

Nothing But The Blood Of Jesus!

Last time in 1 Peter we looked at verses 14-17 of chapter one under the heading 'Ignorance, Obedience, Holiness and Reverence'. We saw that having "prepared our minds for action" v13, results in our "obedience" v14. Not continuing to live those lives of "ignorance," as those who do not know the Lord, because we are no longer destitute of knowledge. Nor are we uninstructed or unlearned, for so the word "ignorance" means. No longer imprisoned in darkness, we live in the light of Christ. So we must not continue in, or return to those "evil desires" of our former life!

V15-16 we are called to be "holy". For it is written, "Be holy because I am holy," God tells us. Remember, it's that idea of being set apart, or separate. Being different from the unsaved world and being seen to be different. "Obedience" to God's word must and does lead us to a life of holiness. That desire for holiness. As that well known tract says, there are only two ways to live! And they are in opposition to one another. One is opposed to God and all that He does and is; while the other seeks to be like Him, to even walk in His steps so to speak. As we seek to follow in the steps of His Son Jesus! So God calls us to be like Himself and reject all that is opposed to Him, all that our former life was. Yes "be holy because I am holy." God says.

Verse 17: God is the "impartial judge." He is not and cannot be swayed by our lip service and outward appearance of religion, no. He looks at the heart. His gaze separates bone from marrow. His eyes see into our very soul!

And finally we are called to "live in reverent fear," recognising that He is the Creator of the universe, and that we are but dust "saved by grace through faith. And this is not of yourselves it is the gift of God" Ephesians 2:8. Ignorance, obedience holiness and reverence!

And that's where we pick up the text this morning. 1 Peter 1:18-20 'Nothing But The Blood Of Jesus!' Again, v17 "since you call on a father who judges each man's work impartially, live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear." Now as I explained last time, the "work" which Peter speaks of here is that whole life which we live before God. And "strangers" means that we are to live our lives as the sojourner just passing through. So then, v18-19 "for you know that it was with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you by your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ."

Friends, Peter speaks to us here, of let's say, those things that were of the greatest value during his days, as being merely other things that would in their time also perish. Yes that even though they are lasting and enduring in a worldly sense, (even such things as these of great value,) are indeed going to perish! And though they be of great value, they cannot purchase salvation for us!

Brothers and sisters think of religions of the world (apart from biblical Christianity that is,) they are all in effect, calling upon their followers to purchase the end goal, whatever that may be. foresee fruit off now have coloured flags and prayer wheels Islamists murder and maim. Cutting off his envy, even blowing up others as well as themselves in their efforts to appease Allah. The Romanists of Catholicism have their own forms of payment. Confess your sins to some so called priest say '50 hail Marys' and your sins are forgiven. Put enough money in the plate each week, call the Pope father, and obey all he says and then your place in heaven is assured.

The followers of Hinduism believe in karma say, do more good than bad and the cosmic scales of justice will fall in your favour and you will be reincarnated as a Prince and not a cockroach. The

bottom line is, that they all in effect have their method of payment so to speak. So if we break this stuff down, it's what can I do, yes what payment do I need to make in order to get the prize!

Indeed even Judaism, if they did not look beyond the symbolism of those sacrifices, could be misconstrued as being payment by the believers for the forgiveness of sin, and heavens glories. That's what the Pharisees had done to God's Law of love when Jesus came. Turned it into a bunch of legal requirements. But Peter says to them, "the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers." Now whether they were pagans who had no understanding of the true God, and worshipped and sacrificed to any and everything but God, (or they were actually Jews who merely went through the motions of Judaism, because it was their tradition, but had no personal relationship with God at all, it amounted to the same thing), "The empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers." Yes it all boils down to climbing the ladder of blessing so to speak. Or those payments that we make!

But Peter reminds us that we are "redeemed" (remember the word redeemed means to buy back, to purchase out of slavery people who were in bondage or debt). Peter reminds us that we are Redeemed not with perishable things even though they be of the highest value. Because such things mean nothing to God! The God who created the universe and everything in it doesn't need our things, because all things are in His hand. Yes He has enough things of His own. Do you remember Malachi 1:10 "oh that one of you would shut the temple doors, so that you would not light useless fires on my altar. I am not pleased with you", says the Lord Almighty, "And I will accept no offering from your hands." Can you see? That as many payments that they made of those millions even billions of sacrifices meant nothing to God. It was all just stuff. And as I mentioned, God has more than enough stuff of His own. And all of that stuff that we can see, even silver and gold, and all of that stuff that we can do, (through which we believe we can in some way merit our salvation,) is all going to burn. Yes it is all going to perish! Peter has already spoken in v7 of our faith "which is of greater value than gold" is not going to perish. But gold and everything else will!

Friends, "useless fires upon the altar of God", "the empty ways of our past life" apart from Him, and the emptiness of any way in which we have been deceived into believing that we can, or are, earning our salvation, all of those things are going to perish! Because they cannot purchase our freedom, no they cannot redeem us, they cannot buy us back. Only Jesus could do that!

V19 "but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect." Have you ever really thought about this? Yes have you ever really sat and thought about, what the rarest, and most valuable substance in all the universe from eternity past, present and future is? Well of course it is the Blood of Jesus. And now think of this. That each and every drop that Blood was spilled for you. No you were not redeemed with the perishable things of this world but with the "precious blood" of Jesus. But it's a finite resource you see, which had a limited and specific purpose. And there will never, ever, ever, ever, be even one more drop to be spilled for all eternity. And again, each drop was spilled for you! Yes Jesus died for His People as a whole, and yet He also died for each one of us, as though we were the only one. Yes it is the most precious, rare and valuable resource, not only for man, but also to God Almighty Himself. The poured out Blood of His One and Only Son!

Again Beloved, have you ever really sat and pondered the thought, of what God did for you through Jesus? I have been a Christian for 37 years and I'm ashamed to confess that I haven't really sat and reflected, yes truly sat and reflected upon the Father's giving of His Only Son. Now of course I have thought of Christ's sacrifice, but not so much of the Father's sacrifice, by placing myself in His position, that I would give of my own son. Or my own daughter. Friends think about it. How precious is the blood of your children? Would you not do anything and everything to save them were they in

danger? But God didn't do everything to save His Son. He did everything, (even giving of His own Son's Blood) to save us!

Now I know that I'm not saying anything new to you this morning, but this just struck me so profoundly and so powerfully when I was putting this message together. Our salvation. Our freedom. Yes our redemption was not purchased, (indeed it could not be purchased) with those "perishable things." But instead with the rarest resource, yes the most valuable resource in all eternity past, present and future.

Again v19 "but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect." What purchased our salvation? What was the only thing that was the efficacious and acceptable offering and payment to God for sin? The eternal purity, (made perfect through suffering) the scriptures say, yes the internal purity of His One and only Son's Blood. Hallelujah what a Saviour!

John 1:29 "the next day, John saw Jesus coming toward him and said "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world." John 1:35 "the next day John was there again with two of his disciples. When he saw Jesus passing by he said, "Behold the Lamb of God." Can you imagine? After the billions of animal sacrifices throughout Israel's history, over one and a half thousand years all pointing to this day. And then you hear the words that fulfil all of those prophecies. "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world." The word "Behold" is rich with meaning. It's not, oh look at that. Oh that's nice. That's interesting. It means fix your gaze upon it. Drink this moment in which is before you. Don't just make a passing glance, fix your gaze, drink it in ponder this thing, remember what you see here today. "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world."

Now think of giving, even exchanging the life of your child for someone you love. Could you do it? Could you ask your child to die for someone else that you love? Who in turn loves you? But what about asking your child to die for someone who hated not only you but them. Could you do that? Would you do it? I couldn't. I wouldn't. Romans 5:8 "For God demonstrates his love for us in this for while we were yet sinners Christ died for us."

You know Beloved, we can fall into the habit of coming to refer to the "precious blood of Jesus" in such a familiar way. At the Lord's supper each month I say the words, "The blood of the Lord Jesus was poured out for you. Let's drink this together in remembrance of Him and be thankful". But these words can fall from our minds like water off a ducks back. From now on, I am really going to try and place myself when thinking and speaking of these things, in God's position, by thinking of my own children. As I really try and grasp what He has done for me, because the blood of our children brethren is indeed "precious." How much more so, the Blood of the Saviour, the very Son of God. That was spilled drop by drop, for our sakes! And He was "without defect, without blemish."

Now this goes all the way back to the Old Testament and the first Passover. Exodus 12:5 "the animals you choose must be 3 year old males without defect." They must be three years old. May I suggest, pointing toward every year of Jesus` ministry, and every day which He laid in that tomb. "Without defect or blemish" So not three legged, not lame, not blind or some other imperfection. Because these things pointed to Jesus and what He would do upon that cross. The animal was sacrificed in accordance with God's command. Because sin must be atoned for. Hebrews 9: when Speaking of the setting up of the Tabernacle and the role of the priests Hebrews 9:6-7 we read "when everything had been arranged like this, the priest entered regularly into the outer room to carry on their ministry. But only the high priest entered the inner room and that only once a year, and never without blood, which he offered for himself and for the sins of the people committed in ignorance." And also Hebrews 9:22b "without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness." Yes the

animal was sacrificed to atone for sin so that the Angel of death would Passover those homes, that had wiped the blood of those sacrifices on the styles and lintels of their doorways, in accordance with God's instructions. So their sin was symbolically paid for by that shed blood, and the judgement of God passed over those houses. And friends we need to understand that everyone who entered those places be they Jew or Egyptian, slave or free, was that night delivered from the wrath of God! But the purity of the animal was crucial. Because it pointed to the reality of the purity of Jesus` Life and Blood. While also revealing the heart of the one who came to sacrifice. Or the intention of the heart. Yes Christ`s Blood "precious." And His life for our sakes was without "blemish, without defect," His life was without sin. Because if Jesus` life was not without sin, then we are all still destined for hell. Yes Beloved, Christ`s Blood is Precious! V20 "he was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake."

Now think about the implications of these words. That as an atoning sacrifice for you, (that even before all that we know of this world and this life to be even came into being,) God gave of His Son to buy you back from everything that He knew you would be and do. Yes His love, mercy and grace fell upon on you, even before the earth came into being! Yes even before mankind was, God sacrificed His Own Son for us! Again think about it, if you knew someone was going to stab you in the back. And betray your trust, even spit upon the blood of your child that you would have shed for their sakes, would you go through with it? Yes would you create those billions and billions of people, make a glorious world for them unique in all the universe, knowing that they would betray you and turn their back on you, and look with contempt upon all that you would do for them? Would you still go through with your plan? No. Of course you wouldn't, because you are not God. But that's what He has done for you and for me and for all of His people! He called us His "treasured possession." He has given us to Jesus and Jesus has said "all that the father gives me will come to me and whoever comes to me I will never drive away." And also, "of all that the father has given me, I will by no means lose any."

Again think about it: before Human life was created, God's grace and mercy was being poured out upon that life. Praise God! Again look at these astonishing words. "He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake." Why have these things happened? And why have they taken place when they did? "For your sake." Yes for our sakes. For yours and mind. And notice when it is that we are living. "In these last times."

As we read these things we can get a sense of Paul`s urgency as he writes, telling his readers that they are living "in these last times." Friends in saying "these last times" Peter means these last days, before the return of the risen Lord Jesus as the great judge of all the earth! No longer "the Lamb that takes away the sin of the world." No longer that one whom "before his shearers is silent who opened not his mouth." But the "Lion of Judah" the King of the whole universe!

Brothers and sisters Romans 1 speaks of the knowledge of God's existence being placed into the very DNA of mankind. "So that men are without excuse." But like all of those who harbour guilt, our natural inclination is to push the reality of our accountability, (our being called to make payment for wrongs committed,) way out of the distance. And yet Peter told his readers 2000 years ago that they were "living in the last times." Jesus` return is imminent, he tells them. How much closer then is His return, 2000 years since Peter declared "these last times."

Brothers and sisters it's interesting, our hope is in the return of Jesus, and yet the reality is, that in many ways we don`t want to come back yet! The unsaved person with that knowledge of God's existence in their being, believes that they have been good enough. And that if God does exist, He is an ancient being with a long white beard and a walking cane, who will say; Don't worry all is well,

you can come to. And yet friends if all of this were true, (of course which it isn't,) but yes if all of this were true, what would we then do with the blood of Jesus? Would God really have sacrificed his Son, His One and only Son, to then even capitulate into there being another way? No. No Beloved, as we've already established, the Blood of Jesus is "precious". Yes since we are living "in these last times" dear friends, there should be an urgency about our relationship with God. There is the sense to which Jesus is on His way back. It's just that He hasn't yet arrived!

Paul put it to Timothy when he was not much longer for this life in these terms in 2 Timothy 4:1-2a "in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living in the dead, and in view of his appearing and his Kingdom, I give you this charge, preached the Word." So not hidden somewhere in the deepest recesses of our mind, tucked away for some distant future, "but in view of his appearing." I can see Jesus is coming, Paul is telling Timothy. He is on His way. And in view of the reality of the sky peeling back and the King come coming on the clouds of heaven, I give you this charge to "preach the word" of salvation and His coming, before it's too late!

Beloved, it is so clear that we are living "in these last times." And the more our society spirals down the sewer of immorality and godlessness, (while embracing every idol under heaven,) it becomes more clear that Christ is on His way!

O Beloved, if the Blood of the Son is "precious" to the Father, the question is, is it "precious" to us? Yes is it "precious" to you and to me? For "it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you you're your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect." O dear friends, it's Nothing but the blood of Jesus! Yes there is Power in the Blood! Because the Blood of Christ is PRECIOUS! The most valuable and "precious" substance throughout all of Eternity. Yes there is Power in the Blood!

Let's pray!