

Harris Creek Baptist Church  
Jonathan Pokluda  
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### Christians Are Weird

1 Peter 1:13-25

**13 Therefore, with minds that are alert and fully sober, set your hope on the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at his coming. 14 As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. 15 But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; 16 for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.” 17 Since you call on a Father who judges each person’s work impartially, live out your time as foreigners here in reverent fear. 18 For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. 20 He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake. 21 Through him you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and glorified him, and so your faith and hope are in God. 22 Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for each other, love one another deeply, from the heart. 23 For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God. 24 For, “All people are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, 25 but the word of the Lord endures forever.”**

Harris Creek, how we doing? Let's go! Let's go! Let's go! Hey so, school is back in session in case you weren't aware, and that changes like- anybody feel the change to the rhythm from summer? And, what we're doing? Just like a different kind of vibe in the air- anybody feel that? Yeah, some of you, okay, and so the nature of the conversation change too.

When sports kick up it's like, “Hey, did they make the team? Did they win?” They didn't win by the way. Sorry to be the bearer of bad news. It's tough, it's tough. Some of you are going to need to repent for the way you talk to the O-line, and I'll be hearing confessions afterwards. But no, the conversations become like “Hey, did they make the team? Are they JV or varsity? How were their tryouts?” I'm hearing these conversations in coffee shops and in the line at the bank. It's just a little bit of what happens and you remember like if it's if that's not where you're at you remember being in high school and feeling that like, hey, everything kind of hinging... “I want to be on that team. I want to make that team, A team, B team, JV, varsity. I want to be- that's my squad. You find identity in it. Like that's who I belong to.” We dress the same we make sure we go to the, you know, the same pep rally, sit together. Like, that's my squad.

I remember being called up. I played basketball and called up to varsity, and it's like immediately, “Gonna play on Friday?” Let's go. And you walk different when you're on varsity, in the hallway, all of a sudden, it's just like you kind of drag a leg you know varsity... and you dress different, you know, and so for me like being cool in high school was a little bit evasive.

That was elusive to me that it was this target that I was always aiming for never quite hitting, you know. And so I'm like, I show up to varsity, I want to fit in. I want to look the part. Act the part. Be the part. I got my jersey tucked into my shorts. My shorts were way too big, so I wanted the length, you know, but to get the length I had to go double XL, but it's 100 pounds lighter okay so my shorts all cinched together with that drawstring. I have my Nike socks pulled all the way up past my knee so you couldn't see any flesh. It was like shorts covering socks like that's how I was rolling, tucked in there. I got my shoes all laced up tight.

And I go to the game and there's a game before us that's going to play, and Jr's sitting there. Jr's been on varsity since he's a freshman. He's a senior now. You know, and he gets cool. Like I'm trying, JP's trying to find cool. JR, he was born cool. He is sitting there. He's got his elbows on his knees. He's just watching the game. He knows what's going on, and he's dressed... He's got his shoes perfectly unlaced you know what I mean. They're just hanging on his feet barely like it was strategically- the laces are perfectly undone. His socks pushed down, and he's got those tear-away pants. The ones they like snap and he's got the last four strategically undone. They kind of bell out over his perfectly unlaced... He's got his jersey on, and we had hats. My hat didn't fit my head. His hat sat perfectly on top of his head, and he had this this sweat band right there on his forearm. Just right there just gripping his forearm. So, I'm coming up all you know tucked in like a goober, and I'm just like... I'm just watching him. I'm like okay. I'm taking notes. I'm like all right shoes unlaced, tear-away pants, four buttons undone, all right, oh- not tucked in okay, got it, not tucked in, oh I got to get the sweat band, oh he had the air bud... like the earbuds, these were wire days to my young friends, but they were like draped over his ears just like kind of hanging there like in case he wanted to listen to music. It was available to him, but he was like I'm not listening right now, but I could if I wanted.

So, you better believe the next game, I show up and I'm like: tearaways four buttons undone, shoe strategically unlaced. I went and got the sweatband on this forearm just the one because I want to be varsity like JR's varsity. He fits in. He's got it. He's been called out and called up. I've been now called out and called up. I want to be varsity like JR's varsity.

Today Peter's going to say you need to be holy like God is Holy. And if we're sitting there like, "Well, I really want to be holy. Let me try to be holy. What do I need to be holy?" I don't know that we have given this enough thought. I don't even know that we believe. There's some of us here this morning that don't believe. "Oh, I'm supposed to be holy, like I'm supposed to live a holy life."

Now as a reminder, Peter wrote his first letter to the persecuted church in Asia Minor, modern day Turkey about 63-64 A.D., so about 30 years after Jesus has ascended to be with the Father. And the church is being persecuted, and he writes this letter to strengthen them saying, "hey, this is who you are." And he's going to speak identity to us today. This is who you are. So, I want to talk about what does it mean to be called out and called up to be holy? And in the same way that I would never wear my freshman jersey to that varsity game because I'm on the varsity team, right? I think some of us think, "well I'm just going to bring all my worldly ways into the church, and I'm going to be worldly and churchy." And that's not being called out and that's not being called up. It's not being holy.

I'm not trying to say that there's varsity and JV Christians. There's not, it's binary. You're a Christian or you're not. You're on the team or you're not. If you're on the team, you're called out and called up to be holy, and we better figure out what that means. Because there's something very different about the first century than the 21st century. In the first century, no one, not a single person, on the planet Earth is walking around pretending to be a Christian. They're not like it's culturally acceptable to be a Christian- it's my country club, high five, secret handshake, what's up, I go to church there, First Baptist so-and-so. That doesn't exist. Do you know why? Because it's not culturally acceptable to be a Christian. You get baptized. You say I follow Christ. I follow the way and suddenly you're hunted like a buck in deer season. They're looking for you, you're on a list, and that's why he's writing this letter.

When we read it, we have to read it in the context of what's happening then. Here, today, oh yeah, Christian, it's good for business. Oh, what church do you go to? Because that's my club, this one. This is where I pay dues. These are my people. These are who I connect with. No, no, no, this is very different. I was talking with a faith leader, someone with a significant, vested interest in ministry in Waco. They served here in ministry for years and years and years and years and years and I was having lunch with her and her husband, and she said, "when I heard that you were moving to Waco because I didn't know who you were. I had never heard of you, but I prayed and I said out loud I hope he's courageous." I said, "why did you say that?" And she said, "because it's going to take real courage to stand up against the spirit of religion in that town." She said, "when we did ministry in that town it was like two steps forward five steps back." There it is like you're coming up against a spirit of religion.

So I've got to say right now for you when I'm talking about holiness I am not talking about religion. Those are two very different things. When I'm talking about you being called to be like Christ I'm not talking about you learning the motions and the movements of what other Christians do. You're following Jesus. His Spirit lives inside of you. He's directing your steps and your path.

I'm going to be in 1 Peter. I'm going to start in chapter 1 verse 13 that's where we're at, and I hope to make it through all the way through chapter 2 verse 3. We're talking about holiness and as we move through this section we're going to talk about the preparation for holiness. The price paid for holiness, and before you leave today what it looks like to practice holiness with God's people.

As a reminder from last week, Peter's talking about our salvation. He says the prophets foretold of it. The angels long to look upon it, and I said this idea from that summary of that text... I said, "you are sitting in the certainty of a future reality." That's your salvation. You're sitting in a certainty of a future reality, and he says therefore, because you're sitting in the certainty of this future reality...

**1 Peter 1:13:**

***Therefore with minds that are alert and fully sober...***

And man, does the NIV let us down here. Because in the Greek, what that says is: as you gird the loins of your mind. That's different, can we agree? Girding the loins of your mind. He's mixing metaphor talking about loins and minds but here's what that means. In this time, people wore flowing robes, and so if they were going to have to run or fight or go to war they'd pick those robes up and tuck them in the belt. That's what it means to gird your loins. You pick up your robe and you tuck it in. It's the modern day equivalent like in the cartoons, or you like roll up the sleeves, you know, it's like "oh, you want some? You know, come on, what's up, right? He's saying, hey, do that for your mind, which is now translated in the NIV:

**1 Peter 1:13:**

*Therefore, with minds that are alert and fully sober, set your hope on the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at His coming.*

Now listen we are 13 verses into chapter one- and four times Peter has told us about the coming of Jesus Christ. He's saying, you want to endure suffering under the sun? You better fix your minds on the hope that you have that is to come when Jesus Christ returns. It's the only way. It's the only way.

**1 Peter 1:14-16**

*As obedient children do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as He who called you is holy so be holy in all you do. For it is written: "Be holy because I am Holy."*

That word is *hagios*. It means set apart. You have this future- your future hope Jesus is coming back for you. So in the world don't get swept up in the world. Then some of you, you're so good at the world. You got the part. You can look the part. Act the part. Talk the part. Navigate the functions. Now you get the world-how to make money. You can be a king in the world. You are winning at the wrong game. You're winning at the wrong game. Everyone around you- the temporaries- like, "oh wow, isn't that amazing! Look at that." Meanwhile, the clock runs out and you realize you've been playing the wrong game the whole time. Don't do that. He's saying fix your hope on what's to come.

It's like this, what does it look like to be holy? How would you live today if you knew Jesus was coming back tomorrow? How would you live today if you literally knew Jesus was coming back tomorrow to take you home with Him? And why not live every day like that? Like that's to live by faith. And he says, "with your minds alert and fully sober." You've got to prepare your mind.

*1. Prepare your mind to live a holy life.*

Double meaning, to live a holy life you must prepare your mind, and we need to prepare our minds so that we can live a holy life. Verse 13, it says "prepare your mind alert and fully sober," so what does that look like? You start your day with the things of God. You wake up and before you grab your phone and before you move on to the next thing and before the worries of the world hit you and just pile up and you wake up in just enough time to go and pack a lunch... No,

no, no. Stop. Be aware there's a God. He has a kingdom. You're going to live for Him. Set your minds. Prepare your minds. Focus on the future hope. Literally think about it and obey God's Word rather than what the world says.

I wanted to be varsity as JR's varsity: four buttons undone, shoes perfectly unlaced, wristband on the forearm, you know hat on top of my head, earbuds draped over my ears, shirt untucked. So, what, we're to be holy as He's holy, so we're looking at Him. How is He holy? Who does He love? How does he talk? Where does he go? Where do you want me to go? We're to fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, throwing off the sin that so easily entangles us and living a life committed to Him. Being holy as He is holy, which means- you ready? Here's what that means, and I don't want to surprise you. I don't want you to come here, get two years in and be like "oh, they bait and switched me with that." Here's what it means. Being really, very weird. You are a stranger and an alien living in a world that you don't belong to.

I gave a message about being a weird parent which turned into an Instagram video about weird parenting and the response was overwhelming from parents. They're like, thank you so much. We felt crazy. We felt crazy for not giving our kids phones when everybody else did or saying they couldn't do this or go there. Thinking about, we are so weird. When my kids say, "hey, but y'all are the weird parents." I'm like praise God. Like that is a badge of honor. I'm trying so hard to be the weird parent. I'm so glad you see it too. You're affirming me in that. That's what I'm striving for. That we're weird in the way we think about phones. Weird in the way we think about social media. Weird in the way that we think about sleepovers. We're so weird. It's like what oh you thought I was trying to parent like everyone else in the world does? That's what you thought? No, no, no. God has a special calling on your life. He wants to do something really unique through you. You are a princess and a prince in another kingdom an heir to a throne you're going to be somewhere forever and ever and ever you're not trying to live like them.

I talked to a dad whose son lived his junior high and high school life perfecting the game of football. Private coaches and summer ball and workouts and trainers and diets and eating and protein and all the things. Practice, practice, practice. But the problem was where they went to school the football team- they weren't good guys. The locker room discussion was full of sexual conquests and who did what with who, when, and where, and how many times. And the music that was played in the locker room was for a lack of better term, satanic. That's like a weird parent talk. It was satanic because it was. And everybody's vaping and everybody's looking for the next party.

And this young man had efforted to be an influence among his peers, and he realized "I've reached as far as I can influence them and now I risk being influenced by them." And so going into a season of something that was so important to him and said, "Dad I don't know that I should play." And the dad said, "I don't think you should. It's not going to make you more holy." Wait, hold up. Hold on. Are you telling me your child being holy is more important than your child getting their college paid for and being amazing at throwing an oval football? Wait what? You are so weird. Isn't that weird? It's like really, I mean come on. Because I've been reading this like anywhere in here does this say to be holy? Oh yeah, it does, and you think, 'man that's crazy!' No, it's not crazy. It's like super normal Christianity. Like low bar Christianity. That was

crazy. No, not even a little bit. No, not even a little bit crazy. Like that was like basic bottom, let's just slowly take a step of faithfulness kind of stuff. And it seems crazy in our culture. I promise you it is not. You think Peter's going to meet you at the pearly gates and be like "wait, hold on before you come in here" it's, oh no really, you sacrificed football? What were you thinking?" Not going to happen.

Hey, I'm not I'm not telling you how to parent or how to think about these things. I'm telling you to think about these things. I'm not telling you what to do I'm saying, "hey, make sure you wrestle with them." You may have different convictions, that's okay. I respect that. You may land in different places, and you know do different things. Some of your kids may be on that team and they may have converted half the football team or half the basketball team or half the cheerleaders, right? In the way that they're faithfully sharing, I'm like man "praise God! I'm so glad they have them there." But you've got to wrestle with these things. The call is to be holy.

1 Peter 1:17

***Since you call on a Father who judges each person's work impartially live out your time as foreigners here in reverent fear.***

Now listen, if you were not here this summer, we did a series at Harris Creek called awe. A-W-E. And the first message of that series is we said, "Hey, what does it mean to fear God?" And I said, "I'm going to write down two words and the two words that I wrote down are 'awe' and 'reverence' because that's what people think- to fear God just means to stand in awe of Him like a sunset." And I said, "no, the fear of the Lord, which the Bible says over 300 times that we are to fear God has always meant trembling." It is always the word has always meant trembling. He's talking here, when he says, fear God. He's not being in awe like a beautiful sunset. He's saying you're going to face judgment, man. And you can't get up there and be like "oh I didn't know you told me to be holy." Because of where you're at right now, that excuse has been ripped away from you. He's saying, you're going to face judgment so I'm not going to go further into that if you missed the series go back and listen to it. Verse 18:

***For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors but with the precious blood of Christ a lamb without blemish or defect. He was chosen before the creation of the world but was revealed in these last times for your sake. Through Him, you believe in God who raised Him from the dead and glorified Him, and so your faith and hope are in God.***

That's one of those things I read and I am like, what is really going on there? Something about gold and silver and perishable in the ways of ancestors. Something is happening there that I don't see in a plain reading in English. So, I started reading the commentaries trying to understand history and sure enough amongst Peter's listeners were three kinds of people: free people who had never been slaves, freed people who had been slaves but they served their term or they had been purchased out, and then slaves- people in the church who were slaves.

And what was customary in this time is- slavery was different than in America's history- it wasn't a racial slavery. You would come up as a bond servant under somebody in exchange for food and shelter. You would work for them, but it wasn't by any means righteous or right or consistent with the will of God. And what was happening is when these when slaves would fulfill their term or a relative would purchase their freedom, they would then go to the Temple of a little "g" god and they would pay some silver or gold that they had collected or stolen or worked for and they would pay that to the god little "g" god. And they would come up under them and say, now I'm a slave to this little "d" deity presumably for protection from them.

Right, now, Peter has just told us in chapter one it's the shield of God that protects you there's one true God and He's purchased your freedom from slavery not with gold and silver like your ancestors but with the blood of his own son Jesus Christ. This is what he's saying: your holiness- it's been paid for- it's been purchased, so your faith and your hope are in Him alone.

## 2. *We're to persevere in holiness knowing Who paid for it.*

We're to persevere in holiness knowing who paid for it. Peter is doing such a masterful job of reminding us of the Gospel that our sins have been paid for that our freedom has been purchased. That act was not of our own doing that we can't just come under some little "g" god for 70 or 80 years, but that we have been purchased. Our freedom has been purchased by the One true God so that we can live with Him forever and ever and ever and ever.

There's a story told in a book called *Scandalous Freedom* and I'm going to tell you the story- very difficult to validate a story in a time and a place I didn't live. I don't want you to be distracted wondering "hey, is the story true?" You could think about it like a parable if you want. What does the story illustrate? But the story was told of Abraham Lincoln.

Abraham Lincoln walked up on a slave auction and as the auctioneer was shouting numbers and as people were bidding on other people to presumably be their property a woman was escorted up onto the platform, shackled hands and feet. Lincoln stood in the back and as people began to bid. He began to bid, signaling to the auctioneer, bidding up the price as the woman looked out she saw just another white man thinking he just wants me as his "property." *I'm saying in air quotes.* Lincoln won the auction. He walked up to the woman. They unshackled her hands and feet and he simply said, "young lady, you are free." She stood there confused. She said, "what do you mean?" He said, "I mean you're free." She said, "freedom. What is this? Are you saying that I'm free to say whatever I want to say?" He said "Yes ma'am, you're free to say whatever you want to say." "Are you saying that I'm free to do whatever I want to do?" "Yes, my dear, you are free to do whatever you want to do." And now with tears running down her cheeks as the sobriety of reality is hitting her mind she says "are you saying that I'm free to go wherever I want to go?" And he said, "I'm telling you; you are free to go wherever you want to go."

She looked at him and said "well then I imagine I will go with you. Because if you're the kind of person..." with my commentary now... if you're the kind of person that is going to risk your life, to stand on truth and risk your resources, to bring about my freedom then I imagine you might have something to say about how maybe I should live my life. Now I'm not talking about Lincoln. I'm talking about Jesus who gave his blood to set you free. Not his monetary resources. Not stroke a check or gathered some gold or some silver- all of which is His. He gave his life.

Bled out on a cross to say that you are His. That you belong to Him. Filled you with his Holy Spirit. Do you think that He might have some desire in where you would go and what you would say and how you would live and interact with His people? Do you think the Spirit of God might have a desire for you? Don't stoop to do anything less.

Have every conversation He wants you to have. Love as radically and recklessly as He would want you to love. If it means unbelievably radical life change, understand it is simply basic devotion that He's calling you to. It's not that big of a deal unless you don't do it. But the bar is not nearly as high as you think it is. That's why I told you in the beginning, He's asking you to be weird. Stand out... in the world. Verse 22:

***Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for each other, love one another deeply, from the heart.***

Okay, he's saying here's a sign of holiness: you love each other; you care for one another; you get along. Verse 23:

***For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring Word of God.***

The Word of God is the gospel now preserved in the Bible, so we live by the imperishable seed that is the Word of God and then he quotes from Isaiah chapter 40 verse 6:

***“All people are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of the Lord endures forever.”***

And so, he bakes in this this metaphor, this illustration, from the prophet Isaiah and he says “hey Harris Creek, do you remember the sunflowers?” Yeah. If you weren't here this summer, this field out here had the most breathtaking- almost perfect picture of sunflowers that would all face the same way, all the same size. It was an Instagram dream, you know, people are coming from all over. Like some of your Christmas cards are going to have those sunflowers in them, you know. It was so beautiful. You couldn't not talk about them. Like, how do I have to fit this in a sermon you know then, and I did. You would be like, man, coming up over that hill from the north on traveling south on 84 and you get over the hill and it would just take your breath away. Just a field with a blanket of yellow. And what is left today is stalks and dirt. And he's saying man you are going to live a life placed in a box and placed in a hole in the ground like your great, great grandparents. That's what's going to happen. And I don't care if you have your names on the top of 30-story buildings. Those buildings are going to come down, and your name is going to be forgotten and to dust you will return and the thing that lives forever is the souls of people and the Word of God. Period... as my Gen Z friends would say.

Therefore chapter 2... and chapter titles, breaks are added later, not inerrant, not inspired by the Spirit... verses added later this is one idea I'll tell you why I think so one it starts with:



**Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.**

The Lord is good and His Word endures forever. He has this list of malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy, slander of every kind. He's saying, "hey, you want to be holy? You're holy? You're God's people? Then you get along with God's people, and you love God's people." And as he's talking about how you love God's people he lists out these sins. All of these sins are relational sins. These are all sins of people that break fellowship.

These are sins like, "well, I'm going to tell you one thing but I'm going to act a different way." These are sins like, "well I'm going to want what you have." These are sins like, "hey I'm going to talk about people poorly who aren't present." And he says this is inconsistent with what it means to be holy. You do this; you're not holy. It's not holy. It's not holy to show up to life group and say, "hey, did you see so and so, what were they wearing? What were they thinking? I can't believe it." No, no, no. You go to them. Leave your gift at the altar and start by saying will you forgive me because I said something about you behind your back.

And when others in your life group do it you say, "hey, whoa time out. You need to go tell them or I will, and that's how we preserve unity here." And that's just normal. Not crazy. Normal. Totally normal. And when you see someone wanting things that they don't have and that desire growing put your arm around him. You remind them how much you love them, and you let them know that's not going to carry them toward holiness. It's going to pull them away from it. He says a response to holy living results in love for God's people, repentance from sin, and a desire for spiritual growth; that you would crave the Word of God like an infant desires milk. That you would fight for it, that you would want it, that you would crave it.

### *3. We're to practice holiness with people of God's Word.*

We're to practice holiness with people of God's Word. It's a dream of a life group passage and it is why when you gather in your life group it is so unbelievably, incredibly important that you are not just giving your opinion and your preferences and your values, but that you are speaking to each other from the Word of God.

When someone says, "well, I don't know if we should go private school or public school. I don't know if we should buy this car. I don't know if we should change neighborhoods. I don't know if I should quit my job. I don't know if we should have a date night. I don't know if..." And you don't say "well, my wise uncle or I read in Forbes magazine or one time I heard that..." you say, "well, here's what the Word of God says and in doing so you let the Spirit of God convict their heart accordingly.

You don't have to over-index on control. You can't control anybody. You're going to wear yourself out. You say, "this is what the Word of God says and here's how I'll pray for you. And now you'll be free to do whatever you think you should do after you've prayed through these Scriptures." And what it does for you is it makes you know the Word of God. And you have more tools available to you than ever before. You've got Google. You can say, "what does the

Bible say about materialism?" "What does the Bible say about private school?" "What does the Bible say..." And Google is going to say here's a bunch of verses.

This week in our life group someone said "hey, I think I need to have this really difficult conversation with someone. You guys don't know them. Here's the situation. I think that obedience for me is to have this conversation. Will you guys pray for me and let me know if you have any counsel?" And here was the first text that was received. The realest life group, that's ours in case you were wondering. If yours was the realest ...just kidding... it says, "I think that's the right kind next step." Hey, I think right? There's even like humility in there. "I don't see a reason not to do it and then here are the verses why: James 5, Matthew 18, Galatians 6, Luke 17, and there's some other verses. I'm praying now for you that God's kindness leads them to repentance and let's wait for others to weigh in."

That is a near perfect response. "Hey, I'm not a hundred percent sure, but it seems to me you're moving the right direction and the reason that I come to that conclusion is because of these Scriptures. If you haven't looked at them check out these scriptures and now I'm going to pray for you that God would continue to lead you, but let's wait because wisdom comes from the council of many not just me." That is almost perfectly executed. That is totally normal in life group. That's what you leave here and do. You're not wielding the Bible like a sword beating people over the head about it you're like, "hey, I'm praying for you. Here's some verses that speak into it, I trust that the Spirit of God is in you and going to lead you but make sure these verses guide your steps."

And I think sometimes we gather in life group, and we try to make people more like us not like Jesus. The chasm between you and Jesus is really, really big even the one in the room who's most like Him. Still a giant chasm between you and Him. People will be like well you know, "I don't ever buy a car that's more than fifteen thousand dollars." "Wow that's neat, cool, you know, I mean good for you." But that that's not helpful. What's helpful is "hey, here are the Scriptures that speak to these kinds of things. Pray through them and let the Spirit of God guide you." That's incredibly helpful.

And as you come together as you see something that is inconsistent with what the Spirit of God would have for someone say it in kind, loving, gentleness but clarity. And here's how you know that you're led by the Spirit. If they don't listen to you, you're okay. See, when you're led by the flesh, someone doesn't listen to you it will drive you mad. But when your led by the Spirit, you're just an agent of the Spirit. You're like, "hey, here's what I think the Spirit wants you to hear, but I may be wrong. Here's some verses. Read the verses. Apply them to your life." And that's what we're doing as we shepherd each other here.

Small groups exist for lots of different reasons in different churches. Maybe you grew up in a Sunday school model. Maybe you grew up in a Bible school model. Maybe you grew up in a Bible study model or maybe you grew up in a supper club model. Here it's a shepherding tool. It's the first line of defense. That when something happens in your life worthy of celebration they're throwing the biggest party. And when something happens in your life that is burdensome they're showing up and they're picking up a side of that burden. They say, "We got you. We're going to carry you in the season."

I don't even know you well. I don't, I don't. We don't need that people are like, “oh, but I don't have a lot in common with my life group.” Good. That's what makes a good life group. When you're homogeneous, when you all look the same, and talk the same, and act the same, and spend the same, and have the same amount of resources, terrible life group. Terrible life group. Great bridesmaids, maybe, bad life group. Okay, like, good for the bachelor party, bad for the life group. The life group is like, “oh, I love a diversity of thought. I love that we have different struggles. Different problems. That we can care for each other in different ways. That we talk in different ways. That's the body of Christ.” And that's your local expression of the church.

In summary, out of time. You want me to keep going, Jose? In summary, prepare to live a holy life. Prepare your mind to live a holy life. Persevere in holiness knowing Who paid for it- what was paid for. And practice holiness with people of God's Word.

I thought about this I was like, “Who's the holiest person I know? Who's the holiest person I know?” I thought about my grandmother- my mom's mom. She's the matriarch. Her name was Helen May, but everyone called her “honey.” Everyone in the community: the mailman, everybody. I mean, her letters would be addressed “honey.” She grew up; she lived in a town of 400 people. Her farmhouse overlooked their field and then on the other side of the field was their church and there's the cemetery where all her ancestors were and there was just a holiness that marked her. Now when I say holiness don't you think Pollyanna? All is right in the world like, “hey there, brother, so great to...” No, no, no, none of that.

She was gritty. She was gritty, man. Every day at five o'clock, she'd open a Pearl Light- that's a beer in case you're Baptist, and she would sit, every day at five o'clock, and she'd sit and overlook that and her and my grandfather would be in and out of conversations and prayer and pray for rain and pray for these things... And, she wasn't just talk, I mean, she would show up. Somebody needed something and they would meet that need like no one I've ever seen. You know, they just were there, right? I mean they just put, just find, need to meet them.

I would go over there every Sunday after church and when I would go anytime she would see me she'd say the same thing. She would get down on my level and she'd say “Hey how's my mighty man of God? How's my mighty man of God today? And when you're six, it's like, “oh man Grandma thinks something, mighty man of God, you know, I'm in the Lord's army, yes sir.” And when you're 10. It's still how cool, mighty man of God. 12. But when you turn 16, you are so confused all the hormones are overwhelming your body and you just want more than anything to be liked and accepted. You want to be on varsity. And if somebody says, “hey you can be cool just vape this you know smoke this drink this.” You're like, “okay, that's going to make me cool, I'll do it. I'll do it.” And she comes and she says, “how's my mighty man of God today?” and my inner narrative as “you don't know half of it- if you just knew, if you only knew. You don't know.” but those words are so powerful. That's a power in them. It's identity language man. Someone coming to you and saying, “no, no, no, no, this is who you are. Oh, you think you're confused. You're who you know, what you love, and who you love, and how you think, and how you feel, this is who you are.”

This is what Peter is saying to you, “you are Holy because He is Holy. He made you holy. Don't stoop to be worldly. You don't need to be worldly.” Be a weird parent. Be a weird college

student. "I went my whole college life, you know, I never got drunk or slept around." "What? That's so weird." "I know, I belong to another kingdom. Be weird."

Let me pray you would.

We're going to need your help on that, God. Would you just make us holy. If we were trying to be healthy, we'd eat better, work out or something, but to be holy it's like what have we to do but look to You and beg You to make us holy. To obey your Word. To live in community. To walk in righteousness. We need your help. Pray that you'd place a "honey" in our life that would just say this is who you are and this is whose you are. Somebody here is like "but I'm an adulterer" and no, you're holy. They say, "but I'm an alcoholic," and you say "no, you're holy." I said, "but man I slept around this year." "Yeah you're holy." The enemy, the accuser, he speaks other identities over us, and I just pray your Spirit would be stronger. That as we sing this song that Christ would just be magnified just bigger in our lives. That we would look to you and that your Holy Spirit would conform us to His image and character. In Jesus name. Amen.