Introduction

I love our GPS maps that we use when driving. Before smart phones I was a member of AAA, and the primary reason was their map service. I had a map of the United States, each region of the United States, each state, and all the major cities. I had a couple of large boxes at home with all our maps in it, and they were all filed alphabetically by state, with the cities in their respective states. While I was traveling as a professional golfer these maps were critical, and I took the maps I would need for each trip we took. One of the things that I miss about the maps was the overall sense of direction I got when looking at the maps. It seems that I type in the address now, and the GPS takes me to it, and I don't have the overall picture in mind as I am driving.

In the word of God, some of the books have definitive breaks with new stories, doctrines, and lessons, and when we teach the whole section, it is easy to have the overall picture. At other times, we break up the text into paragraphs, sections, pages, or chapters; and our text for the message may be part of a larger section, and we can miss the bigger picture. Our passage today fits into that category. Last week we covered verses three through nine, and we looked at four reasons to rejoice in God for our salvation.

Our first reason for rejoicing in God for our salvation is that He caused us to be born again. We have been born of the Holy Spirit. Jesus paid the price for our sins and gave all of us the opportunity to receive Him and have our sins washed away. We used to sing a hymn, written by Seth and Bessie Sykes, called, Thank You Lord. It went like this: "Thank You Lord, for saving my soul. Thank You Lord, for making me whole. Thank You Lord for giving to me, Thy great salvation, so rich and free." We should always be rejoicing in our salvation, no matter what trials we may be going through.

Second, we are to rejoice in God for our salvation because He has reserved an inheritance for us. He has chosen a special inheritance for us. This inheritance is unlike an earthly inheritance, in that it is imperishable, undefiled, will not fade away, and is reserved for us.

Third, we are to rejoice in God for our salvation because He protects us by His power through faith. God is unlimited in His power, and He uses that power to protect us. We have some responsibilities in our protection. We must take up the armor of God and the shield of faith. We need to be alert and prayerful. We are in a spiritual battle, and we must use the spiritual weapons that God has given us.

Fourth, we should rejoice in God because He is proving our faith through the trials we are going through. The end result will be praise, glory, and honor. The outcome of all of this is that the outcome of our faith is that we obtain the salvation of our souls. That is where we left off last week, rejoicing in God for our salvation.

In our passage today, Peter continues talking about this salvation that we obtain. It is a continuation from last week, and if we had covered it with the passage last week, it would have been the fifth reason to rejoice in God for our salvation, that He revealed it to us. Since that is where we are beginning in our text today, it is our first point of the message. We are to rejoice in God for revealing this salvation to us. Then, Peter gave two other exhortations. The first exhortation is for us to prepare our minds for action, which includes keeping sober in spirit and fixing our hope completely on the grace of God. The second exhortation is to live a holy life, just as Christ lived a holy life, leaving us an example to follow. We are not to be conformed to the former lusts, but are to be holy in all our behavior. We desperately need this message today.

Responding to the Gospel of Grace

1. Rejoice in God for revealing this salvation to us (1 Pe 1:10-12)
2. Prepare our minds for actions (1 Pe 1:10)
   a. Keep sober in spirit.
   b. Fix our hope completely on the God's grace.
3. Live a holy life
   a. Do not be conformed to former lusts
   b. Be holy in all our behavior
   c. Follow the example of Christ, who is holy.

> (1 Pe 1:10-12) "As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that *would come* to you made careful searches and inquiries, {11} seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. {12} It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things into which angels long to look."

> (1 Pe 1:13-16) "Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober *in spirit,* fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. {14} As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts *which were yours* in your ignorance, {15} but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all *your* behavior; {16} because it is written, 'YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY.'"

1. **Rejoice in God for revealing this salvation to us** (1 Pe 1:10-12)

Peter continued with his exhortation to rejoice in God for our salvation, and gave two important insights about our salvation. He wrote, "As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful searches and inquiries, seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ with them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow." We learn from this that they had a strong desire or motivation to find out more about this salvation. They considered it extremely important, and so they made very careful searches and inquiries. They wanted to make sure they were hearing correctly and had a good understanding of what they were prophesying about. They wanted to accurately prophesy about it, so they devoted time and energy to make these careful searches and inquiries.

> (1 Pe 1:10-11) "As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that *would come* to you made careful searches and inquiries, {11} seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow."

As many of you know I have a vineyard and an orchard. I am always trying to learn more about different types of trees and vines, and how to take care of them. I make careful searches and inquiries about pruning. I look at videos on how to prune, and when to prune each cultivar that I have. I study how to grow things organically, and how to deal with certain pests or diseases, using approved organic materials and methods. Most people are not interested in the type of Youtube videos that I watch, or the articles that I read about these things. I do it because I am interested and it is important to me. The prophets of old felt that way about our salvation. They were interested in it and felt it was critically important to study, search out, and inquire about it.

Oftentimes, when I am doing research, I have specific questions in mind. For example, I may want to know how long of a cordon I should leave when pruning my grapes or kiwi. Recently, I was researching how to get rid of fire ants without using anything that would be toxic to our health. I found about six or seven different methods, and I had already been using several of them. But, I went and bought some borax and mixed it with confectioner sugar and put it out for the ants to eat. It is not toxic to us, but it kills the fire ants.

The prophets had specific things in mind when they were making careful searches. They wanted to know the person and the time that the Messiah was going to come. Today, we have very similar desires. People want to know when the Messiah is going to return and gather the church to Himself. They are looking at all the prophetic signs that the prophets and our Lord gave while He was here in the flesh.

They were not just looking at the person and time, they were sensing in the Spirit that the Messiah was going to suffer. They were also seeing the glories that followed the suffering. This was encouraging to these aliens scattered all over Europe and Asia who were suffering. It was a promise that there were some glories in the future after their time of suffering. They saw that there was light at the end of the tunnel.

What were some of the findings from their careful searches and inquiries? Isaiah wrote about the coming of the Messiah in Isaiah 7 and 9. He was going to be born of a virgin, and be called Immanuel, which means, God with us. His name was going to be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. The Messiah was part of the trinity, and Isaiah wrote about it.

> (Is 7:14) "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel."

> (Is 9:6) "For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace."

In Isaiah 53, he wrote about the suffering of the Messiah. There we learn that He was a man of sorrows, and bore our griefs and sorrows. He was stricken on our behalf. He was pierced for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities, chastened for our well-being, and scourged for our healing. He gave some details of why Jesus suffered, and of the crucifixion and burial.

> (Is 53:4–5) "Surely our griefs He Himself bore, and our sorrows He carried; yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. {5} But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being *fell* upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed."

In Psalm 22, David prophesied about the crucifixion of Jesus. It is a very detailed account, giving information about His garments being divided up and lots being cast for His clothing. He spoke about the two evildoers on either side. He wrote of His hands and feet being pierced, but that none of His bones were broken. These are very significant details that they gave to us about the coming of the Messiah, and His suffering for our sins.

> (Ps 22:14–18) "I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; it is melted within me. {15} My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue

> cleaves to my jaws; and You lay me in the dust of death. {16} For dogs have surrounded me; a band of evildoers has encompassed me; they pierced my hands and my feet. {17} I can count all my bones. They look, they stare at me; {18} they divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots."

These prophets of old prophesied by the Spirit. Notice that Peter said "the spirit of Christ within them was indicating." The Holy Spirit is the same Holy Spirit that was in the beginning at creation. It was the same Holy Spirit that gave them prophetic visions and messages. It was the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, and the Holy Spirit. They are all one and the same. In Romans 8:9, Paul wrote about the Spirit of God dwelling in us, and then he wrote, "but if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him." In John 14, when Jesus said that we will come and make our abode in you, He was talking about the Holy Spirit coming in us, which is the Spirit of God, and also the Spirit of Christ. We see the trinity in the Holy Spirit. This is the same Holy Spirit that all believers have dwelling in them.

> (Ro 8:9) "However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him."

> (Jn 14:23) "Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him."

Then Peter tells us that these prophets thought they were serving themselves. They had these desires to understand the coming of the Messiah, who it was, when He would come, and about the suffering and glories. But Peter tells us that they were not really serving themselves, but us. We are benefitting from the careful searches and inquiries that they made. The prophets were simply instruments that God used to bring all of us more understanding of the gospel and our salvation. The message of our salvation was not just important to them; it is important to us and God revealed it to all of us through the prophets.

> (1 Pe 1:12) "It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things into which angels long to look."

In 2012, I was in my third year of planting the East Mountain Vineyard Church in Edgewood, New Mexico. I was also the CEO of Murchison Drilling Schools, a company that my mother and father started. It had grown and we now had training centers in other places in America and abroad. I was traveling over thirty weeks of the year, but was home on Sundays to preach. I also worked in leadership training, leadership meetings, counseling, evangelism, and men's meetings. I was extremely busy. I took a vacation week, and after finishing my preparation of my Sunday message, I had several free days. I had an interest in studying the fear of the Lord. I wanted a deeper understanding of it, so I made careful search of the Scriptures about it. I thought it was just for me. It was not anything that I was planning for our leadership training or for Sunday messages; I thought it was just for me, and when I was finished, I felt very nourished. But then the Holy Spirit spoke to me very clearly. He said that I was to take what I had learned and teach it at a men's conference. Therefore, I put together a men's conference that year for the four Vineyard churches in New Mexico, and we also opened it up to other men that wanted to come. This is just like the prophets in the Old Testament. They had a desire to learn more about this salvation and the coming Messiah, but ultimately it was not for them but was for all of us.

Peter announced that this salvation had been announced to them through those that preached the gospel to them by the same Holy Spirit sent from heaven. At Pentecost, there were 120 believers gathered together, and when the Holy Spirit was poured out, Peter preached and 3,000 souls were added to the church. Shortly afterwards, on the way to the temple to pray, Peter and John came across a lame man at the gate of the temple called Beautiful. People would set him down there every day to beg alms of those entering. Peter fixed his gaze on him and said, "I do not possess silver and gold, but I do have I give to you; In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene – walk!" The man immediately stood upright and began to walk; and he entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God. People at the temple recognized the man and were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him. This gave Peter an opportunity to preach the gospel, which he did, and 5,000 men heard and believed in Christ that day. Because that was only the number of men, there may have been as many as 10,000 to 20,000 people saved that day. The stoning of Stephen and the scattering (diaspora) took place soon afterwards. A large number of these believers that had scattered had probably heard the gospel from Peter. There were twelve apostles and all of them were preaching and teaching in Jerusalem, so he was not the only one preaching the gospel. However, he was certainly the Billy Graham of their day, and thousands of them heard the gospel through him. Peter humbly said, "through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven.

> (Ac 3:1–10) "Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the ninth *hour*, the hour of prayer. {2} And a man who had been lame from his mother's womb was being carried along, whom they used to set down every day at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, in order to beg alms of those who were entering the temple. {3} When he saw Peter and John about to go into the temple, he *began* asking to receive alms. {4} But Peter, along with John, fixed his gaze on him and said, "Look at us!" {5} And he *began* to give them his attention, expecting to receive something from them. {6} But Peter said, "I do not possess silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you: In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene—walk!" {7} And seizing him by the right hand, he raised him up; and immediately his feet and his ankles were strengthened. {8} With a leap he stood upright and *began* to walk; and he entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God. {9} And all the people saw him walking and praising God; {10} and they were taking note of him as being the one who used to sit at the Beautiful Gate of the temple to *beg* alms, and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him."

> (Ac 4:4) "But many of those who had heard the message believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand."

Then Peter said, "things into which angels long to look." This salvation that they were searching carefully and making inquiries about was not just of their interest, but the angels also longed to know more about it. When we think about the value of something, part of the value is determined by what demand there is for something. In economics, the supply and demand help determine the price. The demand for information about our salvation and the coming of the Messiah was in huge demand; it was valuable information, and God had chosen the prophets to study it for the sake of believers today, and He had used preachers of the gospel to communicate the message to people. These aliens could rejoice in God for the salvation had been revealed to them.

> (1 Pe 1:12) "It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things into which angels long to look."

2. **Prepare our minds for actions** (1 Pe 1:13)

Peter begins the application of his previous comments with "Therefore..." Because we have this wonderful salvation that the prophets searched out, that angels longed to look, and was communicated to us, we are to make some applications. Because we have this special inheritance reserved for us, an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and will not fade away, we are to respond to it. Peter exhorted these suffering believers who are scattered everywhere to prepare their minds for action. The KJV renders it to "gird up the loins of your mind." The Amplified says to "brace up your minds." We are to prepare our minds for action.

> (1 Pe 1:13) "Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober *in spirit,* fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

We like to play some word games after dinner. There is one in particular, "Spelling Bee," that we all try to win each day and be the winner for the week. They give you seven letters and we play that the first person to get a word that uses all seven letters is the winner for the day. The one that wins the most days of the week, is the winner for the week. Karen keeps a note pad at the table and keeps track of who wins every day. Since we play on her IPAD, she makes sure that everyone is ready before she hits the start button. We can't be texting, reading email, or doing anything else. We have to gird or prepare our minds for action. We have to be alert and focused. If we are not mentally ready, someone else will get a word before you do.

Peter is telling them to be mentally ready for action. Our mind is where much of the spiritual battle takes place. The enemy sowed thoughts and temptations to Eve and she sinned. When Jesus was tempted by the devil, he kept giving Jesus temptations with questions and thoughts. We have to gird our minds for action, because that is where much of the battle takes place. In 2 Corinthians 10, Paul wrote that "though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses." It is a spiritual battle and our mind is very much involved in the battle. Next, Paul said that we must destroy speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we must take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ. This is a spiritual battle, and we have to prepare and gird our minds for action.

(2 Co 10:3–6) "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, {4} for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. {5} *We are* destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and *we are* taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ, {6} and we are ready to punish all disobedience, whenever your obedience is complete."

a. Keep sober in spirit.

Next, Peter gives us some more details about how to prepare our minds for action. He wrote, "keep sober in spirit." Our minds and spirit cannot be focused on the things of the world. If we are worldly or lofty-minded, we will not be ready for the spiritual battles. The Greek word for sober that is used is nepho (Strong's G3525), which means to abstain from wine. When a person gets drunk with wine, alcohol or drugs, their reactions are slowed, their inhibitions are loosened, and their thoughts are not clear. God wants us to be thinking clearly and on guard for whatever comes our way. Therefore, we must be sober in spirit.

> (1 Pe 1:13) "Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober *in spirit,* fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

Karen and I just finished a defensive driving course. If you take one every three years your insurance premiums are reduced. Much of the attention of the course is on being mentally ready and sober in spirit. They give all kinds of statistics on how distractions affect your ability to drive safely, and they list many common distractions. They also devote a lot of time to the negative and dangerous effects of alcohol. When someone is not sober, they are a danger to themselves and everyone else.

Unfortunately, there are many believers who are caught up in the world today and are not sober-minded. There are many believers that do not have their minds prepared for the spiritual battles that are going on, and are not sober-minded. As I walk the neighborhoods, praying for my neighbors, I see Halloween decorations in their yards. There are witches, ghosts, ghouls, and other things of the occult in their yards. It is as if they are not aware that we are not to have anything to do with witchcraft and the occult. We are not sober in spirit and prepared for action, and we need to be. We have a wonderful salvation and inheritance, and are protected by faith, but we must do our part. We are to be sober in spirit and prepared for action.

b. Fix our hope completely on the God's grace.

The second thing that Peter mentions about being prepared in our minds is to fix our hope completely on the grace to be brought to us at the revelation of Jesus Christ. The overall theme of the book of 1 Peter is to stand firm in the true grace of God in the midst of suffering. The starting point of standing firm in God's grace is to fix our hope completely on God's grace.

> (1 Pe 1:13) "Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober *in spirit,* fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

> (1 Pe 5:12) "Through Silvanus, our faithful brother (for so I regard *him*), I have written to you briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it!"

Peter began this letter by blessing the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. We have been born again to a living hope. Since Christ was raised from the dead, we also have hope that we will be raised from the dead. In Ephesians 2:12, Paul wrote that the Gentiles in the flesh were excluded from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the convenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus those who were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. Through salvation, we have been born again to a living hope.

> (1 Pe 1:3) "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,"

> (Eph 2:12–13) "*remember* that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. {13} But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ."

What is hope? According to Merriam-Webster hope is "to cherish a desire with anticipation, to want something to happen or be true. The Greek word is elpis (Strong's G1680), and it means to anticipate or have expectation. Hope and faith are very similar, but both Paul and Peter make a clear distinction between the two. Paul said, "But now faith, hope, love, abide these three, but the greatest of these is love." Hope is one of the three pillars, and is distinct from faith. In 1 Peter 1:21, Peter wrote, "so that your faith and hope are in God." The Greek word for faith is pistis (Strong's G4102), which means to believe, have confidence in. In Hebrews 11:1, God tells us that "faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen."

> (1 Co 13:13) "But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is love."
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> (1 Pe 1:21) "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."
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> (Heb 11:1) "Now faith is the assurance of *things* hoped for, the conviction of things not seen."

Hope is an expectation of something to happen, while faith is the confidence and assurance that it will happen. In the Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown commentary on Hebrews 11:1, they quote Hugo de St. Victor, "By faith alone we are sure of eternal things that they are: but by hope we are confident that we shall have them."[1] Faith affirms the reality of what God has promised and hope anticipates our future enjoyment of it.

Peter exhorts these believers who are suffering and have been scattered all over Europe and Asia to fix their hope, their expectation, and their anticipation on the grace of God. It is part of preparing our minds for action.

3. Live a holy life

The third response to this great salvation was to live a holy life. Peter gave three things to do in living a holy life. First, we are not to be conformed to the former lusts. Second, we are to be holy in all our behavior. Third, we are to follow the example of Christ.

a. Do not be conformed to the former lusts

The first thing Peter wrote is, "As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in ignorance." Earlier Peter had written that we were chosen to obey Christ. Now, as obedient children, we are not to be conformed to the former lusts which were ours before we had a relationship with Christ.

> (1 Pe 1:14) "As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts *which were yours* in your ignorance,"

In 2 Corinthians 5:17, Paul wrote that if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation and that old things passed away and net things have come. In Romans 12:2, Paul wrote for us not to be conformed to the world, but to be transformed by the renewing of our minds. Peter's exhortation is just the first past of that, not to be conformed to the former lusts, or the world. Believers need to make a decision not to be conformed to the former lusts. It is an act of the will, and a

[1] https://biblenotes.online/resources/jfb/hebrews.htm?utm_source=chatgpt.com

commitment not to walk in the ways of the world. There are many believers today that are just living without a firm commitment not to be conformed to the world. We cannot be straddling the fence. We cannot have one foot in the world and one foot in the church; we must decide, as obedient children, not to walk in the ways of the world, not to be conformed to the world.

> (2 Co 5:17) "Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come."

> (Ro 12:2) "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."

When I became a Christian I did not know anything about this. I did not know about being conformed to the world and being transformed. I did not know about renewing my mind with the Word of God. When I became a Christian, I yielded my life to Christ, and asked Him to come into my life. I came to the place that I believed that Jesus is real, that He had died for our sins, and had been raised from the dead. Since He was real, I was going to worship and follow Him. I did not make a profession not to be conformed to the former lusts; I did not know anything about that. When people receive Christ, we need to mentor them and make disciples. We need to teach them to be obedient children, and not to be conformed to their former lusts.

> (1 Pe 1:14-16) "As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts *which were yours* in your ignorance, {15} but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all *your* behavior; {16} because it is written, 'YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY.'"

b. Be holy in all our behavior

The second exhortation that Peter gives was to be holy in all our behavior. He wrote, "but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior. The KJV says to be holy in all manner of conversation. The ESV renders it be holy in all your conduct. We are to be holy in every area of our life. Our thought life needs to be holy. Our attitudes and motives need to be holy. Our words and conversations need to be holy. Our actions need to be holy. Because of this great salvation that God has given us, we are to respond by being holy in all our behavior.

> (1 Pe 1:15) "but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all *your* behavior;"

For us to be holy in all our behavior, we must first learn and understand what holy behavior is. We have to go back to the Word of God and allow God to define what is holy and what is not holy. We live in a day where the culture insists on no moral absolutes. They want to leave it up to each person in each situation to determine what is right. When we stand before God, He is not going to judge according to what we think is holy and right, but according to His standards. We must get back to the Word of God. We must align our moral compass with the Word of God. We must allow God to define what is holy and what is not.

Paul wrote in 2 Timothy 3:16-17, "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work." The Scriptures are the plumb line that we use to teach what is right and wrong. The Scriptures are what we use to determine what to correct and what not to

correct. The Scriptures are what we must use to train people in what is righteous and what is not righteous. We must accept the authority of the Scriptures, and use them to establish what is holy and what is not holy.

> (2 Ti 3:16–17) "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; {17} so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work."

Accepting the Scriptures to define what is holy and not holy is just a starting point. If we are going to live holy lives, we must renew our minds with the word of God. We must purify our hearts and minds and fill them with the Scriptures. Jesus said that it is not what goes into a man that defiles him, but what comes out of the heart. Therefore, we must have pure hearts.

> (Mk 7:18–23) "And He said to them, "Are you so lacking in understanding also? Do you not understand that whatever goes into the man from outside cannot defile him, {19} because it does not go into his heart, but into his stomach, and is eliminated?" (Thus He declared all foods clean.) {20} And He was saying, "That which proceeds out of the man, that is what defiles the man. {21} For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, {22} deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness. {23} All these evil things proceed from within and defile the man."

We must confess sin in our lives and ask God to cleanse us from those sins. We must fill our minds with the Word of God. The Word of God needs to richly dwell within us. That takes time and a commitment to read, study, memorize, and meditate on the Scriptures. For us to live holy lives, we must cleanse our hearts and maintain pure hearts. To maintain pure hearts, we must watch over our hearts with all diligence, being careful what we watch, listen to, and read.

> (1 Jn 1:9) "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

> (Col 3:16) "Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God."

> (Pr 4:23) "Watch over your heart with all diligence, For from it *flow* the springs of life."

c. Follow the example of Christ

> (1 Pe 1:16) "because it is written, 'YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY.'"

Next, Peter wrote that we are to be holy because God is holy. We are called to be His representatives, and since He is holy, we are to be holy. We are called to be His disciples, and the goal of a disciple is to become like his teacher. We are called to be holy because we are the children of God, and our Father is holy. We are called to be holy because He made us in His image, and He is holy. We are to be holy because He is holy.

Peter wrote a lot about following the example of Jesus. In 1 Peter 2, he wrote that we have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth, and while

being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He utter no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously."

> (1 Pe 2:21–23) "For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, {22} WHO COMMITTED NO SIN, NOR WAS ANY DECEIT FOUND IN HIS MOUTH; {23} and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting *Himself* to Him who judges righteously;"

In chapter four, Peter wrote that we are to arm ourselves with the same purpose as Christ. Since He suffered in the flesh, we are to cease from sin and not live for the lusts of men, but for the will of God.

> (1 Pe 4:1–2) "Therefore, since Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same purpose, because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, {2} so as to live the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for the lusts of men, but for the will of God."

In chapter five, Peter exhorted the elders to lead by example. Elders are to demonstrate the character of God in their lives, and to be examples to the flock of what it looks like to live holy lives. While pastors are to be examples to the flock, I have always told people to keep their eyes on the Lord, as He will never disappoint or let us down. People, and pastors are people, can let us down and disappoint us. They are to be examples to the flock, but occasionally they fall short of the mark.

We are called to live holy lives. We are to be holy in all our behavior, because God is a holy God.

Conclusion and Applications

Our salvation is very special. The prophets understood how important it was and they made careful search and inquiry, seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. The angels also longed to look at the gospel. The prophets thought they were doing it for themselves, but ultimately it was for us. We have received this special and important gospel message. Our salvation is very special, and we should rejoice in God for it.

In respond to this wonderful salvation, we should prepare our minds for action. We should keep sober in spirit and fix our hope completely on the grace of God. Finally, we should respond by living holy lives. Our conduct, our behavior, or our manner of conversation should be holy, just as God is holy.

There may be someone watching or listening today that does not know Christ as their Lord and Savior. The starting point of living holy lives is receive Christ. When we receive Christ into our lives, He comes in and He forgives us of all our sins. He cleanses our hearts and puts His Spirit in us. He justifies us, declaring us to be innocent. He calls us saints, which means holy ones. The beginning of living holy lives is a relationship with Christ. If you believe that Jesus is the Son of God, that He died for our sins, and was raised on the third day, I invite you to receive Christ. "Jesus, I do believe that You are the Son of God. I do believe that You came and lived a holy life, and died for my sins, so that I could be forgiven and cleansed of my sins. I believe that You rose from the dead. I ask You to come into my life and forgive me of my sins. I confess You as

Lord of my life, and yield my life to You today. Help me to follow and obey You, and to live a holy life. I ask this in Jesus' name. Amen."

There may be others today that are struggling with sin and living a holy life. In John 8:32, Jesus said that if we continue in His Word, we are truly His disciples and we will know the truth, and the truth will set us free. You want to be free today. The key for you is to continue, to dwell in, and to abide in God's word. God wants you to fill your heart with His word. He wants you to meditate on His Word. He wants you to look intently and to meditate on His word. He wants you to apply His word in your life. He wants you to know His truth, and when you know His truth, He will set you free. I encourage you to make a commitment to read, memorize, study, and apply God's word in your life.

> (Jn 8:31–32) "So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; {32} and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."

Closing Prayer

Father God, thank You for our salvation, and for revealing it to us. The prophets and angels longed to see, know and understand it, and we are the ones that You revealed it to. Thank You for our salvation. Thank You for our inheritance that You have chosen and reserved for us. Thank You for Your protection. We praise You for being the God of hope, and we thank You for giving us hope for the future. In response to this glorious salvation, help us to gird and prepare our minds for action. Help us to live sober lives. Help us to live holy lives, and to be holy, just as You are holy. I pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

Discussion Questions

- The prophets and the angels had great appreciation for the gospel message. Do we have the same appreciation for it? If not, why?
- Do you give thanks to God for your salvation on a regular basis?
- What are some ways to prepare our minds for action? What all does that entail?
- Why does Peter emphasize preparing our minds for action?
- Why is being sober in spirit so critical?
- What are some ways to maintain a sober spirit?
- What are some things to avoid or beware of in maintaining a sober spirit?
- Why is the attack on moral authority so harmful?
- How does the lack of a Biblical worldview affect our ability to live holy lives?
- What must be done in the church to build up the Biblical worldview?
- Why are small groups and being part of a spiritual community key in living holy lives?

Responding to this Gospel of Grace

Introduction (1 Pe 1:10-16)

1. **Rejoice in God for revealing His salvation to us** (1 Pe 1:10-12, Is 7:14, 9:6, 53:4-5, Ps 22:14-18, Ro 8:9, Jn 14:23, Ac 3:1-10, 4:4)

2. **Prepare our minds for actions** (1 Pe 1:13, 2 Co 10:3–6)

   a. Keep sober in spirit. (1 Pe 1:13)

   b. Fix our hope completely on the God's grace. (1 Pe 1:13, 5:12, 1:3, Eph 2:12-13, 1 Co 13:13, 1 Pe 1:21, Heb 11:1)

3. **Live a holy life**

   a. Do not be conformed to the former lusts (1 Pe 1:14, 2 Co 5:17, Ro 12:2, 1 Pe 1:14-16)

   b. Be holy in all our behavior (1 Pe 1:15, 2 Ti 3:16–17, Mk 7:18-23, 1 Jn 1:9, Col 3:16, Pr 4:23)

   c. Follow the example of Christ (1 Pe 1:16, 2:21-23, 4:1-2)

Conclusion and Applications