

1 Peter Chapter 2 v 11 &12

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[0 : 00] our first hymn, it's number 296, reminding us that it is Christ himself who has made this way into the presence of the Lord and before whom we can come, knowing the forgiveness of our sins, knowing the very presence of God's Spirit with us.

Before the throne of God above, I have a strong, a perfect plea, a great high priest whose name is love ever lives and pleads for me. We'll sing it to the new tune, which is, we sing two verses together.

Hopefully you'll pick it up if you don't know it yet. Let's stand as we sing. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. dogs of God behind us.

Thank you. I have a stronger earth and clean A great high priest whose name is God Whoever lives and cleans for me I live in His freedom, in His hands I live in His wisdom, all His heart I know that while in heavenly sounds Your tongue can live in His hands, depart Your tongue can live in His hands, depart When Satan tends me to despair And tells me of the guilt within Now when I look and see Him there Who made an end of all my sin

[1 : 57] It was the sinless Savior thine My sinful soul is doubted free Hold up the justice and his kind To look on Him and pardon me To look on Him and pardon me Behold Him, there the risen man My perfect spotless righteousness The great unchangeable I am The King of glory and of grace Don't fear themselves, I cannot die My soul is purchased, my His blood My life is given with Christ on high With Christ my Savior and my God

In Christ my Savior and my Lord Let's come to God in prayer together We come to one who sits and reigns upon a throne of grace and who is pleased to hear us when we pray I'll lead briefly if one or two others would like to express their own prayers of worship, thanksgiving, praise of faith We'll do that together How amazing it is for us, O Lord To know what we cannot see That you love us and receive us and that the Lord Jesus Christ your Son intercedes for us so that we might come to you sinful as we are, holy as you are and know that we should be heard, received and accepted give us that confidence that rests not on ourselves but upon Him give us that assurance which looks not to our own goodness but to His greatness

Grant us again, O Lord to come near in prayer and bring you our praises our worship and our praise as we bring them now in the name of Jesus Christ your Son Amen We're going to return to our series we started at the beginning of the year which is the first letter of Peter and we're into chapter 2 now and to give us a bit of a refresh as to where we are we're going to begin at the beginning of chapter 2 so chapter 2 verse 1 and read through to verse 12 but it's particularly verses 11 and 12 which we're going to be concentrating on this evening and picking up on so just a reminder as you're looking there that's 1 Peter chapter 2 if you've got the Red Church Bible page 1218 Peter is writing to Christians that are scattered throughout what we now would know as Western Turkey different churches and believers they are severely persecuted for their faith under the Roman government and they are oppressed in all sorts of different ways some of them have lost their homes, their possessions some even have lost their lives and Peter is writing to them to encourage them, to help them he's going to be offering very real practical instruction in the way that they live and behave in a world which is hostile against them but first of all particularly in chapter 1 and so far in 2 he's been encouraging them to see what God has done for them who he is, this God what it means for them to be a believer and what God desires of them and the key verse really in the whole of the book is in chapter 1 and it's verse 15 but just as he who called you is holy so be holy in all you do and in a world of sin and wickedness the believer is to be someone who reflects the very character the very nature, the very personality of God so we're going to pick up from chapter 2 verse 1 as I said and read from verse 1 through 2 and including verse 12 here is the word of God verse 1 therefore rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind like newborn babies crave pure spiritual milk so that by it you may grow up in your salvation now that you have tasted that the Lord is good as you come to him, the living stone rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him you also like living stones are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ for in scripture it says see, I lay a stone in Zion a chosen and precious cornerstone and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame now to you who believe this stone is precious but to those who do not believe the stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone and a stone that causes people to stumble and a rock that makes them fall they stumble because they disobey the message which is also what they were destined for but you are a chosen people a royal priesthood a holy nation

God's special possession that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light once you were not a people but now you are the people of God once you did not receive mercy but now you have received mercy dear friends I urge you as foreigners and exiles to abstain from sinful desires which wage war against your soul live such good lives among the pagans that though they may accuse you of doing wrong they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us and we hope and trust that the Lord will help us to understand and apply his word to our lives in a moment or two but first of all we are going to sing again from our hymn books taking up that theme of Peter's letter to be holy 742 take time to be holy speak oft with the Lord 742 the Lord take time to be holy sing of the Lord

God God, I need Him always, and we are His word. Make friends of the children, help those who are weak.

[9 : 32] Forgetting Him, He is blessing to see. Take time to be holy, be found in your soul.

He's taught at His temper, beneath His control. Blessed by His Spirit, and filled with His blood.

You soon shall be pritted, all service of God. And again as we sing.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. The famous John above, the pure celestial prudent heart.

- [11 : 00] In the love, grace of sacred love, of love we hold and hold my heart.
Let it fall by glory burn within extinguishable place.
And gently endure, its souls return in humble breath and furthered grace.
Jesus, confirm my heart's desire to work as fear and faith for thee.
Still letting on the holy life and still surround my gift in me.
- [12 : 24] Ready for all thy perfect will, thy arms of faith and love repeat.
Till death, thy endless mercy see. And make the sacrifice complete.
If you have a Bible to hand, and I'd encourage you to take to hand a Bible, then please turn with me back to 1 Peter, first letter of Peter in chapter 2.
And particularly those verses, which I'm going to read again, verses 11 and 12. As we catch up with where we left off before Easter in this journey through this letter of Peter, this first letter of the Apostle Peter.
So 1 Peter 2, verses 11 and 12. Dear friends, I urge you as foreigners and exiles to abstain from sinful desires which wage war against your soul.
- [13 : 39] Live such good lives among the pagans that though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.
Well, sadly, the refugee crisis which is sweeping across from Middle East to Europe shows no sign of being resolved.
There doesn't seem to be any agreement in how to help, deal with, support, home these people. There's been lots of meetings the European Union have met and talked and discussed and haggled and so on.
The only decision they've come to is to send back from Greece migrants who don't feel certain requirements. It looks as if this wave of homeless people seeking sanctuary will continue to be a great cause of concern for some time to come.
And I'm sure that as you've watched on the television or read in the paper, you yourself have felt your heart go out to those who are exiles, those who are homeless.
- [14 : 47] Homeless. Try to imagine what it must be like to be one of these very pitiful people with all your possessions you own in a bag, with no home, tired, unwanted by the people you've come to for help, fearful, penniless, perhaps because you've given all the money you had to smugglers to get you across the sea.
It's quite obvious that these people are people who don't want to be foreigners and exiles. They don't want to be in the circumstances they find themselves.
Only severe difficulties, only tight straits have forced them to become what they are at this time. But when Peter writes here to the believers, to the Christians, he speaks of them as foreigners and exiles.
The believer is a foreigner and exile too, but we're not foreigners and exiles because we have had to become such through war or poverty or persecution or some other harsh treatment.
Rather we are such people by God's grace and by our own choice as we are his people. Peter has used this description before in chapter 1, right at the start of his letter.
- [16 : 01] He says, Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ to God's elect, exiles scattered throughout the provinces of. There in chapter 1 verse 17, he says, live out your time as foreigners here in reverent fear.
And he puts the two of them together, foreigners and exiles. So what does he mean? He means, of course, that the believer is on his way home.

He's not yet arrived at home. This world is not the home of the Christian. We are merely those who are passing through. It's not our permanent residence.

It's not the permanent residence of anybody, whether they're Christians or not. We're here for a few short decades. That's it. Then we pass into eternity, into our everlasting existence.

Either that presence with the Lord, which we might call heaven, or that absence of God, that place of sorrow and grief, which is hell. Those are two eternal realities in which everybody will spend eternity in one or the other.

[17 : 05] So this world is not our home. It's just that the Christian recognizes that. The rest of people in this world, on the whole, live as if this is all there is to life.

This is all we've got. And we must make the best of it while we're here. But not the Christian. The Christian is an exile, a foreigner. His home is heaven. His citizenship, says Paul, is in heaven. He's heading there.

Passing through, as it were. Now, remembering this, and that's why I believe Peter continues to repeat this phrase and to stress this truth. Remembering this and being aware of this is helpful for us as Christians particularly.

It helps us and prevents us from investing too heavily in this world. Investing in this world for our hopes, for our pleasures, for our joys, for our satisfaction and contentment.

Rather, we are to take the very words of Jesus himself and realize that the goal of our lives here is to build up for ourselves an investment which is spiritual, which is heavenly.

[18 : 09] And so, Matthew 6, verses 19 to 20, Jesus says this. Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth where moths, and this is where the new international version differs from what we're used to, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal, but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal.

We are to be investing in heavenly treasures. Not things that are just for a moment, things that are lasting, everlasting, and solid.

And this has been really something of the theme all the way through the letter so far, as we've been seeing, as I pointed out to you, that key verse in chapter 1 and verse 15.

The key thing that Peter's letter is, how can we live as a Christian in this world? How can we live in this world as we should, as God wants us to?

And he sought, as I've said, through the letter so far, to impress upon his readers that the key to answering that question is found in knowing who you are. If you don't know who you are, then you won't know how to live.

[19 : 27] If you don't know who you are, then it affects everything else that you do. So our truth is that the reason our world is in such a mess, the reason that the things that we see go on around about us is because men and women do not know that they have been created by God for God.

They think that they are here by accident or chance through evolution and that actually their life is meaningless, they've bust a bunch of chemicals that have accidentally come together and mutated over billions of years.

And they have no purpose, no meaning, except to get pleasure, happiness, joy here and now, and then to return to the ground. But knowing who you are is vitally important, and it's vitally important for the Christian.

And so Peter has not only spoken in this negative way, your foreigners and exiles, but throughout the letter he's spoken positively to encourage the believers to see themselves for who they are.

That they are children of God, their heavenly father. That they are, as we read there, wonderful titles of verse 9. A chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special people.

[20 : 32] To the world, the Christian is odd, an outsider, weird. But to God we are family. To God we are special. To God we are important.

And so as we come to verse 11, we're coming to, as one commentator put it, a bridging point in the letter. A bridging point from chapters 1 and part of chapter 2 into the rest of the letter.

And so Peter is going to begin with some more practical, down-to-earth, we might say relevant instruction about how we're to live in this world. As Christians.

How we're to be holy, just as God is holy. And notice that he begins by saying to them, or addressing them in this wonderfully tender way. Dear friends.

If you've got the authorised version of something like beloved. Beloved. And I suppose dear friends is a bit insipid in that sense. But there is a real sense in which Peter is saying, those that are dear to my heart, those that I love, listen to me.

[21 : 33] I want you to know that you are precious. And the reason that he wants to say that to them, the reason he wants to say, dear friends, beloved, I care about you, is because some of the things he's got to say to them are not easy things to hear.

The things he's got to say are not hard in the sense he's going to rain down condemnation upon them and tell them how awful they are. But rather, they're things that are challenging, costly, hard to hear, hard to obey.

And he wants them to know that as he speaks to them, the reason and motivation that he lays before them these challenges is because of his great care and love for them. And so it is with the whole of the word of God, isn't it?

The whole of the word of God to us is God's love letter to us. But there are parts of it which are challenging, hard, painful to bear. And if we do not understand, of course, that God loves us and the motivation for him giving us his word is because of his love for us and his desire for our best, then we shall only see his word as irritating, obsolete, getting in the way of our lives.

But all that Peter has been speaking about, about the privileges, the honor, the blessing of being God's people requires action.

[22 : 47] Who you are will depend on what you do or rather the other way around. What you do will depend on who you are. So if you're a schoolboy or schoolgirl, you will go to school.

If you're an engineer, then you will do engineering. If you are a cook, then you will cook. It's who you are and what you do. So again, this means that we are to think about living lives that imitate the Lord.

That's what being holy is. That's what we saw, that key. Be holy as I am holy, says God. It's what he said in the Old Testament to his people then. It's what he says to his people all the way through the ages.

Be holy because I am holy. If you're in a relationship with God, then there is something of the characteristic and nature of God that rubs off on us. I'm sure you've heard people say that dog owners begin to look like their dogs after a while.

Don't know. Depends on, of course, whether your dog's a good-looking dog or not. Whether you agree with that or not. But the fact of the matter is, in relationship with people, we begin to take on something of the similarities, the likeness of the people we're in relationship with.

[23 : 56] They affect us. Well, you cannot meet with God, be in a relationship with God without being affected. And if I can put it in the best way, contaminated by the holiness of God. It must show.

This is why it's so very sad, isn't it, when we hear of people who profess to be Christians doing wicked and sinful things. And the world naturally says, well, how can that person be a Christian when they do this?

And the world is quite right to point the finger and say, how can they be a Christian and do this? Christians do fail. Christians do get it wrong. But Christians are meant to bear the likeness of Christ.

Christ, we're meant to be those who show that we've been rubbing shoulders with a holy God. So, Peter's now speaking to them.

And notice again how he first of all begins there with that tender address, dear friends, beloved. But then immediately switches to seriousness. I urge you. I urge you.

[24 : 55] If you've got the AV, again, it's I beseech you. New King James, I beg you. It's much more than simply asking, would you mind, please, just listening for a moment.

I've got something to say. It's important. But it's not commanding. He's not saying, you must do this. But he's saying, from love for you, listen to what I'm saying. I'm urging you to do something.

When you urge somebody to do something, it's because of a deep concern for their welfare. I urge you not to do that. Or I urge you, please, to do this. We're conscious that if they do not take on board what we call them to do, they may place themselves in great danger.

I urge you to stay away from the edge of the key. Because we're concerned they may fall in, whatever. And this urgency really covers everything that Peter's about to say.

In fact, it leads into this introduction to this whole section which goes through into chapters 3 and 4. This practical section of holy living, as I've mentioned. Two general things.

[26 : 00] Two general spheres that Peter's going to touch upon which affect our lives. There's the sphere of life outside the home and the sphere of life within the home or within the family.

That covers everything, doesn't it? Inside the home, outside the home. But he's going to begin with outside the home first in a minute. Two actions are urged upon us as believers. As those who are foreigners, exiles.

As those who are living in this world at this time and yet not part of it. One is a negative one. One is a positive one. General rules for being an expat in the world today.

First of all, abstain from sinful desires. I urge you to abstain from sinful desires. Now if you've travelled at all and been to a foreign country, particularly what we might call one of the two-thirds now it's called.

It's not the third world country, it's two-thirds countries. Ones where perhaps the plumbing isn't as good as it may be in the UK. Or the sanitation and so on. You'll be given maybe a booklet or in your travel guide some tips about things that you should and shouldn't do when you're in that country.

[27 : 14] Tips that will make your journey and you'll stay there a safe one, a happy one. These may include things like you should avoid drinking the tap water. Avoid staying out late in a certain part of the city and so like.

Now these tips, these instructions in one sense, they're not legalistic rules. They're not things that are punishable under the law if you break them.

But rather they're for your own safety and your own good. You can choose to ignore them if you want. You can choose to drink the tap water. You can choose to go into a rough part of the city late at night.

But of course you may well incur unpleasant consequences from doing so. So Peter's words are a warning to us for our safety. Because the place in which we are staying in this world is a place of conflict.

It's a conflict zone. Because he speaks there about waging war against your soul. Abstain from sinful desires which wage war against your soul.

[28 : 20] You're in a conflict and therefore you need to be taking from him advice which is for your greater good. Now many of you know that during the second world war, I think certainly here in the UK, other places as well, there were posters put up at railway stations and other places around the country with pithy warnings.

Loose lips, sink ships and careless talk cost lives. And they were people being urged to be discreet in their conversations. Abstain from gossiping about where their husband has been posted overseas or what's happening.

They might give away enemy information unwillingly and unknowingly which can be used against them. That's in one sense what Peter's saying here. Abstain from certain things because these things can be used against you.

Against your spiritual life, against your soul and do you damage because you're in a conflict. So what are these things that we are urged to abstain from that may be used against us?

Simply put, he says sinful desires. Sinful, abstain from sinful desires. See the real problem that we have as Christians living in this world is not the world on the outside but me on the inside.

[29 : 38] That's where the conflict is, isn't it? The conflicts within. The struggles with our own sinful nature. Read Romans 7 and Paul, this great apostle, how he speaks about this great struggle going on between the sinful nature and the spirit of God who dwells within every believer.

The inner struggles are the hardest struggles to fight with. The powerful temptation to do what I want, to follow my lusts, to please myself. That's where the real difficulty is.

Yes, the world around about us may offer up tempting treats before our eyes. It's only because we want those treats that we find them tempting at all.

It's only because we want to do those things that there's this battle and conflict within us. We wouldn't be tempted to do something which we find disgusting or ugly or painful.

I don't have any real trouble that when I'm passing the edge of the quay by the harbour, I have no temptation to throw all my money into the sea. I don't have that temptation because I don't want to do it.

[30 : 44] It's only when I see something very sparkly and nice that I become greedy and want to have it. That's the problem. It's there, isn't it? It's not the thing itself.

It's the problems in the heart. Well, how do we then abstain from what's within our hearts? Sinful desires. How can you run away from yourself? People talk about running away to find themselves, but how do you run away from yourself?

How do you get away from this spiritual, the sinful nature, the sinful desires which live within us? Well, I think the way to do that is we're to take action to starve those desires and keep them weak.

To abstain from those sinful desires, keep back from them those things that will feed those sinful desires, that will strengthen them and give them more, as it were, power against us. Of course, in days past, even perhaps today, there are some people who think the only way you can do that is by locking yourself away in a convent or a monastery.

That's how you can be godly and avoid corruption, but again, it doesn't get you away from here, does it? But that really, of course, again defeats the verse because, yes, he says, abstain from sinful desires.

[31 : 54] Well, it can't mean being in a convent or a monastery or locking yourself as a hermit because, verse 12, live such good lives among the pagans in the world. We're not meant to be out of the world in that sense.

So what does he mean? Am I tempted towards lust? Then I need to abstain from those images or those people that would increase that lustful desire.

Just as an alcoholic would be urged to avoid going to the pub or the off-licence or the person who has an addiction to gambling to steer clear of the bookies, the casino, the horses.

So we're to do all that we can to run away from those people, those places, those voices that feed the sinful desire. Timothy was a young man, a young pastor, in fact, and Paul writes to him in his second letter.

He says this, flee the evil desires of youth and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

[33 : 04] So there's an abstaining which is doing all that we can sensibly, common sensibly, to avoid feeding, inflaming, encouraging those sinful desires. But notice, just as with Paul's words to Timothy, there's a positive action as well.

He says, flee those things and pursue these things. In one sense, the more that we abstain from those things, the more we seek after that which is good.

The more we pull away what is bad, we seek what is good. A bit like junk food, I imagine. The more good food we eat, the less junk food we eat. And the more junk food we eat, the less good food we eat.

Because we only have a certain appetite. Spiritually, that's what we're to do. So he says, yes, abstain from sinful desires. That's the first urging, the negative. But don't just do that, i.e. lock yourself away in a monastery or cut yourself off from everything.

But rather also live such good lives among the pagans. That's the second urgency. Live such good lives. Now clearly, of course, as we've seen all the way through his letter, living that good life is to live at odds with the pagans.

[34 : 16] It's to live a life which is different from the people of the world around about us on the whole. Seems perhaps a bit rude for him to say, live such good lives amongst pagans.

What does he mean? Other translations simply put non-Christians or Gentiles. It really means somebody who's outside the family of God. It's somebody who's outside the people of God.

He's not talking here, as maybe may be understood now in the 21st century, those people who engage in paganism, the worship of spirits in the world and the worship of nature and so on, which is becoming, it seems, more trendy.

It's really a phrase for the catch-all of the majority of the world in which we live, the majority of people outside of Christ. Notice he says, live such good lives among the pagans that though they accuse you of doing wrong.

One of the things that's apparent throughout the centuries of Christianity is that Christians, the church, have often been accused of doing wrong things, either by state religions or by governments or by the general populace.

[35 : 23] In the time that Peter's writing, in just a little while after that, the early church Christians were condemned as cannibals by people around about them because they talked about eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Jesus.

And they took part in the Lord's table. And so people misconstrued that. They were cannibals. They were thought of as being immoral and incestuous in their relationships because they had love feasts with brothers and sisters.

Jude speaks about those love feasts in his letter. They were thought of as being traitors to the government because they would not offer incense to Caesar or pray to him.

And so it is today. Yes, in the world around Abanous, we know that Christians are persecuted, have been persecuted by the powers of communism and others as well because they are people who do not follow the line, toe the line as it were, because they are different.

But even in our own country, Christians, at least true Bible Christians, are Bible bashers, do-gooders, party poopers, amongst other things as well. You just don't fit in.

[36 : 29] You're odd. Therefore, there's something wrong with you. You're interfering. You're trying to make us like you. All these things are leveled at believers.

They accuse you of doing wrong. What are we to do in these situations? How are we to defend ourselves as Christians where these false and misunderstanding things are said against us?

Should we write pamphlets and books? Should we enter into great debates about how good Christians are and so on? Well, surely actions speak louder than words.

And that seems to be what Peter's saying here. Though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good works. The reality is that as a nation here in the UK, particularly the greatest blessing for the whole of this nation has come through Christians doing good works.

Prison reform, child welfare, child labor reform, education reform. And so it goes on. The abolishing of slavery. Christians, believers, having an effect.

[37 : 38] Light and salt in the world. But even in our own lives, day by day, we don't have to be world changers, community changers. We're to be those who live good lives and do good deeds.

We're to be people who live as Christ lived. And when you think about that, then you realize that the Lord Jesus Christ was a person who suffered the greatest slander, the greatest false representation of any person who ever lived in the world.

They accused him of all sorts of things, didn't they? And sought to bring charges against him. This man advocates that you do not pay taxes to Caesar. This man advocates that he is king and not Caesar.

They sought to misrepresent him as an evildoer. But we know that his life was one of good deeds.

Our actions are to be full of good deeds so that there may be a change that takes place. Look at the whole of the verse. Live such good lives among the pagans that though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.

[38 : 47] What is Peter talking about? What does he mean? When will God visit us? Is he talking about the return of the Lord Jesus Christ? That's certainly true. That will happen, isn't it?

Christ will return. He will visit this world again. He will come in judgment. We know that on that day, all the world will see that the believers, the church, were those who lived rightly before God and they will seek to glorify God.

They will glorify God whether they like it or not because Paul tells us in Philippians 2 that every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God.

Those who've had no time for Christ, those who've lived their lives rejecting the gospel and rejecting believers, they will have to glorify God by acknowledging that Jesus is the Son of God, that he is the one who deserves and deserved all their adoration and faith.

Is that what Peter's really talking about? I don't think so and many other commentators think also that really it's pointing to something else. Notice that it does not say on the day that God visits the world or everyone but us and who is us?

[40 : 02] Us is the church. Us is God's people. So when does God visit us? When you know your Old Testament, as I'm sure many of you do, you'll know that often the phrase comes out of the Lord visiting his people when God will come to his people.

Here's how one of the writers explains that phrase, visiting us. When God visits people, it always means a divine intervention for blessing or for judgment.

But the visit always changes the destiny of the one visited. So it's when God comes and does something in people's lives, either to judge them or to bless them.

When he visits, it's an interchange and interaction of God and his people. So what I believe Peter is writing here and what he's writing here is positively to encourage the believers to live such good lives with the thoughts, with the hope, with the prayer that those amongst whom they live shall experience the visitation of God to their lives, bringing them to saving faith.

that they might see in our lives good deeds which point to the grace of God, the saving power of God and trust to him themselves.

[41 : 22] Titus writes this about the coming of God's goodness. At one time, we too were foolish. He's talking to us, believers. Disobedient, deceived, enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures.

We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another. But, when the kindness and love of God our Saviour appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy.

He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. God coming to visit is God coming with grace. As Paul points out in Romans, he says, today is the day of salvation.

Today is the day of God's favour. Yes, there is coming a day when God will come with judgment. And Christ returns when all the nations we laid before him. But in these days in which we live, it's still grace.

And Peter is saying, abstain from sinful desires. Live good lives. Not that you might show off to say, look how good I am. I'm better than you to your neighbours.

[42 : 27] Not that you might be glorified and people say, what a nice man he is. Not that you might be built up in pride. No, but that even through you God would visit men and women who are pagans and outside of his grace and receive him and give him glory.

Again, these are the words of Jesus. We're only saying what Jesus himself said right back on the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew in chapter 5 as he draws near to the end. He says this, verse 5, sorry, chapter 5.

And verse 16. Sorry, I've been in the wrong chapter there. In the same way, let your light shine before others that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

Why do we live as strangers and exiles in this world? For God's glory. Why do we abstain from sinful desires which wage against our souls that God may be glorified?

Why do we live for Christ no matter that we are misunderstood, no matter that we are name called or rejected or despised for the glory of God?

[43 : 40] That's our goal. That's our motivation. And through our lives, yours and mine, God is gracious to visit, to save. And we trust and pray that he will do that even as we go on together.

Well, let's sing together our final hymn. It's a hymn which really, again, is a prayer asking for God to so fill our lives that he would be glorified in all that we do.

816. Fill thou my life, O Lord my God, in every part with praise that my whole being may proclaim thy being and thy ways. and thy life, O Lord my God, in every part with praise with praise and my whole being that my holy will be in game what faith I hear and thy grace he fill every part of me with praise

There's all my needs be Of thee and of thy love, O Lord Lord, who I be and be So shalt thou walk from me in thee Receive the glory due And so shall I begin, O earth A song forever new So shall the heart of day or night Of sacredness be free

That all my life in every step Be fellowship with me May God himself, the God of peace Sanctify you through and through May your whole spirit, soul and body Be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ The one who calls you is faithful And he will do it The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ Be with you all evermore Amen Amen