were going through a really difficult time. They prayed and prayed for their family not to get sick. And they went for a long time and then finally the family got sick with the dreaded "C." And this person wrote me and said, what did I do wrong? And if I could just understand why God allowed this, then I can move on in my faith. And I said, that's a fallacy right there.

It is a fallacy to believe that if you have all the pieces in such a way that you can see the perfect picture, that somehow you're going to have peace. It's not true at all. We put our faith in God. Peace comes from putting our faith in God when we can't see the picture. When you can't know how the end is going to get, how you're going to get there. You just simply know God is faithful.

That's all you know, right? That's all I know. Well, do you understand what's going on in your life? Nope. I don't have a clue. Well, then how can you trust Him? Because God is faithful. You see it that's the thing. And he, and that's how the people in the Old Testament could be saved without knowing the fullness of God's plan of redemption, because God is faithful.

They were saved by grace through their faith. How's God going to save you? I don't know. I'm just trusting Him. I'm just trusting Him. But they understood that it wasn't for them. And then notice at the very end of verse 12, Peter makes mention of the fact that even angels long to look into this.

Angels, angels long to look into this plan of salvation that you and I have embraced. Because you understand, don't you, that angels can't be saved. Angels, they're very different from us. They're not human beings who have gone to heaven. Angels are completely different, and there's things they can't relate to.

They can't relate to things that you and I experience on a day-to-day basis. Just like I can't relate to a lot of things that women experience. I was mentioning in first service, that I watched my wife give birth to four children, and I could tell from watching that it was a painful experience, but I can't relate to it. Because I don't care what the woke people are telling you, men can't have babies!

So, it isn't going to happen, and I can't relate to that particular reality. I can kind of go, whoa, but I can't relate personally. Do you know that angels can't relate to some of the things that you experience? They can't really even relate to what it means to be saved. But they long to look into it.

They long to know more. Before we move on, I want to make note of something that we saw in verse 11, and I don't want to skip over it too quickly here. But did you notice in verse 11 that Peter refers to the Holy Spirit as the “Spirit of Christ,” did you catch that? Look at verse 11 again. Well, it, here's a partial.

He says that, the prophets of old were looking into these things and they wanted to know ¹¹ “...*what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when He predicted the sufferings of Christ.*” Now he's talking about the Holy Spirit, but he refers to him as the “Spirit of Christ.” And that's completely fine. I mean, there's no problem.

It's, it is correct biblically to refer to the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Christ. He is also twice in the New Testament referred to as the Spirit of Jesus. And he's also referred to as the Spirit of God. Well, how can you do all that? Because the three are one, and that's how. He is the Spirit of Jesus.

Now, what's interesting is that Peter's referring to the Holy Spirit concerning the Old Testament prophets before Jesus was even given his earthly name, he refers to him now as the Spirit of Jesus. But for them, for the Old Testament prophets, it was just the Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit. So, he's using kind of an anachronistic title, if you will. It's out of time.

But it's something that is good for us to see and be reminded of. But the point of all of this stuff that Peter's saying about how the prophets were looking into this, and the angels long to look into this, is to underscore for you and me the importance, the immense privilege that we have of knowing and understanding the Gospel.

The prophets didn't get to know it like we do. The angels can't relate to it like you can, and we have it. We have embraced it. It's ours. And it's ours in understanding. Praise the Lord. And so, it's powerful. The Gospel is powerful and the reason it's powerful is because it's the glory of Jesus. The glory of Jesus is in fact, the cross.

I've got to tell you, I'm looking forward to Good Friday. We, Aaron mentioned that we're going to have our Good Friday service. I mean, I love Resurrection Day too, don't get me wrong. But I love Good Friday because, and I hope you guys can join us for that, but Good Friday is when we focus exclusively on the cross.

The cross is the glory of Jesus. There's great power in the cross of Jesus Christ. And that's what Peter is reminding these precious saints to whom he is writing.

But the reason he's telling them this is because they're suffering. Don't ever forget that. The reason Peter is saying this is because these people are suffering.

You say, well, what does suffering have to do with the Gospel? Well, Peter is reminding these people that the sequence of our lives follows the sequence of the life of Christ. Listen people, He suffered, and then He was glorified. He suffered first, and then he was glorified. And it's the same for us.

Remember what Paul said to the Romans, Paul wrote in chapter eight:

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Romans 8:16-17 (ESV)

The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs of God and fellow heirs - with Christ, (look at this) provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with Him.

This is such an important reminder for us. Suffering is to be a part of our lives. It's not odd. It's not weird, it's not some intrusion. It's part of who we are in Jesus. And so, understanding all this, Peter goes on in verse 13, to begin by with the word, "therefore." Remember the word "therefore" always tells you, I'm about to make a statement predicated on what I've already said.

Therefore, in other words, in light of what I've just said to you, here's what he says, prepare your minds for action. ¹³*"Prepare your minds for action and being sober minded (we'll talk about those. He goes on to say), set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."*

Where's your hope supposed to be set? On, hopefully, getting out of your trial or difficulty that you're currently in? No. He says, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought at the revelation, or if you will, the coming of Jesus Christ. When Jesus comes, He's going to come and He's going to bring glory for those who are waiting for him. He says, set your hope there.

So, I want you to look though at verse 13 because this is an important verse for us to really pay attention to. He's exhorting these people, but you'll notice that he's referring to their thinking. What does he say in verse 13? He says, prepare your what for action? Your mind, and then what does he go on to say? *"And be sober minded."*

Again, we're talking about the mind. We're talking about the thoughts. Why is Peter focusing on the mind, the human mind? Set your minds for action. Be

sober. By the way, sober minded simply means clear thinking. Be clear thinking. Set your minds for action. Why is the mind of focus of Peter's exhortation?

Well, it's because it's so easy for us as believers to have our minds taken over by the thoughts and ideas of the world. Let's just face it guys. We're Christians, we're born again, we're children of God, and most of the time we think like the world. Let's just face it. Most of the time our thoughts are directed to the world, and our solution to problems are often very worldly.

Okay, I'm confessing for all of us so that you don't have to. It's a reality of the situation and that's why it's necessary to exhort believers saying, prepare your mind, your thoughts, for action. What does that mean? What action? Well, he's talking about persecution. Prepare your minds for persecution and just remember, this is what we were told to expect.

Remember what Jesus said recorded in John chapter 15 up on the screen. Remember, Jesus said:

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John 15:20 (ESV)

"Remember the word that I said to you: 'a servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you."

So don't think you can get out of it. That's the reality. And so Peter's saying, hey, remember what Jesus said? Prepare your mind. And be clear thinking about it. Don't let other worldly thoughts get in to deflect what you should be doing, which is preparing your thinking,

Because persecution could break out at any moment. You know, there are places in the world right now where Christians are being persecuted. Hunted, killed. We're living in a part of the world that's pretty mild. But even here, it could break out at any time. Here's the question. Are you prepared? Are you prepared? In your mind?

Is your thinking prepared to be persecuted for somebody to, hate you? And act on that hatred simply because you belong to Jesus, and you've made him Lord of your life. Are you prepared for that? And if that happened, how would you respond? Because, again, in our humanness, I'm full of all kinds of ways that Paul would respond.

Not sure that's what God would want me to do. So how would you respond? This is part of preparing your mind for action. Are you going to fight back? Does preparing your mind for action mean you need to make sure your gun collection is in a safe place with plenty of ammo? Is that what it means?

Well, these questions are the very things that motivate Peter to go on and write what he does. Look what he says in verse 14, ¹⁴“*As obedient children do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance.*”

I think that's just such a wonderful way of putting it. He says, since you're going to walk with the Lord and as obedient children, don't conform to the passionate thoughts of your former way of life. Because in my former way of life, if somebody got in Paul's face, Paul would get back in the other person's face, right? If somebody takes a swing at me, I would take a swing back. If someone hurts me, I would hurt them back.

That's my former way of living apart from Christ. That's who I am, apart from Jesus Christ. It's who you are too. So, the very first thing he says related to preparing your mind for action, related to persecution is, as obedient children do not conform to your former way of living the way you used to respond with people getting in your face and making life hard, and telling you they hate your guts.

Don't respond according to your former way of life. How are you to respond? Verse 15. ¹⁵“*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.*” There it is right there. Be holy. Don't respond according to your former way of life, but rather be holy. Why? Because He is holy There. We just told you how you're to respond. Now let's close in prayer.

Now, that wouldn't be a very good place to close would it? Because we're all kind of going, huh? Holy. In fact, I got most Christians when they read this verse or read anything in the word of God about them being holy, they tilt because they're thinking be holy, like God is holy? I mean, is that even possible?

And the reason they're stumbling over it is because they are defining holiness as moral perfection. That is not what we're talking about here. Holiness, the word holy. means set apart. It means “other,” not like the rest, but different “other.” That's why Peter is saying it in this context.

So he says, prepare your minds for action. For what? Persecution, persecution's going to come. Oh, okay, cool. How are you going to respond? Well, don't respond according to your former way of life. Be different. Be "other." Why? Because God is "other." Because God is holy. You get it? God is not like you and me. We like to think He is, but He's not.

He's "other." He's different. And so. He calls you and me to this standard of differentness if you will. And He says, as I am different, as I am "other," you be "other." So how does the world respond when people get in their face. They fight back. You be other, you be different. You be holy. For I am holy. And it's so very important to understand that this is part and parcel of the Gospel.

Sometimes we tend to look up, think about the Gospel as just the message of how we're saved. It's like, what's the Gospel? Okay, let me give you the four spiritual laws. And there you go. There's the Gospel. But you know what Peter is doing in this section of the first chapter? He's telling them that the Gospel is far more than just, here's how you're saved. It's here's how you conduct your lives when life gets hard.

That's part of the Gospel. And he anchors how we are to conduct our lives to the Gospel, and it's important that we see that. It's why he goes on in verse 17 to talk about how you're conducting your lives. Look what he says, ¹⁷*"And if you call on Him (God, and you call him your) Father, and you believe that He judges impartially,"* (well that should change your conduct).

He goes on to say, *"conduct yourselves accordingly with fear, with reverence, all during the time of your exile."* and then listen carefully to verse 18. Here's, remember, he just told you how to conduct yourself. With fear and reverence. Why? Verse 18,

¹⁸*"Knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways, inherited from your forefathers, and you were ransomed, not with perishable things like silver or gold (or whatever like that), ¹⁹but (you were ransomed) with the precious blood of Jesus Christ like a lamb without blemish or spot."*

Do you guys see what Peter's doing here? He tells you how to conduct yourselves, and then he anchors it back to the Gospel. Here's why. Because you've been ransomed. Because you've been purchased. Because you've been blood bought by Jesus Christ. That is why you are not to live in such a way as the world. Because you've been purchased. You are not your own. You've been bought with a price.

So, follow Him. Do you see that Peter is anchoring how we conduct our lives with the Gospel of Jesus Christ? It's pretty. It's pretty cool actually. Verse 20, he goes on just to speak of Jesus saying that, ²⁰“*He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you*”

And that's his way of saying Jesus, has always been around. He's the eternal Word of God. Remember what it says in John 1:1. “*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*” So, he says, He was known from the foundation right, of the world, but He was manifested now in these later times, for your sake,

And he goes on to say in verse 21, ²¹“*who through him (you) are (now) believers in God who raised him from the dead and gave him glory so that your faith and your hope are in God*”. And you can see that's what Peter is doing. Your faith and your hope needs to be in something beyond what you're enduring right now in life. It's got to be, it's got to be.

Having, verse 22, ²²“*having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere, brotherly love. (Now he says), go on and love one another earnestly from a pure heart.*”

Once again, is this something you would say to people in a letter who are going through hard times, struggling, pained, hurting? Would you say to them, Hey, just want to exhort you love one another with an intense, brotherly love.

That's not where we would usually go. That's where Peter's going. Because the focus is on serving the Lord and walking in obedience to Him. It's not what you're going through that's painful. Because life is painful, and if that's all you're focused on, your mind will be filled with pain. He's telling them, you have a great glory to look forward to.

He says, and again, he anchors it to the Gospel. Verse 23, “*since you've been born again.*” So it keeps coming back to that. And then, concerning the Word of God, which is the promise of God. He quotes the Old Testament in verse 24 saying, ²⁴“*all flesh is like grass and all its glory, like the flower of grass. And the grass, withers and the flowers fall. But the Word of the Lord remains forever.*”

And this is Peter's simple way of saying, your hope, which is founded in the Gospel and the promises of God in the Gospel, will never fade away. It's not

going to go away. There's going to come a day in this life, any hope in this life is going to be gone.

But there is a hope that we have that will never fade. Never ever. ²⁵“*The Word of the Lord remains forever.* (And he concludes this chapter by saying), *And this word is the good news that was preached to you.*” So we come back to the good news, we come back to the Gospel.

But it's again, it's not just your ticket to heaven. It is a direct understanding of how we are to live our lives, how we are to conduct our lives, even when somebody is making life miserable, or something is making life miserable to you.

Thank you, Father God. May Your grace minister to our hearts throughout the week as we ponder these things from your Word. We thank you and praise you for your goodness. In the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior. And all God's people said together. Amen.

If you need prayer, come on down front. We'd love to pray for you. God bless.