

Excerpts from Life-study of First Peter, Message

12

THE FULL SALVATION OF THE TRIUNE GOD AND ITS ISSUES (7)

Bible Verses:

1 Pet. 1:18 Knowing that it was not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, that you were redeemed from your vain manner of life handed down from your fathers,

1 Pet. 1:19 But with precious blood, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot, the blood of Christ.

Before we go on to verses 18 and 19, I would like to say a further word concerning the matter of becoming holy in all our manner of life (1:15). The phrase “manner of life” is a literal translation of the Greek. According to 1:15, we should not merely be holy and live a holy life; we should become holy in all our manner of life. Others should be able to see a certain manner in our living, and this manner should be holy. This does not mean that we are holy

occasionally or that we are holy in certain things. For instance, it is not that in the morning we are holy in one matter, and then later in the day we are no longer holy in that matter. No, we need habitually to have a holy life. This is what constitutes a holy manner of life. If we would have a holy manner of life, we need to be habitually holy in our constitution. This means that we need to become a certain kind of person, a person who is holy in constitution.

To have a holy manner of life, we need three things: the impartation of the Father's holy nature into our being, the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit to make us holy, and God's discipline so that we may participate in the holiness of our holy God. These are the three factors for us to live a life of holiness. Our living should not only be holy to a certain extent, but our very manner of life should be holy. This means that we should have a living that is the expression of our holy God.

According to verse 18, the blood of Christ has redeemed us from our vain manner of life. This vain manner of life is in contrast to the holy manner of life in verse 15. According to most other references in Scripture, the blood of Christ redeems us from sins,

transgressions, lawlessness, and all sinful things (Eph. 1:7; Heb. 9:15; Titus 2:14). Here is an exception: Christ's blood has redeemed us from our old, vain manner of life, because the emphasis here is not on sinfulness, but on the manner of life. The whole chapter emphasizes the holy manner of life which God's chosen people should have in their sojourn. Not only is the Spirit's sanctification for this; even Christ's redemption is for this—to separate us from our vain manner of life handed down from our fathers. Knowing that this was accomplished with the highest price, the precious blood of Christ, we pass the days of our sojourning in fear.

As fallen human beings, we were in a dreadful situation before we experienced Christ's redemption: we were merchandise up for sale in an unclean marketplace, the marketplace of the vain manner of life. If the spiritual feelings within you are tender when you are in a shopping center, you will realize that such a place is unclean. Outwardly, it may be very clean; however, spiritually speaking, it is very dirty. Furthermore, nearly everything in a shopping center is related to the vain manner of life. Formerly, we were merchandise up for sale in Satan's shopping

center, in his unclean, worldly market. Today all of human society is an unclean market.

Although we were items on sale in Satan's shopping center, Christ came to purchase us, to redeem us. He paid a very high price to buy us—the price of His precious blood. Satan did not want Christ to buy us. Satan's plan was that we would be bought by someone else. Therefore, when Satan realized that Christ had come to purchase us, he caused a great deal of trouble. Unwilling to release us, to let us go, he raised up many obstacles and barriers to frustrate Christ from purchasing us. Nevertheless, Christ died on the cross and shed His precious blood to redeem us. From our side, we were purchased, but from Satan's side, we were redeemed.

The Lord Jesus is a Man mingled with God. Therefore, when this Man died on the cross, God also passed through death. No human words are adequate to explain this.

Only the blood of Christ was qualified and sufficient to redeem us, to purchase us. We had been put on sale by the enemy Satan, our usurper. But Christ, our Redeemer, paid the highest price to purchase us. Peter speaks of this in verses 18 and 19.

In verse 18 Peter says that we were redeemed “not with corruptible things.” The blood of Christ is a material substance, yet its effectiveness, function, worth, power, and authority are eternal and incorruptible.

Verse 19 says, “But with precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, the blood of Christ.” It is important to understand what Peter means by “blemish” and “spot” and to know the difference between them. Blemish is a term often used for impurities found in precious stones and gems. Suppose you have a precious stone in your hand. If this stone is pure, it does not have any mixture; that is, it does not have any foreign body mixed in with it. However, sometimes a precious stone or a gem does have a foreign body in it. That foreign body, that element of mixture, is a blemish.

Among all the human beings who have ever lived on earth, there has been only one Man—the Lord Jesus Christ—who is without mixture or blemish.

The lamb sacrificed at the time of the Passover had to be without blemish and without spot. Furthermore, this lamb had to be kept for four days in order to be carefully examined. Before the lamb

could be sacrificed, it first had to be examined to prove that it was without blemish and without spot. This is what the Lord Jesus experienced in Jerusalem during the days before He was crucified. Day by day He was examined by the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the scribes, the elders, and the priests. They did their best to find a fault of some kind in Him. However, according to their law, they could not find fault with Him. Then they handed the Lord Jesus over to the Roman rulers, to Pilate and Herod. But neither could these Roman rulers, according to Roman law, find any fault in Him. For this reason, Pilate declared, “I find no fault whatever in him” (John 18:38). Therefore, according to both divine law and secular law, the Lamb of God was examined and found to be without mixture and without spot. Only this unique Person is without blemish and without spot.

On the one hand, Peter refers to the Old Testament typology; on the other hand, simultaneously he indicates that Christ is the real Passover lamb.

I would encourage you to spend an hour alone with the Lord to consider the precious blood of Christ shed for you on the cross. This will give you

the desire to have a holy manner of life in fear. You will want to become holy in all your manner of life and to pass the remaining time of your sojourn in fear. If we would live in this way, we need to realize that we have been redeemed, bought, purchased, with the high price of Christ's precious blood. This realization will cause us to have a living in a holy manner of life, for we shall realize that Christ's precious blood has redeemed us from the vain manner of life. No longer will we want to live in a way that is vain.

A vain manner of life is not necessarily sinful. Rather, in certain respects it may be quite moral. Nevertheless it is still vain—having no goal, aim, or purpose. Anything without a goal or purpose is vanity. Now we should live a life without any vanity. Everything we do and say should have God's goal in view. This kind of life is weighty and full of content. It is a life with purpose, goal, and aim. Let us all spend time to consider Peter's writing concerning the precious blood of Christ so that in a practical way we may become holy in all our manner of life and pass the time of our sojourn in fear.

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Note: This version is not intended to be printed as material for pursuit during the small group gathering. Instead, it is to be used as additional reference for brothers and sisters who want to prepare in advance for fellowship on the. We include here notes from the commentaries of the brothers in the life-study radio program. The points from these commentaries can help enrich our understanding and, eventually, our fellowship with the saints on the selected portions of the life-study message. We still recommend that, if possible, the saints still listen to the [audio message](#) in addition to reading the [life-study message](#) for personal pursuit and for preparation for small group gatherings. We also wish to point out that these notes have not been fully polished.

[Commentary:]

Introduction

[CW:] In chapter 1 of his first epistle, Peter contrasts our former way of living or literally, our manner of life, which was vain, with our present manner of life, which should be holy. Vain, of course, means empty, without meaning. Well, all of us must surely confess that our life before we were regenerated was characterized by sin. But Peter points out that even more, our life was vain, empty, and without purpose. Yet, we have been called to a holy manner of life. "Do not be fashioned," Peter writes, "according to the former lusts in your ignorance, but according to the Holy One who called you. You yourselves, also, be holy in all your manner of life." How can we have such a living, such a manner of life that becomes holy? Well Peter's further word in this chapter becomes a very great help to us. John Pester joined us today for fellowship. John, I love this program, I love the message, but not sure how much grace we'll have to adequately convey, but the thought here is truly marvelous.

[JP:] The thought is marvelous, and the thought is very deep. It points us in this book, speaks of our need to have a Christian life under the government of God. And a Christian life that is under the government of God is a Christian life that has a holy manner of living. It's a living that is without mixture, without defect, it is perfect, it is according to the eternal life and the divine nature of the Triune God, and it is available to us because of the redemption of Christ and is accessible to us because of the precious blood of Christ. We have access to this life because of Christ's redemption through His precious blood, and Peter points us to this. Many Christians regard redemption as something in the past. But Peter refocuses on Christ's redemption and the preciousness of His blood, so that we would not have a vain manner of living in this age, in our life right now as Christians. And I know many, many Christians wonder, 'How can I have a holy living?' You can have a holy living because of the provisions of Christ's redemption through His precious blood.

[CW:] Yup. That's really the focus. Peter is going to bring up redemption here in the coming verses that we'll read. But it's sandwiched in between the former manner of life and what should be our present manner of life. So it really is related not just to the forgiveness that we received at the time that we accepted Christ., not just related to the eternal record of sin that was dealt with once for all by the shedding of His blood on the cross. But it really becomes part of our daily living, doesn't it?

[JP:] If we view redemption just as an event in the past that took care of our sins and wiped out our sin records before God, and now we can come to God, that's a rather shallow understanding of redemption. There is an aspect of redemption that relates to taking us out of our vain manner of living. And that vain manner of living wasn't just present in the past. It's possible to be present with us today. We can be Christians living a vain life if

we don't have a deep understanding of the purpose of God and we don't have a deep realization that our access into that purpose is through the precious blood of Christ.

[CW:] Well, let's look into these other verses. That was verse 15 where Peter referred to the holy manner of life that should be characteristic of our living today. But in verses 17 and 18, says, "And if you call as Father the One who without respect of persons, judges according to each one's work, pass the time of your sojourning in fear, knowing that it was not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, that you were redeemed from your vain manner of life handed down from your fathers." And John, you made reference to the understanding of this word, redeemed. Like so many spiritual terms, so many biblical terms, it gets somewhat common cliche and we lose our sensitivity and our appreciation for really what is on the depths of these rich words that are given to us in the Scripture. I think Witness Lee will help rekindle a proper sensitivity in this message. Just a hint. Let's go to Witness Lee now.

Part 1

[CW:] John, we're gonna come back to really focus on the preciousness of the blood in the portions ahead, but I'd like to spend a minute talking a little bit about Peter. And to him, how valuable this blood must have been. Because Peter's background is one, I think that all of us are maybe a little bit familiar with, and certainly one we can all identify with, and we see a lot of ourselves in Peter. And so, he had a lot to appreciate, didn't he, in the terms of the effectiveness and the preciousness of this blood?

[JP:] I think in reality, we're all Peter. Given an opportunity to stand and speak for the Lord, we often deny the Lord. And, when we deny the Lord, sometimes, we inwardly feel that piercing gaze of the Lord, condemning us for our lack of faith, for our unwillingness to follow the Lord wherever He goes. And so Peter had this deep realization of failure. But he also had a deep appreciation for the preciousness of the Lord's redemption. He realized that all of his sins, his transgressions, his failures, had been covered by the precious blood of Christ through Christ's death on the cross. But Peter also had a realization that he was a vain man, that he had traditions handed down from his fathers that he was living in and according to, and they were vain. They did not fulfill the purpose of God. He had a deep realization that he was conveying in this chapter of Peter that we had not only been redeemed from our failures, which he was surely appreciative of, but he was even more appreciative, I think, that he had been delivered from his vain manner of life. The reason why he denied the Lord was because he had a whole living and a whole history of vanity. He had no conception, no reality, no realization of the purpose of God. And all of his thoughts were focused and centered on himself. And he realized through the redemption of Christ, and he presents this to Jewish believers and to all Christians that we can have a holy living, a holy manner of life, because we had been redeemed from that vanity. The things that were holding us back, that had to be dealt with by Christ and the cross, had been dealt with, but they continue to deal with the things that hold us back, and that's primarily our vain manner of life. We have to be Christians that are so conscious and so sensitive to how we are living our life in this age, in the time of our sojourning here on the Earth. It's not enough to be a redeemed Christian, a regenerated Christian. We have to be Christians who live according to the divine purpose. And in order to do that, we need the preciousness of the blood.

[CW:] I wanna underscore the points you've made because I think it is such a good one. We all may have our moment of denial. The thing that just pierces our heart personally, that we consider, when we think about all

that the Lord has delivered us from, saved us from. But more than that, in Peter's case, is you just pointed out, his appreciation was based on the fact he'd been delivered not just from the time that he failed the Lord when the test was on. But his whole manner of life, his whole manner of living, even his whole manner of serving God in a vain way, in a way that was absent of real meaning, real purpose, as you've said, living in the tradition of his fathers, and counting that as being probably adequate. But really, in the realization he brings us to here, he sees much more than that now, doesn't he?

[JP:] Yes he does. And that's what's so striking about this particular portion, is that he points us to the ongoing and future redemptive aspects of the precious blood of Christ. It's because, without that, we would just as quickly fall back into our former manner of life, the vanity of what we were before we received the Lord. This is the predicament of many, many Christians. They have received the Lord, but they have fallen back into their vain manner of life. Not even realizing that it's that vain manner of life, as much as their sins, that are holding them back from going on in the Lord and having a proper Christian life under the government of God.

[CW:] Let me read that portion again in verse 18 and then add verse 19, as we get ready to go back to Witness Lee for this next section. "Knowing," he said, "that it was not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, that you were redeemed from your vain manner of life handed down from your fathers, but with precious blood as of a lamb without blemish, without spot, the blood of Christ."

Part 2

[CW:] We have to appreciate Peter's realization of who he was speaking to here. Don't you, John? Really get into the depths of this.

[JP:] He was speaking to a Jewish audience, primarily. And he was presenting Christ, as the fulfillment of the typology of the Passover Lamb. When he speaks about the precious blood, there's some very important words in these verses. The first important word is blood itself. In order for there to be redemption, there has to be blood. Blood has to be shed. Without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sin. This shows that God was incarnated as a man. Then this blood is not like the corruptible things of gold and silver. This means that there is a divine element involved in this blood, which means God was involved. God, the divine life and nature of God was involved and mingled into this blood. And then, it's the blood of a Lamb. And this shows that it's not precious because it's valuable like gold and silver. It's not the monetary value that makes it precious. It's much higher than that. It's the organic value. Because a lamb is an organic being. And this means that the divine life of God was involved in the shedding of the Lord's blood. There's the divine element in this blood, which makes His blood satisfy God's righteous requirement, and it makes it eternally efficacious to us. And so, Peter presents Christ as the fulfillment of this passover lamb. And he does it in such a way... I appreciate how he says, "without spot or blemish". And this points to the examination that Christ underwent prior to his crucifixion. For 6 days, He's examined by the priests and the politicians. The most judgemental people that you can find on the face of the Earth would be politicians and religious people, because their whole living is involved with judgement. And these people wanted to find fault with Christ, yet they could not find fault with Him, which shows that He is a spotless Lamb whose blood really does satisfy God and eternally speaks for us and covers us, and enables us to have a holy living that's under the government of God.

[CW:] This inspection process or examination process is really critical, isn't it? It was really preparatory to the offering of the blood on the cross, where He was judged by God as a substitute for all of us. So this blood had to be proven, before He even ascends to the cross. And man's law, you know the secular law, could find no fault. Neither could the religious ones, according to God's Old Testament law. He passes the ultimate test here, doesn't He? Proving that uniquely, He was qualified.

[JP:] In the Old Testament typology, before the Passover Lamb could be offered, they had to be inspected by the chief priest and determined to be without spot or blemish. And so, the examination, so to speak, that the Lord underwent prior to His death on the cross there during the Passover, was a fulfillment of that type. So, our Lord fully passed the test. He fully is qualified to be the Passover Lamb.

[CW:] That, I think is underscored. We're gonna pick a verse out of the gospel of John here, as we go to our last section. John 18:38, "Pilate said to Him, What is truth?, and having said this, he again went out to the Jews and said to them, I find no fault in Him." Striking. Here's Witness Lee.

Part 3

[CW:] John, we made reference to this earlier, but I think it's a good point to come back to as we close today. Not enough that our life would be clear of sin or moral, but Peter clearly is pointing us to a life that's full of purpose, isn't he?

[JP:] Peter speaks of the preciousness of the Lord's blood in relationship to the vanity of our former manner of living. A vanity which is so strong, so powerful, so encompassing in our daily living that it completely takes us out of God's purpose. And the precious blood of Christ was necessary to redeem us from that vain manner of life. Without the precious blood of Christ, we would still be in that vain manner of living. It is a strong... on our daily living... the vanity of our former living. And the way the redemption of Christ operates is that it brings us out of that vanity into purpose. And the purpose that it brings us into is not just any purpose. Many people think, "What is God's purpose for my life? I'll just have to have a purpose, if I have a goal, if I have an aim, I'm okay. The reason I'm having problems is because I don't have a goal, and I don't have an aim. I just need to get a goal." That is not what Peter is talking about. Peter's talking about *the purpose, the divine purpose*. And he spells it out in the subsequent verses. We need to be people who are tasting to see that the Lord is good, growing in the divine life that we have received. We need to be people who are being transformed into living stones to be built up into a spiritual house, to contain and to express and tell out the virtues of the One who has called us into this marvelous grace. And that is the life that is not vain. We can have a life that is moral, we can have a life that's ethical, but if we're not in this way, if we're not people who are coming to the Lord, tasting the Lord, contacting the Lord, growing in the grace, maturing from being babes into those that have a deeper spiritual understanding, a deeper spiritual realization, and a deeper spiritual building with others, then our manner of life is still vain. We have to be people who access, contact the Lord, realize the power of the divine life operating in our daily living, and come into a process where we're being transformed and built up into a spiritual house. If we don't have this, then whatever purpose we think we have, it's still vanity. And in order to get out of that vain manner of life, we need the precious blood of Christ. May the Lord's blood cover us all the days of our life, daily, hourly, minutely, as we seek the Lord, as we look to the Lord, so that our lives can be lives of purpose and meaning, according to the divine will, the divine purpose.

[CW:] Great answer to the question, "What's God's purpose for my life?" I think Peter gives to us, doesn't He? He really spells it out, and that's coming in the programs that are ahead in this Life-Study. John, I want to say, I'm motivated. But after hearing this again, I've heard it now two or three times, still I'd like to take the printed Life-Study, go out by myself for an hour, read it carefully and prayerfully with the Word of God opened, and look at these verses, and let the Lord shine in again to deepen my appreciation for the preciousness of His blood and the real meaning of His redemption. I think all our listeners could benefit by a similar exercise.

[JP:] I do appreciate that practical word. If we would just take these verses, and consider them for an hour, to have a deeper realization of the power of the Lord's blood and the preciousness of His blood, it would have a transforming aspect to our daily living.

[CW:] Well, we hope that you will take that exhortation and by the Lord's mercy, that we would all have such a time.

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