

Intro

- There are times that I need to just reduce my problems down to just defining my identity.
 - What I mean by that in times of struggle I have to discard all other input and start from a foundation that I know to be true (or at least a true as can be discerned).
 - Information from others may be flawed, News is bias, My emotions lead me astray.
 - So what do I know to be true. -- Cognito ergo sum – well ok not to that level (very often)
 - But I know first I am a servant of Christ. That is the foundation to my identity.
 - ❖ Then after that I am a husband, father, friend, mentor, employee, engineer, mild depressant, bar-stool philosopher, a poor comedian.
 - *I really wanted to start this out by telling a really funny story about mistaken identity. But I kind of lost myself in the search. -- It did produce a Facebook post however.*
- But really, in doing that – reducing all input to the foundation of my identity – It ends up encouraging me to be like Christ. He is my model. He is my truth.
- It starts in our identity with Christ.
- I think this is a big part of what Peter is doing in his first epistle, here.

- Today is part one of a two part series: **Hope** and **Holiness** based on 1 Peter CH. 1
 - Peter writes about being (v.3) “born again to a living hope”
 - And then what that means to us (v.16) “You shall be holy, for I am holy” – Leviticus
 - Thus, the hope and the holiness that we will discuss.

- At the time of its writing, Peter is probably in Rome and witnessing the beginnings of the Christian persecution in the reign of Nero.
 - He knows the young Church needs guidance, needs definition, and there is storm brewing.
 - ❖ Peter gives the readers definition – and that leads into what to do with that.
 - Spiritually and practically.

- Today’s focus is going to be on that identity in Christ.
 - It is grounded in faith and hope.
 - Which gives us connection and structure to ... well ... honestly ... *everything*...
 - If you really comprehend it, not just blindly follow for the sake of saving your skin, but really scrutinize and contemplate the information, then it becomes pretty clear -- everything will be measured to your faith.

- It is common with epistles (letters) of this time, the opening salutations start with presenting the author and then identify the audience.

¹ Peter 1:1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ,

To those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, ²according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, **in** the sanctification of the Spirit, **for** obedience to Jesus Christ and **for** sprinkling with his blood:

May grace and peace be multiplied to you.

A Cosmic Gospel

- The author is pretty concise: Peter
 - Though likely dictated by Peter and written by Silas
 - The epistle closes with “By Silvanus, a faithful brother as I regard him” (5:12)
 - Also the Greek writing structure is much more refined than we suspect Peter’s skills to be.
 - ❖ 2 Peter is more rough and rudimentary, Peter probably didn’t have a scribe with him.
 - The persecution from Nero had increased by then and Peter was near martyrdom.
- Then there is the case of the audience.
 - There are two types of people:
 - ❖ Those who categorize people into two groups and those who don’t.
 - In Peter’s case here – it is the Elect and Reprobate.
 - ❖ Those who have salvation and those who do not.
 - ❖ Well... he may not be off base there.
 - The letter is addressed “To those who are elect exiles” to be exact.
- What is meant by that, “elect exiles”

Elect

- Elect: (G1588) ek-lek-tos; Selected, Chosen:
 - Think of it as God [The trinity (Father-Son-Holy Spirit)] had a vote and you (Christian) were voted in. And it was unanimous. ⇒ Of course they always vote unanimous!
 - ❖ We really have to absorb (vs.2) into the investigation of this word “elect”
 - “To those who are elect exiles... according to the foreknowledge of God the Father”
 - ❖ “Foreknowledge” (Having information prior to the event) (Predestine) – Eph 1:4
 - ❖ What a loaded word “foreknowledge”; can’t fully understand.
 - Eph 1:4-5 ... HE chose us before the foundation of the world, ... He predestined us for adoption
 - So it is – **PRE** destined. A destiny before the world was created.
 - ❖ So that we may be holy.
- The question we really ask is this; what are the grounds by which God elects?
 - **John Calvin**, the doctrine of predestination is so mysterious that it must be treated with great humility and great care, because it can be so easily misunderstood and distorted to cast God as a tyrant – haphazardly gathering some to heaven and casting others to hell with abject randomness.
 - Calvin goes on to coin the idea “learned ignorance” vs. “brutish ignorance”
 - ❖ Where we admit ignorance but from the stance of exhaustive study and thought.
 - His will, His pleasure, His justice | and from our perspective we are blind.
 - God’s paradox. Does not work itself out logically (ie: *gain life – lose it*)
 1. Before the foundation of the world God chose you
 2. We play a role, have a responsibility, response, free will (Gen [Abram], Ez, James)
 3. But that role is NOT a cause to our election – to our salvation.
 - “According to his great mercy, **He** has caused us to be born again” (v.3)
 - I have to leave you there, this isn’t supposed to be a theology lesson the doctrine of election
 - Just be known, Christians, you are elect – chosen by God. A mystery not to be taken lightly.

A Cosmic Gospel

- Exiles (G2937) of the Dispersion; Diaspora (G1290). REF. *Jas 1:1*
 - Seems like Jews, because this is a term used to describe the scattering of the Jewish people due to the Babylonian exile. But Peter uses terms that indicate they are converted gentiles (v. 14) “do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance”
 - The list of regions (Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia) pair well with Jews from the Pentecost but also Paul’s missionary journey.
 - Those who believe and are scattered across the world: The Church.
 - Us! (Eph 2:19) We are strangers and aliens in this world.

Sanctified for Obedience

- One more word that may need some explanation: Sanctification
- Sanctification (**hagiasmos**) – root: hagiazo (**Holy**; Pure, Godly, Set apart)
 - Three verb tenses. Immediate, Now, Future.
- “in the sanctification of the Spirit, **for** obedience to Jesus Christ and **for** sprinkling with his blood”
 - Sprinkling with His blood
 - ❖ Establish a covenant (Ex 2:5-8)
 - ❖ Ordination (Ex 29:21)
 - ❖ Purification (Lev 14:6-7)
 - Set aside [By the Holy Spirit] – To serve Him – and be purified.
 - Kind of presents a loop. Cleansed to be further cleansed.
- So intro **in summary**: A letter from: Peter, penned by Silas
 - To: The Jews from Pentecost, the gentiles from Paul’s mission, The Church in Turkey, All Christians scattered across the world.
 - Christians: Chosen by God, Responded to God, Set apart and being purified by God
- “May Grace and Peace be multiplied to you”
 - ❖ Remember Mercy: Not getting what we deserve.
 - ❖ A step beyond that is grace.
 - Grace: Getting what we don’t deserve. (Eternal life)
 - ❖ But God throws in more than that (as if that isn’t enough).
 - He wants us to prosper (spiritually, emotionally, relationally)
 - ❖ He wants to guide us, lead us, counsel us. Cleanse us, heal us, and strengthen us.
 - ❖ He gives us grace beyond measure – sanctify us
 - ❖ **May this all be multiplied to you**
 - (Hebrew word) Shalom, have peace in your heart. You are reconciled with God
 - ❖ Do not worry. Be at peace with your God, Yourself, and others.
 - ❖ **May this be multiplied to you**
- That is quite an introduction isn’t it?
- As we read on we see how the theme builds.
 - We get a solid definition of what a Christian is. My wish is - that be your identity.

A Cosmic Gospel

1: Peter 1:3-5 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the **dead**, ⁴ to an inheritance that is *imperishable, undefiled, and unfading*, kept in heaven for you, ⁵ who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

- His great Mercy - Caused us to be born again
 - Mercy: Not getting what we deserve. (Spiritual death) – (Forgiveness of our sins)
 - ❖ *"No other attribute could have helped us had mercy refused. As we are by nature, justice condemns us, holiness frowns upon us, power crushes us, truth confirms the threatening of the law, and wrath fulfils it. It is from the mercy of our God that all our hopes begin."* (Spurgeon)
- His great Mercy - **Caused** us to be **born again**
 - Jesus is the cause! He caused us to look (knocking) He caused us new birth (regeneration)
 - ❖ Which begins with mercy...forgiveness
 - 2 Cor 5:17, "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature"
- Living **Hope** through **His** resurrection
 - All this we know because His resurrection is our resurrection.
- Resurrected to an **inheritance** that is imperishable.
 - What is this inheritance that we talk about that is *imperishable, undefiled, and unfading*?
 - ❖ [Num 18:20] symbolic Aaronic inheritance: Priests – dedicated to His word.
 - ❖ An inheritance not like the other tribes – a non-tangible... holy inheritance.
 - Contrasting story of death – hard to respond // A hope realized.*
 - We have a great **hope** not a cultural hope as in I wish for, but a biblical hope: I look forward to. Which is coupled with the faith: A trust that God word is true.
- We too often think of "faith" as being blind foolish and uninformed.
- I am going to jump ahead to vs. 8, because Peter gives us a definition to faith.

1 Peter 1:8 Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, ⁹ obtaining the outcome of your faith, **the salvation of your souls**.

- My father used to say he can't believe in a big Santa Clause in the sky.
 - But this is really the uninformed view – a brutish ignorance
 - As Peter points out here. Our faith is really seeded from trusting in Jesus.
- The author of Hebrews put it:

Heb 11:1 Now faith is the assurance of things **hoped** for, the conviction of things not seen.

A Cosmic Gospel

- Peter knows we didn't witness Jesus and His resurrection like he did.
 - And there is where our faith as a Christian really begins.
 - There is evidence, Peter himself is a witness. Among hundreds of the time.
 - Peter's second epistle he says, "We did not cleverly devise myths -- we were eyewitnesses"
 - ❖ Key word "WE"
 - ❖ And I am a witness of lives changed. My life changed, and many others.
 - It is a faith that is not blind. It is not an uninformed faith.

- And the outcome of this faith: "the salvation of your souls."
 - What a wonderful thing to hang your hat on.
- You are being guarded – through your faith – for salvation.
 - All build from the foundation of your trust in God's word –
 - ❖ Jesus resurrection is defeat of death! This we must believe.

- That is a beautiful thing.
 - But, unlike the media (Disney) that we consume – the credits don't roll there.
 - That is where we start.
 - ❖ Our identity is defined. We have a firm foundation of faith and hope to work from.

Trials - Faith

¹ Peter 1:5-9 ...by God's power [you] are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. ⁶In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various **trials**, ⁷ so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

⁸Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, ⁹ obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

- Trials testing genuineness of faith
 - I love that image of refining precious metals [Refining]
- Dan 11:35** and some of the wise shall stumble, so that they may be refined, purified, and made white, until the time of the end, for it still awaits the appointed time.
- **Malachi 3:3** writes that God is "like a refiner's fire – purifying like gold and silver"
- Refining precious metal takes heat. The dross (impurities) float to the top and are removed.
 - And the metal is then more pure, clear, beautiful and precious.
 - But gold & silver is still perishable - Peter is referring to our faith being purified.

A Cosmic Gospel

- I would not be near the man I am now if it were not for the adversities I had to overcome.
 - We are trained to run from difficulty. If we are not in control of the situation – it is bad.
 - NO. "... we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose." [Rom 8:28](#)
 - I have been realizing I want to protect my children from real life trials.
 - ❖ But, these could be character changing moments. I need to stop that.
 - ❖ Christians embrace the trials
 - [Heb 12:11](#) For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.
 - ❖ Let God be glorified as we walk through the fire – and be made more precious
 - Being sanctified, purified, set apart – being the light of truth – shining Jesus glory

Concerning Salvation

¹ Peter 1:10 Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours -- searched and inquired carefully, ¹¹ inquiring what *person* or *time* the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. ¹² It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but **you**, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look.

- Prophets searched and inquired – “who is the messiah, when will He come”.
- These are things angels long to look
 - What are these things that Peter is referring to?
 - ❖ The previous verse: The sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories
 - ❖ Christology: Incarnation, Sacrifice, Propitiation
Our Election, Conversion, Redemption, Justification (Soteriology) (Ordo Salutis)
 - ❖ Sanctification, Adoption, Inheritance, glorification.
 - ❖ All these most marvelous “tions”
 - The marvelous works of God – concerning us. His work in us.
- When it says that angels long to “look” (G3879): Stop to inspect
- (*Inspired from Albert Barnes commentary 1875*)
- Do you recognize the value of the Gospel you have received, the greatness of the privilege?
 - The hosts of Heaven lean over with great interests scrutinizing the very details of humanity
 - ❖ a fallen creature, tempted, suffering, dying, and exposed to eternal death.
 - ❖ How amazing, the indifference of man to this great and glorious work!
 - ❖ astonishment when the Son of God left the courts of glory to be poor, to be persecuted, to bleed, and to die, not less must be the astonishment than when, from those lofty heights, the angelic hosts look down upon a race unconcerned amidst wonders such as those of the incarnation and the atonement!

A Cosmic Gospel

- Image: Angles leaning over the earth gazing into the church with eagerness to see the gospel played out.

- ❖ Cheering for every conversion.

- Image: *Years of work – then the moment of truth – great achievement. (ie: graduation)*

What is the greatest achievement of humanity? – through out an idea. [Launch]

NASA Apollo program. Concept in 1960 – Employed 400,000, 9 years of work, billions of dollars later. The entire world was on the edge of its seat to see these human beings Neal Armstrong Buzz Aldrin Mike Collins travel 240K mi. [Apollo Team]

In a piece of aluminum foil, to a airless void. Returning at 25Kmi/hr

To lay the first human foot prints into the dust of the moon.

[Foot Print]

And do you understand how small this is in comparison with the cosmic level of our salvation? All this around us is playground. It is fodder to the real achievement.

Rom 8:18-24 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

19 For the creation waits with **eager longing** for the revealing of the sons of God.

20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope **21** that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

22 For we know that the whole creation has been **groaning** together in the pains of childbirth until now. **23** And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, **groan** inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

24 For in this **hope** we were saved.

- Can't you feel it? The entire universe in earnest wait. So anxious for the freedom promised, nerves buzz – all focus is on this one moment. "For in this **hope** we were saved"

Practical

1 Peter 1:13 Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

- What does that mean for you now?
- What does this mean for Christians today?
- Christian – You are chosen - you are transformed.
 - The core of your identity is in Christ
 - From this faith in Jesus your entire structure is to be built.
 - Beginning with your inherit - a life everlasting - stretching across the cosmos.
 - ❖ The pinnacle of all creation.
- SO: "Be holy as I am holy"
- Dan is going to talk about this next week.