

I PETER

Our Great Salvation

September 16, 2012

I. Our Great Salvation, Serving Others

A. **I Peter 1:10-12** . . . As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful searches and inquiries, [11] seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. [12] It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things into which angels long to look.

B. Pray

II. Peter's method of providing motivation for fulfilling his exhortations

A. Before digging into these verses, I want to show you one of the methods Peter commonly uses in his first letter. When Peter is about to make a request of, or exhort his readers to some action, he often provides them with a motivating reason for doing what he is about to exhort them to do.

1. And the verses that we are looking at today form the last statement in a list of motivating reasons – beginning in **verse 1** – for pursuing a godly life as Peter exhorts his readers to do in **verses 13-16**.
2. Follow along as I lay out for you Peter's reasoning for pursuing godliness of life. We will begin in **verse 1**:
 - a. **Vs 1-2** – We are chosen according to the foreknowledge of God and by the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit **TO** obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled, that is, to be saved through the cleansing blood of Jesus.
 - b. **Vs 3** – We have been born again to a living hope, that is, to a salvation that saves us from the power and practice of sin now, so we can live as God intends us to live.
 - c. **Vs 4** – As part of our salvation, we have an imperishable, undefiled, and eternal inheritance waiting for us in heaven.
 - d. **Vs 6-7** – Though we pass through trials and endure suffering, it is for our good in that these times test the genuineness of our faith, so that over the long haul of life, our faith will grow strong and result in praise, glory and honor at the return of Jesus Christ.

- e. **Vs 9** – The outcome of our tested, verified, and strengthened faith is the salvation of our souls.
 - f. **Vs 10-12** – And if all these reasons are not motivation enough to pursue being holy as God is holy, consider that we have received a salvation that is so glorious and so extensive that not even the prophets who prophesied about it or the angels who were watching it unfold understood its full intent and extent before it came to pass. Yet we do, because the Holy Spirit, speaking through the apostles, has made it known to us.
- B. Though this first example of Peter’s pattern of providing a motivating reason for fulfilling his subsequent exhortation is longer than most, Peter uses these twelve verses to bring us to the **THEREFORE** of **verses 13-16**.
1. Now the **THEREFORE** at the beginning of **verse 13** informs us that because all these things about salvation and eternal life are true, we ought or we have a duty to live a holy life.
 2. And so Peter exhorts us to holy living by saying: [13] **“Therefore,** prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. [14] As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, [15] but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; [16] because it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.”
- C. My reason for pointing out Peter’s method of providing motivating reasons for his subsequent exhortations is to encourage you to view today’s study as more than a history lesson, or as more than an effort to glorify and rejoice over our salvation in comparison to what the Old Testament believer’s had. It is my desire that today’s teaching will put the capstone on the inspiration and motivation for stepping into **verses 13-16** so that as a result of your marvelous and gracious salvation, you will pursue holiness of life as fully as you can.
- III. Those who foretold, longed to know more about what they were foretelling
- A. **I Peter 1:10-11** . . . As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful searches and inquiries, [11] seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow.
1. Those who foretold the coming of Christ longed to know more about who the Christ would be and when He would come, for in knowing

- the who and the when, they believed they would understand what this coming salvation would look like and who it would include.
2. Now the fact that they did not fully understand the prophecies God was speaking through them does not at all mean they were not speaking for God and under the direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God.
 - a. In fact, Peter says they were speaking under the inspiration of the Spirit of Christ, and that the Spirit of Christ was **IN** them.
 - b. So not knowing all about what they were prophesying does not change the fact that they were speaking under or by means of the inspiration of God.
 - c. Now it seems to me that this is a good place to make a good point. The Holy Scriptures and the Holy Spirit have been given to us to reveal truth to us, not for the purpose of satisfying our intellectual curiosity or to answer all our questions, but to transform us spiritually, intellectually, and morally.
 - d. And so I caution you not to allow the Holy Scriptures and the work of the Holy Spirit to become more a source of conversation than a source of transformation, for when that happens, both the scriptures and the Holy Spirit lose their eternal value to you.
 3. Returning to **I Peter 1:10-12** . . .
- B. The first prophecy concerning a coming salvation and the Messiah who would bring it, began in the Garden of Eden when, God said to the serpent, “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel” (**Genesis 3:15**).
1. But of course, since God knew both the person and the time of this prophesied salvation, He does not count as one of those prophets Peter is referring to here in **I Peter 1:10-11**.
 2. However, there are numerous prophetic statements in the Old Testament, in addition to **Genesis 3:15** that speak of a coming Messiah and the salvation He was to bring. And to give you a sense of both the prophets and the number of prophecies, listen as I read through the following four lists – incomplete as they may be.
 3. We read prophetic statements about the birth of Christ in:
 - a. Isaiah 7:14, 9:6;
 - b. Micah 5:2
 4. We find prophetic statements about the sufferings of Christ in:
 - a. Psalm 22:1, 7-8, 18; 34:19-20; 69:21

- b. Isaiah 50:6; 52:14-15; 53:1-12
 - c. Zechariah 12:10; 13:7
5. We read about the glories of Christ in:
 - a. Psalm 2; 16:10; 22:22; 45:7; 110:1,4
 - b. Isaiah 9:6; 40:3-5, 9-11; 42:1-4; 61:1-3
 - c. Jeremiah 33:14-15
 - d. Ezekiel 34:23
 - e. Daniel 7:18
 - f. Malachi 3:1-3
 6. And we read prophecies about Messiah's people – those who will receive this great salvation that the prophets of old longed to know about more fully, in:
 - a. Isaiah 51:11; 60:1-22; 62:2-5
 - b. Jeremiah 31:31-34
 - c. Daniel 7:18, 27
 - d. Hosea 2:23
 - e. Joel 2:28-32
 - f. Amos 9:13-15
 - g. Habakkuk 2:14
 - h. Zephaniah 3:14-20
 - i. Zachariah 14
 7. Peter, himself, referred to one of these prophecies in his sermon on the day of Pentecost. In referring to it, Peter was declaring that the prophecy was coming to fulfillment at that time. This prophecy is found in **Joel 2:28-29** . . . “It will come about after this that I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind; and your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. [29] Even on the male and female servants I will pour out My Spirit in those days.”

C. The list I just read represents 39 prophecies by 13 different prophets. And Peter is telling us that these prophets longed to know much more about their prophecies than they knew, because they wanted to understand what God was about to do and what His salvation would accomplish for His people. Now should you think Peter is the only one to mention the prophet's and angel's incomplete knowledge of what was to come, let me point you to three other scriptures.

1. Jesus made this same point in **Matthew 13:16-17** . . . But blessed are your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear. [17] For truly I say to you that many prophets and righteous men

desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.

2. Paul spoke of this in **Ephesians 3:4-10** . . . By referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, [5] which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; [6] to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel, [7] of which I was made a minister, according to the gift of God's grace which was given to me according to the working of His power. [8] To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ, [9] and to bring to light what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God who created all things; [10] so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places.
3. And the writer of Hebrews affirms this in **Hebrews 11:13** . . . All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.
- D. One of Peter's key points about the prophecies is that the salvation brought to us through Jesus Christ is different enough from the salvation brought to God's people before Jesus died and rose again, that those who prophesied about it did not know who would usher it in or comprehend its full potential to save, but they wanted to.

IV. Which brings us to the question, "Just how great is this salvation that we are privileged to experience today?"

- A. We may never know how truly great our salvation is in this life. However, those of us who are born after the Cross are privileged to enter into a grace from God that is greater than the grace given to God's people before the Cross, in the sense that it accomplishes for us – on a spiritual plane – more than God did for them.
- B. Let me paint a picture of what the prophets and angels could not see, yet we can see because God has made it known to us.
 1. Our salvation was brought to us by God's own son, who became the sacrificial Lamb who died once and paid the penalty for sin once, for all time.

- a. This is different from the OT believers who had to offer a yearly sacrifice for sins which only covered over the sins committed until the Christ would come and pay the full price for them (Note: **Hebrews 10:4** . . . For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. **Hebrews 9:11-14**).
- b. Therefore, unlike the OT sacrificial system, Jesus paid the debt of sin, once for all sinners, and once for all sin, and once for all time (Note: **Hebrews 10:1-10**). There is no longer any need to offer another sacrifice for sin. The final sacrifice has been made, and it covers those who lived a life of faith before the cross and it covers all who live a life of faith after the cross.
2. Our salvation reconciles us to God – in a personal and intimate way. This is not unique to the NT believer, but it is unique in that it is applied to **EVERY** NT Christian.
 - a. Before the Cross, some of those who lived by faith had this kind of access to God – such as Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, David, Elijah, Elisha, and a few others like them. But the general population of believers – before the Cross – knew God from afar, as it were. They had to stand outside the Holy of Holies.
 - b. We are privileged to know God close up and personal. We stand inside the Holy of Holies. **II Corinthians 5:18-19** . . . Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, [19] namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. (Note: **Hebrews 10:19-22**)
3. Our salvation breaks the enslaving power of sin, once for all, and defeats the devil for all time so that he no longer has the power to enslave us and make us live in sin (Note: **Romans 6:22; I John 3:8**).
4. Our salvation makes us new creatures in Christ Jesus. Upon repenting and trusting in Jesus, we are born again, or born anew (Note: **II Corinthians 5:17** . . . Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come).
5. Our salvation results in our being indwelt by God, Himself, so that after being born again, we have both God's presence with us and His nature within us (Note: **Hebrews 12:10; II Peter 1:3-4**).
6. Our salvation makes the way for us (all Christians) to permanently receive the indwelling Holy Spirit, as opposed to having Him come

upon us for a time for the purpose of enabling us to accomplish a specific task for God (Note: **Acts 2:38, 8:14-15; Romans 5:1-5; I Corinthians 6:19; Ephesians 1:13-14**).

7. Our salvation is for Jews and Gentiles alike, and it goes so far as to unite Jew and Gentile believers into one new group, which we call the Church or the Body of Christ (Note: **Ephesians 2:14-22, 3:4-6**).

V. Conclusion

- A. Are you beginning to get the picture? Our salvation is complete, rather than being a salvation that goes from year to year. The penalty for our sin has been paid, not covered. The power of the devil and the enslaving power of sin have been broken. We have been set free to live a life of holiness unto God. The Spirit of Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the nature of God dwell within us. When we are born again, we become new creations in Christ Jesus. We can both enter and live in the presence of God without fear – as any son or daughter can do with their loving Father.
- B. Amazing grace! How sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me! I once was lost but now am found, was blind but now I see.