

Pilgrims Of The Dispersion (1:1)

INTRODUCTION

1. Throughout the New Testament, various phrases are used to describe those people of God who make up the Lord's church
 - a. Individually, they are referred to as disciples, saints, believers, priests, Christians, etc.
 - b. Collectively, they are called the church, the church of God, churches of Christ, the body of Christ, the temple of God, the family of God, etc.
 - Each of these terms describe various relationships maintained by those who are Christians
2. An interesting phrase not commonly used in reference to the people of God is found in [1Pe 1:1](#), where Peter addresses "the pilgrims of the Dispersion"
3. A proper understanding of this phrase can be very beneficial, and give us insight into:
 - a. What the Christian life is
 - b. An important responsibility expected of Christians
 - c. Our true home, and goal in this life

[Let's start by...]

I. DEFINING "PILGRIMS OF THE DISPERSION"

- A. THE WORD TRANSLATED "PILGRIM" IS INTERESTING...
 1. Transliterated from Grk., it is *parepidemos* {par-ep-id'-ay-mos} which is a combination of three words:
 - a. para - "alongside of"
 - b. epi - "upon"
 - c. demos - "used in Biblical Greek of the people of a heathen city" (Wuest)
 2. Here, then, is how Thayer defines the word...
 - a. "one who comes from a foreign country into a city or land to reside there by the side of the natives"
 - b. "a stranger"
 - c. "sojourning in a strange place, a foreigner"
 - d. "in the NT metaph. in reference to heaven as the native country, one who sojourns on earth: so of Christians ([1 Pe 1:1](#))...of the patriarchs ([He 11:13](#))."
 3. Another definition: "One who stays in a place as a stranger or visitor; to describe Christians whose final citizenship is in heaven and who are regarded as temporary dwellers on earth." (Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia Of The Bible)
- B. THE MEANING OF THE WORD "DISPERSION"...
 1. The Greek word is *diaspora* {dee-as-por-ah'}
 - a. It is noun form of the verb *diaspeiro*
 - b. Which means "to sow, to scatter seed"
 2. The term is found in [Jn 7:35](#), and there it refers to the Jews who were scattered among the Greeks
 - a. As a result of the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities
 - b. This has caused some to conclude that Peter was writing to Jewish Christians
 - c. Who were living in the regions of Asia Minor (modern day Turkey) - cf. [1Pe 1:1](#)

3. But there is good reason to believe that Peter was writing to ALL the Christians, both Jewish and Gentile, who were scattered throughout Asia Minor
 - a. Comments are made in this epistle that cannot be understood in reference to the original recipients being Jews - cf. [1Pe 1:14, 18, 20-21](#)
 - b. More likely, Peter employs terms once limited to the Jews, but now applicable to all who are in Christ
 - 1) For example, terms like "elect" (1:2), "holy nation" (2:9), "people of God" (2:10)
 - 2) Even as Paul did: "circumcision" ([Php 3:3](#)), "Israel of God" ([Ga 6:16](#))
4. If this be so, then Peter implies by using the term "pilgrims of the dispersion" that all Christians are:
 - a. Pilgrims living in a world not their own
 - b. Like scattered seed, spread out among those in the world

[With this understanding of the phrase, "pilgrims of the dispersion," we can now draw insights that are implied by it...]

II. INSIGHTS FROM BEING CALLED "PILGRIMS OF THE DISPERSION"

A. THIS PHRASE REVEALS WHAT THE CHRISTIAN LIFE REALLY IS...

1. It is but a JOURNEY, begun when we first became Christians, ending only when we reach our true destination
 - a. This ought to affect our entire perspective on life
 - 1) It is not an end in itself
 - 2) Only a temporary trip toward our final destination
 - 3) Our homes, our jobs, take on a different meaning when viewed in this light
 - b. This ought to affect our perspective on death
 - 1) Not the end of life, but the end of our journey!
 - 2) Not the end of life, but the beginning of eternity in our true home!
2. Embarked on this JOURNEY, we become like our spiritual father, Abraham
 - a. Notice [He 11:8-10, 13-16](#)
 - b. If this be our attitude towards this life...
 - 1) Then God is not ashamed to be called our God
 - 2) And we can honestly sing songs like "This World Is Not My Home"

B. THIS PHRASE REMINDS US OF AN IMPORTANT RESPONSIBILITY...

1. Our responsibility as "pilgrims" is to be SEPARATE - cf. [1 Pe 2:11-12](#)
 - a. We may be "in the world," but we are not to be "of the world" - [Jn 17:15-16](#); [2Co 6:14-7:1](#)
 - b. Remaining separate may cause some in the world to think we are strange - cf. [1Pe 4:3-4](#)
 - c. But Jesus said this would happen, even as it did to Him - [Jn 15:18-19](#)
2. Figuratively speaking, we should be like those foreign refugees now in our country:
 - a. Who resist giving up their heritage, their language
 - b. Who resist attempts to "Americanize" them and destroy their cultural traditions
3. Can it be said of us who are Christians, that we are keeping ourselves SEPARATE from the world?
 - a. Are we allowing the world to influence our...

- 1) Speech?
 - 2) Dress?
 - 3) Conduct?
 - b. If we so, then we are no longer "pilgrims," but "naturalized citizens" of this world!
 - c. Remember John's warning in [1Jn 2:15-17](#)
- C. THIS PHRASE OUGHT TO REMIND US OF OUR TRUE HOME...
- 1. Our citizenship is in heaven, from which we eagerly await our Savior - [Php 3:20-21](#)
 - 2. We are to be looking for "a new heavens and a new earth" - [2Pe 3:13-14](#)
 - 3. That is where we will find our true home, the CITY...
 - a. "which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God." - [He 11:10,16](#)
 - b. That is "the one to come" - [He 13:14](#)
 - c. That "comes down out of heaven from God" - [Re 21:1-22:5](#)
 - That is where we, who are now simply strangers and foreigners scattered like seed in this world, will one day be gathered together!
 - 4. Those who are truly "pilgrims" will think often of their true home
 - a. When my family lived in Taiwan, we thought often of our home in the states
 - b. And so we will think often of our heavenly home, if we are truly "pilgrims of the Dispersion"!

CONCLUSION

- 1. Are we "pilgrims of the Dispersion"? We are, if as Christians we...
 - a. View our life here on earth as a journey in a foreign land!
 - b. Keep ourselves separate from things in the world that would lead us away from God!
 - c. View as our true home, the heavenly city God has prepared for those who confess they are strangers and pilgrims on the earth!
- 2. But you are NOT a "pilgrim of the Dispersion" if...
 - a. You have not yet begun your spiritual sojourn by obeying the gospel of Christ!
 - b. Having done so, you allow the attractions of the world to discontinue your journey and "settle down" in things which would separate you from God!

The "Elect" Of God (1:2)

INTRODUCTION

- 1. In our previous study, we noticed that Peter referred to Christians as "pilgrims of the Dispersion"
 - a. This description implies that Christians are but strangers, foreigners, sojourning in a land not their own, and scattered about like seed
 - b. With their citizenship in heaven, they may be "in" this world, but they are not to be "of" this world
 - c. Therefore, one of their important duties is to be "separate" - cf. [1Pe 2:11](#)
- 2. One might think that since Christians are "scattered strangers" in

this world, they are to be pitied

3. Not so, for though they are strangers in the world, they are the "ELECT" of God - [1Pe 1:2](#)
 - a. The word "elect" simply means "chosen" and is thus translated in [1Pe 2:9-10](#)
 - b. There we learn that Christians are "a chosen generation"; i.e., they are truly God's chosen people!
4. In this lesson, we shall consider what it means for Christians to be "The ELECT Of God"

[Using the comments of Peter in [1Pe 1:2](#) as an outline for this study, we see first that as the ELECT of God...]

I. WE ARE A PART OF GOD'S PREDETERMINED PLAN

- A. PETER SAYS "ELECT ACCORDING TO THE FOREKNOWLEDGE OF GOD"
 1. The word "foreknowledge" comes from "prognosis" {prog'-no-sis}
 2. It means "forethought, pre-arrangement"
 3. I.e., being the "elect" (chosen) of God is in keeping with God's plan which He designed beforehand
 4. As B. W. Johnson says in his "People's New Testament" commentary: "Their election and salvation was in accordance with God's predetermined purpose to save men through the gospel, and hence, according to foreknowledge."
- B. PAUL EXPOUNDS UPON THIS "PRE-ARRANGEMENT" IN EPHESIANS...
 1. God planned it before the world began - [Ep 1:4](#)
 2. It anticipated the "chosen" being holy and without blame - [Ep 1:4](#)
 3. It looked forward to the "elect" being adopted as sons - [Ep 1:5](#)
 4. This plan is according to God's good pleasure - [Ep 1:5](#)
 5. This plan has a goal that the "elect" walk in good works - [Ep 2:10](#)
- C. WAS THIS "ELECTION" INDIVIDUAL OR CORPORATE?
 1. I understand election by God to have been general, not particular; corporate, not individual
 2. That it would be "the body of Christ, the church as a whole"...
 - a. Which God chose to be the recipients of His divine and gracious purposes
 - b. And which He planned beforehand (foreknowledge) to carry out in Christ Jesus
 3. While in the "corporate" sense this choice is unconditional and final, as "individuals" we must be "diligent to make your calling and election sure" - [2Pe 1:10](#)
 - 1) Just as Israel (as a nation) had been chosen by God to receive His blessings during the Old Testament period
 - 2) But individually, the Israelites also had to make "their calling and election sure"

[So by being in Christ, we are God's "elect", and involved in a plan which was in the mind of God before time began and which is still in the process of being worked out! The implication of this is that those who are God's "elect" are very special to God.]

As we return to [1Pe 1:2](#), we learn also that...]

II. WE BECOME GOD'S "ELECT" THROUGH THE SANCTIFYING WORK OF THE SPIRIT

A. SANCTIFICATION AND THE HOLY SPIRIT...

1. Sanctification, the process by which we are "set apart" for God's purpose, is accomplished by the Holy Spirit
2. There are several passages that describe the connection between the Holy Spirit and our sanctification - [Ro 15:16](#); [1Co 6:11](#); [2Th 2:13](#)

B. HOW THE HOLY SPIRIT ACCOMPLISHES THIS "SANCTIFICATION"...

1. It is through the Word of God
 - a. It was God's will that the Holy Spirit would reveal the Word to the apostles - cf. [Jn 16:12-13](#)
 - b. Through this revealed Word, we are "sanctified" (set apart) - cf. [Jn 17:17](#)
2. Therefore, when people obey the Word of God which has been revealed by the Holy Spirit, they become "chosen...to salvation" through:
 - a. "sanctification of the Spirit" (the Divine side of conversion, as the Spirit has revealed the Word and convicts men of sin through it)
 - b. "and belief of the truth" (the human side of conversion, as they believe it) - cf. [2Th 2:13-14](#)

[Having been "sanctified" (set apart) by belief in the truth, and as God's "elect" now a part of His eternal plan, you might expect such privileges would call for certain responsibilities.

Indeed it does, for as God's "elect"...]

III. WE HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF OBEDIENCE!

A. GOD'S CHOSEN ARE EXPECTED TO BE OBEDIENT...

1. We saw earlier in [Ep 2:10](#) that it was part of God's plan before time began that the people of God would "walk in good works"
2. This is all part of God's wonderful grace as defined by Paul in [Tit 2:11-14](#)
3. We do not earn salvation by such good works (cf. [Tit 3:5](#)), but nonetheless we are to be diligent in doing them - [Tit 3:1,8,14](#)

B. PETER WILL LATER EXPOUND UPON THE NEED FOR OBEDIENCE...

1. As obedient children of God, we are to be holy - [1Pe 1:14-16](#)
2. We are even to submit to civil authorities, that we might silence the ignorance of foolish men - [1Pe 2:13-16](#)
3. Peter implies grave consequences to those "who obey not the gospel of God" - [1Pe 4:17](#)

[Peter also tells servants and wives to be obedient, but this should suffice to impress upon us that the privilege of being God's "elect" involves the responsibility of being obedient to the will of the Lord.

Finally, being the "elect" of God also means...]

IV. WE HAVE THE BLESSING OF FORGIVENESS!

A. WE ENJOY THE "SPRINKLING OF THE BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST"

1. A clear reference to the blessing of forgiveness of sins made possible by the death of Christ
2. The blessing of forgiveness is one enjoyed...

- a. When we first become Christians upon our baptism into Christ
- [Ac 2:38](#); [22:16](#)
- b. As we confess sins throughout our daily walk with God -
[1Jn 1:7-9](#)

B. THIS BLESSING IS ONLY ONE OF SEVERAL MENTIONED IN PETER'S EPISTLE

- 1. He later speaks of "an inheritance" - [1Pe 1:4](#)
- 2. And the "salvation of souls" - [1Pe 1:9](#)
- 3. He describes Jesus as the "Shepherd and Overseer of your souls"
- [1Pe 2:25](#)
- 4. He also refers to the care of God - [1Pe 5:7](#)

CONCLUSION

- 1. We hope to examine some of these blessings for God's "elect" in greater detail in future lessons
- 2. But what we have seen from [1Pe 1:2](#) is that while Christians may indeed be "pilgrims", strangers living in a world not their own, they are not to be pitied!
- 3. For by the grace of God and their obedience to the gospel of Jesus Christ, they are God's "elect", His "chosen ones", and as such they are:
 - a. Part of God's predetermined plan
 - b. Chosen through the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit
 - c. Given responsibilities in keeping with the fact they are the children of God
 - d. Recipients of the richest blessings God has to offer (such as forgiveness of sins)
- 4. Is it surprising, then, that Peter would address such people with:

"Grace to you and peace be multiplied"?
- 5. Certainly those who are God's "elect" receive in multiple measure the saving grace of God and the peace which accompanies such unmerited favor!

How about you? Are you one of the "elect" of God? You are if you have answered the call of the gospel through the obedience of faith (cf. [Mk 16:15-16](#); [Ac 2:38-41](#))!

If you have not yet rendered obedience to the gospel, then please do so today, especially in view of the following statements by Peter and Paul:

"For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?" - [1Pe 4:17](#)

"and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed." - [2Th 1:7-10](#)

A "Living" Hope (1:3-5)

INTRODUCTION

1. In our study of Peter's epistle so far, we have noticed...
 - a. That as far as the world is concerned, Christians are but "pilgrims"
 - b. But as far as God is concerned, we are His "elect"
2. As the "elect" (chosen) of God, we are the recipients of many blessings that God offers to all who will obey and follow Christ
 - a. One of these blessings is described in [1Pe 1:3-5](#)
 - b. There we learn that God has caused us to be born again unto "a living hope"
3. An understanding of this "living" hope can help Christians who are "pilgrims" be more joyful during their sojourn in this life
4. Therefore, in this lesson we shall examine what Peter says about the Christian hope that makes it a "living" hope

[Verse 3 begins with Peter praising God, and this leads us to the first reason our hope is a "living" hope...]

I. BECAUSE GOD IS MERCIFUL!

- A. THE BASIS FOR OUR HOPE LIES NOT IN OUR OWN PERFECTION OR RIGHTEOUSNESS...
 1. It is a good thing that it does not, for all are sinners in God's sight - cf. [Ro 3:23](#)
 2. Even as Christians we find ourselves guilty before God - cf. [1Jn 1:8,10](#)
- B. THE BASIS FOR OUR HOPE LIES IN THE ABUNDANCE OF GOD'S MERCY...
 1. Mercy bestowed while we were yet sinners - cf. [Ro 5:6,8](#)
 2. Mercy bestowed upon the conditions of faith, repentance, and baptism - cf. [Ac 2:36-38](#)
 3. Mercy bestowed continually upon Christians as they repent of and confess their sins - cf. [1Jn 1:9](#)

[Because of God's "abundant mercy", then, we who are sinners can have a "living" hope!]

But according to verse 3 there is another reason to have hope...]

II. BECAUSE JESUS IS ALIVE!

- A. THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS IS CRUCIAL TO OUR HOPE...
 1. If Christ is not risen, then the apostles were liars, and our faith is vain! - [1Co 15:14-15](#)
 2. If Christ is not risen, we are still held guilty for our sins, no forgiveness has occurred! - [1Co 15:17](#)
 3. If Christ is not risen, those who have died as Christians have perished, they are lost! - [1Co 15:18](#)
 4. If Christ has not risen, then we do not have a "living" hope, instead we are to be pitied by others! - [1Co 15:19](#)
- B. BUT THROUGH JESUS' RESURRECTION, WE HAVE BEEN "BORN AGAIN" TO A LIVING HOPE!
 1. Peter may have reference not to the process of conversion (though he does in [1Pe 1:23](#)), but to the renewed hope

produced by the resurrection of Jesus

- a. E.g., after Jesus' death and prior to His resurrection, the disciples were despondent
 - b. But after the resurrection of Jesus, His disciples were "born again" in regards to their hope
 - c. As Guy N. Woods says in his commentary: "The reference here is...to the re-establishment of the faith of the disciples by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead."
2. Surely the fact that Jesus did rise gives us reason for a "living" hope
- a. God would not raise a liar, so anything Jesus said about our hope is true - e.g., [Jn 11:25](#)
 - b. Since Jesus rose from the dead, we have a firm hope that we too will one day rise from the dead - cf. [1Co 15:20-23](#)

[By the abundant mercy of God, and upon the basis of Jesus' own resurrection, then, we have been "born again" to a living hope!

But there are two more reasons discussed in verses 4-5 as to why our hope can be described as "living". One is...]

III. BECAUSE OF THE NATURE OF OUR INHERITANCE!

A. THE DEGREE OF HOPE WE HAVE IS DIRECTLY RELATED TO THE INHERITANCE WE HAVE...

1. If our inheritance is a good one, our hope is strong, or "living"
2. If our inheritance is a poor one, then our hope is weak, or "dead"

B. AS DESCRIBED BY PETER, OUR INHERITANCE...

1. IS INCORRUPTIBLE
 - a. The Greek word is *aphthartos* {af'-thar-tos}, meaning "not liable to corruption or decay, imperishable"
 - b. Unlike this present heavens and earth in which now live, and which will one day be destroyed - [2Pe 3:10-13](#)
2. IS UNDEFILED
 - a. The Greek word is *amiantos* {am-ee'-an-tos}, meaning "not defiled, unsoiled"
 - b. It is unlike the earthly Canaan, which could be and was defiled by its inhabitants
 - c. Our hope pertains to that where the defiled are not allowed to enter - cf. [Re 21:27](#)
3. DOES NOT FADE AWAY
 - a. The Greek word is *amarantos* {am-ar'-an-tos}, meaning "unfading, perennial"
 - b. The word is a variation of "amaranth" which was the name of a mythical flower whose bloom was perpetual and whose loveliness never faded
 - c. Such is our heavenly reward: it will not rust, fade, or wither like so many things do here on earth
4. IT IS RESERVED IN HEAVEN
 - a. The word "reserved" comes from *tereo* {tay-reh'-o}, meaning "to watch, to observe, to guard, protect, to reserve, set aside"
 - b. Therefore, our inheritance is safely guarded in heaven itself!
 - c. No one, not even Satan himself, can steal it from you!

[Since this is the nature of our "inheritance" upon which our hope rests, we can see why our hope is described as a "living" hope.

There is one more reason to call our hope a "living" hope: not only is our inheritance safely guarded in heaven, but also...]

IV. BECAUSE WE ARE SAFELY GUARDED!

A. CHRISTIANS ARE "KEPT" FOR THE SALVATION READY TO BE REVEALED IN THE LAST TIME

1. The word "kept" is from phroureo {froo-reh'-o}, and is a military term
2. It means "to guard, protect by a military guard, either to prevent hostile invasion, or to keep the inhabitants of a besieged city from flight"
3. "While our inheritance is being kept guarded in heaven under the watchful eye of God, we are being garrisoned about by God's protecting care for it." (WUEST)

B. NOTE THAT BEING "KEPT" INVOLVES TWO THINGS...

1. First, THE POWER OF GOD!
 - a. We have the help of God Himself, who knows how to help those in temptation
 - b. He knows how to deliver them out of temptation - cf. [2 Pe 2:9](#)
 - c. He knows how to enable them to bear with the temptation - cf. [1Co 10:13](#)
 - d. He supplies the armor necessary to withstand in the evil day - cf. [Ep 6:10-13](#)
2. Also, OUR FAITH!
 - a. To be safely guarded by God's protective care requires faith on our part
 - b. The only way we can ever lose our inheritance reserved in heaven is to become unfaithful to the Lord! - cf. [Re 2:10](#)
 - c. While the Bible teaches the security of the "believer"...
 - 1) It also teaches that a "believer" can become an "unbeliever" - cf. [He 3:12-13](#)
 - 2) And it teaches that "unbelievers" have no hope - cf. [He 3:14-4:3](#)
 - d. As long as we remain "faithful", then, we have the assurance of God's protective care to guide us until we receive that inheritance reserved in heaven for us!

CONCLUSION

1. In this passage ([1Pe 1:3-5](#)), then, are four reasons why the hope of the Christian is called a "living" hope:
 - a. Because God is merciful!
 - b. Because Jesus is alive!
 - c. Because of the nature of our inheritance!
 - d. Because we are safely guarded!
2. A "living" hope can be a source of great joy in the lives of Christians; it certainly was to the original recipients of Peter's epistle:

"In this (the living hope that pertains to the salvation ready to be revealed in the last time) you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials." - [1Pe 1:6](#)

3. Do you have this "living" hope?
 - a. You do if you have received God's mercy offered in Christ, and are remaining faithful to the Lord
 - b. If you have not received this mercy, or have neglected it through unfaithfulness, why not come to the Lord according to His conditions found in His Holy Word? - cf. [Ac 2:38](#); [1Jn 1:9](#)

Joy Inexpressible And Full Of Glory (1:6-9)

INTRODUCTION

1. One of the many blessings available to the "elect" (chosen) of God is a very special kind of joy...
 - a. For reasons we shall notice in our lesson, Christians are able to "greatly rejoice" (lit., "leap for joy") - [1Pe 1:6](#)
 - b. They have access to joy that is "inexpressible and full of glory" - [1Pe 1:8](#)
 - c. A joy so great, so glorious, that it is impossible to truly express with words!
2. In this lesson, we shall focus our attention on Peter's remarks in [1Pe 1:6-9](#) concerning this "inexpressible joy" that Christians are blessed to have

[Notice first that in verse 6 Peter begins by saying "IN THIS you greatly rejoice..." He is referring to those things which serve as...]

I. THE BASIS FOR INEXPRESSIBLE JOY

- A. THERE ARE "PAST" GROUNDS FOR REJOICING...
 1. We have been "set apart" by the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit - 1:2
 2. We have been "sprinkled" with the blood of Jesus Christ - 1:2
 3. We have been "born again" to a living hope - 1:3
- B. THERE ARE "PRESENT" GROUNDS FOR REJOICING AS WELL...
 1. We are God's "elect" - 1:2
 2. We are "kept" by the power of God through faith - 1:5
- C. AND THERE ARE "FUTURE" GROUNDS FOR REJOICING...
 1. We have an "inheritance" reserved for us in heaven - 1:4
 2. We look forward to the "salvation" which will be revealed in the last time - 1:5, cf. 1:9

[All these blessings (past, present, future) serve as the basis for inexpressible joy. Because of them, we can "greatly rejoice!"

Exactly how great is this joy? In verses 6-7, Peter explains...]

II. THE EXCEEDING GREATNESS OF THIS JOY

- A. IT ENABLES ONE TO REJOICE EVEN IN TRIAL (1:6)
 1. No matter what degree of suffering one may experience, in Christ there is joy to match it
 - a. As Peter explains in [1Pe 4:12-13](#)
 - b. As he and the rest of the apostles exemplified in Ac 5:40-41

2. How can Christians find joy in such trials?
 - a. Informed Christians understand the purifying nature of such trials - [1Pe 1:7](#); cf. [2Co 4:17-18](#)
 - b. Knowing what trials can produce, it is possible to be joyful in trials - cf. [Jm 1:2-4,12](#); [Ro 5:1-4](#)

B. WHAT KIND OF TRIALS?

1. The word "various" includes all kinds
2. Primarily, it includes those which come as a result of living for Christ - e.g., [Mt 5:10-12](#)
3. But we can also rejoice in the everyday afflictions of life
 - a. E.g., sickness, heartbreak, frustration, approaching death
 - b. For these things also provide an opportunity to test our faith, hope, love, longsuffering and patience

[If one is able to rejoice even in the midst of such trials, surely they have a joy "inexpressible and full of glory"!

But how can Christians be sure to possess this joy? For it must be admitted that all do not, and there are times when even the best of us do not.

In verse 8, Peter alludes to two things which I suggest are necessary to...]

III. POSSESSING THIS INEXPRESSIBLE JOY

A. WE MUST LOVE JESUS...

1. "whom having not seen you love"
2. Jesus is the ultimate source for being able to rejoice in all things - cf. [Php 4:4](#)
 - a. He has promised that if we truly love Him, He and His Father will be with us - [Jn 14:23](#)
 - b. If Jesus is with us, we can receive that joy which is inexpressible! - [Jn 15:11](#); [16:33](#)
3. But can we who have never seen Jesus, love Him? Yes! - cf. [1Pe 1:8](#)
4. How can we come to love Him we have not seen? Through a devotional study of:
 - a. The Old Testament, with its prophecies of the Messiah
 - b. The Gospels, with their description of His life, teachings, compassion, suffering, death, and glorious resurrection
 - c. The Acts, with its action-packed portrayal of the Lord working together with His church
 - d. The Epistles, where we learn of many blessings found in Christ, and of His ministry as High Priest interceding in our behalf
 - e. The Revelation, in which we learn of the glorious victory to be won by the Lamb and His followers

B. WE MUST ALSO BELIEVE IN JESUS...

1. "Though now you do not see Him, yet believing..."
2. Through believing in Jesus we can "rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory"
3. But such faith is more than a mental assent, or academic knowledge of Jesus
4. It involves the key element of faith itself, which is "trust"
 - a. Trusting in His commands to be for our ultimate good
 - b. Trusting in His promises to be fulfilled
 - c. The kind of trust that prompts us to obey Jesus

- wholeheartedly
- d. This kind of faith comes from the Word of God - [Ro 10:17](#)

CONCLUSION

1. When we have this kind of faith in Jesus, and when we truly love Him with our whole being...
 - a. A blessing we receive is that "joy inexpressible and full of glory"!
 - b. A blessing that can sustain us till we reach the end (goal) of our faith: salvation! - [1Pe 1:9](#)
2. And that is because this "inexpressible joy"...
 - a. Is based upon many other blessings: past, present, and future
 - b. Enables us to joyfully persevere through all kinds of trials in this life
3. But again, this blessing is only for those who truly love Jesus and believe in Him...
 - a. Do you love Jesus? If you do, you will keep His commandments - [Jn 14:15,23](#)
 - b. Do you believe in Jesus? If you do, you will do what He says - cf. [Lk 6:46](#)

Are there commandments of Jesus you have not yet obeyed? If so, why not obey them today so that this "inexpressible joy" can be yours as well!

Ministering Not To Themselves, But To Us (1:10-12)

INTRODUCTION

1. Already in Peter's epistle we have seen several blessings enjoyed by the "elect" of God...
 - a. E.g., born again to a "living" hope - [1Pe 1:3](#)
 - b. E.g., having a joy "inexpressible and full of glory" - [1Pe 1:8](#)
2. As one continues in verses 10-12, he finds that Peter expands upon the topic of the "salvation" Christians enjoy as a result of their faith (please read)
3. If one takes the time to contemplate upon what is found in this passage, he should not fail to be impressed with how privileged we are in God's sight
 - a. For there we learn that we are the recipients of a gospel that was prophesied and has come to us only through the efforts of a very distinguished company of individuals!
 - b. And in their efforts, they were ministering not to themselves, but to us who are now Christians!

[To illustrate just how privileged we are, let's begin identifying those who have ministered to us...]

I. WE HAVE BEEN SERVED BY "THE PROPHETS"!

A. WHICH IS THE MAIN THOUGHT OF THIS PASSAGE...

1. When the prophets prophesied, they were often intrigued by what they revealed - [1Pe 1:10-11](#)

- a. This is because they were inspired or moved by the Holy Spirit, and not by their own will - cf. [2Pe 1:21](#)
- b. Therefore, they often expressed perplexity concerning those things they prophesied - e.g., [Dan 7:28](#); [8:26-27](#)
2. But as pointed out in our text, it was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but us! - e.g., [Dan 12:8-9](#)

B. CONSIDER THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS POINT...

1. We who are Christians have been served by such people as:
 - a. Moses, Samuel, and David
 - b. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel
2. These men (and many others) spent their lives, and in many cases even gave their lives, in service to you and me!
3. Yes, these great "heroes of faith" suffered much in their service to God and to us who are now in Christ - cf. He 11:36-38

[Does this not indicate that we must be very special in God's sight? We who have been ministered unto by the prophets of Almighty God, and who endured all these things for our sake?

And yet, there is even more...]

II. WE HAVE BEEN SERVED BY "THE HOLY SPIRIT"!

A. THIS THOUGHT IS ALSO EXPRESSED IN OUR TEXT...

1. For it was the Holy Spirit who inspired the prophets to proclaim things to come - [1Pe 1:11](#)
 - a. It was He who inspired David and Isaiah to foretell the sufferings of Christ - e.g., Ps 22; Isa 53
 - b. It was He who likewise moved the prophets to proclaim the glories to follow
 - 1) E.g., the resurrection of Jesus - [Ps 16: 9-11](#)
 - 2) E.g., His ascension and coronation - [Dan 7:13-14](#)
2. And it was the Holy Spirit who inspired the apostles to reveal the gospel - [1Pe 1:12](#)
 - a. As Jesus promised He would, in His discourse to His apostles - [Jn 16:13](#)
 - b. As Paul said He did, in writing to the Ephesians - [Ep 3:5](#)

B. AGAIN, CONSIDER THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS TRUTH...

1. Through His ministry of inspiration and revelation in the lives of the prophets and apostles, we have been served by the Holy Spirit
2. Because of His work, we have today the completed revelation of God's Word in our hands!
3. This is in addition to the "sanctifying work" of the Holy Spirit to which Peter referred in [1Pe 1:2](#)

[Do we appreciate the service that the Holy Spirit has rendered for us throughout the ages? Is this not an indication of the great value God must place upon His people?

But there is even another group of distinguished individuals who served their lives in our behalf...]

III. WE HAVE BEEN SERVED BY "THE APOSTLES"!

A. THIS WE CAN GLEAN FROM VERSE 12...

1. "...those who preached the gospel to you"

- a. This is a likely reference to the apostles of Jesus Christ
- b. Who were commissioned to preach the gospel, as recorded in [Mk 16:15-16](#)
- 2. As they carried out this "Great Commission", they considered themselves but servants for those to whom they preached
 - a. As Paul said, they were but "seed-throwers" and "water-boys" - cf. [1Co 3:5-7](#)
 - b. They were serving as servants of Christ - [1Co 3:21-4:1](#); [2Co 4:5](#)

B. THEREFORE, WE HAVE BEEN SERVED BY MEN...

- 1. Such as Peter, James, John, and Paul
- 2. Who gave their lives for our sake, to convince the world that our faith in their testimony is not unfounded, but that Jesus did indeed rise from the dead! - cf. [2Co 11:24-29](#)

[When we take the time to think about those who spent their lives ministering to us, we can't help but conclude that Christians hold a very high place in God's scheme of redemption as it has unfolded throughout the ages!

But before we conclude this lesson, let me point out another noble group that has served those who are God's "elect"...

IV. WE HAVE BEEN SERVED BY "ANGELS"!

A. VERSE 12 TELLS US THAT ANGELS HAD A KEEN INTEREST...

- 1. In things prophesied by the prophets
- 2. In things proclaimed by the apostles through the gospel

B. WHY SUCH A KEEN INTEREST?

- 1. They too were involved in the process of foretelling and revealing the salvation in Christ!
 - a. E.g., Gabriel's appearances to Daniel - cf. Dan 8, 9
 - b. E.g., Gabriel's appearances to Zacharias and Mary - cf. [Lk 1:11-19, 26-38](#)
- 2. But like the prophets, angels were also in the dark concerning the details of coming salvation
- 3. And so, the angels were serving not themselves but us! - cf. [He 1:13-14](#)

CONCLUSION

- 1. Our Father in heaven must hold His "elect" (the church) in high regard to have them served by such a distinguished company!
- 2. To be so privileged should motivate us to praise God for His grace and to devote our lives in grateful service to Him and His people
- 3. But the grace God bestowed toward us reached its peak when addition to all these (prophets, the Holy Spirit, apostles, angels) He sent His only Son to serve us as well!

"just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." - [Mt 20:28](#)

Shall we not respond with grateful service through faithful obedience to His Will?

"THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PETER"

Fortifying The Focus Of Our Hope (1:13)

INTRODUCTION

1. Up to this point in his epistle, Peter has summarized some of the blessings enjoyed by God's "pilgrims"...
 - a. Their election, sanctification, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus - [1Pe 1:2](#)
 - b. Their rebirth to a living hope - [1Pe 1:3](#)
 - c. Their incorruptible inheritance, reserved in heaven - [1Pe 1:4](#)
 - d. Their being kept by the power of God through faith for the salvation to come - [1Pe 1:5](#)
 - e. Their great joy, which is inexpressible and full of glory - [1 Pe 1:6-9](#)
 - f. The honor of having been served by a distinguished group of individuals - [1Pe 1:10-12](#)
2. Starting with verse 13, we find a series of exhortations...
 - a. These exhortations are based upon the wonderful blessings listed previously (note the connecting word "therefore")
 - b. These exhortations are found throughout much of the rest of the epistle
3. The first exhortation relates to the "hope" that we have as Christians - [1Pe 1:13](#)
 - a. In which we are charged to "rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ"
 - b. Put another way, we are being charged to "fortify the focus of our hope"
 - c. What this means, and how we are to accomplish it, will be the focus of this lesson

[Let's start by first noticing...]

I. OUR DUTY TO FORTIFY THE FOCUS OF OUR HOPE

- A. THAT IS THE PRIMARY EXHORTATION IN THIS PASSAGE...
 1. I.e., the words "rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you" is the main point of this verse
 2. The other exhortations which precede it are subsidiary
 3. And will be considered later
- B. WHAT IT MEANS TO "REST YOUR HOPE FULLY"
 1. It means to "set your hope perfectly, unchangeably, without doubt and despondency"
 2. As the NASV puts it: "fix your hope completely on the grace..."
 3. Therefore Peter is exhorting us to make our hope one that is complete, strong, and not wavering
- C. THE CULTIVATION OF A STRONG HOPE IS THEREFORE A CHRISTIAN DUTY...
 1. We have a duty to develop and fortify our hope
 2. Just as we need to cultivate patience, self-control, etc., so we need to cultivate our hope!
 3. For without a hope that is strong...
 - a. Our faith may waver

- b. We are subject to fear, doubt, and depression
- 4. Yes, the cultivation (or fortification) of our hope is essential to living joyful and victorious lives as Christians!

[This is the main point of verse 13, an exhortation to fortify our hope, to make it stronger. Just as we are to grow in faith and love, so we are to grow in hope!

To do this effectively, it is important to give thought to...]

II. IDENTIFYING THE FOCUS OF OUR HOPE

A. AS DEFINED IN VERSE 13, OUR HOPE IS...

- 1. The "grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ"
- 2. I.e., the unmerited favor that we will receive when Jesus comes again!

B. AS ALLUDED TO IN THE PRECEDING TWELVE VERSES, OUR HOPE IS...

- 1. The "inheritance...reserved in heaven for you" - [1Pe 1:4](#)
- 2. The "salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" - [1 Pe 1:5](#)
- 3. The "praise, honor, and glory" we shall receive "at the revelation of Jesus Christ" - [1Pe 1:7](#)
- 4. The "end of your faith--the salvation of your souls" - [1Pe 1:9](#)

C. IN VIEW OF ALL THESE VERSES, THE FOCUS OF OUR HOPE IS TO BE...

- 1. The coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the wonderful grace He will bring!
- 2. The wonderful praise, honor, and glory we shall receive when He comes!
- 3. The complete and final salvation of our souls from sin and its effects!
- 4. The receiving of our wonderful inheritance, the heavenly city, which is incorruptible, undefiled, and that does not fade away!

[Such is to be the focus of our hope. And as stated previously, the main charge in this passage to "rest our hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you" (to fortify the focus of your hope).

How we accomplish this is now considered as we examine...]

III. WHAT IS NECESSARY TO FORTIFY THE FOCUS OUR HOPE

A. "GIRD UP THE LOINS OF YOUR MIND"

- 1. "gird up" is an oriental expression...
 - a. It refers to the act of gathering up around the waist the long, loose robes worn by those in the east
 - b. Such "gathering up" was necessary or one's progress in running or some other act of exertion would be impeded
- 2. With the use of this metaphor, Peter is saying...
 - a. We must put out of the mind all things that would impede the free action of the mind in connection with developing our hope
 - b. We must put out of the mind such things like worry, fear, or obsession with material possessions
- 3. I.e., remove anything and everything that is not conducive to having a strong hope in the coming of our Lord

- a. Such as carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life - cf. [Lk 21:34-35](#)
- b. Such things as these "choke" us and hinder our ability to bear fruit (such as the fruit of a strong hope) - cf. [Lk 8:14](#)

B. "BE SOBER"

1. The word "sober" means "to be calm and collected in spirit, to be temperate, dispassionate, circumspect"
2. It is that state of mind in which the individual is self-controlled, able to see things without the distortion caused by worry or fear
3. I.e., to fortify the focus of our hope requires a CALM and SERIOUS attention to the task at hand - cf. [Lk 21:36](#) ("Watch therefore, and pray always...")
4. We cannot cultivate and fortify a strong hope if we are so "weak-minded" that we allow things to divert us away from our true calling!

CONCLUSION

1. And what is our calling? To sojourn through this life as pilgrims, but with a hope that is resting fully upon the grace we will receive when Christ comes again!
2. The problem with many Christians today is NOT that they have no hope...
 - a. But that their hope is weak and shallow
 - b. And that is because they are preoccupied with the affairs of this temporary life
3. To remain faithful to the Lord, we need to heed Peter's exhortation to fortify the focus of our hope by...
 - a. Freeing our minds of those things which would hinder us
 - b. Being more serious about the kind of lives our Heavenly Father would have us live - cf. [Lk 12:35-40](#)

Our next lesson will elaborate upon how God would have us live; but for now, are we living for God at all...?

Proper Conduct As Obedient Children (1:14-21)

INTRODUCTION

1. In our previous study, we saw from verse 13 that we have the responsibility to fortify the focus of our hope and set it fully upon the grace that we are to receive when Jesus comes again
2. Another responsibility we have as Christians is to conduct ourselves as "obedient children" - [1Pe 1:14](#)
3. While the need to be obedient is often misconstrued by some as sounding legalistic, it is stressed in the New Testament nonetheless - cf. [He 5:9](#); [2Th 1:8](#)
4. In what way are we to be obedient? There is much the Bible has to

say on the subject...

- a. But in this lesson we shall focus our attention to [1Pe 1:14-21](#)
- b. Where we learn that "Proper Conduct As Obedient Children" has both negative and positive connotations (i.e., both "thou shalt nots" and "thou shalt")

[For example, we learn from verse 14 that as "obedient children"...]

I. WE ARE NOT TO CONFORM TO FORMER LUSTS

A. UNDERSTANDING WHAT PETER IS SAYING...

1. The word "conform" ("fashion" in the KJV) means "to conform one's self (i.e. one's mind and character) to another's pattern"
2. The "former lusts" refer to the evil desires and behavior in which we once engaged, and in which the world continues to engage
3. In essence, then, Peter is saying:
 - a. "Don't act like you once did, or like those still in the world."
 - b. "Do not adopt their sinful habits, mannerisms, dress, and speech, which you did before you became Christians."

B. APPLYING WHAT PETER IS SAYING...

1. We will not seek to act like those who are not Christians
2. For Christians are not to be "conformists", but true "non-conformists", or "transformists" - cf. [Ro 12:1-2](#)
 - a. "Conformists" simply imitate others, sometimes claiming to do so only outwardly
 - b. But "transformists" are those who:
 - 1) Have undergone a true change on the "inside"
 - 2) And who manifest the difference on the "outside"
3. To behave properly as "obedient children", then, we need to be sure we are not adopting the sinful habits or mannerisms of those in the world
 - a. Like accepting the popular fashions of our society which appeal to fleshly desires
 - 1) E.g., short dresses, tight "designer jeans", and other immodest apparel
 - 2) Christians, rather than conforming, are to adorn themselves in modest apparel - cf. [1Ti 2:9-10](#)
 - b. Like filling our speech with suggestive language or jokes - cf. [Ep 4:29](#); [5:3-4](#)
 - c. Or delighting in various forms of entertainment which cater to fleshly desires - cf. [Php 4:8](#)
4. But too many Christians DO conform to the world and its lusts...
 - a. Therefore it is not surprising to hear many becoming entrapped by the world
 - b. As is indicated by the rise of marital unfaithfulness and divorce
5. So Christians need to heed what Peter is saying (as well as what was said by John - [1Jn 2:15-17](#))

[In a more "positive" vein, we learn from verses 15-16 that as "obedient children"...]

II. WE ARE TO BE HOLY IN ALL OUR CONDUCT

A. CONCERNING THE WORD "HOLY"...

1. It is closely related to the words "sanctify" and "sanctification"
2. All of which stress the idea of being "set apart"
3. To be "holy", then, means that we are "set apart" or dedicated to God

B. WE ARE TO BE "HOLY" FOR AT LEAST TWO REASONS...

1. The first reason is that given in our text: "For I (God) am holy."
 - a. The God who has called us through His gospel is a holy God
 - b. He Himself is "set apart" from sin and wickedness
 - c. His very nature demands a similar holiness on our part - cf. [He 12:14](#)
2. It is also Jesus' desire that we be holy (He died for this very purpose!) - cf. [Ep 5:25-27](#)

C. NOTE ALSO THAT WE ARE TO BE HOLY IN "ALL" OUR CONDUCT!

1. Holiness is not something we put on when convenient, like on Sundays
2. Instead, our daily life, our entire conduct is to be "set apart" in service to the Lord - cf. [Ro 12:1](#)
3. For this to be true, every aspect of our life must be in harmony with God's demand for holiness!
 - a. This means our work, our speech, our dress, our recreation...
 - b. ...ALL should be in harmony with the principles of God's Word
4. Even the most mundane things, when done in keeping with God's Will, become a part of our holy service to God!
5. Can it be said of our lives, that we are holy in all our conduct?
 - a. Do we go about our business, our play, with the thought of being "set apart" to the Will of God, so that it is evident in our business or play?
 - b. I am sure that all of us can improve in this area of our service as "obedient children"!

[There is one more point that can be made in reference to our conduct as "obedient children", taken from verses 17-21...]

III. WE MUST CONDUCT OURSELVES IN FEAR

A. AS PILGRIMS, "FEAR" HAS A PROPER PLACE DURING OUR SOJOURN...

1. Even as Jesus taught His disciples - [Mt 10:28](#)
2. And as Paul wrote the Philippians - [Php 2:12](#)

B. PETER GIVES TWO REASONS FOR SUCH "FEAR"...

1. In view of the judgment by our Father - [1Pe 1:17](#)
 - a. He will not be partial - "without partiality"
 - b. He will be personal - "judges according to each one's work"-- No one will receive special favors, no one will escape His discerning eye!
2. In view of the high cost of redemption - [1Pe 1:18-21](#)
 - a. We were not redeemed from our sins with silver or gold
 - b. But only by the precious blood of Christ!
 - 1) Who was without blemish and without spot
 - 2) Who was foreordained to die for our sins before the world began

- 3) Who came to this earth for our sakes
- 4) By whom our faith and hope are in God!
- c. Any Christian who does not conduct himself in a manner appreciative of the price paid for his sins, can expect a fate worse than death if he does not repent! - cf. He 10: 26-31

CONCLUSION

1. From verses 14-21, then, we learn that "Proper Conduct As Obedient Children" means that...
 - a. We are not to conform ourselves to former lusts
 - b. We are to be holy in all our conduct
 - c. We are to conduct ourselves in fear
2. Paul said much the same thing in writing to the church at Corinth:

"Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." ([2Co 7:1](#))
3. This we cannot do on our own, but by the redeeming grace of God...
 - a. We can be forgiven by the precious blood of Christ
 - b. We can be strengthened by the power of His Spirit to live the sort of lives pleasing to our Heavenly Father

Have you responded to the grace of God in order to receive such wonderful blessings? - cf. [Ac 2:38](#)