

Text— 1 Peter 1:17 to 2:3

Fellow redeemed sinners, redeemed by the blood of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ,

In our Scripture selection the Apostle Peter is addressing fellow Christians, for in 1 Peter 1:2-9 he writes, “Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.”

Accordingly, people with faith in Jesus Christ are those to whom the words of our text are specifically addressed. However, note well that Peter makes it clear that life in this world is not easy for us Christians since we will surely endure manifold temptations which will try our faith. Nevertheless, the apostle subsequently urges his fellow Christians to persevere in the faith and to be fruitful therein, living a sanctified life in obedience to the Lord, for in 1 Peter 1:13-16 he writes, “Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy,

so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.”

Therefore, fellow Christians, we are to remember Easter and its significance all year long, keeping in mind our Savior’s resurrection, and the fact that Romans 6:4 declares, “we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” Yes, we need to make progress in sanctification of life, for 2 Corinthians 5:14-15 states, “the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.” Hence, we are to strive to live a holy life to the glory of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Consequently, let us be encouraged by our Scripture selection which urges:

“LIVE HERE IN THE FEAR OF GOD”

With that as our theme may we, in view of our text and with the help of the Holy Ghost, see—

- 1) Why we are to live here in the fear of God
- 2) How we are to live here in the fear of God

-1-

Verses 17-21, ----- . (1 Peter 1:17-21)

We Christians are people who call on God the Father in prayer, “For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus,” declares Galatians 3:26. Hence, as children of our heavenly Father we do call upon Him; but, we need to remember that our text says: *if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear.* So, note well that we are to fear God the Father since He deserves our respect and obedience because He rightly judges every human being in accord with that person’s work, for our

works give evidence of a living faith in God's only begotten Son or a lack of such faith. Professed Christians who think they are free to live their life gratifying their sinful flesh to-the-max are dead wrong. We Christians are rather to pass the time of our sojourning here in fear of God, respecting Him and His will.

The reason is clear as to why we Christians are to live here in the fear of God, for our text says: *Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.*

Accordingly, we Christians are to live in this world in the fear of God, in respect and reverence and obedience of God, because of the immense cost of our redemption— that being, the holy and infinitely valuable blood of Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior, who has seen to it that we have been gifted with faith in God the Father who glorified His only begotten Son in raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His own right hand in heaven. Thus, our faith and hope of eternal life is in God, for the forgiveness of sins and salvation could not and cannot be purchased with worldly-wealth, such as silver and gold which are corruptible in that those things shall pass away. Only the holy and precious blood of Christ could and did pay for all the sins of all people, for Christ's blood is the blood of the perfect man who is also true God, for in Jesus Christ "dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily," declares Colossians 2:9.

My friends in Christ, when we pause and really think about all that God has done for us, we cannot help but live here in the fear of God, for we are all sinners who have been rescued from never-ending ruin, "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord,"

states Romans 6:23. And, Romans 3:19-28 informs us, "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." Just think of it: God has graciously saved us sinners!

Yes, God has graciously saved us sinners, for Ephesians 2:8-9 states, "by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." Thus, observe that our own works do not and cannot save us in whole or even in the least part, for Isaiah 64:6 reports, "we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away." Yes, even our best works are in themselves filthy in God's sight since we who do the works are sinners. Therefore, we are to live here in the fear of God because He graciously accounts us righteous for Jesus' sake since Jesus kept God's Law perfectly for us and has paid for our sins in full with His own holy and precious blood that He shed while nailed to the cross of Calvary, for we learn in 1 John 3:5, "he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin." Looking at Jesus with the eyes of

faith, we “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. [For] the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.” (John 1:29; 1 John 1:7)

Verses 22-25, -----. (1 Peter 1:22-25)

We’ve already noted that faith in Jesus Christ is a gracious gift of God. Oh, it is certainly true since we read in 1 Corinthians 12:3, “Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.” Hence, it is God’s Holy Spirit that works faith in Christ in one’s heart, and so our text says to all Christians: *Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.*

We Christians have obeyed the truth by believing the Gospel, the good news that Jesus Christ is our Savior and Lord, and consequently our souls have been purified in that our sins are fully forgiven us for Jesus’ sake. However, we Christians cannot take any credit for our faith since we have obeyed the truth of the Gospel THROUGH THE SPIRIT. Indeed, the Holy Spirit has worked faith in Christ in our hearts by means of the Gospel of Christ, which Romans 1:16-17 reports “is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.” Thus, we Christians are to live here in the fear of God in gratefulness to Him for gifting us with faith, for we are *born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass*

withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.

Accordingly, we Christians are surely to live here in the fear of God because God continues to work in us through His pure preserved Holy Word, the Gospel of Christ in particular, to keep us in the true faith, grow us in the true faith, and make us fruitful in that faith.

-2-

As we continue to ponder our text to its conclusion, let us see how we are to live here in the fear of God.

Again, look at verses 22-25, -----. (1 Peter 1:22-25)

Observe that we Christians are to live here in the fear of God by being fruitful in our God-given faith, showing true love for our brethren, our fellow Christians, which is why we are instructed to *love one another with a pure heart fervently*. Note well that our love for one another is indicative of the fact we are *born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever*.

Think about it. God’s ever-abiding pure preserved Holy Word is that by which we are born-again, and therefore we are to show we are regenerated in our manner of living by being loving as God’s Word, the Holy Scriptures, instruct us. Yes, the Holy Bible is to be our guide-Book for living a sanctified life in this world.

Our Lord Jesus Christ has summarized God’s Law for us in Matthew 22:37-40, where we read, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.” Yes, my friends, “Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.” (Romans 13:10) Hence,

we are to live here in the fear of God by striving to obey His Commandments, the heart of which is love, for by so doing we show we are grateful to God for all that He has done and still does for us.

Notice that our text informs us: *all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.* My friends, our bodies are sinful flesh which will not endure forever in their present state of corruption. On the other hand, the Lord's Word endures forever. Therefore, it behooves us Christians to live here in the fear of God by highly valuing His Holy Word, especially the Gospel of Christ, for we need the forgiveness of sins daily since we all sin daily in thoughts, words, and deeds, for Ecclesiastes 7:20 reports, "there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not." So, we surely need to persist in making proper use of the Holy Bible, which is why Jesus says in John 8:31-32, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Let us live here in the fear of God by continuing in His Word, for God's Word shows us our sin, shows us our only Savior from sin, and is a guide for holy living.

Chapter 2, verses 1-3, ----- (1 Peter 2:1-3)

We Christians are to live here in the fear of God by *laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings.* Malice is extreme enmity from one's heart, a wicked unholy hatred that we Christians are NOT to have. Guile is sneakiness, cunningness, and deceit, which we Christians are NOT to practice. Hypocrisy is pretending to be what one is not, which is especially sinful in matters of faith where one feigns piety and virtue, such as was the practice with most of the Pharisees when Jesus visibly walked upon this earth; Christians are NOT to be hypocrites. Envy is jealousies coupled with discontent upon viewing another person's success or position and so forth; Christians are NOT

to be envious of others. Evil speakings are defamations of other folks with one's tongue; Christians are NOT to defame others. Thus, we ALL need to guard against having evil thoughts about others, being hypocritical, and using sinful speech. We are to live here in the fear of God, striving to do nothing that would bring shame on our Lord's name.

Let us never forget that the Holy Bible says, "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another. Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: Neither give place to the devil. Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." (1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Ephesians 4:25-32) Let us live here in the fear of God.

Fellow Christians, if we would live here in the fear of God we need continual proper guidance and direction, which is why our text urges: *As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.* Note the emphasis on the need for us Christians to make use of the SINCERE MILK

OF THE WORD, the UNADULTERATED WORD OF GOD, if we would grow in the faith of Jesus Christ and be fruitful in the same. We are commanded to desire the sincere milk of the Word of God for growth if we have indeed tasted that the Lord is gracious. Accordingly, the sour milk of man's science falsely-so-called, man's philosophy, and man's perversions of the true Holy Bible are to be avoided by ALL Christians!

It's a disgrace that numerous professed Christians have accepted and use perverted Bible translations which attack and compromise the deity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Sadly, the fruit of using such sour milk is plainly evident in the prevailing trends we see in society among professed Christians who approve of and promote sins— sins such as homosexuality, lesbianism, same-sex unions, stealing by means of gambling, and the murder of babies by abortion.

Fellow Christians, let us pray regularly for widespread sincere repentance in our nation and the world. Let us remember that we have tasted God's grace since He has given us true faith in Christ and has preserved us in the same, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Ephesians 2:10) Let us therefore live here in the fear of God by tenaciously clinging to God's pure preserved Holy Word, the real Holy Bible, and the real Lord Jesus Christ proclaimed in that Word, for Acts 4:12 tells us: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

Let us daily and sincerely repent of our sins; let us keep our full trust and confidence in Christ Jesus as our personal Savior and Lord; and, let us go forward remembering to live here in the fear of God. Amen.

m.e.l.