

The Call To Holiness

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As mentioned in the announcements, I accept the call to this church to be the co-pastor. Thank you for entrusting me to be filling this pulpit. So, amen. Well, at this time, if you will, please turn in your Bible to First Peter chapter 4.

Start a new chapter today. Tonight, my message tonight is called the call to holiness. The call to holiness. God calls us to be close to him. At his essence, he is called holy, holy, holy, who was and is and is to come. That's what angels are singing right now. That's what angels will be singing for eternity. For eternity. And we have read in a previous chapter where he is called holy. So we are to be holy. In the next couple of verses that I will be preaching from, we're going to see what that looks like in action. What does holiness look like in action? In essence, what he wants us to become is like Christ. And Christ at his essence is what? Pure. He's pure, perfect, sinless. And we will reach that point in glorification. But while we are on the earth, we are in a process called sanctification or progressive sanctification. We are becoming more and more like Christ.

And that's assurance for all of us sitting here in this room, those that I'm talking to as my brothers and sisters in Christ. Do you see evidence of that? Do you see the evidence that God is calling you to become more Christlike in all aspects, but in particular in his suffering? I preached last Sunday on what Paul said that he may partake of his sufferings. The fellowship of his sufferings. That's a level where many of our brothers and sisters right now who are being persecuted, I named five of them last Sunday who are experiencing that. They are experiencing the fellowship of his suffering. That's a level of maturity that is uniquely called to these Christians. Not everyone has experienced that. Not anyone in this room I can gather. But if God calls us to that that's not something that should we should shirk away from. But we should see that that is God is entrusting you to become more like Christ. That that is the goal of the Lord God.

So we should be then consumed with the thoughts of what was Jesus thinking about? What was his mind fixed on when he was suffering? We're going to get to see that. We're going to see where his mind was while on earth showing us the footsteps that we are to follow. And the way that scripture puts us is to have the mind of Christ. The mind of Christ in suffering. And in 2 Corinthians 10:5, you don't have to turn there, but this is what it says. It says, "Casting down imagination," basically saying, "Destroying speculations, anything that's untrue, lies, casting it all down and every high thing that what exalted itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." You see, every thought, every thought as a Christian must go through the mind of Christ. That's what it means to be obedient. That we don't just go off and do our own thing anymore. We used to do that. We're going to find out. But we are now going everything to the intention of is this what Christ would do? Am I being obedient like he was while on earth? That's something I want you to take notice as we go into the scriptures.

So the aim is to take every thought captive in that passage. And that word is emphasized here bringing to captivity. It's the idea that you bring it to complete destruction that you don't allow this to come back. It's the idea that you you destroy whatever speculation is coming in. You just don't let you don't play around with speculation. You don't play around with lies. That's the idea. And because ultimately speculations end up becoming deceit causing you to be deceitful, deceived. So what God wants you to experience is his rescue. That you're no longer enslaved to lies or or enslaved to sin. You're you're slaves to righteousness. And so everything that comes through that is a lie is to be destroyed. All of it. You don't fool around. We don't we don't let our minds go and wander off and speculate and think too much about it. That's the idea of speculation or thinking about it. No, you don't even let it enter your mind to think about it. And that's what Christ shows us in his example. And we'll see that in some of the texts that we'll bring out.

But you know, this text was said way back in Peter's time. Ever since then until now, I mean the times that we are living, would you not agree that we are in in a time of more fallenness by what that's dominated by media? I mean, you can just open your phone, your computer, any time of day and you can just be inundated with bunch of lies, right? There's so much lies in today's media and much of it, you probably noticed is a direct attack to biblical values. If you don't take notice of that, there's something off because a lot of media, it's very subtle. A lot of things are attacking biblical values and we are being again inundated countless daily opportunities through media to allow our thoughts to go where Jesus mind would not want us to be. So we must catch these impulses immediately and reject them. Don't let it enter into speculation refusing it. Let your minds dwell instead and think instead on everything that is consistent to what Christ thinks about.

So with that, let's go to verse one. Let's go to verse one. This is what it says. For as much then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind. For he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceized from sin. Wow, that's an amazing passage. A lot to unpack here, but essentially you're going to see is a singular and very vital command where it says, "Arm yourselves." That's a command, singular vital command. And it's saying what? Arm yourselves in the same mind or the same thinking as Christ. And then from this directive, the rest of the text is explaining why why you are to do this, why it's so important to have and think like the mind of Christ.

So he calls you to essentially arms. But these arms are not like the world's arms. We are preparing for combat. Yes. And our combat is victory all the time because why? Jesus has already gone before us and became our victor. He's already won over the devil, the flesh, and the world. All of it. All and done. We are just in his path. We are going behind him as it were. He's already made victorious for us. But he's saying, "Look, you got to be armed even if you're behind me because if you don't, you will be defeated all of the time." So, there are specific things what you need to have in this battle to be fully equipped. Paul puts in Ephesians 6 an armor. But here in Peter, it's a little bit different. He emphasizes here your mind. He's going to focus on how you are to arm up your mind.

And one of the things the one of the things that you're going to see is what Warren Risby said that the Christian life is not a playground not but a battleground. We are not on a cruise ship. We

are on a battleship. Another way of putting it to underscore what this passage verse one entails is that we are in a spiritual conflict to the very end. Even though we are saved from sin, even though we have the Holy Spirit within us, Satan will try to still bring us down. Bring us down. Bring us down through what? discouragement to feeling depressed or just feeling overwhelmed by the burdens of trials and suffering. He wants to accentuate those things. So he says, "Go in with conflict in mind."

See, that's right there a good step forward already. just go in with understanding that there's going to be conflict in this battle and to actively engage in the war against sin I mentioned was a our main adversary but it's a three-headed monster in this way it's the world the flesh and the devil it attacks us in this way is that everything that is the world the flesh and the devil is what not of the father that's what 1 John 2:16 says says, "And you know, all these things you'll notice when it comes to the lust of the flesh, the pride of life, and the lust of the eyes, all of this is a fight for you to be without God. Without God, without God, the world, the flesh, and the world, all of it saying you'll be a content without God."

That's what all these things are trying to do. God the Father doesn't want that. He's saying that's not of me. I want you to be with me. I want you to experience my holiness. I want you to experience my love, my grace, and your mer and my mercy and all these things are trying to tell you you can be happy with the lust of your flesh. You could be happy with the things that is the pleasures of the world. that you can be happy be happy with religion trying to impress people and make you name for yourself. That's what man's religion is, isn't it? All without God. That's what these enemies of ours tries to place into our minds. But we must fight back this enemy. We must always know that the gospel is good news. It's the only thing that's good. Nothing in the world, nothing in our flesh, nothing of devil is good. All of it is evil. And we must call it as it is.

Because see, the Lord Jesus was in a battle with Satan in these three areas. And you can find it in Mark 4 1-11, Mark 1:12-13, and Luke 4 1-13. Three areas that Satan attacked was physical needs, his ego, and what? Desire for power. And all three times Jesus denied him. Denied him. Denied him. Why? Because Satan knows if he was going to trip him up, it will be do these things. He's been doing this since Adam and Eve to elevate man and say, "I I don't need God. I can be my own god. And Jesus said, I came here to do my father's business. You see? And so, and he always used the word of God. Three times it is written. You'll see in script in the scriptures because you see every area that Satan attacks is in these three areas. Every area that the flesh attacks is in the areas in the world. physical sustenance. Oh, you need he's going to try to attack you in those areas that you can sustain yourself without God. That you can test God by with your pride or you can worship that you can be the one to worship than worshiping God. He tries to do that all the time.

But 1 Corinthians 15:57 says, "But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ because he was victorious for us." Amen. He was victorious for us. Now in Romans 12 1:2 this passage is talking about renewal of the mind, our lives being transformed. What's interesting to note is this word that says that's transitional which is by. So it says here in verse two, and be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind. So the way it is is that you have to work the passage backwards. And it's this it's the way and this is how it's supposed to be to work itself out is to see that God's will is good that it's

acceptable and perfect but only if we are transformed by renewing of our minds. You see that by renewing of our minds. That's the way we can do God's will and that we can be transformed. See on once once it's it's all settled in the mind, God takes care of the results. That's the idea of that passage. So the battle is going to be there. It's going to it's going to all the attacks, all the conflicts are right there. And he's saying be ready for it.

In verse one, so in Philippians 2:5, similarly Paul says it like this. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus. Because strong emotions will not win the victory. You can have all types of emotions and work yourself up, but if nothing is being fought here in your mind, you will always lose with your emotions. That's another way of putting it. All spiritual victories are won by having the mind of Christ. We must arm ourselves. The way to look at it is he repeats it again. So remember, I've always said this when he repeats something, it's pretty important, isn't it? It's really important. So if you look at 1 Peter 3:18, he says something similar to the effect of verse one in chapter 4. I'll read it to you. It says this, "For Christ also hath one suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the spirit."

So the call to arms in verse one is on the fact that Christ suffered physically. Physically. So this not a lesson that Jesus is telling you look just listen to my teaching but don't look at my life. No, it's look at my life and there you will know where my mind is. Look at my actions. Look at what I have shown you as my as an example for you. Pay attention to me. He's saying how I suffered well. And that's what transforms our life. When we fix our minds on him, he takes care of the results. 1 Corinthians 3:18 puts it this way. But we all with open face beholding as in glass the glory of the Lord are changed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the spirit of the Lord. So in that text it says we all it means that every single believer not just Moses not just all the prophets not just the apostles but all of us we have with unveiled face meaning in this new covenant the local church believers have a much clearer view much clearer view of Christ and his glory which If we see in scripture and we behold him as in a mirror, Paul says, and it's not just merely a reflection, but the mirror in this context is the closeness, the proximity of reflecting his image.

And it's a beautiful picture of us being close to the glory of God, to the same image, from glory to glory, glory, one degree to another, we're becoming more and more like him through his spirit. It's a wonderful thing to know that we are being transformed into his image, being more like Christ. That's Romans 8:29, Philippians 3:12:14, 1 John 3:2. By keeping our focus on him, the spirit continues to transform us into his image from glory to glory. See, God does the doing. He just wants us to fix our minds on him. And it's this amazing thing that manifests itself in our lives that he shows up when we need him the most in our suffering. He shows up and it's us trusting in him through the suffering.

So he says, "Arm yourselves. This is the way. dis arm yourselves in the same way of mind that your attitude the way you your outlook is that the suffering has a purpose just like it did with Jesus. that there's victory in it. There is victory in your suffering because you know Satan loves to say oh look you're suffering you're going to you're not going to make it. Why don't you just give up? How many times have you heard that kind of nonsense? But Jesus doesn't. Jesus says, "Victory, victory, victory. Because I've gone before you, I have put the steps for you to follow."

So, arm yourselves in the same way. You see, 1 Peter 2:23 gives us a glimpse of of this text. Just look at with me. It says this, "Who when he was reviled, reviled not again. When he suffered, he threatened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously."

So, these are some of the steps we've already saw in the scriptures to arm ourselves in this way, knowing that if we commit to Christ's way of thinking, just like this, that there's victory that whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin. You won't sin when you're fighting back, but you're allowing God to judge righteously because you know what? We're bad judges, right? We are poor at it, but he is he is all righteous in his judgment. He knows exactly the amount. See, we're always off, but he is always right. That's what it means. So, we say, "Lord, I am not going to attack." You know exactly what this is about. You know where this is going to go. I don't know. I only know the next step, Lord, but you know all the steps. So, I'm going to entrust you my life through this suffering because there is a purpose for it. You see that? That's how we can arm ourselves. You judge righteously. That's a really great way. That's the end goal. See how he always wants us to think about the end goal. Ultimately, they're going to be judged righteously. Let's not short change that. Maybe this might be an opportunity to share the gospel with them. We don't want to short circuit that. Amen.

So, let's continue with verse two. Verse two, look at look down with me. Says that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lust of men, but to the will of God. See verse two says the idea of life is short. Life is short. You see I would underline the rest of his time, your time. The time is short. However long you have lived as a sinner, lost, they're gone. You you have now just what the time that you were saved till whenever the Lord calls you home. Life is short. So he's saying the rest of time it's gone. It's finished. So look forward. Look forward. That's what you're supposed to do with the rest of your time. You see that? They no longer should live see past to the rest of his time in the flesh. So So what are you going to do with your time that you have left? You've got two choices here. You can either spend it in here in the text says to the lust of men or human passions or you can go to do the will of God. Those are those are really it the will of God or to your own passions.

It's interesting because you see there lusts is plural. There's multiple lust but there's one will of God singular. See, God makes it very simple for us to do the will of God if we will just commit to what he wants in our lives. A singular hopeless laser focused. What is my Christlikeness look like? And how am I supposed to please him for the rest of my life? That's what God's will is. See, Ephesians 5:15-16 puts it this way that see then that you walk circumspectly. It's the idea of look around. Look around circumspectly. Not as fools. Don't just walk into foolishness, but look around and and and and be as wise. That's what a wise person does. Looks around. Okay. Where is this leading me to? What's the ultimate end of this whatever is coming at me right now? A fool just walks and goes, "I'm just going to let it go or I'm just going to let see what happens." You heard that term before? That's not how a a wise person does. He looks around and goes, "Okay, what is this step going to do? What's this step? Where is this going to lead? What is the ultimate purpose to this? That's how we are to redeem our time because it says the days are evil."

So he's saying essentially here, how are you going to steward your time? Because no longer your time anymore. Redeem means buy back. It's no longer your time. It's God's time. We are stewarding what he has given to us. The time here on earth. What are we to do with it? Not to be

foolish, not to fall into evil again, but to look around and going, what are the opportunities? What are the opportunities to share the gospel? Where are the opportunities to live more Christlike in my family, at work, where I'm going to the next day? Because in 1 Corinthians 4:2 says this, "Moreover, it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful." You have one spouse, be faithful to them. Because the foolish people go, "Oh, there's so many options." No. God calls you to a specific occasion. That's your calling. Oh, the world says there's so many opportunities. I can go this way and that way. No, that's not how it works. God wants you to be singular focused. That's what faithfulness look like looks like on a day-to-day basis because we're ultimately accountable to God. And we are to manage everything he's given to us. That's what the Bible says. That is very clear. We're managing not just one part of our life to God. No, it's our whole life. It's our whole life. See, the world says money is the most important thing. God says time is more important. How we spend our time is important to God.

Verse three and four. Let's look down with me. For the time passed of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles when we walked in lasciviousness, lust, excess of wine, reings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries. So verse two looks ahead. Verse three looks back the time that is passed. So we're looking at time here again. Verse three, what do Gentiles want to do? See what what Peter puts here is essentially it helps us to see what it was like during that time. This is the kind of stuff that they were doing. See, they they weren't just playing around. Their lifestyle was this. This was their lifestyle. This is how they lived every day. They that's how bad it was during that time. And these gentile belieers came out from that of that lifestyle. And so now they're not living that way dayto day. They're living differently dayto-day. Every day is different.

And so the list of sins is not a complete picture, but again it's it's a picture of what it was like in Peter's time. So there was personal sins involved here. And then there were social sins involved here. But I want you to see something interesting. Out of all the things after talking about partying and sensuality and drunkenness and all this stuff, it ends with abominable idolatries. Abominable idolatries meaning lawless idolatry. The idea is that I don't want anyone to rule over me. I don't want no authority. Remember we've been talking about authority over and over again. Submission. This is the idea is just I'm not living for anyone's. I'm just living for myself. This is where it leads to ultimately by the grace of God and the mercy of God. Many of us are not there. Amen. It's only because of the grace and mercy of God.

And so you see abominable it's used several times in scripture. this idea that God is extremely offended by idolatry. How many times in scripture does he go let them leave them alone to their idols? See, idols is kind of like it's the last step. It's it's it's it's the idea of worship. You're either worshiping man or you're worshiping God. It comes down to that. It's either his authority or mine authority. And praise God, he has as brothers and sisters brought us out of that. Amen. So it's lost in worship. That's what it comes down to. Lost in worship that it's perfectly described in 2 Timothy 3:4 that people become lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God. See, we we we know wisdom says there's just two paths. And we're seeing this over and over and over again. And God just brought us out on a different path altogether. And we can be called lovers of God. What a what an awesome privilege that is. And he wants us to express that love being a lover of God in worship.

So he's saying this is the worst way man can be is to worship idols. Making man an idol. It's interesting nature and your conscience if you have one and scripture says it's all wrong but the sinner inside them says I will disobey I will disobey I will do whatever I want that's the worst place a human being can be that they won't listen to any authority no good counsel but just go in to their pleasures one commentary puts it like this we live in a time where athletics and entertainment events events are all over. Billions, if not trillions, are being put into both of these industries. And you know what? It's no different than in time in Rome because that's what they were living in time of Rome. You know, when when they went down when their entertainment and athletics were at this peak, how are we in America? Where are we on that timeline that just entertainment is so more important than here in in church? We're seeing that, right?

Stadiums filled to the rim either in theater or in a sporting stadium. And then look at the contrast in the churches. But you know what? God is doing something amazing. He's actually bringing more clarity. He's bringing more clarity to America. because you're seeing the stark difference now, aren't you? Before there was a lot of people in churches in America, but you're seeing more of that divide, more of that divide, more of that that Again, I'm not saying anything bad necessarily about those things. But it's all consuming. It's those people that just spend all the time, again, time here in these things that can just slip away into all sorts of other sins. And that's why the world knows if you put money into it, again, money that's her focus, they put money after money over these things because they know that people will be attracted to it because it goes to our fallen nature. Our fallen nature loves to please self. We need so as Christians, we ought to know that we are where our hearts are different now. Amen. We are lovers of God rather than pleasure.

Philippians 3:13, Paul again says this to forget what lies behind. Similar to this part of the text is we're looking ahead and not in the past. Whatever that was our focus, our attention back then doesn't mean anything anymore. Paul puts it perfectly. It's like filthy rags. It's I don't even want to say what it is, but essentially whatever is in the past doesn't mean anything. the misery that I experienced or even the high accomplishments which both Paul experienced and he it combines both of them the highs and the lows and he says it doesn't mean mean anything anymore my one focus the one thing he says is the high calling of Christ Jesus again a singular thought but there's so much to it isn't there's still so much to it

Now what's what's interesting in the passage in 2 Corinthians 11:3 the idea was persecution was happening in in Corinth and Satan couldn't stop people going to church actually during that time. So what Satan did is he switched gears and he went instead from from the outside he came in the inside. And you know how much havoc he did remember in first Corinthians all the things that they were doing inside the church that was the devil's work. But you know thank God there's a second Corinthians. God transformed them with their mind. And Paul was getting to their mind and telling them, "Get back to the word. Get back to the authority of scripture. Don't do what you want to do." Because they were just doing whatever they want to do. The Lord's table. They're like, "Oh, we'll just do this instead." Right? And they went back to the word, the authority of scripture, and they listened to Paul. And that was it. As a believer, that's what it is. we go back to scripture because that's where the mind of Christ is. You see

we are by habit Peter mentions here we are by habit very stubborn. we are at many points our our shortcomings is not taking suffering for Christ seriously. This is an area that is all very important. And I I read an article the other day that a lot of these persecution type websites, they say that pastors that are not are are the ones that are not preparing them is in this one area, how to suffer for Christ. this is an area that many pastors are lacking. I I took note of that and how how closely tied in it is to what we're reading tonight. that is us to prepare for it to be ready for it and that's normal Christianity. I said that in the past and to take serious these things that enough is enough with our with the with the devil trying to tempt us to say just just go back to the past. A little bit more won't hurt. You know that that's what the devil likes to do. He's always likes to bring the past say why don't you go and do this again. He loves to do that. But the Holy Spirit says, "No, time of the past is enough. There's no more fooling around with it."

because we're going to see in verse 4 if you will read it with me silently it says this wherein they think it's strange that he run not with them to the same exis of riot speaking evil of you saying look they're going to be surprised but don't be surprised as as brothers and sisters you don't be surprised but they are going to be surprised by not joining in with them as they used as you used to. That's what he was saying here in Peter's time. Like don't be caught off guard. Don't don't be in shock or anger or in disbelief because you know when when people are surprised more and more it's confirming the change and transformation in your life, right? Because who who who was persecuted? I mean the good good sinless son of God was persecuted just for no cause in the scriptures it says for no cause just for being good and so that's what they're being that's where the world will go into is more of this and excess when we as Christians continue to live as Christ that once we were in excess, we're not in excess anymore. We're not walking or to them it's running. They're running to it. Now you're you're running the other way. And and then they're speaking all this evil of you.

See, holiness provokes slander in all forms. And we're going to see in the next section of 1 Peter 4:12-19 is it goes it gets physical if you continue to pursue. But here it's just dealing with evil speaking of you when they're watching your life. And you know this was the original if you if you would think of it this way cancel culture. They will cancel you out. They say, "Oh, you're not part of us. Okay, we're going to speak all types of evil of you just because you're not doing what they used to do." See, many of us may not have been in a situation like this, and praise God for that. but, you know, it's becoming more and more like that. I'm finding out people are are celebrating sin and more and more celebrations of it and we're getting closer and closer to that age time where again because it's just rampant everywhere. the media makes sin not sin anymore and and it's very easy to just slip into that mode of just following what the world is doing. But we are running the other way. and we're going the way that Christ has called us.

Now I'm going to jump to verse five and six. And this is where we're going to end tonight. I'll read them together. Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead? For for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit. Verse five, Peter is saying that those enemies, those that are speaking evil of you right now, that there will be a day of reckoning in the final judgment that in the courtroom of God, the Lord Jesus will be the judge and this and sinners will have to answer to them to him. Acts 17:30³¹ says this. In the times of this ignorance, God winked at or overlooked, but now commanded all men everywhere to repent

because he appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, and that he hath raised him from the dead.

So might it might look like enemy the enemies are winning on this side at this time but the Lord will get the final say and he's going to be ready to judge and it can happen any any second and totally without warning. He'll judge everyone and he'll do it with both the living and the dead. And not even death will get off the hook in this case. And so we are in Acts 10:42 are to be commanded to preach unto people and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the judge of quick and dead. The good news is you have time now while it's not too late. That's what we are commanded to do and to preach. It's a wonderful thing that we have this awesome treasure in earthn vessels is the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. The death, burial, and resurrection of him that they don't have to live in sin. And we can tell this message that we first receive the gospel to them. It's not good to live in sin. Look, you don't have to suffer for sin any longer. Christ did it once for all. He paid it for all. That's the hope on this side of earth is the gospel.

And this is why it says in verse six, for this is why the gospel was preached even to those who are dead thou judgest in the flesh the way people are that they might live in the spirit the way God does. That's another translation. See a lot of people say that this verse is I looked at a lot of commentaries is this is the hardest one of the hardest texts to to read. But if you look at the whole context of where this passage is in it's really straightforward because in Hebrews 9:27 says this it's is that and as it is appointed unto men once to die but after this the judgment. So what Peter is talking about here is that Christians heard the good news and they've trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ and they've passed away. Those are the dead that is mentioned here in this text. And the early church was found it very difficult because Christians were dying and they thought that Jesus was going to come, second coming was going to come in their lifetime. We see that in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18. I can't get to it tonight, but the idea was that that THEY thought that they were not within the saved.

But it says here that in 1 Corinthians 15:26, the last enemy that will be destroyed is death. That we might be judged physically, but like anyone else, we're going to live in the spirit the way God does. You see, the flesh will die. That that's what they have to realize. The flesh has to die. Doesn't mean that they're in sin. It's just that sin leads to death. sin is a the the death of the flesh reveals that sin has its way. But he's saying that even though our flesh is going to die, we are alive in God. That's it. We are alive in God. That's what it means to be having the spirit in us. In verse six, God in the spirit. And I'm going to end with this passage, John 14:1-2. Very comforting for us, brothers and sisters. again looking always to the end and looking back to where we are. Says this, don't let your hearts be troubled. You're experiencing all types of issues and trials and persecution and suffering. So don't be troubled by that. Says, "You believe in God, believe also in me. My father's house has plenty of room. If that weren't so, would I have told you that I'm going away to prepare a place for you? Very comforting, isn't it? Our place again is not here ultimately. It is ultimately will be with the Lord.

So endure suffering, brothers. Don't yield to sin. That is the call to holiness. And God will use you in a unique way. And it will surprise you again and again how good he is to those that will

serve him through the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. Let's pray. Father, thank you so much for your word. God, thank you that we can see the end. God, how much the world, the flesh and devil only shows us the beginning and tries to hide what happens in the end. But Lord, instead you reverse that. You want us to see from the end to the beginning so we can have hope. We can have faith. We can trust you because your word is trustworthy.

Father, I pray that you would give encouragement through these words tonight that as you are holy, you call us to holiness so that we can be in your presence, Lord. In holiness, there's light and scatters the darkness away. And we can see the purity of who you are. And that purity is your love that's shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. Father, may we experience your love more than the pleasures of this life. Have us done with it. And as we love you more, Lord, I pray that we would just experience more of your goodness and your kindness and your generosity and be able to serve you with their time left here on earth. And then Lord, I pray for those that are still living in darkness and are trying to avoid the light as much as possible. God, I pray that they would send some light tonight through this text that they would see, God, that it's not to hurt them, but it's actually to remove them from what is holding them back, from your goodness, to experience your love and your beauty. God, that sin tries to cover up in an empty shell with a makeup that's not even incomparable to your beauty, which is all pure. There's no covering. There's no makeup. It's all pure. Father, I pray that they would want to know you, in Jesus name. Amen.