Knowing and Going by God's Grace

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Date: 28 November 2021

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[0:00] It's come no longer fear for in the pain our God draws near. Now we have to ask ourselves, well, where's that pain coming from?

Why are we involved in trials? Why is there evil in the world? Why do we suffer for doing good? We understand when we suffer for doing wrong. But what about when we're trying to be kind and gentle and loving and giving and sacrificial?
And we still get grief from the people around us, from the world, from situations. Well, it fires a faith worth more than gold. Now look at this.
And there his faithfulness is told. Where's there? Where's the there? Where is it placing God's faithfulness being shown? In what? In the pain.
In the suffering. In the trial. For in the pain our God draws near. And there his faithfulness is told. Paul said it this way.
[1:01] When I am weak, he's strong. In my weaknesses, people are able to see the greatness and goodness of God. Because the only explanation for me as a weak and sinful man doing anything righteous and good is God.

Not me. And so Paul said to live is Christ. That's what we want to talk about this morning. We want to glory in Christ.
We want to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ. So we're in first Peter. This will kind of be officially the first message. God willing of many, if he gives us all breath for life.
To go through this book together. So we're only going to cover two verses. And that's pretty good. Because boy, I tell you. I exercised a lot of discipline this week in my study.
I got through Peter, an apostle. And I was like, I got a sermon here. I don't know what I'm going to do. So off we went trying to hit the delete button and all that kind of mess and edit down through this.
[2:10] Read with me verses 1 and 2. Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ. Now that's his greeting.

That's Peter's salutation. And it's fairly standard, fairly typical of how the apostles particularly, Peter, James, John, began their letters.
An epistle is an ancient letter. And these letters were written by individuals for specific reasons targeting different groups of people.
Sometimes it was a local church, like the church in Ephesus that we read about earlier. Or the church in Colossae. Local groups of believers like we are today.
If they wrote a letter to us today, it might read, Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ to the saints at Grace Church, Williamsburg. It's just fairly standard.
[3:35] If you go back over, hold your finger there and look at Ephesians with me, since we were there in our call to worship. You see these parallels, these comparisons.

Paul, that's just exactly how Peter starts his letter. Peter, the name, an apostle of Jesus Christ or Christ Jesus.
He adds, by the will of God. Now he addresses this to the people he wants to see this, read this, understand this, to the saints who are at Ephesus.
So this is a local letter. This is meant to be a letter for a local congregation. Even though it might be passed around to other congregations in the area, he's specific about who he wants to send it to.
Then notice in verse 2, very similar to Peter, grace to you and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
[4:32] So these are common greetings in the ancient world, particularly when they're going to write in some type of an official capacity. Now the title of my message this morning, Knowing and Going by God's Grace.

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Knowing and Going. What I have in mind there is what we know, how we think, how we mentally process, make meaning of, and interpret, perceive our world.
And what happens to us in our world. That's the knowing part. The going part is then what we do. How we live in light of what we perceive. What we make meaning of.
How we interpret the issues or matters of life. So knowing and going. And it's all by God's grace, even for unbelievers, whether they realize it or not.
They live by the grace of God. If God removed his hand from the world, we'd all perish. So even unbelievers receive the rain. They have food. They get to hold their babies.
[5:36] They get to enjoy the material blessings of the earth. Knowing and going by God's grace. Right away, as we delve into verse 1, I want to put this up on the screen for you.

Point number 1 that I want to emphasize. God's servant by grace. God's servant by grace. And here I have in mind Peter. An apostle of Christ Jesus.
This man is God's servant. One of the reasons that I want to spend a little time highlighting this is because I want you to grasp that these are real people in real time in history, living their lives and interacting with their world just like you and I do.
These are regular people in many ways. Common people. Everyday people. Now we're going to talk about the special designation Peter an apostle. We're not apostles.
So there's a difference there. But in many other ways, this is just a man. But he's a transformed man. And he's writing as a transformed man.
[6:47] He's not the man he used to be. He's a real person. He's a saint, a sinner, and a sufferer. Just like you and I. He was Simon.

He lived a lot of his life as Simon. He lived with his brother, Andrew, and his father, John.
And together those men had a fishing business that they ran on the Sea of Galilee. They made their fishermen, their living as fishermen.
It's Galilee is up in the northern part of Israel, right at the top northern shore of the Sea of Galilee. They lived in a city named Capernaum.
Now imagine, imagine this. Their lives changed in their very first encounter with Jesus. The very first meeting, everything changed for Simon and Andrew.
[7:48] So think about this with me. Imagine the effect of meeting someone for the first time and having that person change your name for you.

Well, you're not Jeff anymore. You're George. Well, what right do you have to do that? My mama named me Jeff. I want to be Jeff. Nope.
You're going to be George now. What is that? But that's exactly what happened in this case. Andrew introduced his brother Peter to Jesus in John 1, verse 42.
Jesus said something to the effect, your name is Simon, and now it will be Cephas. Cephas. And so he changed Peter's name on the spot.
Cephas is Aramaic. Peter is Greek. Both the Aramaic and the Greek mean the same thing.
[8:50] Rock or stone. Rock or stone. Cephas. Cephas and Peter. Aramaic and Greek. Aramaic, Greek, and Hebrew were all spoken in and around Israel during the life of Jesus.

In fact, it's very likely that Aramaic was the native tongue that Jesus spoke. Aramaic is a Semitic language. It's more like Hebrew than it is Greek.
We have several books in the Old Testament that have portions written in our earliest manuscripts in Aramaic. Like Daniel, portions of Daniel, large segments of Daniel, Ezra, part of Jeremiah.
And then we have a few places in the New Testament where just some phrases or words are used. The New Testament wasn't written in Aramaic, even though they spoke in Aramaic.
And Greek during this time. And Hebrew. These are all the influences of different cultures coming into the land of Israel. For instance, if you remember what Jesus, one of the phrases Jesus used when he was on the cross.
[10:02] Eli, Eli, Lassa. I can't say it all. But my God, my God, why have you forsaken me? That's in Aramaic. And that's why you see that. Written in kind of a weird language.

That's what he was speaking on the cross. Now, like each of us, and this is important for me as I read through this. Peter had his successes and he had his failures.
And all of this is just coming out as I try to introduce to you, not assuming that you know these things, this man who says, Peter. Peter. Many of these people that he's writing to would have known these common things about the apostle Peter that I'm giving to you now.

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Perhaps some of them wouldn't, but many of them would. Peter, like us, had his successes and failures. He had his strengths and he had his weaknesses. He had his times of spiritual discernment and he had times of spiritual dullness, didn't he?
Like us, Peter was a bit capricious. He was a bit fickle. He was a bit changeable. Let me give you some instances. He was often insightful.
[11:17] He was often impulsive. And he was often irritating. I get irritated with Peter sometimes, but it's because I see me in Peter in lots of ways.

And I get irritated with me. He could be courageous. He could be common. And he could be cowardly. The same man.
He would confess Jesus as Messiah and vow to draw his sword and die in a blaze of glory with him in one moment.
And in the next moment, he would rebuke Jesus and deny him three times. He was capricious.
He was a man's man. Appreciate that about him. He was a man's man who seemed to live mouth first. But he was a man who grew in grace and in the knowledge of God.
[12:19] So Peter gives us hope. Even for us mouthy ones. So he learned. He learned from being with Jesus to live heart first.

He learned to care. He learned to consider. He learned to think. He learned to act with grace. And his entire letter is written full of grace.
He learned the way of grace from his master. Peter lived boldly. He wept bitterly. And he died bravely.
As a martyr. Tradition has it that Peter was crucified upside down. When it came time for him to be crucified, he said he wasn't worthy to be crucified in the same manner as his Lord.
And so he insisted that they put him upside down. That's what they did. I can't imagine anything being crucified. I can't imagine being crucified unless it was being crucified upside down.
[13:21] If you've ever stood on your head for just a little while, that's not a fun thing to do after just a few. For me, a few seconds.

I don't like it. All the blood rushed into my head. It was that's horrible to think about. Now, I like to imagine a few things about Peter as I read through his life and his encounters, especially with Jesus and with his fellow disciples.
Boy, it's very revealing as to his character and his manner and the drive of his life. So I imagine that he laughed big and loved bigger.
I just think he was an all or nothing guy. I think he was all just heart first. Everything he did was pedal to the metal. There's no half measure in Peter.
And I love that about him. But it got him in trouble sometime. But you don't want to walk up to the Lord of glory, who is the creator of the universe and rebuke him. That's just not a good idea.
[14:19] Yeah, but that's what he did. And he did things like that. He was the acknowledged leader of the disciples. And in Jesus absent, he led the little band of followers faithfully for Jesus sake.

Now, Peter also made good on his confession. You remember the last thing that Jesus said to him before he ascended? Peter, do you love me? And he went through that in John 21. All right. Well, Peter said, you know, I love you, Lord.
I do love you. I do love you. I do love you. Right. Three different times he was charged with that. And three different times he confessed his love.
Well, he made good on that love for Christ. He did. Even after denying the Lord, he made good on that. He was also commissioned by Jesus in that moment. Feed my sheep.
Tend my lambs. Care for my people. In other words, he was saying, Peter, lay down your life on behalf of my people. Follow my example and do as I've done.
[15:17] And Peter pledged to do it. And you know what? He made good on it. He did make good on it. He sacrificially served God's people for Jesus sake.

Peter was a transformed man. A transformed man. That's Peter. Peter goes on to say this. An apostle. An apostle of Jesus Christ.
Now, here is his official title. It carries the authority of heaven itself. Why? Why? Well, here's why. An apostle is one sent on behalf of.
That's the literal rendition of it. The rendering of an apostle is one who is sent on behalf of. Peter is sent on behalf of whom?

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What does he say in the text? Look right there in the first little phrase of your Bibles. Peter, an apostle of. Jesus Christ. That's pretty big, isn't it?
[16:17] That's pretty important. He is an apostle sent by and on behalf of the Lord Jesus Christ. An apostle, then, was someone who personally witnessed Jesus's life on earth.

They personally witnessed his death. They personally witnessed his resurrection. They personally sat under his teaching. And they were personally commissioned for service by Jesus himself.
Now, that's the basic criteria for being an apostle. Now, given that criteria for being an apostle, how many apostles do we have in our modern time?
When all of the apostles died off in ancient times, how many apostles then were raised up to replace them so that now, even today, we have this transferring of apostleship to different people in our time?
How many? And the answer is zero. That's right. Greg and I have been commissioned, as it were, by the Lord as under shepherds, not as apostles.
[17:44] There's a very critical reason why Greg and I are under shepherds of the great high shepherd. And we point you not to us, but to the Lord as the Lord of this church.

We don't run the church. Jesus runs the church. We help administrate. Right? We help you understand how to use your gifts in the church. We make sure that sound doctrine is being held to in the church because the truth is how we learn to love one another and serve one another in the church, etc.
For example, even with this thing coming next door. Now, if we wanted to, we could just say, hey, look, this is a good idea. We're going for it. You guys just come along. But we're involving you in this because we want you to have ownership.
We want you to share in the development of what's going on with this suite and be a part of it and feel a personal part in what's happening.
One of the reasons we want to do that is because it's exciting. It's fun. It's good. That's a lot of work, too. No doubt about that. We're going to have to work hard together. But those are all ways that God brings us together and puts us on the same page, as it were, laboring and serving shoulder to shoulder for the greater glory of God.
[19:02] It's the way that God is using us for ministry in our local area as a local church. Jesus is the Lord of the church. We are not apostles.

No one can meet the conditions of apostleship today. So there are no modern day apostles. The reason is so important, and it's relative to Peter's purpose for mentioning it in the opening of his letter.
Why would he say Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ? Is he bragging? Is he trying to lord it over? Is he making some kind of official statement that says, so all of you get in line?
I've got something important to say, and you need to listen up. You know, this kind of rough and gruff. Absolutely not. He's not bragging. What he's doing is this. He's emphasizing that he's writing to them on behalf of Jesus.
Now, not everybody should say that or could say that. But there were many false teachers who were. And Paul was battling them to the nth degree in Corinth, especially.
[20:13] They'd even shown up in Ephesus so that he was having to tell Timothy, Timothy, man up and stand up to these guys. There's a lot at stake if these false teachers keep doing what they're doing.

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ. I'm legit. I'm representing our Lord and our Savior. Therefore, he is instructing them in the very words of God himself.
That's important, folks. Hear it this way. This is God's letter through Peter for them.
Now, none of us, including Greg and I, can say that today. If I write you a letter today, I can't start it off with Jeff, a apostle of God or a whatever of God or and make it sound like what I'm writing is scripture.
So you better take this as. But do you know that there are people today who do that? And who say that in their ministries? So that if you disagree with something that they offer you as an opinion, you're going to get rebuked for it and say, hey, don't stand in the way of God's anointed now.
[21:32] Don't mess with God's messenger. Kind of nonsense. The only time that you and I are on safe ground in speaking the truth in love is when we're speaking scripture to each other.

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In other words, Peter's being used to write the Bible. No, we have the Bible. We have everything about the Bible that we need. So God doesn't need anybody any longer to write more Bible.
So I have to be careful even when I talk to you, even in casual conversation that I'm not saying things to you like God told me. Do you understand that's the kind of thing that prophets and apostles said to validate the fact that they were speaking on behalf of God?
I don't want that on my shoulders. The only time I'm speaking on behalf of God is when I'm speaking scripture to you. I can give you my opinion. I can help you try to discern the best course of action.
But at the end of the day, my opinion is no stronger or better than yours. And so we all need to be concerned with using God's word and holding to God's word.
[22:45] In other words, folks, this is a little bit of a long winded way of saying this. This isn't advice. These are not Peter's opinions, suggestions or Peter's ideas.

This is God's instruction for his children. And it's instruction for them to do what? Will you look at chapter four, verse 19?
This is just one that I picked out. I could pick out a number of instructions here that God is giving to his children through Peter. Here is the instruction that they are to suffer according to the will of God, entrusting their souls to a faithful creator in doing what is right.
Now, that's one of the pieces of instruction God is giving his children through the apostle Peter. And boy, do we need God's guidance to live like that or what?
To entrust our souls to God in a time of severe trial, testing and suffering. Now, we take scripture on faith so that we believe this is the word of God from God to us.
[23:58] We believe this. We believe that Peter was God's instrument in writing scripture and that what he wrote to these people, binding on their hearts and consciences in that time also is binding for us.

Because why? We are God's people. We are just as much in need of God's instruction in these matters as these people were in their day and time. So we listen to Peter because we realize this is God's word to us.
To us. To us. And we treasure it for being that. Like Peter, we also believe that this word is sufficient to lead us in a God-pleasing life of grace.
God didn't leave anything out of his word that we need to live a life that pleases him in holiness. If he did, he set us up for failure. And we don't believe that's what God is like.
Now, to say Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, commissioned by Christ, serving Christ, an under-shepherd, as it were, of Christ, to say all of that is simply our beginning.
[25:10] That's the beginning. That's how he chose to start his letter. Now, let me throw this up on the screen for you. What Peter says next frames his point for the entire letter.

Here's what he says. We are God's people living by God's grace. Don't let the simplicity of that fool you. That's profound.
Those twin truths define us as Christians in our daily relationship with our world, just as they define the Christians of Peter's day and time. We are God's people living by God's grace.
Now, I don't know how your translation reads. Mine is the New American Standard translation. And it reads, Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ to those who reside.
Actually, in the Greek text, what this reads literally is, Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, elect. That's the very next word in the Greek, elect.
[26:16] So what are we dealing with here? Well, let me go to point number two, God's servants. God's servants by grace.

We have God's servant, Peter. Now God's servants. We're being brought into the mix. He writes, Hear me out for a minute.
Eclectoi. It's plural. Eclectos is the singular. Eclectoi, referring to those whom God has chosen.
So it is a literal reading. Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who are chosen, or to the elect, elect is the very next idea.
All bound up in that word, electoi. Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, electoi parapidimoi.
[27:39] Parapidimoi. To all those elect aliens is one translation. It could be elect strangers, elect pilgrims, elect sojourners, elect exiles.

All of those words are synonymous. Electos is our word election. Election. Election. So let me put this up on the screen, too.

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The New American Standard Bible chooses to place the emphasis of election in this verse this way. To those, and then drop down all those words, and then drop down who are chosen.
You see those two underlines? To those who reside as aliens scattered throughout these different provinces and regions who are chosen. Now, what's happening in the New American Standard is this.
This structure is attempting to connect and emphasize election more closely with the concepts of verse 2, which is legitimate. That's the idea that's being carried forward.
[28:45] Your Bible may read a little differently so that when you get to right here. To those who reside as aliens, yours might say to elect exiles.

Because that's literally how it reads. To elect exiles scattered throughout these regions. And then it leaves this off and goes right into according to for verse 2.
The reason that the New American Standard translators put this who are chosen in there is because that is what is meant in the idea of election right here.
To those elect. And they repeat the idea. To those who are chosen. It's just a way of smoothing it out a little bit, but also of making emphasis.
Emphasis. And that's what's coming through in my translation. To those who are chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father. To those elect people who are chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father would be a smoother way.
[29:54] Now look, whatever the translation that you have. The emphasis should be clearly placed on God's electing grace. That's how Peter wants to begin his letter.

That's what he throws out right in the front. And that's what everything else is going to be subordinate to. This main idea of election.
I'm going to show you that. His electing grace. That is his choice of who he saves. This is Peter's way of offering the very highest level of comfort and encouragement to his fellow Christians who are living in hardship.
As whatever your translation says. Aliens. Strangers. Pilgrims. Sojourners. Exiles in the world. Now the question is this. What does Peter mean by elect?
Now these people wouldn't have struggled with that. We have to sort it out. They would have understood in the letter what Peter meant. What does it mean?
[31:00] Well, the reason several modern translations render elect as chosen. Is because that is what it means. Election means that God chooses certain people for salvation.

Now it means more than that. That's not all it means. We're going to flesh that out more in detail perhaps in the future. But hear this part.
Believers. Christians. Are God's chosen ones. So the emphasis in election is put on God as sovereign Lord.
Choosing. The emphasis is not on man deciding. The emphasis is on God choosing. And there are very important theological biblical reasons for that reality.
Very, very foundational. I'm not going to go into all of those today. I'm going to try to stay in the flow of the text and give you more of this. Then we can do maybe a little excursus on election if we need to.
[32:09] All right. Let me say it again. Christians, believers, are God's chosen ones. Now here's the thing. Chosen how? Chosen from what?

Chosen when? Chosen why? I understand that this doctrine can raise questions. It can even create some concerns. I understand that.
As with any doctrine, with any belief, with any teaching. That's what doctrine means. Belief or teaching. In our church family. The issue is what does the Bible say about this?
Not what my opinion is or your opinion. What does the Bible say about this? The answer really can involve a series of messages. And that might be helpful and necessary.
But what is Peter's emphasis here? What is his emphasis here? Simply this. Here it is. God chose to save you out of sin and death and into holiness and life.
[33:15] And that is why you are experiencing hardship in this world. That's his point. His point isn't to dive in to a theological treatise on election.

It's not here. Now we can sidestep and do that if we need to. But that's not what's going on here. He's using election and putting it out in the forefront to make a point.

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And his point is this. Christian you suffer in the world. Because God chose you out of it. So don't chafe at that.
Don't wonder at that. Don't buck that. Just get in line. Take the baton. And run your lap.
And God will let you know when it's time for you to hand it off to the person behind you. Because that's exactly what's happened here. This is thousands of years ago. These people are long dead and gone.
[34:19] And here we are standing reading this letter from this man. Trying to discern what God would have us understand about this truth for our lives. It's our turn right now to hold the baton and run.

And that's what we want to do faithfully don't we? We just want to be faithful. God chose to save you. And he chose to save you out of sin and death into holiness and life.
And that's why you experience hardship. It is because you belong to him. And not to this world. This is why Peter means by what he means by identifying these believers as elect strangers.
Hear me carefully now. Elect sojourners. Elect exiles. If you ask me, Jeff, what is your preference for all those synonymous terms?
Exiles, pilgrims, sojourners, whatever. Sojourner. That's the one I like the best. Now that's not the one my translation used. My translation uses aliens.
[35:27] A little bit unfortunate there for me. Even though I love this translation. This is one of the times where I pick a word from another translation. I like sojourner. Sojourner. Has the idea of someone passing through.

Right? And that's exactly what he's talking about here. In other words, hear me carefully now. Elect. The word that Peter uses here.
That you might have translates it as chosen. Or to those who are elect. The idea here. Elect. Modifies. Strangers.
Sojourners. Aliens. Pilgrims. Whatever word you have. Election. Or the elect. Modifies that. So you are an elect. Sojourner.
That's very important. For you to understand. You are an elect. Stranger. Alien. Exile. So that election is why they don't belong here.
[36:31] Election is why you are a stranger. It's why you are considered alien in this life. Why you are a sojourner. Let me put this quote up here for you next.

And I think it might be helpful to you. Believers are exiles. Not because they are displaced from their homeland. Nope. That's not the point. Many people in the Greco-Roman world no longer lived in their place of origin.
Just like you and I. They move around. For various reasons. Believers are exiles because they suffer for their faith. In a world that finds their faith off-putting and strange.
They are not aliens. Literally. They are sojourners because they are elected by God. Because their citizenship is in heaven rather than on earth.
There it is. That grabs it. That captures it. All God's people through the ages have experienced this reality.
[37:35] All of them. Without exception. We are not unique in this. Let me take you to a reference and show you. Hebrews chapter 11 verse 13.

Look at that with me. The point that we are making here is this. All God's people through the ages have experienced the reality of being sojourners.
Because they are elected by God. Because their citizenship is in heaven rather than on earth. As Tom Schreiner said. Now Hebrews 11 verse 13.
All these died in faith. That is saving faith. This is a list of all different kinds of people throughout the Old Testament. Who were faithful in their walk with the Lord.
And he comes to this place and says. All these died in faith. Without receiving the promises. But having seen them. And having welcomed them from a distance.
[38:36] And having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. Greg does the ESV say strangers and exiles.

Okay. Strangers and exiles on the earth. In other words. Here are all these faithful people. Who live faithfully to the Lord. Looking to the Lord. Trusting in the coming Messiah.
Without being able to see Messiah come. And do all the things that were being promised. They died before all of that. So they looked at it and hoped for it from a distance.

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But they recognized in all of that. That they were living as strangers. Sojourners. Exiles in the world. Because they were God's people. Because God laid claim to them.
And they didn't belong here. That their citizenship was in another place. A different home. And they were just passing through. That's the concept that we have to grasp.
[39:35] If we're going to grasp the richness of 1 Peter. We are sojourners passing through. So that everything that he says now. About this passing through existence.

Can have a sense of meaning and depth for you. And not sound trite. Because when he tells you. That this is just momentary affliction. When he tells you to entrust your soul.
To a faithful creator. He's not being flippant. He's basing all of that in the reality. That you belong to God. This is so rich.
This is a. In other words folks. Capture this. This is a spiritual reality for you. This has everything to do with the spirit.
Living in you. It's a spiritual reality. Which God established in your life. And which cannot and should not be undone.
[40:34] You are a stranger here. Not because of your politics. Not because of your cultural upbringing.

Whether you're from the south. Or you're a Yankee from the north. Or whatever you are. No. It doesn't have anything to do with your ethnicity. It doesn't even really have anything to do with your religion.
You might be surprised to hear that. No. Listen. Here's what it is. It's your nature. That's your problem.
You. You have a new nature. You belong to God. You're a Christian. You're a child of the king. So you don't belong here. God chose you to belong to him.
And no longer to belong to this world. You feel that. You live that. And this world also senses and sees that about you.
[41:43] And that's what we're going to see throughout the book of 1 Peter. Here. The sharper the image of Jesus living in you. The more distinctly and desperately the world will shun and shame you.

Can I say that one more time? Because that's just something that we need to accept. And live with in a joyful thankful way. Here it is again.
The sharper the image of Jesus living in you. The more focused that becomes. The more distinctly and desperately the world will shun and shame you. We think.
Boy. The more I'm like Jesus. The more gentle and tender and kind and giving and sacrificial I am. You'd think that the world would love me for that. Well. Look at the life of Jesus. Go back and read the gospels again.
And look how every one of the gospels end. Okay. They didn't exactly bend over backwards to make Jesus feel welcome in the world.
[42:48] Well. Now I want you to look at this. Peter adds something. Can we throw that map up there for him? Josiah. There she be. All right. Now if you look right here. All of those provinces that you have mentioned in the Bible are right here.

See them. Pontus. Spithynia. Cappadocia. Galatia. Asia. Now he didn't. He didn't include this area here. This is southern Turkey.
So this. All of this here in this brown. That is modern day Turkey. And all of this area is mainly where Peter is talking about.
So. The question is. Is Peter writing this letter to a local congregation? No. He's writing to all of the churches scattered throughout this area.
All of them. Some of them might have been established by the Apostle Paul. Some of them might have been established by Peter himself. Some of them may have grown up as a result of the Apostles ministry.
[43:49] And believers starting their own churches. But this is meant to be a letter that is passed around to all of these different churches. You see here.

Ephesus. Pergamum. You see Laodicea. Colossae. Lystra. Iconium. Derbe. Those are ones that you will recognize in the ministry of the Apostle Paul and his missionary journeys.
But what about way up here? That's where Peter's writing right now. To try to encourage these people. So the point of all of this is just simply. He isn't writing to one church family.

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The letter is intended to be circulated around to different churches in that region. And some commentators said that this area could cover as much as 750,000 square miles.
That's a huge area. It really does cover most of modern Turkey. And remember. There were no cars. You couldn't just hop on a little plane and skip over.
[44:49] You went by cart or foot or horse or mule. All right. And then let's throw this one up there for him, Josiah. Believers are elect strangers scattered about because they don't belong here.

As a believer, a God chosen one, your home is in heaven and you are being fit to live there for eternity. Not here. Now that's the tension that you feel.
That living in this world creates for you. The longer you walk with Jesus here, the more you will experience the tension and longing to go to your heavenly home.
Why? Because you become more and more like Jesus and you learn to long for him more and more. You grow up in him. Now there's a problem if you're a Christian and you're walking with the Lord and you don't feel that sense of a growing longing for Christ.
There's something going on there. Could it mean that you're not saved? Possibly. It could also mean that in your relationship with God, there are things that are tending to cut the line of fellowship between you and the Lord.
[46:03] So you're not growing in that sense of warmth and devotion. But we all should be growing in an increasing sense of longing for Jesus to come back or longing to go to heaven.

I'll tell you, the older I get, the more that intensifies for me. Right? Everything starts wearing out and you just start feeling like, man, I'm ready for my new body.
Yeah, amen. Yeah. All right, how about point number three here? Let's go to God's salvation by grace. We get into verse two here real quickly. Peter writes, Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ to those who reside as aliens scattered throughout these regions who are chosen according to the foreknowledge of God, the father, by the sanctifying work of the spirit to obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with his blood.
Grace and peace be yours in the fullest measure. Now, Peter wants to establish the tremendous privilege and blessings of this election for us.
And so he tells us how God accomplished this special spiritual standing status nature for us. He's going to briefly just speak to how that happened.
[47:24] Why would he do that? Well, I'll tell you exactly why he wants to do it, because he wants God to get all the glory. That's why he wants these people to realize that everything about their salvation is rooted in God's choice for them.

Now, why would that be so important? Because he wants them to realize that nothing, nothing in the universe is powerful enough to snatch that away from them. God gave it to you.
God keeps it secure in you, and no one will ever take it from you. No matter how you suffer, no matter how the hardship comes, nothing in the universe is more powerful than God's grace at work in you as he has chosen you in his son.
You are fixed and fitted for heaven, friend. It's just beautiful. That's what he's wanting to accomplish. Our election is, notice in the Bible, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father. That is a very important concept. Foreknowledge is the Greek word prognosis. Isn't that interesting? Foreknowledge is the Greek word prognosis.
[48:35] It includes the idea of knowing beforehand. Yes, it does. It is a predetermined purpose. So it is more the idea of God predetermining beforehand.

Foreknowledge is God predetermining a purpose beforehand. Not just looking and knowing what's going to happen. Not just seeing what's going to happen.
But predetermining a purpose for what will happen. Do you see the distinction there? It's critical. It's critical. Theologically.
We were elected by God in his foreknowledge of us. In other words, God predetermined his purpose to know us intimately.
It's the kind of knowing in the Bible that speaks of intimacy. To know us. That is to establish a relationship with us at a predetermined point in time.
[49:41] His foreknowledge means that in his electing grace, he predetermined a time when he would know you intimately.

Savingly. He knows that. He knows that. That's kept in his counsel. Now when God purposes in his counsel to do something, what can thwart it?

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You were elected for salvation before the foundation of the world. And in God's foreknowledge, he had a predetermined purpose in time to bring you to himself.
And nothing could stand in the way of that happening. Not even you. Isn't that wonderful? Not even Jeff's wickedness.
Not even my sin. Not even the way that I spoke about God. Thought about God. Not the way I lived my life without God. Was more powerful than God's predetermined purpose to save me and know me.
[50:48] He overcame everything that had overcome me to keep me from God. So that I could be with him. That's what your God has done for you.

That's his electing grace. Why people hate this doctrine confounds me now.
Foreknowledge then does not mean that God saw into the future. God saw who would choose to believe in him.
And then based on their choice of him. He then responded by deciding to choose them. No.
That's not what this means. That's not foreknowledge. Do you understand what I've just said? That God looked into the future because he's God. And he went, oh, Jeff's going to choose me.
[51:52] He's going to decide to follow me. So I choose Jeff. Who's in the driver's seat? Who's responding to whom? You follow?

God's responding to me. No. That's not right. That's not what the Bible teaches. Look. This is salvation.
If what I just said to you is true. Then this is salvation based on a work. A work of mine. Because God looked into the future and saw what I would do.
And based what he would do for me on what I would do. That's a work. That's work salvation. And we can't have that. That gives no glory to God.
Peter won't have it. He won't have it. And we're not going to have it. We don't want the glory that belongs to God alone. We chose him so he in turn chooses us.
[52:57] Nope. Foreknowledge simply describes God the Father's pre-intended purpose to have a relationship with us.

And so God elected us. He marked us out for salvation. You understand election doesn't save you. It marks you out for salvation.
You're not saved yet. You're marked out. You're chosen. But now something has to happen. What? You need to believe. God doesn't believe for you.
You need to believe. You're not a robot. Contrary to the. All the nonsense that comes at this. We're not robots.
All right. Here's another quote for you. Salvation foreknowledge then involves God predetermining to know someone. By having an intimate saving relationship.
[53:57] So choosing them then from eternity past to receive his redeeming love. He chose us. And now we need to receive it.

And so Peter goes on to say this. According to the foreknowledge of God the Father. That's the work of the Father. By the sanctifying work of the Spirit.
That phrase. That clause. By the sanctifying work of the Spirit. This is how God brought his predetermined plan of electing us. Into a point in time.
You need election to now come home to your heart. Right. Otherwise it just stays a concept. Or whatever out there.
So that we can come to trust. Christ in a moment in our lives. If you look at the book of Titus chapter 3. It's right after 1st and 2nd Timothy.
[54:59] This is another one of Paul's protégés. His pastoral interns if you will. The Isle of Crete. And Paul is writing instruction to Titus.

About how to pastor. And he comes to chapter 3. And he's rehearsing some of the benefits and blessings of salvation. And in verse 5 he says.
He, God, saved us. Not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness. But according to his mercy. By the washing of regeneration.
And renewing by the Holy Spirit. Whom he poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ. Our Savior. And then the result is justification.
Why am I reading this to you? Because this is what Peter is saying here. The Holy Spirit carries out God's plan. Of his electing grace for us.

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[55:57] In eternity past. How does he do that? By consecrating us to God in a moment. In actual time for us. When the Holy Spirit sanctifies you.

He sets you apart from sin. To God. And he sets you to a life of living to love God.
And not a life of living to love sin. So what we're talking about in this washing of the Holy Spirit. Is that moment in time when you were saved. Born again.
That blink of an eye. When you went from spiritual death to spiritual life. Because of a faith encounter with the Lord Jesus Christ. And where'd you get the faith? Where'd you get the faith to believe?
From God. According to Ephesians 2. By grace you are saved through faith. It is a gift of God. It's not of yourself. Lest any man should boast. We don't boast in that. We can't even boast in the fact that we believed.
[56:54] We believed. But where'd we get the power to believe? From the Lord. Why? Because I was dead. See that's one of those sermons that I need to do. That's an excursus. I need to tell you all of that stuff beforehand.

That makes election shine like a diamond. Dead worms. Who have no hope in the world. And God marks them out for salvation. And says at this point in time.
It's going to happen for you. And nothing can change that. Not even you. People have all this problem. With I don't want a God who's going to walk on my will.
And I say bring it on Lord. Walk all over my will. Because what do I know? If you left me to my will. I'd still be living in rank sin. Chasing the stuff of this world.
And I sure never would have married Suzanne. She was a Christian. She's a good girl. All right. No not good.
[57:54] She was. Okay. She was a good girl in the Lord Jesus. From a good home.

With a good mama and daddy. And I didn't know. I didn't know girls like that. Until her. All right. Look at what Peter says in chapter 2 verses 9 and 10.
But you are a chosen race. Isn't that cool? You are a chosen race. A royal priesthood. A holy nation. A people for God's own possession.
Boy how wonderful is that. So that. You may proclaim the excellencies of him. Who has called you out of darkness. And into his marvelous light.
For. You once were not. A people. But now you are the people of God. You had not received mercy. But now you have received mercy.
[58:56] Wow. This is what you were. This is what you now are. And it's all because of God's electing grace. If you notice the contrast from their former selves and lives.

To their life now as they live as Christians. Now the Holy Spirit affected all of these spiritual blessings in them. That he's just recounting. That's the work of the Spirit. It's the work of the Spirit. Bringing. Bringing. The predetermined purpose of the Father. Into your life. In a moment. Making it real.
Bringing it out of eternity past. And making it real. In that moment. When you became a Christian. That's the work of the Spirit. But we're not done.
There's more. The Holy Spirit affected all of these spiritual blessings in them. Notice in the text. To obey Jesus Christ.
[59:54] This is what the Lord Jesus accomplished for you. This is what he applied to you by God's grace through your faith in Christ as your Savior and Lord. You see that in the text?

According to the foreknowledge of God the Father. By the sanctifying work of the Spirit. Look. To obey Jesus Christ. And be sprinkled with his blood.
The result. The result. Of God's electing grace in your life. Is that you are recreated.
To obey. Jesus Christ. And not. To obey. Your lusts of deceit. You were this.
Now you're this. And he says. All of that was done by God. To put you in a life. Of obedience. You used to live.
[60:53] In obedience. To self and sin. Now you've been taken from that. And put in a life. Where you can live in obedience. To Jesus. And holiness. You couldn't do that before.

But now you've been transformed. Transformed. Peter is a transformed man. Writing about being transformed. And living in that life. He's all about that. To obey.
Jesus Christ. That's the result. Of being recreated. In Ephesians 2. Chapter. Ephesians chapter 2. Verse 10. A very critical. Important. Wonderful. Description. Of God. Working in our lives.

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Ephesians 2. 10. For we. Are. Christians. Believers. We are. God's. Workmanship. Created. [61:52] In Christ. Jesus. For good works. Which. God. Prepared. When. Beforehand. So that. We would. Walk in them.

This is. God's. Predetermined. Purpose. To save you. And create. In you. A life. Of obedience. To himself. Good works.
Whereas. Before. You could not. Produce. Good works. He. Predetermined. That you. Would have. A life. Of living. In good works. To him. And all.
Of this. Is based on. God's. Electing. Grace. It's. It's not. A throwaway. Doctrine. It's not. An optional. Doctrine. It's the foundation. Of why. We love.
God. Why. We serve. God. Why. We live. For God. I'm pretty. Passionate. About it. I didn't know. [62:46] Any of this. When I got. Saved. Say Jeff. Do you have to know. All this. When you get. Saved. No. I didn't. I'm one example. I didn't know. About election. When I got saved. I just knew. I was a sinner. In need of a savior.

And Jesus Christ. Was that savior. That's what I knew. And that was enough. For me. To trust Christ. To forgive me. For my sins. All right.
Spiritual. Obedience. Comes through. God's. Electing. And sanctifying. You. Did you hear that? Spiritual. Obedience. Comes through. God's. Electing.
And sanctifying. You. Don't get them. Backwards. God. Choosing you. And making you. Holy. To himself. Is what we're talking about. So. Obeying. Good works.
Follows. And flows. From. Being chosen. And saved. By God's grace. We don't. Obey. In order to get saved. We're saved. And then we learn.
[63:45] To obey. And they go together. They're not. They're not. Mutually. Exclusive. Or either or. This is why. Peter now says. And be sprinkled.

With his blood. See all of this. Is critical. Following. On top of each other. Peter draws. On the old testament. Truth. Of God's people. Being sprinkled.
With the blood. From the sacrifice. To establish. A covenant. Between them. And God. That's the way. It would work. I'm not going to take you there. Now and read it. But they would have the sacrifice.
They would dip the hyssop. Or whatever. In the blood. And then like Moses. He would sprinkle the blood. On the altar. And on the people. And that blood. Being sprinkled. On them. Was a way. That they were ratifying.
The covenant. Between them. And God. It was the blood. That made that possible. Okay. You with me on that? So. This is what we're talking about.
[64:40] God would promise. His love. Forgiveness. And favor. And the people. Would pledge. Their love. And obedience.

In response. Based on. God's love. And favor. For them. And God. Never broke. His part of the covenant. Ever. Ever.
So God says. I will love you. You will be my people. I will forgive you. And the people say. We love you. And we will obey you.
And we will worship you. And we will submit to you. And the blood goes. And gets sprinkled around. That is now the seal and sign. Of our covenant.
Between ourselves. The blood. Becomes the sign of that. All right. Now let's put this up here. Peter. [65:35] Is stressing. Our covenant. Of obedience to God. And his word. Based on the love and grace of God. Ministered to us. Through the sacrifice of his son. On our behalf. Look at this.

Through Jesus. Shedding his blood for us. As he hung. In our place of execution. On the cross. God. Promises to forgive us. For our sins. Past. Present.
And future. For eternity. And that's the blood of Christ. That's why we take the cup. And remember. That is by his shed blood. That we now receive.
God's forgiveness. Past. Present. And future. And for all eternity. Eternally secure. Nobody can ever take that away from us. Where did this amazing grace.
Towards us begin. At our election. When God chose to save us. Before he ever. Made the world. The final point. I'll just make a couple of.
[66:29] Comments. God's sanctification. By grace. That's point number four. God's sanctification. Here is where it comes in. May grace and peace be yours.

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In the fullest measure. That moves Peter. To offer them. This special blessing. Everything he's been telling them.
May grace and peace. Be yours. In the fullest measure. The only way. They can know. And go. The title of my message. The only way. They can know. And go. According to this kind.
Of blessing. From God. Is by God's. Electing grace. In other words. Hear me carefully now. As I end. No election. No salvation.
No salvation. No grace. And peace. In the fullest measure. Peter. Wanted. God's. Highest. Best. For them.
[67:27] Everything. Peter. Will now. Say to them. In this letter. Is based on. God's promises. To give them. His grace. Peace. And peace. In the fullest. Measure. As his people.

People. He marked out. For salvation. People. He then. Sanctified. In the power. Of the spirit. People. He then. Gave. A life. Made.
A life. Of obedience. For. Through the sprinkling. Of the blood. Of the Lord. Jesus Christ. On them. By faith. In his work. In the cross. Even in the lowest.
Worst. Of their experiences. They can know. As God's. God's. Elect. Sojourners. As his. Scattered. Ones. They can know. This wonderful.
Grace. That will. Eventually. Lead them. Home. To heaven. And he says. Bank on this. Base your life.
[68:23] On this. And all the suffering. That's going to come. Remember this. It'll keep you true. It'll keep you pure. It'll keep you thankful.

It'll keep you focused. Let's pray together. Father God in heaven.
This is heavy. Deep. Water. For us to wait in. I pray that you will help your people. Not feel like they're drowning.
In it. But that they're being held up. In a buoyant. Way. That they will find these waters. Refreshing. They will find these waters.
Cleansing. They will cast their eyes. Beyond the waters. To the hills above. To the heavens above. And put their hope in Christ.
[69:17] And recognize that one day. One day. The skies in the east. Will part. The trump will sound. And you will bring your people. Home to heaven. Because you are a good and gracious king.

Who keeps his promises. Thank you for this wonderful gospel. According to Peter. That we are saved. And sanctified. And sprinkled with the blood. Of the Lord Jesus. And so we have you.
As our God. Help us to live. As your people. No matter the circumstances. Help us to make our meaning. In life. The kind of thing. That allows us.
To live in obedience. To Jesus. For his glory. And for his honor. We pray. Amen. Amen.

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