

Readings

Scripture

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. ¹⁴ As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, ¹⁵ but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, ¹⁶ since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy." ¹⁷ And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile, ¹⁸ knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. ²⁰ He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you ²¹ who through him are believers in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

²² Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart, ²³ since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; ²⁴ for "All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, ²⁵ but the word of the Lord remains forever." And this word is the good news that was preached to you.

1 Peter 1:13-25 (*English Standard Version*)

Reflection

Jesus, who forgave the sins of the paralytic (thereby claiming divine power), proclaims that He has invited sinners and not the self-righteous to His table. The Greek verb used here, *kalein*, has the sense of inviting an honored guest to dinner. In effect, Jesus says the kingdom of his Father is not a subdivision for the self-righteous nor for those who feel they possess the state secret of salvation. The kingdom is not an exclusive, well-trimmed suburb with snobbish rules about who can live there. No, it is for a larger, homelier, less self-conscious caste of people who understand they are sinners because they have experienced the yaw and pitch of moral struggle.

These are the sinner-guests invited by Jesus to closeness with Him around the banquet table. It remains a startling story to those who never understand that the men and women who are truly filled with light are those who have gazed deeply into the darkness of their imperfect existence. Perhaps it was after meditating on this passage that Morton Kelsey wrote, "The church is not a museum for saints but a hospital for sinners."

- Brennan Manning, *The Ragamuffin Gospel: Good News for the Bedraggled, Beat-Up, and Burnt Out* (p. 22-23)

Sermon Outline

"You shall be holy, for I am holy."

1 Peter 1:13-25

A New Way of Living

Brad Anderson

Born into the family of God, you have been re-created to take on the family likeness...

(1 Peter 1:3-13a)

What qualities express the family likeness?

A hope, fixed on grace... (1 Peter 1:13)

A child-like obedience, reflected in every area of life... (1 Peter 1:14-16)

A reverent fear, perceived through your actions when away from home...

(1 Peter 1:17-21)

A love for others, cultivated as you continue to obey the gospel...

(1 Peter 1:22-25)

Reflection Questions (taken in part from the Serendipity Study Bible for Groups)

- Where do you most clearly express likeness with your family of origin? In your physical make up? In your actions? In your words? Have any of your mannerisms ever caught you by surprise, reminding you of your mother, father, sister, brother, grandmother, or grandfather?
- What does life look like when a person fixes their hope on grace, today in view of a tomorrow that has not been revealed?
- Describe child-like obedience. When and where have you seen this recently? Why did it stand out?
- The scope of the obedience described in 1 Peter 1:14-16 is comprehensive. How would child-like obedience be expressed in an area where you presently struggle to follow your heavenly Father? How does a hope, fixed on grace, empower you to step toward greater obedience?
- Read 1 Peter 1:22-25. What does it mean to obey the gospel? How is brotherly love, love for others, cultivated as the gospel is obeyed?
- How does Peter's call to holiness challenge you in your life at home? Work? Community? Church?