Grace, Grace, God's Grace

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Preacher: Joey Snodgrass

[0:00] This is the First Mustang Pulpit Podcast, a podcast of the weekly preaching and teaching at First Mustang.! Thank you for joining us. It's an honor for me to be with you.

! We worship the Lord together as we sit under the teaching of His Word.
And speaking of being together, it's a joy to be all together in one service this morning. So I'm sure you lost your seat. Apologies for that. But it's fun to be here. It may have been harder to find a seat. But a joy to sing together with one voice and to be gathered together in one service, together to delight in what Christ has done for us. Yesterday was the 4th of July, you might have heard.
And we celebrated 250 years as a country. I'm thankful to the Lord for our great country in which we live. It allows us the freedom to pursue Christ and worship Him and build families and build friendships and communities.
[1:13] And receive the rewards of hard work. I'm deeply thankful for our country and the Christian foundations it was built upon. I'm also thankful for those who have given their lives to create and protect and defend our nation, both past and present.

And also those who are yet to come in the future who will take up that cause. I'm also thankful for those of you who serve in things like law enforcement and the fire department who protect our slice of America.
So really I'm just thankful if you have a more manly job than I do. I'm grateful for you. Thankful for you. Thank you.
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Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Our hope doesn't just go back 250 years, but almost 2050 years back to Jerusalem. And the gospel that we believe, the gospel that has saved us, goes all the way back there.
But as we'll see in our passage this morning, the gospel we believe, the gospel that has saved us, and the grace that sanctifies us doesn't just go back to Jerusalem. The gospel, we believe, is as old as the Old Testament.
Open with me to the book of 1 Peter. Our passage this morning will be 1 Peter chapter 1, verses 10 through 16.
And just a little bit of background about the recipients of this letter. They were Christians who were scattered throughout the region of Asia Minor, as they're identified in chapter 1, verse 1.
[4:11] And these people have been suffering. They have a background in paganism and idol worship and all kinds of immorality, and they've been saved. They've heard the gospel, repented of their sins, and been saved.

And now they're suffering. They're being persecuted for their faith in Christ, and that persecution isn't going to stay the same. It's actually going to get worse. And so Peter, in anticipation of that, is writing to remind them of the hope they have in order to help prepare them to suffer well.
He's reminding them of their hope that they've got, and he calls it a living hope in verse 3. It's living because Jesus, the Savior, is living. It's through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.
And verses 3 through 12 of this first chapter are actually just one sentence. Peter's just going on and on and on, and the theme of that one long sentence is verse 3, the very beginning.

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Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.
[5:44] They're being kept and guarded through their suffering until they see Jesus face to face. They're preserved through their faith until they meet the Savior who's given them this living hope.

And so let's read our passage for this morning, 1 Peter 1, beginning in verse 10. 1 Peter 1, 1 Peter 1, beginning in verse 10.
Since it is written, You shall be holy, for I am holy. Let's pray. Our Father, we praise you for this living hope we have through the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, your beloved Son.
And we pray now that as we turn to your word and we sit under the teaching of your word, I pray we'd receive this word with meekness, knowing that this word is able to sanctify us.
This word is, this message of Christ has saved us and will continue to sanctify us until we see your Son face to face. And so Father, we may behold wondrous things from your word, speak to us and give us ears to listen.
[7:50] It's in Christ's name we pray. Amen. Amen. Amen. We'll cover our text this morning in two sections. The first one being marvel at the grace that is ours.

Secondly, hope in the grace that will be ours. So number one, marvel at the grace that is ours.
Peter begins this section in verse 10 concerning this salvation.
The salvation he's referring to is the salvation that he's described in verses 3 through 9. It's through Christ. It's a living hope. It's through his death and resurrection that we've been born again.
And we did not find this salvation. We did not earn this salvation. He calls us elect or chosen exiles back in chapter 1 verse 1. And it's about this salvation that the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully.
In thinking about this salvation, Peter describes it as grace. This grace that is ours. This grace that is the believers of the first century.
[9:07] This word shows up in the Old Testament and it's most usually translated as steadfast love or loyal love or faithful love. This is a one word summary of all that Christ has offered us.

This grace is God's unearned favor. His unearned love for us as sinners that we receive in Christ through faith. Grace is a synonym of salvation, but it's bigger than salvation.
Salvation is what Christ accomplished. Grace was the motive. Grace is the undercurrent of all that God does and all that God, all that he does to act toward us in a loving way.
His motive is grace. Grace is the undercurrent of salvation. Grace is the undercurrent of salvation.
In grace, Christ has paid for our sin. He's conquered the penalty of our sin.
He's overcoming the power of sin in our life. And one day when we see him, he'll completely vanquish sin from our presence through his grace. Grace is the undercurrent of salvation.
[10:12] And we don't deserve any of it. That's what makes it grace. It is unearned, unworked for, given to those of us who are unworthy of it.

And as we think about grace, I think there's a great danger that we face. Not because it's dangerous to think about grace, but there's a danger in the fact that we are so familiar with it.
But any number of you could come up here, and if I asked you, what is grace? You could define it for me, biblically. You could give verses that use the word grace and help you define it.
You could explain what this means. You could say it's unearned. You could describe it in great detail to me. And because of that familiarity, we can put it in a box.
We can say this is what grace is. This is how the Bible uses this term. This is what it means. And I don't need it as much as I used to. It's not as spectacular to me as it once was.
[11:14] This is the danger we face when thinking about the word grace. We can just skim past it through our familiarity with it. And if we're not careful, the idea of the grace we've received can be boring to us.

Have you taken his grace for granted? This passage, I pray, will help us rightly appreciate the grace we have received and all the grace that we will receive in the future through Christ.
Peter says, it's about this grace that the prophets prophesied. What prophets are we talking about? All of them.
In the Greek language, Peter actually doesn't use the word the, so he just says prophets. Prophets prophesied about this. Every prophet from Moses to Malachi, all of them were talking about this grace.

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All of them were pointing toward Christ. This is how Peter read the Old Testament and how we should as well. The prophets declared their message about Christ.
[12:23] And that message was one of grace. But notice what Peter says. They're prophesying about the grace that was to be yours. And as Christians, the grace he speaks about is ours through faith.

Peter is saying that everything the Old Testament predicted is ours in Christ through faith. And Peter is not just saying that, he's saying the reason the Old Testament's prophets prophesied was for us.
The reason they were given the message that they had was for us. This is true of Peter's audience that he's writing to and it's true of us as believers today.
Certainly the prophets spoke to the people that they lived in. They spoke to the time and setting in which they found themselves. But their message of the Messiah was not to be fulfilled in their day. The salvation they predicted was for generations to come to experience. Now they were saved by grace, but they were saved by looking forward to the grace that would be given to sinners through the cross of Christ.
[13:38] And so the events, the person that they prophesied about was something that they themselves would never see with their own eyes. And so Peter says they searched and inquired carefully.

They studied. What is it that they studied? They studied their own writings. They studied the things that the Holy Spirit had inspired them to write. They studied the other prophetic writings they had access to.
Those who came before them or those who were writing and preaching during their own day. And what questions were they asking? What were they searching for? Verse 11 says they were inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating.
They were asking two questions. Who and when? Who is this prophecy about? And when will he be here?
What person is this? What time is this describing? Who and when? They knew the Messiah was coming. They knew they were predicting the ministry and the reign of the Messiah.
[14:53] But who would he be? And when would he get here? And the Jews today are still asking these questions because they've missed the Messiah. They've completely missed Christ.

But they're still asking those same questions that the prophets were all those centuries ago. And it says that the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating these things.
Now this is a reference to the Holy Spirit. But why is he not just called the Holy Spirit here? He's called the Spirit. He's called the Helper. He's called the Holy Spirit. Very rarely is he referred to as the Spirit of Christ.
So why does Peter choose those words to write here in 1 Peter chapter 1? I think a couple of reasons. One, he's reminding us that this is the Spirit whom Christ sent.
You can read about that in John 16. Jesus is preparing his disciples for his departure. And he says, I will not leave you as orphans. I'll send you a helper. I'll send you the Spirit.
[15:56] He will guide you into the truth and he will glorify me. And so the Spirit is sent by Christ to point to Christ. And this is not something that just happened in the New Testament era.

Peter is saying that Christ sent the Spirit even to the Old Testament prophets under the Old Covenant. They received the Spirit from Christ to prophesy about Christ.
And so another reason is this is also a strong statement about Jesus' pre-existence. Jesus was born in roughly 4 BC. But he's existed from long ago.
He's existed from ancient times. He is eternal alongside the Father and the Spirit. All Scripture is breathed out by God.
All Scripture given by the Spirit through men as they were carried along. So the prophets were writing and they didn't know who or when.
[17:00] But what did they know? Well, it might shock us all the things that they did know because the Spirit was indicating when he predicted, what did he predict? The sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories.

The sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. When we think about the sufferings of Christ, we're thinking primarily about his crucifixion. The prophets predicted his crucifixion.

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And we read about that in great detail as Jeremy did in Isaiah 53. If you just read Isaiah 53, who could have guessed that was 700 years before Christ died.
He was pierced for our transgressions. He was crushed for our iniquities. Upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace. Isaiah was predicting the sufferings of Christ.
Or places like Psalm 22, which begins, My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? They've pierced my hands and my feet. They've divided my clothing among themselves.
[18:03] And for my garment, they've cast lots. David was predicting the sufferings of Christ. They weren't just predicting his sufferings, though. They're also predicting the subsequent glories.

Things like the resurrection from the dead. His ascension back to heaven. His return to earth to rule and reign over his enemies and in peace over his people.
Places like Psalm 2 that talk about the Father setting his king on Zion. And dominating his enemies. Psalm 110, him ruling over his enemies as a footstool.
Or Zechariah 12, 10. They will look on him whom they have pierced. And they will mourn for him. The sufferings of Christ and the resulting glories.
So what did the prophets know? Well, they knew a lot more than we often think. They knew a lot more than we often give them credit for. They knew what Christ would do. They knew what he would suffer. They knew what his suffering would accomplish.
[19:10] And they knew the glories that would be his after his suffering. They knew his suffering would lead to his exaltation. And they saw this through all kinds of different patterns in the Old Testament.

You think of Joseph. He was exalted. He was Potiphar's right-hand man. And thrown into the depths of the earth after false accusations. Only to rise again to higher power than he had previously.
They saw this all throughout the Old Testament. And John MacArthur summarizes three basic facts that these prophecies pointed to.
Three basic facts. One, the Messiah would suffer. The Messiah would suffer. Two, the Messiah would triumph.
Three, the Messiah would save. Think about his suffering. Isaiah 53, Psalm 22. Thinking about his triumph.
[20:10] Psalm 2. Psalm 16, predicting his resurrection. Thinking about his salvation. Isaiah 61. Proclaiming the year of the Lord's favor.

And so, the prophets could see that Christ would suffer. That he would triumph. And that he would save. Did they know all of the details of those things? No.
They didn't know his name would be Jesus. They didn't know his mother's name would be Mary. They didn't know he'd live in the first century. They didn't necessarily know that he would die by crucifixion in great detail.
The prophets knew what they prophesied. But not when these prophecies would come to pass. Or by whom they would be fulfilled. But it's like Hebrews 11, 13 says.
All these died in faith. Not having received the promises. But having seen them. And greeted them from afar. They strongly desired to see the person or the time.
[21:10] But they knew they weren't serving themselves. And Jesus himself in Matthew 13, 17 says. For truly I say to you. Many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see.

And did not see it. And to hear what you hear. And did not hear it. And so, the prophets found themselves in a situation that's similar to where we find ourselves today.
Many of us like to think about New Testament prophecy. And the end times. And the Lord has revealed a great deal of detail about those things. But we don't know, for example, who the Antichrist will be.
And we don't know exactly when he will rise to power. We know what's going to happen. We don't know who it's going to happen by. Or when it's going to take place.
This is the situation the prophets also found themselves in. And as they were studying. As they were inquiring. Verse 12 says. It was revealed to them. That they were serving not themselves.
[22:15] But you. As they studied. They recognized that they were preaching and writing about a generation that was yet to come. They were writing about things that they themselves would never see with their own eyes.

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And so this is revelation about the revelation. This is revelation from God about the revelation they had received and written down.
Or we could call this illumination. Their eyes were opened to see the truth that's been previously revealed. And you and I experience illumination as we read our Bibles.
By the help of the Holy Spirit. He gives us understanding. And that understanding is not new revelation. It's insight into what has already been spoken. Insight into what's already been revealed.
And so as these prophets devoted themselves to studying and inquiring. They received this light. They received this illumination. And they recognized we're not writing about anything that we ourselves will see.
[23:21] We're serving people that will come after us. We're setting people up to see the beauty of Christ whenever he does appear. Why did the prophets prophesy?

For us. For New Testament Christians. And so I want you to get this. These Old Testament prophecies don't just apply to us.
They were written for us. They don't just apply to us. They were written for us. And so we can say all of Scripture. Scripture is not about us.
But it is for us. It's not written to us directly. But it is written for us. We are not these believers scattered throughout Asia Minor. But this letter is written for us.
And I want you to see an example of this. Save your spot there in 1 Peter. And go with me to 1 Corinthians chapter 10. I want you to see this with your own eyes.
[24:23] Paul also thought this way about the Old Testament Scriptures. In 1 Corinthians 10, Paul is looking at the wilderness generation that left Egypt and wandered in the wilderness.

And that generation all died because of their disobedience. And Paul catalogs some of their disobedience. In verse 7, he says, don't be idolaters as some of them were. Verse 8, don't indulge in sexual immorality.
Verse 9, don't put Christ to the test as some of them did. Verse 10, don't grumble as some of them did. And look at his summary statement in verse 11. Now, these things happened to them as an example.
But they were written down for our instruction. On whom the end of the ages has come. Why did God destroy the wilderness generation?
Because they were unfaithful. Why did he inspire Moses to record that destruction? For us. On whom the end of the ages has come.
[25:40] This is what Paul says. You can go back with me to 1 Peter. This is in line with how Peter viewed the Old Testament as well. They were serving you.

They're serving you, he goes on, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preach the gospel or preach the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven.
This gospel was proclaimed by the prophets. This message is the same as what the prophets declared, but it's come home to our hearts through the apostolic preaching.
And what we continue to do week by week in our church is apostolic preaching, apostolic teaching. Not because we are apostles or the descendants of the apostles, but because we are declaring the same message that they preached.
And what is the message that the apostles preached? Jesus is the Christ, and the time is now. The prophets didn't know who or when, but we know it's Jesus, and the time is now.
[26:47] Today is the day of salvation. And when Peter preached his first message in Acts 2, the first Christian sermon, what was his text? It was the Old Testament.

And he said, the Messiah is Jesus, and the time for repentance is now. These new believers, just like we are believers today, were saved by this apostolic message that Jesus is the one hoped for. He is the promised one, and a time for repentance is now. Was that message new? No. It goes all the way back to the garden where God himself predicted there would be someone coming who would crush the serpent's head and liberate his people.
The gospel we believe, the gospel that has saved us, is as old as the Old Testament. And Peter says the apostles preached by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven.
The Holy Spirit who revealed the prophecies to the prophets now inspired and encouraged the apostles to go out with that same message to proclaim repentance in the name of Jesus to the ends of the earth.

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[28:01] The same Spirit is at work in all of those people. And he said, it's kind of funny, he just says in verse 12, the things that have now been announced.

And then at the end of verse 12 he says, these things into which angels long to look. The angels strongly desire to look into the things that are associated with our salvation.
The angels strongly desire, and the word he uses is the same word as lust. This is a strong, overpowering desire to know. They want to understand salvation.
This word is used in the gospels in John 20, to describe Peter and John having to stoop to look into the tomb where Jesus was laid. It's this kind of craning your neck, trying to get a closer view of what the details are surrounding this.
Angels desire to look into our salvation. Why? Because they've never received mercy. They've never received grace.
[29:06] The angels who are in heaven have not done anything wrong, and so haven't done anything that requires grace. And the angels who did rebel in ancient times were condemned for all eternity without grace, without mercy.

Christ didn't take on the form of an angel to redeem angels. He became a man to redeem us. And so angels are mystified by this aspect of who God is, by this attribute of who our God is.
They're fixated on salvation. They're fixated on the mercy that we have received. And it's not as though they're ignorant to the details of it.
They have a front row seat to watching people be saved. They had a front row seat to seeing the events that led to our salvation. The angels predicted the birth of John the Baptist.
The angels predicted the birth of Jesus to Mary. The angels told Joseph to marry Mary. The angels pronounced Jesus' birth to the shepherds. The angel choirs sang with joy before the shepherds because Christ is born.
[30:14] The angels were there when Jesus was being tempted in the wilderness and they ministered to him. The angels were there to announce his resurrection. The angels were standing by the disciples as Jesus ascended back to heaven and announced that he would one day return in the same way.

And the angels will sing the song of salvation for all eternity. But they marvel at it.
They can't get to the bottom of it. They've seen things that we can only imagine at this point in our lives. And so if you've ever wondered what it's like to be an angel, well, the angels are wondering what it's like to be you.
What is it like to experience God's mercy? What's it like to receive grace? This isn't just a passing curiosity. They want to dig into it. They want to understand something they'll never personally experience.
My kids like watching on YouTube a channel that's called The Outdoor Boys. And this is a father and his sons that go out and just do manly stuff. You know, survive, camp, hunt, fish, go on all kinds of different things.
[31:30] I've watched a few of these videos with them. The most recent one I watched was them spending two weeks in Australia hunting crocodiles. I will never do that, most likely. I was riveted to the TV.

Like, okay, if I happened to be in Australia for two weeks and needed to hunt crocodiles, how would I do it? I'll never personally experience that. And I was drawn in just because of the subject matter.
And in a much greater way, that's something of what the angels think about salvation. They will never experience the riches of his grace, the profound depth of his mercy. And yet they can't stop looking at it.
They can't stop thinking about the riches that are ours in Christ. They're fascinated by our salvation.
Why are we sometimes indifferent to it? Why are we not thankful for it? Why do we take it for granted? Why do we put his grace in a box as if we understand the full depths of it?
[32:32] I would go on a limb to say the only thing more strange to angels than salvation is someone who's received salvation and isn't grateful for it.

Doesn't think about it like they should. They want to understand this part of a relationship with God.
The Old Testament prophets studied this salvation.
The Holy Spirit inspired their writings about this salvation. The apostles proclaimed this salvation in the power of that same spirit. And the angels investigate this salvation should we neglect it.

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It should be so much more precious to us who have experienced it. And what an immense privilege we have of living in the times we do. Of seeing the full revelation of God in the face of Jesus Christ. We need to marvel at the grace that is ours. But secondly, we should hope in the grace that will be ours. Hope in the grace that will be ours.
[33:36] I want you to notice something that is always true in New Testament letters. Gospel facts always come before gospel commands.

Peter has been talking about salvation for roughly 12 verses and not given a single command. And so any command placed on you is rooted in the grace that God has already given you through Christ.
As Christians, God does not command anything of us that his grace also equips us to do. He gives us grace to be obedient to the commands he places on our lives.
And so now Peter shifts to giving commands. Therefore, based on everything he's written so far, verses 1 through 12.
And the main command here in this section is in the middle of verse 13, set your hope. That's the command. But how do we do that? He says preparing your minds for action and being sober minded.
[34:43] Preparing your minds for action. Maybe your translation says this, and it's actually a more literal translation. Girding the loins of your mind.

ESV renders it preparing your minds for action. In the ancient world, men wore what we would now call today dresses. They were man dresses though.
And in order to work or go into battle, they would have to what's called gird your loins. So they kind of pull it up above their knees. They'd pull it between their legs and tuck it into their belt.
So it turned into like a man romper. And this prepared them for battle. This prepared them for action. This prepared them to run. This helped them not get tangled up.
This prepared them to not fall. They'd bring in all their loose ends. Anything that could entangle them or trip them up. And Peter's saying, you need to do that with your mind.
[35:42] Get rid of anything that is a distraction. Pull in anything that is going to slow you down or cause you to drag in the Christian life. And he says, and being sober minded.

Literally, he says, being sober. And certainly Peter would warn against drunkenness as would the rest of the Bible. But usually this word in the New Testament is used metaphorically.
Think clearly. Think in a sober way. So be careful who you give access to your mind to.
Be careful who you allow to access your mind and influence your thinking. And I think if we were honest, we would all say, we watch things or listen to things or talk about things that don't help us follow Christ.
And Peter says, get rid of all that. And I'm not saying that every song you listen to has to be Christian or every movie you watch has to be Christian. I'm not saying that at all. And I don't think Peter is either. But what he's saying is, if anything is causing you to be spiritually tired, be spiritually foggy, get rid of that.
[37:02] Why? So that you can be obedient to this command. Set your hope. This is not something we'll stumble into. This is something that takes intentionality and preparation to set your hope fully on what?

The grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Hope is an act of the will. Hope in the New Testament is an action.
It's an act of obedience. This isn't something that passively comes over us. This is a choice that we make. So what is hope? We can describe it this way.
Hope is future faith. John Piper describes it as faith in the future tense. And I love that wording. It's a decisive act of belief for what God has said about the future.
If there's something that characterizes this world, I think it would be hopelessness. If there's one thing that should characterize the church, it should be hope.
[38:07] A decisive act of trusting all the things that God has promised to us in his word about Christ. This isn't a hope that our world will get better.

This isn't a hope that America will continue to exist for another 500 years into the future. This is a hope primarily that our Savior will come back. A hope that believes what the Savior has promised to us.

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This is the grace that will be brought to you when? At the revelation of Jesus Christ. The opening words of the book of Revelation are the revelation of Jesus Christ.
The revealing of Christ. The second coming of Christ. Peter is referring to when Christ returns again in all of his glory to fully and finally conquer his enemies and to fully and finally save his people.
And the prophets also predicted this event as well. We have received grace. We have been saved.
But we don't yet fully experience the salvation that Christ has bought for us as we one day will.
[39:18] We've received grace but not all of God's grace yet. We'll experience his grace in a fuller measure on that day when we see Jesus coming on the clouds with glory and meet him face to face.

And just like our initial salvation, we don't deserve it. It's grace. It's undeserved favor that we will receive when Christ returns.
And so Peter says, verse 14, As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance.
There's one thing that the Bible commands of children. Obey your parents. We are God's children. We are God's children through salvation in Christ.
And the thing demanded of us is obedience. Like obedient children. Don't be conformed to your former life.
[40:21] That phrase, don't be conformed, is only found in Romans 12, elsewhere in the New Testament. Don't be conformed, what? To the passions of your former ignorance.

There's that word lust again. These desires of your former ignorance. These are sinful desires that characterize unbelievers and certainly described these believers before they came to Christ.
They were pagans. They worshipped false gods. They participated in all kinds of immorality. And the same things describe us as well. There was a time when we were ignorant of Christ.
We were unaware of the glories of God in the face of Christ. And because of that ignorance, we pursued our sin. But now we know Christ.
Now we worship him. Now we see his glory in creation and in the word. And so that should change our behavior. That should change the way we live our lives.
[41:25] We're no longer conformed to those things. We're no longer identified by them or described by them. Verse 15, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct.

Our Father is holy. That's the primary description of him in the Bible. He's holy. And we now as his children have a family name to uphold.
We bear his resemblance. We bear his image. And so we should act accordingly. Who God is shapes how we live.
Holiness means to be set apart or cut off from, to be distinct.
That's our calling as individual believers is to be holy. That's our calling as a church is to be holy, to be separated from sin. And while we need to be separated from sin, we're not called to separate from sinners.
[42:36] This world is full of sinners. And we extend the message of the gospel to them. But in our lives, we distance ourselves from the desires that used to define us.

And we need to be holy in all of our conduct. Not just at church. Not just when people are watching. In all of your conduct. Because or since verse 16.
It is written, you shall be holy for I am holy. This is a quote from Leviticus 19 verse 2. A direct quote from there.
And interestingly, in the book of Leviticus, the only motivation for obedience given to the people of Israel is because the Lord is holy. There is no other motivation given.
God says obey. Not because your life will go well. Not because you'll be rich. Not because you'll be successful. Not because your life will be without pain. You obey. Because I am holy.
[43:41] And so Peter pulls this into this command to be holy. Because the Lord is holy. We are called to be imitators of God as obedient children. Ephesians 5.1 Why is that to be the focus of our lives?

Why is that to be the focus of our morality? Because God is holy. And one day for all eternity, we will be holy too. Holiness will characterize our lives in heaven.
And so we need to make it our aim now. And let's just track with Peter's logic. Let's reverse engineer this here. If we are struggling with obedience, what does Peter say is wrong?

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We have a misplaced hope. If we have a misplaced hope, what does Peter say is wrong? We're not understanding the gospel. We're not understanding our salvation in the way that we should.
And so if you understand God's grace and you worship him for it, and you have a hope of Christ returning, that will empower you to live a holy life. Not a perfect life by any means, but a holy life.
[44:48] And so if you're noticing issues with disobedience or sin in your life, you need to track it back to its source. What's going wrong? Am I misplacing my hope? Am I losing focus on the return of Christ?

Am I misunderstanding the gospel in some way? Have you taken God's grace for granted? Or have you lost sight of the grace you will receive when Christ returns?
I love weddings. I love going to weddings. I love officiating weddings. I love being in weddings. I loved my wedding. I almost forgot. That was close.
Loved that one especially. And I love it because it's just a time of celebration. It's a time of joy. And I also love it because it's such a clear picture of the gospel.
And that's actually what Paul says in Ephesians 5. He calls on husbands to love their wives as Christ loved the church. And he gave himself up for her so that he might sanctify her.
[45:57] And so that he might present her to himself without spot or blemish or any such thing that the church might be holy.

Christ died for our holiness. Christ died that we would be without blemish. Christ wants you to be holy.
And the grace we receive when Christ returns is grace that will utterly transform us into that image of holiness. We will be just like him in holiness.
We will see Christ in all of his glory. And when we receive that grace, when we receive that perfecting and fully sanctifying grace, when we see him, we'll join the angels in singing the song of salvation saying, worthy is the lamb who was slain.
To receive power and wealth and wisdom and honor and might and blessing and glory. Because he ransomed people for God.
[47:04] God's grace saved us. God's grace is sanctifying us. And one day his grace will glorify us. The Christian life from start to finish is all of grace.

And when the apostle John had spent his life following Christ and reflected back on the riches he had seen in Christ in John 1, he said, The word became flesh and dwelt among us.
And we have seen his glory. Glories of the only son from the father. Full of grace and truth. And from his fullness, we all have received grace upon grace.
Our God is a savior. And what a savior he is. Our God is a savior. And what salvation he brings us. Grace, grace. God's grace. Grace that will pardon and cleanse within.
And grace that is greater than all of our sin. And one day soon, we'll receive that final installment of grace. And that's where we need to set our hope. And in the New Testament, there's a strong connection between hope for the future and purity in the present.
[48:19] A strong connection between hope and holiness. And John also, when he's reflecting on this in 1 John 3, says, When Christ appears, we shall be like him.

Because we shall see him as he is. And then he goes on and says, Whoever thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.
Have you been saved? Are you thankful for the grace you've received? Are you looking forward to the grace you will receive when Christ returns? Then prove it and live an obedient life as a faithful child.
Don't be guilty of neglecting such a great salvation that's been the study of the prophets and been the inspiration of the Spirit and been the message of the apostles and been the fascination of the angels.
Receive this grace. Rejoice in it. Marvel at it. And hope in that grace that is still yet to come. Let's pray. Father, what can we say but thank you?
[49:31] You've planned this salvation. You chose us for this salvation. You sent prophets with the message of this salvation.

You sent your son to accomplish this salvation. You sent your spirit to apply this salvation to hearts of individuals through the preaching of your gospel. How could we not be thankful?
How could we not be joyful? And yet so often we are. Father, forgive us of not only the sins that made our salvation necessary, but even of the sins of just neglecting to be thankful for the salvation

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that you've so beautifully orchestrated.
I pray that as we read all of your word, we would see the beauty of how it points to Christ, his sufferings and his subsequent glory. Father, we have a living hope because your son is alive forevermore.
I pray that we'd set our hope fully on your son. And it's in his name we pray. Amen. Amen.
[50:48]

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