

Believers Called To Live Counter-culturally

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Go ahead and please turn with me in 1 Peter chapter 3 and we will be going through verses 8-12 this evening. Peter's speaking to those that are living in a hostile world with all types of enemies lurking from every corner of their lives. And what Peter wants to address to the believers in this time is number one, don't allow yourselves to divide. Don't allow yourselves to divide. Satan's going to wreak havoc on you and he will do his dead level best to divide you, Christian. And as he does that, what is Peter's main thrust that he wants to put before believers' minds and hearts? It is this is a spiritual battle. What you're looking at is the tip of the iceberg. What is underneath all the havoc that is going on in what you see with your eyes is happening at a spiritual level. I spoke about this last Sunday about how our prayers are not to be hindered that we don't allow Satan to just come on in as it were into our family life and attack at the spiritual level. And what is that? It's relationships.

Relationships happen at a spiritual level. And as believers, we ought to know that our trust in the Lord Jesus Christ is spiritual. We came to know him by what faith we trusted him. What he has done for us on the cross. And God's spirit showed us and revealed that truth because we were called out from the world. We were called out from the midst of all the hostility, all that was being placed to Christ. The enemy was trying to destroy and Satan did his dead level best, didn't he? But he could not triumph over what Jesus was to do on the cross. And thank God for that. Amen. And we are here today because of what Jesus finished on the cross for us. Payment for our sins. Took away the wrath of God that we deserved and allowed us to now live according to his purposes when we believed him and trusted in him. So what is our defense? What is our defense? This is what Peter is going to address.

He's already addressed all those relationships such as the master and servant, such as the husband and wives, the wives and the husbands. Now he's going to address all of you, everyone, all believers. That doesn't mean that it excludes the husbands and the wives or the masters or the servants or everyone in the government. It is everyone's unfolded into this passage in 8-12. So what is the thing that our defense is? I didn't address yet. It is this is to be of one mind. What is that thing that we are to be of one mind? Well, the common thing is to glorify Christ because it's no longer about us anymore is it. It's about glorifying Christ. It is him that we exalt. It's no longer ourselves. When believers when we fix our attention on the Lord Jesus Christ, our priorities are completely flipped. It's no longer about what we desire. It's about what he desires. It's what he has interest over. Not our interest first. It's not what we want to do, but what he wants to do in our lives. And when we do that, the enemy is powerless. The enemy is powerless and he's not able to sow division because we have Christ's strength. Because we have Christ before us and in us.

And what happens is when we live out this way, we gain victory after victory after victory in our Christian lives over the enemy. Believers are called, we're going to find out, to be compassionate, a characteristic that Christ was about and doing while he was here on earth, especially with those who were suffering, with those who were lost. Compassion involves having compassion with those in need. We are called to fulfill what Christ wants us to do in greater ways. Think about that. That we can reach that he wants us to reach to the uttermost. It starts at home. It starts where we are right now. Right here in this local body whom that we are to love right here in this local body. Who are we to have compassion over right here in this local body? And that word is summed up in the word brotherly affection or brotherly love. Because in a hostile world filled with what? Hatred and coldness, it is what Christians have. True joy that is marked by Christ's joy in us that our love can permeate in wherever we are at. Just think about that. Wherever you are, whether you're here in this local body now, whether you're at home, whether you're at your workplace, love ought to permeate from you. It is a wonderful thing that you are that person that can display Christ's love and Christ's joy. And this is another word for it is kindheartedness. That you're just kind to people around you. And we see these words over and over again. This is a characteristic of God. Loving kindness.

This is an invitation to create an environment that draws people not to yourself but ultimately to the Lord Jesus Christ if they are lost or if they are living in a world of hatred and rejection. See, we don't bring about fear. We don't bring fear to people. That's what hatred does. I don't want to be with you, so I'm going to just say all types of things about you. But instead our words and our conduct are reflected in a completely different way where people are attracted and we're going to find that out later when Peter talks about our testimony. Can't wait to get there. But we're going to stay here for a moment tonight. This idea that God changes us from the inside out. That he doesn't want us to attack and infiltrate what's happening around us, but he wants us to cultivate something within us. He wants us to work on the very thing that we cannot do. We cannot work in the inside, can we? That's why we needed Christ. And so the spirit of God works in and through us to achieve what we cannot achieve. And this is what we're going to find out is this humility and spirit. This aspect of humility and spirit that God gives to us as recipients of God's favor in our lives.

So 1 Peter 3:8-12 offers a wonderful reminder that we can have this blessed life that we're going to see here in this text that we can reach every day of our lives. These verses serve as a bridge between Peter's teaching on Christian submission. We saw that in the previous text and we're going to see a forthcoming discussion on Christian suffering. Both themes acknowledge that following Jesus does not promise an easy existence. However, as reminded, Jesus said that it is the narrow gate that leadeth unto life and few there be that find it. It is this path that we are on that ultimately leads to life in us. Not just life in heaven, but life right here on earth.

Ephesians 1:3 says this, "Blessed be the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." So it says here in this text, a life without Christ lacks true blessing. However, in Christ, we are inherited with blessedness. We are inherited. That means it's not a reward that we receive. It's we already given a life of blessedness and that's what it means here in this text. So this life that we live transcends material possessions and superficial improvements in our lives. Isn't that what we see? I'm blessed because I have this. I'm blessed because I have that. No, that's not the word blessed. It's already

inherited in Christ. We already in a position of being blessed. It's not by what we get out of life but what we who we have in us. So the text emphasizes that blessing and burden can coexist. Absolutely. There are these two facets that happen in the Christian's life. This tension but this is the experience of a true believer. You cannot have one without the other. You cannot have a blessing and a burden and separate those two. They must coexist.

So Christians receive blessings both because of your faith. And despite of all the challenging circumstances of the Christian life, we find that this is the emulation of Christ's life. We are to emulate Christ's life. So verse eight says, "Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous." So, this marks the conclusion of this section, not of this letter, but of this section with this word. Finally, picking up from 1 Peter 2:12, which advised what? Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles. Peter elaborates on this honorable behavior. He instructs citizens to submit to the government, servants to their masters and wives to their husbands, husbands to their wives. Having addressed these specific groups, now he is going to conclude the section by directing all of you as believers. So verse 8 sums up like this is how we are to conduct ourselves with other believers. And then verse nine is how we are to conduct ourselves with unbelievers.

So verse eight finally the verse calls us to practice five virtues or five characteristics. This is what Christ gives to us. We are inherited this blessing. Five of them. Look at down with me. First it's of this one mind. One mind. This list of virtues begins with the call to unity in mind. The nature of this unity is spiritual, not organizational. Very important there. It is this like-mindedness. It's a Greek word that takes two words meaning to think the same. Think the same. So the idea is we're not going to agree with everything. However, when it comes to the gospel, the importance of the local church and the great commission, we all agree. Amen.

Second, there is compassion. Compassion. This is an English word that means to suffer with. To suffer with again going to the Greek, it's this idea of greater intimacy. Again, that word love. It's like agape. It's something that only Christians can really understand to understand why are we suffering, right? We're suffering for Christ. It is something that we understand. Another way of saying in Romans 12:15, we can rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep. It's this idea of the highs and lows of a Christian life. In joy and in sorrow, we can have compassion with one another. That's what the beauty of a local body. When someone is going through some rejoicing, we all gravitate towards that, don't we? Or when someone's weeping, we all gravitate towards that person that's weeping. It's like with Brian Spicer, right? We all collectively as members understand that that feeling of weeping in a sense. Yes, he has passed. But we also rejoicing at the same time, aren't we? So, there are those balances in the Christian life. The one who sympathizes or has compassion does not simply say, "I know how you feel at a distance," but rather it's this idea. It's revealing much more than that. It's the idea that you do more than you say. You do more than what you say. It's the idea of love, brethren, as brotherly love. It's this is what the heart of what this text is trying to convey to us.

You'll see that the first and last of the virtues are attitude-based. You see that that we are to adopt. Second and fourth are emotions that we should feel. So it's the mind and of the heart. He wants both. He wants both. Isn't that what Jesus was? And we are to cultivate the same characteristics of him. The four other traits involve Christian fellowship and we can practice

them even towards non-Christians but not so with brotherly love. John Calvin wrote it this way. Where God is known as father there only their brotherhood really exists because we all have the same father that's the idea the church should be more than a family it should be a brotherhood. 1 Peter 1:22 says this, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the spirit unto unfeigned or earnest love of the brethren see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently." That's a can't get any better than that kind of love. Amen.

Fourth, there is the pitiful. Another way of putting it, a tender heart. Another going to the Greek again. This is in a sense a visceral, the visceral parts of the body, the seat of emotions. The language here is used in the gospels of Jesus, moved with compassion. Matthew 9:36 puts it this way. Where he saw the crowds, he felt what? Compassion. Because that what they were harassed and they were helpless. Matthew 14:14 where he had compassion on a great crowd who were what? Sick. They needed healing. Jesus was stirred up in the innermost being over the human condition of man. Compassion has action behind it. So like Jesus, we are to have this tender heart. And he gives us this tender heart which is the opposite of what? A hard heart. When we were lost, we had a hard heart. Nothing could have penetrated until God moved and made our hearts tender. And Ephesians 4:32 puts it this way. And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted. Here it is emphasis. Forgiving one another even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. Because Christ forgave us, we can forgive others. That's the heart of someone who has a tendered heart, who has been tendered.

Finally, let's look at the word be courteous. Or another way of putting it, a humble mind. This virtue begins and ends with the mind. We started with the mind, didn't we? Be one mind. Be courteous is also with the mind because the mind requires humility. It requires a humbleness. You see, humility the way it's defined is this way. Is not thinking negatively about yourself. It's not that or it's not thinking about yourself at all. It is self-forgetfulness. That is what the definition of humility is. Self-forgetfulness. Philippians 2:3-4 puts it like this. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory, but in lowliness of mind. Let each esteem others better than themselves. Verse four, look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. That's forgetting self, isn't it? You're thinking about others. It takes a humble mind to offer help without thinking you are better than others. It takes a humble mind to receive help without thinking you are less than. Another way of saying it is you can receive help without thinking you're better than other people. Or if you are a recipient of receiving help, you can think you are not less than somebody else. Right? You don't think about yourself. You don't think about where you are, but rather you care. You have compassion. You desire to see Christ work in and through you.

So again, verse 8 teaches believers how to relate to other believers. Now, we're going to go to verse 9, which teaches believers how to relate to unbelievers, where it says, "Not rendering evil for evil or railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing, knowing that ye are thereunto called that you should inherit a blessing." This is living the contrary way of life as a Christian. This is it right here. This text because Peter speaks of this way is that when we're called to be a Christian, we don't look anything like the world. And in this text, you're going to see what that is. That we are it's how we respond when you're wronged. That's how you know that you're a Christian. When you're wronged, it's what your response is. Your response is altogether different than the world.

Let's look at it. One way that the world does it is getting even, man's way. Verse nine, not rendering evil for evil or railing for railing. What is the common rule? Is that do unto others as they do unto you. Revenge, retribution, and retaliation. Those are not the options for a Christian. None of those are. We must not repay evil for evil. People can do all sorts of things, harm us, do bad, they can malign us. Doesn't matter. As a Christian, we must not respond in like manner. We are not to repay evil for evil, as the text says because that ultimately accomplishes nothing. It does nothing of good. And so likewise, we must not repay railing for railing. Our inability to act stems from a lack of capability. Even when we're capable of doing what's right, what does the flesh do? It always wants to go towards the negative, doesn't it? Just go to your default mode as it were. If you weren't a Christian, you will always go to the negative response and receive therefore the negative consequences and just continue that loop of evil for evil, reviling for reviling.

But thank God we're outside of that cycle. We're not part of that negative response, negative consequences, but rather our words have been changed from the inside out. From our hearts being transformed and changed by the love of Christ, he changes our words. He changes our deeds. And so for the troubled Christian, Peter addresses the Christians here because this is a big part of the culture during the time. This is just happening all the time all over the place. And he's hitting something very touchy subject as it were. He knows that the Christians are troubled by this because this is how they used to respond. And he's going, "No, you don't come back like that. You don't come back like you used to in your old nature. That's not how we are to conduct ourselves." So Peter reminds us of Christ. And it was found in 1 Peter 2:23 where 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, we saw getting even man's way. Now, let's look at getting even the way God wants us to. Amen. Verse 9. Not rendering evil for evil or railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing, knowing that ye are thereunto called that you should inherit a blessing. So when you receive evil or insults, we are given the ability to resist our natural urgency to retaliate in kind. Instead of doing nothing which is not also the option by the way is to trust in the Lord for him to do it the way he wants to, that's how we respond with blessing. So the Greek word found in this root word that we see here is eulogy which speaks of what, to speak well of, to speak well of. This means we are called. We are called by the way we are called to bless those who attack us who slander us and speak all kinds of bad and negative words about us. And how do we respond? There's a few ways. We can pray for them. Intercede for them in prayer. We can appeal to them with the gospel. We can show them who Christ is. This is the approach that God gives to us as believers that mirrors Jesus. You see, Jesus is reflected when we have these opportunities. And how many opportunities do we have in a day? Just count how many opportunities we have to respond with a Christlike manner because there are negative things happening all the time, every day. Amen. This is your testimony time. This is the opportunity for God to work and give you grace and strength at a time of need. Is it not a time of need to pray and appeal to people at the gospel level? Luke 26:28 says this, "Bless them that curse you and pray for them which despitefully use you or abuse you." So why bless those who curse you? Verse 9 gives us the answer that you are called thereunto called that you should inherit a blessing. It's a calling. It is what you are called to do. It's not an option for the Christian.

So when God presses it into your mind and to your heart, there's a reason you're a believer and you are called to do this. It's an effectual call of God in Christ. And so Peter repeatedly emphasizes this purpose that the nature of our salvation we are saved both from and for something. You see his sovereign grace has called us to receive a blessing according to his way which extends to both what? Our current lives and the life to come. He's talking about a blessing now. Talking a blessing now. Because you are going to, by the way, receive full blessing in heaven. It will be experienced fully. But at a time right now, currently we are to experience it freely on earth. We can. This is the text that shows it to you. So when we are treated by others in a way that will cause us to react in our flesh normally, supernaturally he helps us to treat others like how he wants them to be treated. You see it's a matter of representing the Lord and we are not to take things in our own hands but in God's hands. We will face the consequences by our actions. And so, however, if you entrust things to God, when we entrust ourselves to God, we have an opportunity to receive a blessing.

So, this word obtain means to inherit or inherit means to obtain. And what does that mean? Inheritance is what? Ultimately, a gift. It is not a reward. Let me just emphasize that inheritance is a gift not a reward. Again, salvation is what? A gift, not a reward. A blessing is in the same way. So when we leave things in God's hands, you will receive a blessing.

So verses 10 to 12, we're going to see Peter do something. He references Old Testament. Here he references Psalm 34:12-16 but he doesn't complete the text. And I will show that towards the end why he doesn't do that. So let's go into verses 10 to 12. Verses 10. For he that will love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil and his lips that they speak no guile. Let him eschew evil and do good. Let him seek peace and ensue it. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers, but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.

Peter doesn't cite the complete reference to Psalm 34:12-16. He rather just speaks it and let it flow out of him as he would normally do sometimes. We look back in Acts, he would quote from Joel, he didn't speak the whole text. He does the same thing here and he assumes that the readers are going to understand why he's putting this part of Psalm here at this time. So he kicks off with this Old Testament quote with this word for. You see that for? And then he brings in the scriptures. This is a big deal because it connects something what he just spoke about before. And what he's going to do is he's going to show what this blessing looks like for a Christian when you put it into God's hands.

Verse 10 again reading, "For he that will love life and see good days." John 12:25, very familiar text. I'm going to read it and you're going to know it right away. He that loveth his life shall what? Lose it. And he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. So putting anything before Christ is always a warning. Why? Because Christ is what? Preeminent in our lives, isn't he? He is preeminent. So we can lose everything for him. So he says loving life in this text. Loving life means living in Christ. That's what it means. Loving life means living in Christ not apart from him. It signifies this life that can only be lived by a Christian because we are in Christ that we can have a life that's filled with love and what is also marked by good days or many days of good days.

So this is how life is defined for a Christian loving life and marked by good days. Another way of putting it is living a life of godly conversation and living a life of godly conduct. That's how to live a good life according to God's word. So verse 10, for he that will love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil and his lips that they speak no guile. So it begins with good speech. Again, God transforms our hearts and affects the way we speak. Another way James 1:26 puts it, if any man among you seem to be religious and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain or empty. So you are basically saying he's basically saying you are not godly if you cannot control your tongue or bridle your tongue. That's what here in verse 10 you see that word refrain your tongue. Same connection with James 1:26. It's forceful. It means literally to cease and desist. It's a word that lawyers use when someone is slandering or using their trademark without permission.

So God doesn't permit us to do certain things and he's the one that ceases and desists from what comes out of our mouths. See, that's what it means to put things into God's hands that you just trust him that you allow him to speak by first praying unto him and asking Lord help me in this part that I know in my flesh dwelleth no good thing and therefore everything that comes out of my mouth when I am attacked I won't respond according to your ways help me in that. That's another way it's the idea I want to refrain. Lord, I want you to speak through your spirit. Because after all, it's a spiritual warfare, isn't it? It's a spiritual warfare. And he wants us to not speak sinful words. He changes this aspect of our lives, of our conversation. It's wonderful. Look at what Psalm 141:3 says. Set a watch, O Lord, before what? My mouth. Keep the door of my lips. Keep the door of my lips. Same word keep. Refrain.

See, we need God's help to know when to keep our mouths shut. We also need God's help to keep our tongues from evil. Verse eight speaks of what? Avoiding evil acts by doing these things that God has given to us. And then here in verse 10, speaking, avoiding evil words. So conduct, evil conduct, evil speech. Both must be aligned. We must wage war against both. It's a spiritual battle. But there is another battle to fight. Verse 10 also talks about lips from speaking guile or what? Deceit. Father of truth is God. Father of lies is Satan. We have a new father. Amen. And we are to speak truth. And that's why he's going hard press against this saying Christian, you have a new nature. You have a new heart and you have new truths. And so this is a powerful thing what God does from the inside out.

1 Peter 2:22 said this, "He who did not know sin, neither was guile found in his mouth," speaking of Jesus our savior. So to be like Jesus, saying, "This is how to speak no deceit." He says in verse 11, continuing, "Let him eschew or turn away evil and do good. Let him seek peace and ensue it." So godly conduct involves doing right before the Lord and then towards others. And genuine faith includes what? True repentance. This is verse 11 talking about true repentance. Turning away from evil and what? Doing good. He does that change of mind and change of action. We are pursuing a whole different thing in our life, a whole different thing which is glorifying to God and our Christ. He changes our mind again that leads to changing in our actions.

So verse 11 outlines repentance both negatively and positively that we must turn away from evil. That includes the thoughts and the words as I mentioned but it has this verb that means to actively avoid evil. It's a continuation of avoiding evil and then while we combat the spiritual

battle of external evil he's saying flee from the evil within yourselves. This is where we are to fight our battles is this internal battle within. Galatians 5:13 says this as a warning. For brethren, ye have been called unto liberty. Only use not liberty for what? An occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. This is a proactive measure of avoidance, but also preventing our sinful nature from acting wickedly. We're not to give liberty to our flesh anymore. That's no longer an option.

That's another way of putting it. So we are called for what instead is to do good. It is to do good. Peter consistently emphasizes this importance of practical holiness. So true godliness isn't about following a bunch of things on a checklist. No, but what rather actively doing good is the most effective way to resist evil. He's given us a new nature, a new life, good life. And the spiritual growth that we are to achieve is not just removing the negative influences in our lives, which is yes, that is part of it. But more than that, it's an act of cultivating positive ones. We got to allow other things to grow now. And God is giving us those things to grow. And what is it? Galatians 6:10 reminds us of this as we have therefore opportunity. Let us what? Do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith. So we start off with us as believers, this brotherly love, loving one another, rejoicing with those who rejoice, weeping with those who weep, serving and helping, and then from there serving everyone else.

Because when we do this, verse 11 says, "Let him seek peace and ensue it." That's a result of all this spiritual battle warfare and winning this battle. That peace signifies more than just the absence of hostility, which is yes, but it represents more than that. Is that the relationships grow stronger and stronger together. That's what the Christians are known for. The amount of love, the amount of togetherness despite of the hostility and people running and fleeing. They were running towards the hostility and they what in the world is this? I want to know what this is how can you do this? How do you have the power to do this? Who's giving you the strength? Who's giving you this love? And that's the opportunity that they were able to share the testimony of Christ. And that's what set the Roman Empire on fire as it were or Christlike loveness. This pursuing and not just avoiding but pursuing, pursuing, pursuing. This is what how we are to emulate Christ above all. And what did he do? He told us Matthew 5:9, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God." Blessed.

It is a wonderful thing to have this posture of Christlikeness. I'm going to end here in verse 12. Let's read verse 12 together silently. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers, but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil. You see, God is omniscient. That's what this text is talking about. He is sovereign. He sees everything and but his eyes are particularly focused on who? Notice on the righteous. On the righteous. The Lord watches over those who trust and obey him. And not only his eyes, but he says his ears are open or attentive to their prayers. The God who has eyes and has ears is attentive to the prayers of the righteous. Prayer is again emphasized here just like it was with the husbands because prayer is again where the spiritual warfare is won or lost and he's saying this is where God is watching. This is when God is hearing is in your prayers is in your prayers. It's a picture of our heavenly father leaning over as it were and hearing the cries of his children.

Because when you're in a hostile environment, it is a difficult battle. And I believe we're getting more and more hostile. And let's as a church be more and more active in our prayer lives, more

and more together in prayer, because that's where the spiritual battle is won. See, nothing is too small for God. This is a reminder for ourselves when we're praying. Nothing is too small for God. He cares about everything. Casting all our anxieties upon him because what? He cares for us. He cares about everything. Nothing is too big for God to handle. You can cast everything to him. That is the Lord's posture. And when we insult God, by the way, when we have a prayerless life, let that be known because he's watching and he's listening the prayer of his saints. That's his posture.

But notice the posture towards the evil. Verse 12, but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil. This is the third reference, by the way, to the anatomy of God. The face of God is used here. No longer the eyes or the ears, but the face. The face of God. It means the Lord looks upon them with opposition to turn his face against you. That is a fearful place to be. But this posture is obviously speaking to those who are lost. He's speaking to the lost in the situation that are constantly doing evil and his face is turned instead of watching. So verse 12 is the fifth mention of evil. Did you notice the repetition of the word evil? And I've said this many times when he repeats something he wants us to take notice. And it's repeated five times in these passages that we just read over because this word is speaking again of how much we must abstain from our flesh. We still have somewhat evil in us as believers, but more so the uncontrollable evil amongst the lost.

So Peter ends this quote including the second clause of Psalm 34:16. He doesn't remember I mentioned he doesn't complete Psalm 34:12-16. And this is where he doesn't conclude. If you would go to Psalm 34:16 towards the end it will say to cut off the memory of them from the earth. To cut off the memory of them from the earth. You know why he didn't say this? I think God supernaturally had Peter pause and not continue because of the finished work of Christ. See, the finished work of Christ was not known to the psalmist in 34, but it is known now in the New Testament. The finished work of Christ that you don't have to be cut off because you have been given a savior. I'm speaking to now the lost. You have been given a savior who has finished the work on the cross that you cannot do. He paid for your sins. He's given resurrected life. Resurrected life. Newness of life.

And if you would run to the cross, if God is speaking to you tonight in such a supernatural way by his spirit, trust in the Lord Jesus Christ and be safe. Don't let that image of his face being turned away from you. Don't let that happen to you because he's given you hope in the Lord Jesus Christ and he can look to you if you will turn to him and he will watch and hear you. Seek him while he may be found while he is near. Today is the day of salvation and he will hear you if you will pray and seek his face. Seek Jesus Christ alone, him alone and be saved.

Let's pray. Father, thank you for tonight. Lord, I thank you for just the straightforwardness of Peter. Such clear passages as we've read and how direct he speaks to both the saved and the lost. I pray, Father, that you would work mightily tonight. Father, as we want to please you, help us, Father, to do so. God, if we are fearing man right now in any one of us, Lord, I pray that that would not be the case in any one of us, Lord, but that the fear would be put upon you because we can only please the one whom we fear. So, Father, I pray that you would direct our minds to your word as your author as the authority in our lives. And I pray your spirit will help us to fulfill these things that your word commands and teaches. Help us to be led by your word and your

spirit in this way. Bless us to this end, Lord, so that we can live a life full of love and good days ahead. I pray, Father, that you would bring the lost to know Jesus Christ as their savior and lord, that you would bring them to this awareness that while they are still alive, while you are still impressing into their hearts and minds to trust in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation, I pray that they will by your grace and your mercy bless this end as well. And we'll thank you in Jesus name. Amen.