

## **Title: Living as Royal Children: Fixing Our Hope Completely on God's Grace**

Sermon Summary: This sermon explores 1 Peter 1:1-13, emphasizing the radical transformation from slavery to sin into royal children of God. The pastor challenges believers to recognize their true identity as princes and princesses of the Kingdom of Heaven, not based on their own merit but through God's abundant mercy in Christ. The central command is to "fix your hope completely" on the grace of God—past, present, and future. This requires two simultaneous actions: preparing our minds for action (a decisive choice to engage spiritually) and maintaining sober-mindedness (an ongoing lifestyle of spiritual balance). The sermon emphasizes that understanding our privileged position in salvation—greater even than the Old Testament prophets who wrote about Christ without fully understanding—should compel us to live differently. True hope is grounded in the objective reality of Christ's resurrection, not subjective feelings. The Christian life is not passive waiting for blessings but active spiritual discipline, reflecting on God's love, meditating on His Word, accepting His will, seeking His presence, and taking godly action.

### **Key Points:**

- Believers are no longer slaves but royal children of God, with an identity that reflects their heavenly citizenship
- The word "therefore" in verse 13 bridges the theological truths of verses 1-12 with practical application for daily living
- "Fix your hope completely" is the main imperative, accomplished through two participial actions
- Preparing your mind for action involves: reflection on God's love (leading to awe and integrity), meditation on Scripture (leading to awareness and contentment), acceptance of God's will (leading to willingness and self-discipline), seeking God's presence (leading to confidence and courage), choosing godly direction (leading to focus), and taking godly action (leading to purpose and obedience)
- Staying sober-minded means maintaining spiritual, emotional, and physical balance free from excesses, rampant passions, rashness, and confusion
- This is an ongoing lifestyle choice, not a one-time decision

- Modern Christians have a more privileged understanding of salvation than Old Testament prophets like Moses, Isaiah, and Zechariah
- Hope is grounded in objective truth—Christ's resurrection—not subjective experience
- We must "preach the gospel to ourselves" continually to remember what God has done
- The grace we hope in is threefold: past grace (salvation), present grace (daily transformation), and future grace (Christ's return and full revelation)
- When believers die, they step into an understanding of grace that surpasses anything possible in this life

### **Scripture Reference:**

- 1 Peter 1:1-13 (primary focus, with verse 13 as the central command)
- Colossians 1:1-4 (referenced regarding appearing with Christ in glory)

### **Stories:**

- The opening illustration of waking with amnesia and the Father revealing your true identity as His royal child versus a slave
- The cultural context of girding up robes with a belt to prepare for work in ancient times
- Personal testimony about the pastor's friend Chuck—their friendship, memories of cruising in a Montego GT with wedgie speakers, and Chuck's death in 2020
- The deaths of multiple close friends and family: mother (2004), father (2014), best friend Chuck (2020), best friend Vernon, Kelly, Chuck's wife, and Vernon's wife
- Leslie losing her father and the celebration of life service emphasizing the joy he now experiences
- The pastor's recent hospitalization when his blood oxygen dropped to dangerous levels and he contemplated the possibility of death
- References to historical Christian figures: Martin Luther (1500s), Desert Fathers, Saint John of the Cross, Augustine, and Erasmus—all emphasizing the importance of reflection upon God