

## LIVING AS A SOJOURNER

Oh Friend, we have been blessed beyond blessed. The Holy One, who has likewise called us to be Holy, allows us the privilege of calling Him our Abba, Father. We can come to Him, the Creator of all things, the One seated on a Heavenly Throne, with any request, any conversation, at any time, for He neither slumbers, nor sleeps. The very seat of majesty awaits conversation with you today. Take a moment with Him and then we will get into today's lesson.

**Read 1 Peter 1:1-21 today, as we never want to lose the flow of the letter as we study.**

Peter's words have laid a sure foundation of salvation and hope in Christ Jesus, and he continues to build on it with layers of doctrine to instruct the "diaspora," and us, on how to live as sojourners in this now foreign land called earth.

**Our specific text today is verse 17, read it again, and let's begin to take a closer look.**

"If" - One simple, two lettered word, but in Koine` Greek there are four different types of "if" and it's meaning can be changed by whichever conditional clause it is.

For the students among us:

- ❖ 1st class condition - If and it's true, can be translated "as is the case," or "since"
- ❖ 2nd class condition - If and it's false
- ❖ 3rd class condition - If and maybe it is and maybe it isn't
- ❖ 4th class condition - If and I wish it were true, but it's not

In verse 17, this is a First Class conditional clause which should be translated: *if, as is the case*, or, *since*. So, the verse here begins, "Since you address as Father the One..." -

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because we have been born again to a living hope, and our Father is God, we address Him with our requests. It would do no good to take them anywhere else!

Peter makes a distinction with the use of the accusative case referring to "The Father," that shows it is the Father to whom we are to address our prayers, teaching doctrine that is largely missed by believers today. Habits within our faith can be hard to break without the renewing of our minds, and that renewing only comes as we study God's word, and then, seek to apply it in our lives.

We are taught from the earliest ages to speak to Jesus because He is our friend, which He truly is. But God, through Peter's instruction, specifies that when we approach Him, (*"'invoke for yourself' - This is a compound word which means to participate with someone in making a request for something." - Dr. Troy Welch*) that our prayers are to be addressed to the Father.

Although Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit are One with the Father, they each fulfill a specific role in the Godhead. It is through our relationship in Jesus Christ that we have access to the Father. It is through the communication of the Holy Spirit that we converse with Him. So our prayers should be addressed to the Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, through the fellowship of the Spirit. Seems technical since they are all One, but this is the doctrine of prayer that we see taught throughout the Bible. Even Jesus Himself, when He taught the disciples to pray, did so by addressing prayers to the Father, with all the reverence due His name. He is to be hallowed. He is our Father.

Oswald Chambers in *My Utmost for His Highest* spoke of the boldness we have to approach the throne because, in Christ, God is our Father, but he added, may it never be with impertinence. We must remember to Whom we are speaking and hallow His name and His position in our life.

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As we continue on in the text, we find the Father is "the One who impartially judges according to each one's work." His judgment is based on two truths: First, and this is the best news ever - Every believer is treated in grace based on who Christ is, not who the believer is. Since we are in Christ, His work is the only work that matters for our salvation, all other works are for rewards that will be handed out. And secondly, the evaluation will be based on the works prepared for us individually to accomplish here on earth.

**Read Ephesians 2:10** What do you find regarding works? What are we to do?

We are to walk in the works that He prepared for us to individually do. He has laid a plan, and has divine purpose, specifically for your life. How you fulfill that plan and purpose will be how you are judged. You won't be judged based on the plans He made for my life, and I won't be judged based on the plans He's laid for your life. But, He continually evaluates each person's work.

**Turn to 2 Timothy 2:20-22** This cleansing comes at our salvation when we are washed white by the precious blood of Christ, and then kept clean, as we utilize 1 John 1:9 on a regular basis.

**Write the list of things we will be when we cleanse our self (v. 21):**

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

4) \_\_\_\_\_

We are to be set apart for useful service to the Lord, and we each have our own race to run.

**Read Hebrews 12:1-3**

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In v. 1 we're to lay aside every encumbrance. Is the Lord asking you to lay something aside that is keeping you from following after Him with all your heart, soul and strength?

This race that is set before us, we're to run with endurance, but we don't run blindly, where should our eyes be fixed (v. 2)?

What did He do (v.2, 3)?

While He had to suffer and endure, did you note, His eyes were fixed on something as well? Verse 2 says, "for the joy set before Him" and He wasn't talking the torture of the cross, nor the separation from God's Spirit, there was no joy in any of that, but He endured because of the joy that would take place when death had been conquered, Satan's power destroyed, and the penalty for our sin was paid off. Done, finished.

The words that get me every time, are those found next in v. 2, "despising the shame." Oh Girlfriend, our Lord died, completely burdened and covered with every sin we've ever committed, like the lashes on His back and the bruises on His body were an outward show of His shame, so were our sins that He inwardly despised having to bear. He did that for us! He did that "so that you will not grow weary and lose heart." May we never grow weary and lose heart in our service to Him as we remember His great service to us.

How do we serve Him? How do we fulfill the "works" He's prepared for us?

First, we allow our conduct to be directed by the Holy Spirit. Praise the Lord, we don't have to do the work alone. As we submit to His leading, we allow Him to produce the action in us. When we read Galatians 3:1-5, we find the Apostle Paul rebuking the Galatian believers for trying to do "works" apart from the Spirit. They were living according to the Law rather than

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by the direction of the Holy Spirit. Having an ear to hear the Spirit's small voice is imperative if we are to do things in His power, and not get carried away with living religiously rather than relationally. That kind of hearing takes training, practice, but mostly, not talking over Him!

Secondly, we remember that our time is limited here as sojourners. Each of us have a limited time to complete the tasks He's assigned for us. His word teaches that those days can be lengthened, or shortened, by our performance of them. As an ambassador to the King, He can call us back home at anytime if we are not fulfilling our job. We recognize that as the "sin unto death" referred to in, 1 John 5:16. If we refuse to do the work He has planned for us, He, as our King, has the option to call us back home before our post is finished. Or, we may simply miss out on the blessing of obedience, or receive divine discipline since He disciplines His own (Hebrews 12).

**Can you think of something God has been asking you to do that maybe you've been procrastinating in obeying Him?**

### **Read Psalm 39:4-5**

The best case scenario... just do what God tells you to do. Don't argue with Him, don't be afraid of what He's told you to do, don't delay it, or explain it away. Do what God tells you to do, and do it now. Time is short.

Thirdly, He gifts us with spiritual gifts at our new birth that we are to use in fulfilling the works He has prepared for us, gifting us with just the right tools to accomplish them. And, gifting us so that, "...speaking the truth in love we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love." (Ephesians 4:15-16) His "body" can only

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function correctly as we fulfill the works He's prepared for us. We are to build one another up by using our gifts.

### Read 1 Corinthians 12:11-12

When it comes to gifts, we once again see the three roles of the Godhead at work.

- ❖ **God the Father is the Master Planner: Read 1 Corinthians 12:28 He appoints.**
- ❖ **God the Son is the basis for the gifts given: Read Ephesians 4:7-11 His body.**
- ❖ **God the Holy Spirit is the source who bestows the gifts, as we read in 1 Corinthians 12:11 He distributes.**

So, no excuses, we have all we need. God's grace in full supply. We have the power of His Spirit, we have the time needed to accomplish the tasks. And, we have the gifts, through the Spirit to complete them. God has supplied everything we need to succeed. He is for us!

Our only rational response to all of that, Peter says, is to "conduct yourselves in fear during your stay here on earth" (v. 17). Out of reverential honor, and awe of our Heavenly Father, we should live in active duty as His ambassador until our job is finished. Working with a willing spirit, seeking to please the Lord.

May our desire always be, that on that day of judgment when we stand before the Lord our God, we will hear Him say the words, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." Let our mindset be, as Paul's was as he approached the end of his physical life, that we too, would be able to say: *"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:"* (2 Timothy 4:7)

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### Review:

- Today's Text: 1 Peter 1:17
- Conditional If's
- Addressing prayer to The Father
- Works judged impartially:
  - ❖ Grace based on Christ's work
  - ❖ Based on fulfilling our individual plan
- Individual works (Ephesians 2:10)
- Vessels to be used (2 Timothy 2:20-22)
- Run our own race (Hebrews 12:1-3)
- Fulfilling our plan:
  - ❖ Allow our conduct to be directed by the Holy Spirit (Galatians 3:1-5)
  - ❖ Remember that our time is limited here as sojourners (Psalm 39:4-5; 1 John 5:16; Hebrews 12)
  - ❖ He gifts us with spiritual gifts at our new birth (Ephesians 4:15-16; 1 Corinthians 12:11-12 )
- Roles of the Godhead:
  - ❖ God the Father is the Master Planner: (1 Corinthians 12:28)
  - ❖ God the Son is the basis for the gifts given: (Ephesians 4:7-11)
  - ❖ God the Holy Spirit is the source who bestows the gifts (1 Corinthians 12:11)