

# Hope Forward



**1 Peter 1: 13-19**

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If you were to ask me what my favorite movie is I would probably tell you Star Wars: Episode VI-Return of the Jedi. I think I probably land there. It would take me just a moment because I always go back and forth between Return of the Jedi or A New Hope. I go back and forth between the two, but it would definitely be Star Wars, one of those two. You know, Star Wars: A New Hope actually wasn't the original title to the movie; it was actually The Adventures of Luke Starkiller. That was the original title to the original Star Wars on the manuscript that George Lucas wrote for this movie—The Adventures of Luke Starkiller—imagine if that was the first episode. But when it actually came to the movies in '77, they dropped the title and it was just called Star Wars. Then another movie came out, which was Star Wars number two, The Empire Strikes Back, but when you went and saw it, it wasn't episode II was episode V. It confused a lot of people because they were wondering did I just miss four movies? What happened? It went from Star Wars to Star Wars Episode V: The Empire Strikes Back. Well, then George Lucas re-released the original Star Wars in '81 with a new title, but they didn't call it episode I, they called it episode IV. It wasn't the adventures of Luke Starkiller; instead, it was Star Wars: Episode IV-A New Hope.

It just strikes me of why would George Lucas choose that name? I mean, Luke Starkiller is pretty cool, why would he trade it for A New Hope, why

that word, hope? I mean, by this time he knows this is a big deal. They were already making toys, so it does turn into a big deal. So, why the word, hope; why would you grab onto the word, hope, as you build this entire empire? Why would you pin it all on this word, hope, a new hope? I think the reason is because hope is a very powerful thing. Hope is something that you don't just need if you're rebels on Hoth trying to overthrow the empire; hope is something that we all need, that we all desperately need. In fact, it's been said you can live without food for forty days, you can live without water for four days, you can live without air for four minutes, but you can't live without hope for four seconds. It really is true. If you are hopeless, if you're in a place without hope, that is a very dark spot. You are in danger of not making it through if you are hopeless. So, we all need hope, people need hope.

Peter is writing to elect exiles. He's in Rome, writing to Asia Minor, which is modern day Turkey. He's writing to these little bands of believers who are calling themselves churches and they're exiles. They live in a culture where the government and their bosses are not treating them well now because they're following this guy, Jesus. So they can't hope in the political system, they can't hope in their boss, they can't hope in their surroundings, or their money and their wealth and their lands, so what do they hope in? Well, he's going to write to these elect exiles that they have to hope forward. They have to set their hope in the grace that is coming at the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ. That is what God wants to communicate this morning to a 21st century people who live in a culture where we also feel often as exiles. We live in a culture that doesn't often share our values and views. We are, in a lot of ways, exiles and strangers and sojourners. What hope that things are going to get better, we can't hope in here and now only, we must hope forward in the grace that is coming in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Today, we're going to see our identity as obedient children is going to cause us to hope forward as we live holy.

## **Scripture**

***"Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. As obedient children, do not***

***be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy." And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile, knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot."***

We are going to be challenged to put our hope in the coming grace, to hope forward, but before we get there, I just want to ask what are you hoping in? What is your hope? What are some things that you put hope in? Sometimes we have hopes that become ultimate hopes that are not ultimate things. For instance, maybe politics are the things we put our hope in. We have this hope that if we can just get the right person in the right place then our country's going to go great, everything's going to go well, our lives are going to be well—if our politicians shared our views then everything would be great and we would have a good life. If my hope is in politics, I'm very anxious about elections. All of my effort is going into constantly watching the news, constantly knowing what's happening, what's not happening. And I'm infatuated by this because what I believe is if the wrong people could just get out of the way and the right people could get in there, everything would be great and life would be perfect, so we put our hope in a political system. Or maybe you put your hope in your family. If I could just get my kids to act right, if I get my kids to behave, obey, and do what I want them to do, if my house could somehow be at peace, then I would be at peace. If the problems of my life are my rebellious kids then if they will just act right then everything will be right, so we put hope in this idea of the performance of our kids. Maybe it's our spouse—if my spouse would just love me, or just pick up after themselves, just bare minimum stuff, life would be great; it would be awesome. I just got some hope that they would just get it a little bit but they just don't, and so you have hope in something that doesn't work out. Maybe you have hope in success. I have this job, but I want to turn into a career, so if I could get a new job and that new promotion that job that someone else

has, if I could just get enough customers, enough money, have enough retirement, have enough houses and enough vacations, then I would be completely whole and happy. So your hope is in your success and everything you do is focused on success because you believe if you can finally get there, if you can finally just get success, then you will be whole and happy, so our hope is in our success. It's not that any of those things are bad things; it's just when they become the thing we put all of our hope in they don't hold our hope because those things can't hold ultimate hope. Only God can hold on to our hope, only hoping in God is He actually going to be able to come through with what He has promised.

So, what Peter is going to tell a bunch of elect exiles who can't hope in their culture, can't hope in their government, can't hope in right now, what they can do is set their hope in what is to come at the return of Christ. They are to hope forward and that's what we are to do as well, to hope forward. We have a command to set our hope on the grace that is to be revealed. But before we get a command, we have some work to do because we are going to find that hope is actually hard work. It doesn't just come naturally. You don't just wake up hoping in the grace to come. You wake up hoping in all the things you can see and all the things around you, and you get infatuated with all the stuff and you forget that your ultimate hope is not here and now it's what's coming to you by way of Christ. So let's do the work.

Peter first says, "Therefore..." What is the therefore there for? Well, we've just seen this great salvation we have in Christ. We've been born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Christ, and so hope is our birthright. When you believed in Christ, you have been given hope in Him; therefore, because you have hope, you need to set your hope. Do you see the connection there? You have it now do it. But we still got some work to do because it's not just an easy transition. You're going to look around and hope in all the things you see not the things you can't see, so we have to do some work.

The first work is preparing your minds for action. If you're going to hope in the future coming of the Lord, you've got to prepare your mind for action. Now, Peter didn't actually write prepare your mind for action, what he

actually wrote was gird up the loins of your mind. So, I want all of you right now, just in practice, in application, to gird up the loins of your mind. Go for it—do that right now. Some of you are like “What? What are my loins? I don't even know what any that means!” So our English translators just translated it as “prepare your mind” because gird up your loins sounds a little strange. But to the hearers of this letter, that wouldn't be strange because they knew what it meant to gird up your loins. Guys back then didn't dress like we do—they didn't wear pants they wore a robe, which kind of looks like a dress to us. That's what the guys walked around in, and it's great for walking but it's not good for running. So whenever you needed to do something, like go to battle or run, or fight or flight, you would have to take the bottom of your robe, pull it up, and then tuck it into your belt—that's girding up your loins. This even goes back to the Old Testament. When they sat down for the Passover meal in Exodus 12, what the Scripture actually told them to do was to gird up their loins. That meant tuck the dress into the belt so you can run, because after you take this meal it's go time—you're about to walk out of slavery into freedom, so prepare yourself, get ready and tuck it in because it's time to go.

So, these people Peter is talking to are getting this imagery of having this excess garment they need to tuck it in because they need to get ready to move. That's what he's trying to tell you about preparing your mind, because hope is a mind thing. You've got to put your mind in this. It's something you do in your mind when you hope in something, and there's a lot going on in your mind. Your mind is all over the place in a thousand directions. You're thinking all sorts of thoughts. Our minds go a little crazy sometimes, right? Peter is saying focus...all those other distractions, gird them in, tuck them up; we have to get ready because this is going to be some hard work. In our culture, we would probably say is if you're going to set your mind, you need to roll up your sleeves. Rolling up your sleeves means let's get serious because it's time for work. Peter is saying roll up the sleeves of your mind, get ready, get focused. All that excess that you're thinking about, do away with it because it's time to focus because this is hard work.

Then Peter says, "...and also be sober-minded." What is sober-minded? Well, think of the opposite, which would be drunk-minded. That would be to be intoxicated in your mind, to be unfocused, to be belligerent, to be tipsy, to have blurred vision. He's calling us to be prepared and be focused because what's about to happen is going to be hard for you to do; it's not natural but it's your birthright that you need to cling to.

Now that we're ready, we're prepared, and we're focused, notice what Peter says, "...set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you..." Set your hope, not partially, not a little bit, set it fully. That's completely. That means the grace to come is our plan A. That's what all of our focus is. It's not like we're diversifying our odds, and we're going to kind of go with God might come back, but if he doesn't I'm going to have this whole other life that I'm living just in case this whole God thing is not true—I don't want to waste my life. No. Peter is telling the exiles to live your life in a way that if the return of Christ is not true, then you wasted your entire life. Set your hope fully, cling to, that the way you're living your life is going to be validated at the return of our Lord Jesus Christ, and if He doesn't come back, we're a laughingstock because we lived our life for the wrong thing. So, he is saying set your hope—that thing that the rebels needed to defeat the Empire—well, there's got to be hope, something has to change, something is coming. Our hope is set fully on, notice, "...the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Christ." Your hope is in that future salvation that is coming to you. If you're a Christian, you've been saved, you're being saved, and you will be saved in the end. That's that full and final salvation where you're going to be made like Christ and you will live with Him forever. That's the hope you have today. It's hoping forward. It's hoping in what is to come not just in fixing everything here and now. It's hoping that one day Christ is going to return and you're going to receive that full and final salvation.

So, we're going to hope forward, and hoping for it is going to cause us to live holy. To live holy, we're going to get a negative and then a positive. The first negative is for us to not conform to our old ways, and then the positive is to be holy as God is holy. So, we're not conforming to our old life, instead, we're conforming to the new life we have in God. Let's see

what Peter says in verse 14, "As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance..." As these people are hoping forward, he says don't conform to your former passions when you were ignorant; in other words, when you didn't know God. Don't conform to that. Do you remember who you used to be before Christ? You weren't thinking straight. You didn't know God. Your old self didn't know the glory of Christ so you lived for you rather than Jesus, and you did a lot of things that were not for the glory of Christ. So don't conform. The word, conform, means to be molded, to be squeezed into. Paul uses that in Romans 12, "Do not be conformed to this world..." but Peter doesn't say world, he says don't be conformed to you, to the old you. The old you still has some passions and desires and it's really easy to slip back into the old you. He's saying don't conform.

But notice, Peter doesn't start with 'don't conform,' he doesn't start with a command; instead, he starts with these words "as obedient children." And then he says do not conform, and then be holy. He doesn't say...*Alright guys here's the test, if you will not conform and be holy, then you're going to become obedient children.* That's not the order Peter writes. Instead, he starts with this identity statement, *dear obedient children. Now, act like it.* In other words, you're not doing something to become an obedient child; you are an obedient child so now your behavior should follow who you are. See, this is gospel order, and it's really important that we know that we are obedient children in the Lord Jesus Christ. It's not what we do or what we don't do that makes us obedient children; it's what Christ has done for us that makes us obedient children. Here's the truth—we were all disobedient children, but Jesus came to the earth and He becomes the only obedient child. He perfectly fulfilled the law of God, He always did with His Father said, He was the one and only obedient child. And you know what He did...He went to a cross and traded places with us. On the cross, He is saying, "Dear World, if you'll believe in me, I'll take your disobedience and I'll die for it and I'll give you my obedience as a free gift by faith." So we become obedient children, not by obeying but because of the obedience of Christ. Christ obeyed for us and when we believe in Him, we get His obedience imputed to us—we are obedient kids. So Church, know that if

you're a believer you are a beloved, pleasing son and daughter to God. You *have* obeyed. It's already been done.

So, you are an obedient child. Now what should you do? Walk that out. It's already yours! It's who you are, now walk that out. The first way we walk that out is in the negative sense: do not conform to the passions of our former ignorance. Again, it's from identity. You are obedient children; now stop doing what you used to do! It's pretty clear. Stop doing what used to do. So there is that BC moment, that was before Christ. Remember your BC you, the before Christ you. You didn't know Jesus and you assumed you were the most important person in the universe. We all did...every one of us, we all thought we're the best; we're the most important. We pretty much lived our lives as if we were Lord and God. That's just how we lived our lives. But then, we got this new knowledge that I'm not Lord and God, Jesus is. I repented and gave my life to Him so now my eyes are open to He's the Creator, He's the ruler, and I'm going to live my life under Him not above Him. Peter is saying live in that new knowledge! Remember that Jesus is Lord, you're not, so stop living like you are Lord and you're in control and doing whatever your heart desires and whatever you want. Learn to live under the lordship of Christ. Don't conform to the old you.

I don't know what the old you was like, but there are usually two ways the old you go. There's the BC version that's just a rebel. That was some of you. You've got stories that you could tell. You were that guy in school that everybody knew about. You had the biggest party. You had all the wild times. You were a rebel and everybody knew you were far from God. But there are also the before Christ people who aren't rebels. They act righteous; they are doing what their mom told them, coming to church, wearing a tie, sitting right, and reading their Bibles. They're doing everything right, everything good, and it appears like they are very close to God and they are God's favorite. But in reality, before Christ as a righteous person, you weren't righteous you were self-righteous. In your self-righteousness, you were just as far from God as the rebels. See, by trying to be really good and work really hard, you were trying to get leverage over God so that He would owe you a good life in Heaven...but it didn't work. Eventually, your self-righteousness got sniffed out, and you repented



of your self-righteousness and clung to the righteousness of Christ. So whoever you are before Christ righteous or rebel, Peter is saying don't go back to that guy. Don't go back to self-righteousness thinking it's your works that earn your love with God. That's not true. We work from righteousness, not for righteousness. Also, don't be the rebel, don't go do whatever your heart desires because that's the old you, that was the ignorant you, now you've seen Christ! Now you have a different life so don't conform to the old you, instead conform to God.

Notice what Peter says next. It's going to be the idea of being holy, conforming our lives to God. Here's what we see in verse 15, there's a conjunction, "...but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct since it is written, 'You shall be holy, for I am Holy.'" Do not be the guy used to be, but instead be holy. Now, why should you be holy? Because the God who called you is holy. The God who called you is a reference to salvation. The God who rescued you, who called you, who gave you new life is holy, and He's called you to Himself. So, if you are now His people, you should be a holy people. Now, think of this idea of being holy and God being holy. I realize that I am way out of my pay grade. I cannot even remotely tell you about the holiness of God. I don't think the angels could really tell you about the holiness of God. I mean, we're dealing with something that, frankly, we can't truly understand how holy God is, but what we hear from the Scriptures is that God is holy.

As I just think about that concept, I'm taken back in my mind to fifteen years ago driving from Southern Seminary to Gatlinburg to go to a youth retreat. For whatever reason, I decided to listen to a book on a CD. It was RC Sproul, The Holiness of God. If you want somebody to talk about God's holiness, go get that book it's pretty good. I remember driving for six hours and just being engulfed in this little Scion car. For a moment, I felt like I was transported into that temple scene where Isaiah walks in and he's experiencing the holiness of God, where all the sudden the train of His robe is filling the temple. The thresholds are shaking and there is an earthquake happening, and he is so caught up in this moment. He sees these angels and these cherubs are flying around God and they're covering their eyes and they're covering their feet, and they're saying back to one

another holy, holy, holy is the Lord God, the whole Earth is filled with His glory. Isaiah is caught up in this moment and saying I shouldn't be here, I should die! In the Holiness of God, we realize we should not be here we should die. Then there's this altar where there had been a dead sacrifice, and the altar touches him, and all the sudden, he who was not holy becomes holy in the holiness of God. I just remember driving in that car and just hearing RC Sproul talk about the holiness of God and the attributes of God. I can remember just vividly shaking my hands on the steering wheel just imagining being there and seeing the holiness of God.

See, holiness is something we can talk about but it's really hard to actually know what the holiness of God is like. I mean, Scripture gives us different pictures of what even that word, holiness, means. Think about the creation account where we are first introduced to the word, holy. We have six days of creation, and then we have a seventh day that's different, it's unique, it's God makes it holy and it becomes a Sabbath. It's set apart. That's what holiness is, to set something apart. And of course, that's fits very well with God because God is set apart. God is not like you and He's not like me. He is Creator; we're creation. There is a chasm between us and God. He is holy, pure majestic, and holiness. He is other and we are creatures made from dirt. There's a vast distinction between us and God, and we get this idea of holiness. We can see it as Moses stands before burning bush and God says take off your shoes because the ground is holy. The ground is set apart, it's different because God is there and He is speaking in that area. We can see this holiness drifting into the temple as we find their holy objects that are only used in temple service. They are set apart, they are consecrated, they are other, used for the glory of God. We see this Most Holy place, or the Holy of Holies, where God's very presence dwells. It's called the Holy of Holies because there's a veil and if you walk through it, you will die. Because of the holiness of God, the otherness of God, the grandeur, the majesty, the beauty, the purity, and the righteousness, all of that blazing glory, His holiness, it will cause you to die if you stand in His presence!

And then, God calls Israel a holy people, a holy nation. So how can a holy nation that acts like they do become holy? It's because they are set apart

unto God. That is really what the idea is of God telling us to be holy. He's not just saying just keep all the rules. He's saying be a people unto me, be separate, be consecrated, be devoted to me. Then, we have vessels that are common and vessel that are holy. What's the difference in a common and a holy vessel? One is used unto the Lord and one is not. So what does it mean to be a holy person? Are you unto the Lord or are you not? See, if you're in Christ you're unto the Lord, which makes you holy. We start with identity—you are actually holy in Christ. This is not *be* holy, which means try to keep all the rules. We can often get this confused where if we're to be holy then we need to try to keep all the rules. And if you take that thought, experiment, into the New Testament, then the most holy people would be the scribes and the Pharisees. They kept all the rules. They didn't just keep all the rules that God gave them; they made rules for the rules. They had God's rules, and then they made their own rules to keep them from breaking God's rules. They had rules upon rules upon rules. You talk about holy people—they were the most holy people of all because they kept all of the rules. But Jesus very quickly smelled through their holiness. They were not holy unto God; they were actually a whitewashed tomb, in other words, great on the outside terrible on the inside. They were a cup that was cleaned on the outside, but rotten milk on the inside. You couldn't use it, you couldn't drink from it; it was filthy. Their hearts were not changed. In other words, they kept all of the rules, they were very self-righteous and did all the right things, but they weren't holy people. Holiness is not keeping all the rules; holiness is being consecrated unto God. It's set apart unto God. That's what holiness is. Holiness looks a lot more like loving the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and loving your neighbor as yourself. That's what holiness looks like. It's not just listening a bunch of rules and going to church a bunch of times, and doing this and not doing that. Holiness is chasing after God. Holiness is living in your life unto God as that consecrated vessel.

Notice our command—be holy as He who called you is holy. Peter quotes some Scripture. He quotes the Old Testament. He quotes Leviticus 19:1 where God says, "Be holy because I am holy." So, Peter has already called us obedient children and now he's bringing us back to the Old Testament, using that same language, a holy people. I think what Peter is doing is he's

taking these scattered Gentiles and Jews who are scattered in exile, and he's calling them the people of God—and the people of God were Israel. Israel were the children of God. Israel was the holy nation...and now Peter is saying it's not Israel anymore. It's you, Jews and Gentiles scattered abroad, you're part of the family of God, and you are called holy people of God, so therefore be holy. He's identifying us as this new Israel. Yeah, you're in exile but you're coming into a promised land, and that's where your hope forward it is going to be. Gird up your loins just like they did coming out of the Exodus. You've been brought out of an exodus and you are marching towards your future home therefore have future hope, and you be holy like they were supposed to be holy but couldn't because they didn't have Christ. You be the new people of God that they couldn't because you're now in Christ. He is connecting these dots to the old story saying you are part of that, but you have fulfilled that. You are now the people of God, so be holy.

Not only should you be holy, also “conduct yourselves in fear.” So if you're going to be holy, don't conform to who you were, conform yourself to God and conduct yourselves in fear. In other words, fear God. Notice what Peter says in verse 17, “And if you call on Him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile...” What should they be doing in exile? Here's the command—conduct yourselves with fear. What does it mean to conduct ourselves with fear? Well first, he says, “And if you call on Him as Father.” Again, he's harkening back to our identity. If you're saying that you're an obedient child and that God is your Father, then that's who you are, that's your identity. You are the people of God. So, if you're saying God is my Father, then don't you know who God is? If you're saying God is my Father, then do you remember who He is? Peter says He is actually the judge of all creation and He's going to judge everyone according to their deeds, which, by the way, is bad news for everyone. If God judges according to your deeds, we are all done for. All of our deeds, no matter how good they are, they are like filthy rags before the Lord. We have all fallen short of the glory of God. So we get judged for our deeds and that's really bad news for us. But here's the gospel—as Jesus people, we get

judged in Christ. We get judged as His deeds are our deeds. Therefore, we go through judgment and escape His wrath and fall under His love.

What Peter is trying to get in is the idea that God is a judge and God judges rightly, and He doesn't show impartiality. In other words, He doesn't have favorites. So, track with me because this a little bit hard to connect the dots. Why is he telling us God will judge, there is no partiality, God doesn't have favorites? Because here is what you might be thinking... *Well, you know, I'm a child of God and I'm His favorite, and He gives me special privileges. I know that the Bible says don't do this, but me and God talked and we prayed about it, and we're good. I prayed about it and God said it's fine.* In other words, whatever your sin, whatever your passion, whatever your desire, whatever you like, you're that favorite child who doesn't get justice. You don't get judgment, you don't get how God is to everyone else; you get that special treatment. God is good with your life. You believed in Jesus, now you can do whatever you want, and God's fine because you two hang out and pray a little bit, and everything's great. Peter is saying no. You're not God's favorite child. He's not treating you differently. If you are calling Him Father, then you should live under reverent fear of Him. You should live your life under Him if he's your Dad. You shouldn't just do whatever you want. In your exile, conduct yourself in fear.

I'll try to give you a little illustration that may help connect the dots. Just imagine that you're a teenager. Just imagine that your parents leave you home alone for the first time. Your parents have left. What are you going to do? I mean your parents have left, right? Well, there are a few scenarios. Number one, if you have no fear of your parents then you're going to do whatever you want. I mean, it's like Home Alone time, like Bueller's Day Off. Like... *Get the Ferrari out, let's go, this is awesome! I'm going to call my buddies to come over, throw a party, and trash the house. Dad's gone, and I can do whatever I want! Finally, I'm free of him and I don't even care when he gets back because I'm not afraid of him at all.* That's having no fear of your dad. It leads to a life doing whatever you want. But then, there's an opposite view, and that is that you fear your dad too much. So when your mom and dad leave and you're left alone, do you

know what you do? You do nothing. You sit in your chair and you don't move. You don't go to the refrigerator. You don't make yourself a sandwich. You don't turn on the TV. You don't read a book. You don't play your video games. You do nothing because you're so afraid that you might do the wrong thing that you're paralyzed in fear. You sit and you do absolutely nothing because you're so overwhelmed with your dad who might come home and lose temper, so you are paralyzed with fear. See, both of those would be a wrong way to be a teenager home alone. What you should do is have a proper fear of your dad. What does that lead to? That leads to you living in the house, on your own with Dad gone, and you doing all the things you know that he would approve of. You're making a sandwich, you're playing your videos, you're living your life, you're having a buddy over, but you're not doing things you know he disapproves of. You're doing all the things that you know that he would want you to do if he were right there with you.

That's how you have a proper fear of God. That kind of fear doesn't cause you to do whatever you want or to do nothing at all; it causes you to live under His authority. That's what Peter is trying to get these exiles to do...*Hey exiles your dad is gone. He's not with you right now. He's coming; the Lord is coming back, but right now, in a real way, you're kind of at home alone. What are you supposed to be doing? Live with proper fear; conduct yourself with proper fear.* What does that mean? It's not doing whatever you want because Daddy's not home, it's not doing nothing because you're afraid of Dad; instead, it's living your life under His authority, doing, right now alone, what you know to do if He were right there with you. That's how you conduct your life. And for us, that's how we are to conduct our lives. We're in the dorm room by ourselves, what do we do? We conduct ourselves if Jesus were right there with us. Do the things that He would approve of. Enjoy the things that He says yes to. Flee the things that He says no to. As adults and kids, what should we do? Live in fear; do the things we know that Jesus would approve of. Conduct ourselves with fear.

Lastly, remember the price of your redemption. Notice what Peter tells them in verses 18–19, "...knowing that you were ransomed from the futile

ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot." He's saying know, remember...remember that you were ransomed from your futile ways. That word, ransomed, means to be set free with a price. Everyone getting this letter knew what that looked like, they knew what that meant, because they would have friends that were enslaved to someone else. But you could actually go and pay a price to the person who owned the slave and that person would release them. They would be free, and then you could say, "Friend, I bought you now set you free." That is what it looks like to ransom someone. Peter is telling these people to remember you've been ransomed from your futile ways. You've been bought from your slavery. You've been brought out and given freedom, now remember the price of that.

Notice, Peter talks about the precious blood of Christ and then he goes into a lamb without spot or blemish. Now, I think the reason he brings up a lamb is he wants us to again go back to perhaps the Passover, and then the sacrificial system. But if you think about that Passover, that first lamb giving its life for the people of Israel, they were set free from Egypt. The firstborns were redeemed; they were ransomed with the price of a lamb. A lamb died so the sons of Israel could be released from captivity and going to freedom. He's trying to get them to remember that they were that new people. They had been ransomed out of slavery into freedom, but it wasn't a lamb; it was the Son of God. The Son of God gave His life to ransom you so that you could be out of your futile ways and walk into freedom before God. Remember your price! It wasn't gold, it wasn't silver, it wasn't money; it was a priceless thing. It was the very blood of Christ, the precious blood of Christ.

Every time I take the Lord's Supper here at this church and take the little cup, I can't help but just look down at this juice that's representing the blood of Christ. And I can't help but just to sit in this seat as we are at the table of the Lord as the family of God, looking down at that cup, and thinking the only reason I'm here is because of blood. It's not that I was good enough, that I tried hard enough, that I won something, that I earned something—the only reason I'm at the table of the Lord at the

Lord's Supper is because of the blood in the cup. That's it! That was the price of my redemption. The only reason that I'm going to be at the marriage supper of the Lamb in the future Kingdom is because of the blood in the cup. That's my only boast. That's my only hope.

Peter is trying to draw our imagination to ask, what is the price of your salvation? How much did it cost? In other words, what did it take for a holy God to dwell with an unholy people? What did it take for your treason and your sin to be dealt with so that you could walk in the presence of a holy and just God? What was the price tag on forgiveness of your sins? It was God's own Son! His own precious blood poured out for you, that is the price it took for a holy God to dwell with an unholy people. The only way to make you holy was by the blood of Christ. That's the price tag. That's the cost of your salvation. So what should that cause you to do? Prize it, cherish it...see how big of a deal it was for you to be made right with God. It was a priceless act from a loving Savior who gave His very life for you. So, knowing that my salvation was brought only by the blood of Christ, what did it do for me? It ransomed me from my futile ways inherited from my forefathers. In other words, he's writing to a group of people in exile that had some patterns and behaviors that were brought from the culture they were raised in, their education, their mama, and their daddy. Peter is saying you have no excuse anymore. It doesn't matter what school you went to, what culture you grew up in, it doesn't matter who your mom and who your daddy were. None of that matters anymore because you've been ransom from all of that by the blood of Christ. You've been bought and freed from all those patterns into new life and family with God.

I think Peter would want to say the same thing to us. See, some of us are still blaming are raising, we're still blaming our school, we're blaming our culture, we're blaming our daddy for our temper and our mama for our gossip. We're just saying that's just who I am... *You should have saw my granddad. I'm a little better than him!* Peter says Christ ransomed you from all the bad things your mom and daddy gave you. You have no excuse anymore. You've been ransom from your futile ways, inherited by the blood of Christ. You are new now. So because you're new, walk in newness. Because you're new, don't conform but be holy. Peter was writing to this



people who are living in a place that's hopeless. They're living in a time that's hopeless. Things aren't going to get better in their lifetime; they're actually going to get worse. So what do you do when you're out of hope? Well, you need a new hope. But you don't need Luke the Starkiller. Instead, you need Christ the one who made the stars and the one who loves you, the one who lived for you, the one who died for you. What you need is hope, future hope, forward hope. Friends, things might not get better in our lifetime. Things might actually get worse. Our hope is not here, our hope is not now, our hope is in future grace that is to come. If we will bank our hope in that, if we will set our hope in that, do you know what that hope will do? It will pull us towards holiness because that's what hope does. It pulls us to holiness, not conforming who we were but conforming to who God is because we know our price and we're living in fear, not fear because we're afraid, fear because we know who God is.