

1 Peter Chapter 1 v 13 - 15

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 17 January 2016

Preacher: Peter Robinson

[0 : 0 0] Philippians and chapter 2. If you were here this morning, then you may possibly remember me saying that verses 6 to 11 are believed to be an early Christian hymn that is quoted by Paul.

May even possibly be the words of Paul that became an early Christian hymn, but certainly those verses speak of the Lord Jesus and why he came into the world and what he did.

And we were considering this morning about why we should worship, why we should sing praises to God. And we see again all through scripture these hymns. So we're going to, before we actually come to sing, we're going to read this hymn together. I'm just going to read it, I think we're easier because we haven't quite all yet adapted to the new 2011 NIV.

So I'm going to read it and then we're going to come to worship together. The end of verse 5 reminds us of Christ Jesus, who being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage.

Rather, he made himself nothing, but taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross.

[1 : 2 8] Therefore God exalted him to the highest place, gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow in heaven, on earth, under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Our first hymn reminds us of that truth, that the one who we worship is God who became man, as the words of Paul teach us there, 814, from heaven you came, helpless babe.

No, it's not 814. Oh yeah, why have I got that? 821, thank you. What would I do without you? Let's come to the Lord our God in prayer together.

It's quiet in our hearts before him. Prepare our minds to meet with him and worship him. Amen. You, O Lord, our God, are the great and mighty King of heaven and earth, the ruler over the universe, the one who stands exalted above every other person and creature.

For you alone are the God who made all things from you, all things proceed. Indeed, nothing has been made, O Lord, except that you made it. Nothing exists apart from yourself except that you made it.

[3 : 1 0] You are the only true, everlasting, eternal being. And O Lord, we cannot comprehend what it means that you are infinite, everlasting, unending.

We don't have those concepts in our minds. We can think of big things, huge things, enormous things. We can think of the stars being millions of light years away, but the concept that there is no end to you, Lord, is too much for our tiny little brains to think of.

And yet when we even begin to draw near to grasping that, and draw near to understanding something of what it means that there is no limit to you, then you, Lord, present us with this absolutely astonishing truth, that you, the everlasting, unending God, became a man.

That you, the limitless, infinite God, were contracted to a span. You became that babe in Bethlehem. You became that one who was born of Mary.

You became contained, if we can put it that way, and our words are failing, but you became enveloped in flesh, and became one with us in every way apart from sin.

[4 : 26] You, the very king, became the servant. You, the very greatest, became the least. You, the almighty, became the weak. You, the immortal, became the mortal.

Oh, Lord, what an awesome, astonishing, marvelous thing that it is that we celebrate when we think of Jesus Christ coming into the world.

But what is most astonishing about this is the very reason that you did all of this, the reason that you came, the reason that you humbled yourself and condescended, the reason, yes, oh, Lord, that you were even obedient to the cross.

It was for us, for our sake, for our salvation. For our rescue, for our deliverance, so that we who are alienated from God may be brought near.

We who are under wrath may be brought under grace and loving kindness. We who are hell-bound might be heavenward going. And, oh, Lord, we come again with great thanks, great praise.

[5 : 29] Oh, great wonder that you should ever have done all these things for us, for me. How can we ever count ourselves as worthless? How can we look upon ourselves of no consequence?

Lord, when we consider all that you've done for us, you count us worthy of these things. And, Lord, you count us of great value. You count us as precious in your sight.

And you've proven that by the very cost and the lengths that you've gone to for our salvation, that we might be your children, that we might belong to you and be one with you.

Oh, Lord, fill our hearts with the joy and the rapture of what this means this evening. Cause us to see again, oh, Lord, afresh, what it means to be long to you, for us to be able to say, you are mine and I am yours.

We pray that we might express us as we sing, express that as we hear your word. We might express that as we hear your word preached and that you would make us receptive to your word and speak to us in such a way, oh, Lord, that we may more greatly value and more greatly delight in you, our Savior and our God.

[6 : 40] Come upon us. Lord, you know us. You know our needs, our fears, our concerns, our anxieties. We ask that in all these things, in every one of them, oh, Lord, we may rest in you and find in you our peace and our fullness.

For we ask it and all our prayers, in Jesus' name. Amen. Yes, it's 1 Peter chapter 1.

In the New Bibles, it's on page 1217. I'm going to read the first 16 verses. Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to God's elect, exiles scattered throughout the provinces of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father through the sanctifying work of the Spirit to be obedient to Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with his blood.

Grace and peace be yours in abundance. Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. In his great mercy, he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade.

This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, who, through faith, are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.

[8 : 10] In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith, of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire, may result in praise, glory and honour when Jesus Christ is revealed.

Though you have not seen him, you love him. And even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with inexpressible and glorious joy.

For you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls. Concerning this salvation, the prophets who spoke of the great it was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of the Messiah and the glories that would follow.

It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you, by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven.

Even angels long to look into these things. Therefore, with minds that are alert and fully sober, set your hope on the grace that be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at his coming.

[9 : 38] As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do.

For it is written, Be holy, because I am holy. Please have your Bibles open then at that first letter of Peter.

We began looking at this letter some months ago, and we've had various events and occasions taking place to...

brought us to a halt. Last time we got up to verse 12, and we stopped there at the end of November, beginning of December, and we're going to be looking particularly at the three verses that follow that 13 through to 15 this evening.

But let's just give a bit of a recap. We... Barry read for us that passage, which is helpful. But just to remind ourselves, Peter, this is the Apostle Peter, we know so well from the Gospels.

[10 : 43] Many years later, he's writing to a group of believers who are spread out. We're told they're scattered through the provinces, mainly modern-day Turkey and around that sort of area.

And we know that they were all suffering from persecution. That's going to come out much later in the letter, and we looked at it when we did an overview, but it's strongly hinted at there in verse 6.

Though now, for a little while, you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. They were a troubled people, a struggling people. Christians have always been that way, never been a case.

What we've heard this week, and the sadness of the loss of Mike, grievous though it is, has been the case throughout the church history, where there's been persecution, where our enemy, the devil, is at work.

And the antidote that Peter has been bringing to God's people in their troubles is to remind them of the security of their salvation in Christ. Not that they should look at the trials, but that rather they should look at what God has done for them and remind them how secure that salvation is.

[11 : 54] Verse 5, who through faith is shielded by God's power. And to give them further assurance, he's pointed them, of course, that the perfection of their salvation will come only when Christ comes again.

They're living in an imperfect world, and they themselves are going through these trials as part of God's purpose for them, part of his refining of them. These, he says, of the trials, verse 7, have come, so that the proven genuineness of your faith may result in praise and glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.

Their suffering is not in vain, and their faith is not in vain. Their trust in the Lord has every, gives them every confidence in the face of what they go through, because as well, he's spoken to them about the reliability of the gospel they've believed.

We saw that in verse 10 and following, that their message that they believed and trusted in is a certain, sure, it's divinely inspired, given by God's Spirit.

It's that which has been always the same message throughout the history of God's dealing with his people, revealed to the prophets and so on, and something that was uniquely handed down to them by those who preached it, by the power of the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, there in verse 12.

[13 : 20] So now Peter has laid this foundation for his letter, he's laid this foundation of faith and hope for the believers. How is he going to continue to strengthen them and help them in this very tough time?

The purpose of his letter is that they might have grace and peace and abundance, that they might be helped. Well, surprisingly perhaps, when we get to verse 13, we see there is a real change of tact, and he now calls them to action, calls them to action, therefore, with minds that are alert and fully sober.

Since all this is true, since all that God has done for us, all that Christ has done for us, since our salvation is secure and trials are part of God's purpose in refining us and preparing us for that day when we shall be in glory, therefore, because of these things, be prepared to live out the life to which you've been called.

Because of these things, because of what Christ has done, because of who you are in him, then now's the time to act. Now it's very natural, of course, for us in the midst of times of trouble and trial to seek comfort.

And it's very right of us to give comfort. It's good to encourage one another. But there can be a sense in which, perhaps, when we go through real difficulties, we want to retreat.

[14 : 43] We want to hide away, as it were. We want to sort of lock the doors and lock the world out from us and retreat into our shell. And that can be very bad for us spiritually.

It can be harmful for us. Certainly, we need to be encouraged. Certainly, we need to be supported. But if that's all that we're given, if that's all that we receive, our kind words, if I'm put it that way, comforting words, then we can find that we may even sink lower under the pressure of those trials, that they may actually become, and those words of comfort may have the effect, actually, of weakening us rather than strengthening us.

Now, I don't want you to misunderstand me in this. Please don't. To say to a believer, a broken believer, a struggling believer, oh, cheer up, stop moping about, get over it, that is utter foolishness and more often spoken out of ignorance at the very least.

But to be so caught up in our grief, so caught up in our troubles that we are forever paralyzed from living the Christian life is to add sorrow to sorrow to sorrow.

There's a sense in which that song of Nat King Cole rings true, at least I think it was him. If your chin is on the ground, pick yourself up, dust yourself off, and start all over again.

[16 : 13] Now, again, understand what I'm saying. There is a sense in which that's what Peter is doing now. He's saying now, in the midst of your trials, is the time to act.

I've encouraged you, I've told you again the things of God, now I'm calling you to do the things that you need to do as a believer. He's not talking about positive thinking.

He's not talking about that human optimism, of course, that the world has where it's empty hope that it spouts all the time as things can only get better. It's not that.

It's something which is real. It's because of what we have read. It's because of what we know to be true of God, because we know of how he's dealt with us and how he is gracious towards us that we can begin to move forward and be the people he wants us to be.

Well, how are we to do that? In the midst of all that's going on, in the trials, how are we to still move on? Well, first of all, he tells us that we need to get our minds ready.

[17 : 24] Therefore, with minds that are alert. All action, of course, starts with the mind. Everything we do begins with the brain. That's scientific. We know that.

The brain does its thing and there's a spark or whatever happens and it tells the fingers to move and the hands to move and so on. But also, we act upon our thoughts. How we think is how we live.

And so, before we do anything at all, we need to collect our thoughts. That's what he's saying. With minds that are alert, minds that are ready, minds that are prepared. Now, he's not so much as saying get yourself psyched up like a boxer might do before a big fight but rather clear your minds of the clutter before you engage in this very important test.

So, here we are. The world is pressing in. The troubles are pressing in and he's saying, right, get your minds ready. Get your minds alert. Clear them of the clutter. Now, those of you who've got the authorized version will know that it uses very much a picture phrase, gird up the loins of your mind which is a lovely picture of what it really is sort of saying.

It's a bit like saying to those who in the ancient times would have a robe around about them sort of tuck it into your belt as if you're about to do some physical exercise like running.

[18 : 51] In fact, there's an example of that very thing in 1 Kings 18 when Elijah has descended from Mount Carmel we're told that he tucked his cloak into his belt and he ran ahead of Ahab all the way to Jezreel.

So, that's what it's saying. Get out, get those things that clutter up that may trip you up that get in the way get them tucked away get them in order. worries, anxieties, confusing thoughts they all hinder us and even at times paralyze us from doing and living for Christ.

And so, in one sense I believe that there's a sense that we have to do this prayerfully. That we have to bring these things to the Lord we have to hand them over to the Lord in readiness to do his will.

Get your minds alert. Get your minds ready. Don't let them be all cluttered and weighed down. And then he says, therefore with minds that are alert and fully sober.

He isn't talking about a sober mind so much I believe. And he's certainly not talking about them being drunk. He's not saying now come on put away all the booze and sober up.

[20 : 01] Now he's meaning something rather different isn't he? Just as we need our minds under control and prepared so we need to also take control of our hearts. And the phrase in one sense is to be self-controlled self-disciplined not just in the things we do but actually with our emotions.

And the emotions are very strong things aren't they? They're not wrong. God has given us emotions. They're part of who we are as bearers of God's image. He is the God who feels if I can put it that way.

But unchecked emotions are dangerous. And unchecked emotions can actually be very harmful to us when we're in trials and troubles. They can lead us into all sorts of places.

They can take us into all sorts of doubts about the person of God because we feel abandoned or because we feel forsaken or whatever it may be. We must not be led by our feelings.

They've got to be held in check by what we know of God. So we know this don't we? Tomorrow morning on Monday we may wake up and go to work and we feel a bit bleh.

[21 : 11] We feel not very spiritual. We feel not very godly. We feel this. We feel that. But the fact of the matter is that we are unchanged from Sunday. Unchanged in our standing before God.

Unchanged in our fellowship with God. Unchanged in our relationship with Him. And so we need to get those feelings in check. Sober.

Keep them under control. That isn't to say we mustn't feel anything. We must be the English stiff upper lip. We must hold things all together and sort of brace ourselves. That's not the case at all.

But feelings like despair, anger, jealousy, we've got to bring them all again to God. And sometimes we need to repent of those things.

But most of all we need that they should not rule us. One of the great troubles of our day and age, isn't it? That men and women are ruled by their feelings.

[22 : 08] Well I feel like this. I feel inclined to be attracted to this particular person or that person. Therefore I will do this and I will do that. No. Feelings are not to have the first place.

So we're getting ready. Our minds are getting ready. Our hearts are getting ready to do the things of God. And then he says set your hope on the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at his coming.

Prepare your minds. Sober up. Focus. Focus your hope. This requires looking out of ourselves.

So far in one sense he's been saying sort yourself out if I can put it that way before the Lord but now he's saying we need to look out. We need to lift our heads up. We need to lift our heads up to the goal to the winner's podium to the end when Christ is revealed at his coming to that finishing tape.

We can prepare our minds to act. We can quieten our hearts to move to move but if our eyes are constantly dwelling on our situation on our trials our circumstances then we still won't be able to move from the spots.

[23 : 26] We'll still be glued down. We need something to aim at if we're to move forwards. Something to work towards. Several times I've walked past park hole shipbuilders and I've seen ships being built in various stages until the complete trawler, most of them they were trawlers was completed but to begin with there's nothing there but just some sheets of steel.

That's it. You think how on earth does this boat this huge craft come together? It takes months possibly even years to get the finished vessel but each engineer has in mind that completed ship as they're working upon their one particular piece of steel attaching it to the frame to the hull and so on.

They all have the goal. I'm not just sticking a piece of metal on here I'm building a ship. And the finished work that we have been called to complete is that work which God is doing in us which will reach its goal and completion when the Lord Jesus comes again.

Here's Philippians chapter 1 verse 6 He, that's God who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

And so we're to focus on that. Focus on that time when set your hope on the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed.

[24 : 59] What does that mean? At this very moment of course we are those who've received God's grace and God's grace is at work in us but the accomplishment the finished aspect of God's grace is that when Christ comes we shall be like him.

It's the top stone as it were will be put upon the building in our lives. The completion the finished the last piece as it were of the jigsaw will be put in place.

So we're ready. Our minds are ready. Our hearts are ready. And we've set before us this goal. But what is it we're to do?

That's the end result when we shall be like Jesus. That's the end result when we shall be complete when all of God's grace will have finished its work in us. But what are we to do?

What is the work of the Christian? What is the work that is in our hands to do? What are we to press on in living out in spite of the trials in spite of the storms around about us in the world?

[26 : 07] What is it that we're not to be distracted from? Well it's there verses 14 to 16. As obedient children do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance but just as he who called you is holy so be holy in all you do for it is written be holy because I am holy.

We can sum this up in the very language of the New Testament. Elsewhere we're told in Ephesians 5 verse 1. Follow God's example or as the older NIV used to say be imitators of God.

Paul in 1 Corinthians 11 1 Follow my example as I follow the example of Christ. 1 Thessalonians 1 verse 6 You became imitators of us and of the Lord.

So the simple phrase the work that we are to do the thing that we're to be focused on is being like God. being like God. We're to follow in our Father's footsteps as obedient children.

We're to develop more of the family likeness. Because God is holy we are to be holy. Holiness is the most striking of God's characteristics.

[27 : 24] It's what the angels talk about all day long. Isaiah tells us in chapter 6 verse 3 Speaking to one another holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty.

And when John looked into heaven he saw that and heard in heaven that ringing from the walls and the halls of heaven is the same song over and over again.

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty who was and is and is to come. The mission of God's people throughout history has been the very same to be holy.

Be holy because I am holy. Peter is quoting here from Leviticus. Four occasions God calls for Israel in Leviticus to be holy because he is holy.

Chapter 11 verses 44 and 45 Chapter 19 verse 2 Chapter 20 verse 7 That's where he's quoting from. Why did God rescue those slaves from Egypt that we've been thinking about in Exodus?

[28 : 26] Why did he set apart Abraham for himself and declare that his descendants would be a people for himself? It says in Exodus 19 verse 6 Although the whole earth is mine you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

Exactly what Peter quotes here in the second chapter as we'll come to it later on verse 9 You are a chosen people This is the church of Jesus Christ. The same thing said about the Old Testament church is said about the New Testament church.

You are a chosen people a royal priesthood a holy nation God's special possession. That's going to be the theme as we go through this letter of Peter.

All he's doing really as we go on into chapter 1 as we go into chapter 2 3 and 4 is this He's talking about how we live out practically being God's holy people.

Look at verse 22 Now that you have purified yourselves chapter 2 verse 5 You also like living stones are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood.

[29 : 41] Verse 11 we've already sorry we see there Dear friends I urge you as foreigners exiles to abstain from sinful desires live such good lives chapter 4 verse 2 As a result do not live as a rest of earthly lives for evil desires but rather for the will of God verse 7 The end of all things is near therefore be alert be of sober mind so that you may pray.

It's all the outworking of this call to be holy as God is holy. But what does that mean? Practically The church in the Old Testament church in New Testament all God's people the mark that sets them apart and that's really what holiness means was holiness belonging to the Lord being like the Lord displaying His glory.

What does it mean for you and I? If we are serious Christians if we take seriously the call of God does it mean that we should become nuns or monks that we should become a hermit or that we should join a commune people Christians included have very strange and weird ideas about holiness don't they?

That's why we don't hear much about holiness because people don't really understand what holiness is does it mean that you do all these strange things that you wear horse hair shirts or that you beat yourself with a whip or what does it mean?

means none of those things of course Peter along with the rest of the Bible makes it plain that there are two aspects to holiness both God's holiness and the holiness of God's people and the first aspect of it we'll take them in this way we don't need to is that there's a negative effect holiness has a negative effect and that is that holiness stops us from doing those things that are opposed to holiness it stops us being evil that's why as obedient children do not conform to the evil desires why?

[31 : 48] because you're holy because you're holy Habakkuk chapter 1 verse 13 we went through Habakkuk midweek Bible studies your eyes Habakkuk says of the Lord God your eyes are too pure to look upon evil you cannot tolerate wrongdoing if we feel greatly offended by the wickedness we see in the world around about us God is much the more so if we have to turn our eyes away from things that we see on telly and occasionally things are said distressing scenes whatever if they make us cringe then they make God cringe if I can put it that way all the more he turns away from evil he does no evil he does no there is no evil in him there is nothing impure in him there is nothing wrong in him there is a negative effect which is not to do evil or enjoy evil and so it is with God's people so it is with the church 2 Corinthians chapter 7 verse 1 let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit perfecting holiness out of reverence as believers as Christians we are to be those who abhor evil to be holy means to turn away from that which is wrong to see it for what it really is it is not a party pooper it is not somebody who simply has got their nose stuck in the air and thinks they are better than anybody else no of course not but it is to hate that which is horrible that is normal isn't it but it isn't normal in our world sadly in our world more and more increasingly so people delight in what is horrible and evil and vile and wicked and as Christians who are dwelt in by the Holy Spirit we can't help but see those things as being abhorrent as God sees them but of course it also means in our lives something very positive as well not only is there a negative which turns us away from what is evil but a positive motivating us to do what is right and good holiness is not simply separating ourselves from evil and putting ourselves in a nunnery or putting ourselves in a hermitage or in a commune or whatever it's not just taking away it's giving holiness is positive the holiness of God is positive

Isaiah 48 verse 17 this is what the Lord says your Redeemer the Holy One of Israel I am the Lord your God who teaches you what is best for you who directs you in the way you should go God is who he is and does what he does because he is holy and what he is and what he does is positive it is creative it is formative it is blessed it is building up it is strengthening it is rescuing it is redeeming and so it is the case for the church we'll just pick up on what Peter says here in chapter 2 verse 9 you are a chosen people a royal priesthood a holy nation God's special possession why?

that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light we thought of this this morning why do we sing praises to God? because of what he's done for us because of what he's promised us because we're his my strength said Moses my God said Moses my salvation are we positive about holiness?

the only way the world sees holiness is negative and sadly sadly sadly that's infiltrated the church the only thing we think of as holiness is negative it's pouring scorn upon everybody else it's looking down your noses about other people it's thinking of yourself as better than them and so on and so on they only see negativity when they speak of holiness that is not the way the Bible speaks of holiness it is proactive it is positive be holy it's a being word a doing word as we shall see as we go on such an active holiness is a sure sign that God has worked in our lives holiness is not something that we do and therefore we become I can't put it that way we don't do holiness and then become holy we are holy and therefore we do we do holiness we've been set apart by God he's worked in our lives he's transformed us he's changed us therefore the fruit of that is that we're holy

God is intrinsically in his character and nature holy you can't separate that from him and therefore he does holy things it's not because he does holy things that make him holy and so it is with us two things here that we see that show that we have been changed in verse 14 first of all we are no longer ignorant as obedient children do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance once we didn't know God's will once we didn't know what he was like once we lived amongst the rest of humanity completely blinded to God at the best having a very distorted view of him which was warped especially in concerning his holiness but we're not ignorant now dear friends our eyes have been opened our hearts have been transformed we've received this wonderful salvation gospel that we've been thinking about in the earlier verses and it's given us understanding of God and what he's like once he was unknown but now he's known that's the change if you know God's will you'll want to do it won't you because we know it's best because we know it's good for us because we know exactly that this is the will of God and all his will is perfect and just the world looks on it sees God's word and it hears these commandments popping out here and there and it sees these strange people and it has no idea it's ignorant and of course that ignorance is where we were where we would have remained but for the grace of God but also of course not only have we been brought out of ignorance into knowledge but we've become obedient children of God that phrase as obedient children do not conform and of course that phrase as obedient children could be taken and we would and many people would understand it in this sort of way now you be a good girl for your father that's not what it's saying that's us reading our understanding of you be obedient children for your father because he's coming home doesn't want to see a mess in your bedroom etc etc no we could understand it that way but I don't believe that's how we're meant to understand it at all since you are obedient children and that's who we are we are already obedient children when you become a Christian you become an obedient child of God look at there at verse 22 now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth what is it to become a Christian well one of the things about becoming a Christian is you obey the truth you hear the truth of the gospel and you obey it it says repent of your sins so you repent it says put your faith in Jesus as your saviour and you do it it's obedience because you are already obedient children because by God's

[39 : 38] Holy Spirit power you've been brought into this place where you acknowledge God as your father and you seek to do his will therefore be holy are you a child of God this evening dear friend not are you the child of a Christian that's great it's a great blessing we brought him in a Christian home it's a wonderful thing but are you a child of God have you already been obedient to his will then are you ready to grow in holiness is there within you that burning desire and it may not be understood in the same way as saying yes I want to be holy but there's something within you the spirit of God within you that says I really really really really want to be less sinful I really really really really want to please God and I really really really want to be more like Jesus in the way

I speak to people and meet with people and deal with people that's sanctification that's the work of holiness that's the spirit of God within you and that's what Peter is saying God has done these things and he's made this transformation so now though these trials are going on though these difficulties are there there's a call to you notice that in verse just as he who called you what did he call us to he is holy and he's called us to be holy he's called us to action in Ephesians in chapter 2 at the end of that wonderful passage where Paul talks about what we were by nature children of wrath those who went along with the world and then he talks about how God but God in his mercy and grace and love saved us and raised us up and made us alive and by grace you've been saved he concludes that passage by saying you are God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus to do good works do you know what God's will is for you dear friend you say well I don't know what the future is

I don't know what God wants me to do this this is God's will be holy he'll work out the rest he'll make clear the rest set your hearts dear friends set your mind set your hope upon that goal of a life of holiness pursuing that wonderful finishing tape of perfection when Jesus comes again this is the will of God for us our sanctification well let's sing together that hymn 742 take time to be holy speak oft with the Lord and in this little hymn it gives us some encouragements and gives us some instruction as well about how we pursue that life to which God has called us may the God of grace who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus that great shepherd of the sheep equip you with everything good for doing his will and may he work in us what is pleasing to him through Jesus

Christ to whom be glory forever and ever amen