

1Peter 11-01-07b

Let's pick up our study now in 1 Peter 1, verse 13. Actually, we have finished verse 13 and we're moving into verse 14. Having girded up the loins of your mind, being self-controlled, hope fully, expect fully the grace being brought to you by or in the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Verse 14 goes on to say, as obedient children not conforming yourselves to the former lusts as in your ignorance. So this is a metanoia. It is a change of mind.

We formerly conformed ourselves to desires, epithumia. Peter has just got through using this word. Where did we just see the word desire? Prophets of old prophesied of the grace to be brought to you.

Things, angels desire to stoop down beside. And what I like about that verb, stoop down beside, is it's more than just look into. Like, well, I'd like to look into that at some point.

Oh, you got some real estate in Florida? I'd like to look into that. The angels are higher and greater. What is man that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that thou visitest him? Thou hast made him lower than the angels, yet thou hast crowned him with glory and honor.

And the angels in all of their heavenly grandeur and all of their wonderful holy capabilities, when they see the grace and the salvation that is being brought to us, they want to hunker down and get into it. It reminds me of our dog. You've seen Major.

He's pretty big. But he would love to be a lap dog. He would love to stoop down and just be a little dog and jump up into the lap.

Most times he wouldn't want to be a little dog because it's good to be big. It's good to be able to intimidate and snap bones like twigs and things. But there are times when he would love to stoop down.

He'd like to shrink himself down and get into that mode. And this is really what the verb connotes. When the angels see the wonderful things that God is doing for us, they would like to hunker down and get in there.

The adults say, you know, these new playgrounds look pretty fun. Tubs full of inflated deals and these slick slides. You go down to Chuck E. Cheese and see the latest whiz-bang little motor cars.

When I was little, I always thought it would be great to drive. All little kids, if they've got an ounce of red blood in them, want to drive. I used to wish a few of my friends had those pedal cars.

I'd think, wow, they can pedal and they have a little car. By the time I had a chance to do that, I'd grown too big. But I used to occasionally think, you know, if I was small, I'd get in that thing and

do some pedaling.

The angels see the great manifestation of God's grace toward us and they wish they could get into it. They desire to stoop down alongside that and partake of it and enjoy it and revel in these great expressions of God's character. Well, here we have the same word, epithumia.

We should make sure our loins are girded, in our minds. We should make sure that we've got self-control. We should be hoping and expecting fully in this grace that is being delivered to us through the Word of God, through the revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ, as obedient children.

Why would He say as obedient slaves? Or why would He say as obedient servants? Why would He say as obedient children? The great thing about an obedient child is they bring joy to the parent. You don't have to explain everything before the child will obey. People, a lot of times, you've got to go into it all.

Children in the military are the one place where you can just say, look, do this, and you ideally get unquestioning obedience. Will you take this towel and clean up that smelly mess over there and when I come back in a few minutes, have that all squared away? Yes, Dad. Yes, Mom.

Don't have to explain why. Don't have to cajole. Don't have to promise a reward.

Don't have to bribe. Don't have to threaten. Look, here's the situation.

I need you to do this. I'll be back in a minute and it'll be done, right? Yes. This is what God hopes for from us.

He's giving us this deliverance in the grace coming to us through His Word by the power of the Spirit. And He says, look, can you just do this? Just be an obedient child. Don't get wrapped around some axle.

Don't let your nature get the better of you. Don't start worrying. Don't start fretting.

Don't start fighting with one another. Obedient children don't get into a big fracas and break the vases and furniture just because the parent is not immediately in the room. As obedient children, hupakoe, akuo, talking about hearing, hupa, under.

I hear, under. I am under you. I hear and obey.

Hupakuo, not conforming. Sus schematizaminoi. What a great word.

At the heart of that is schema. You know, the scheme, the design, the plan. Sus means with.

Sun, with. So this is conforming to the scheme. Sun schema.

And the izaminoi makes it a participle. So when you have the negative with this, it's a present

middle participle. You remember the middle voice is where it's not exactly active and it's not exactly passive.

It's active, but it's sort of reflexive. It comes back on you. So it would be not conforming yourself.

It's not quite I'm conforming and it's not quite I am being conformed. It's I'm conforming myself. I am molding myself.

I'm putting myself into this situation. And then you've got the negative. Not, not conforming myself.

Not going along with the scheme that I used to go along with. Not living out the old pattern. Not following the old behaviors of the former desires.

Everybody has epiphymia. Paul uses this word that's translated lust. Paul says, I've got a great epiphymia to be with you.

I'm here in prison. I'm writing you a letter, but I epiphymia, I long to be with you. I long to be restored to you.

I long to get in a visit. Epiphymia just means a passionate desire. And what is a passionate desire? It's a strong desire.

I might want cream in my coffee, but if my pants start getting tight, I don't have to put cream in my coffee. It's a very mild, yeah, that would be nice, but I'm not compelled. But there are people, you know, if you put a piece of dark chocolate out on the table, now you've got epiphymia.

Now it's like, I must have it. Give it to me, give it to me, give it to me. Give it to me now.

Give me more. Irresistible. It's a very strong, it's a compelling felt need for a thing.

I really need that new, fill in your blank here, piece of clothing, tool, musical instrument, whatever it might be. Epiphymia. Well, these are the things that drive us.

Here's the sort of the, more of a dictionary definition. Epiphymia is the kind of desire that compels action. This is a desire that you act on.

It's not like, well, I wish I had a thing, but I'm not going to do it. I wish I were thinner, but I'm not going to work out. Or I wish I, you know, I wish I had a haircut, but I'm not going to go down and pay for one.

Epiphymia is a desire that produces action. It is motivating interest in the thing. That's why the angels bend down.

They really want to figure out what God is doing in our salvation. And they do. They watch.

They're involved. They are paying close attention. It's very compelling to them what God is revealing in human history.

As obedient children, doing these things we saw in verse 13, we are not going to act on those old desires, those old epiphymias that used to dictate what we did. And this isn't in the dim, dark past. This is like, you know, earlier today, yesterday, I let my impatience get the better of me.

I let my worry get the better of me. I let my desire to be the first to tell a thing lead me into gossip, and it got the better of me. I so wanted to get back at somebody, I talked bad about them.

I so wanted to boast that I bragged on myself. I so... Whatever it is that drives normal, human, sin-filled behavior, that's the former epiphymia. It's the former driving influences, not conforming.

So this kind of works both ways. If you don't want to be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, how do you do it? Well, renew your mind. Gird up the loins of your mind.

Be sober. And being sober, fully hope in the deliverance that's being brought to you day by day. That's now your driving motivation.

I am going to carry on this conversation. I am going to engage in this particular task of my day. I am going to deal with this issue in my thoughts and my mind, this relationship issue, this people issue, this circumstance issue, this worry issue.

I'm not going to deal with it in the former epiphymia, where I almost get a perverse pleasure out of the sinful mode of doing it. I'm going to deal with it in hope. I'm going to be self-controlled because I've already girded up my mind.

If I haven't girded up my mind, I've got to go back to that step. I can't try to deal with it like a mature believer. I've got to go back to the beginning.

I've got to go back to the mind girding. I've got to go back and deal with any unconfessed sin, either to God or to others. I need to be sure that I am looking at this situation from a biblical, divine perspective.

In the great overarching scheme and plan and purpose of God, is it all about me or is it all about others? Looking out not only for our own interests, but also for the interests of others. Let this mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who emptied himself, took on the form of a servant, came in likeness of men. That's girding my mind.

One of the promises, it's even in some of the gospel songs, it says the Lord himself will gird himself and serve manna all around in the kingdom. He will gird himself. He's going to get ready.

Gird the loins of your mind. Having done that, be self-controlled. This takes self-control.

You say, well, I don't have self-control. Where do you get self-control? It's a fruit of the Spirit. Well, how do I get the fruit of the Spirit? See, you're back to girding your mind.

There's a sequence, there's a building, there's a means of doing this. It's not just some holy exhortation and you're left there holding an empty bag, saying, well, that all sounds great, but I can't do that. Yes, we can.

We can do this. The grace has been given to us in the revelation of Jesus Christ to do every one of these steps. Is there any doubt in your mind about how to gird the loins of your mind? The grace has been given to us.

It's in the Word of God. We know exactly how to gird the loins of our mind. Got any problem with how to get self-control? The grace has been given to us.

Our deliverance out of sin and out of lack of self-control has been given to us. It's in the revelation of Jesus Christ. It's in the Word of God.

Just go get it. Making a cake. Got no eggs.

Well, go get them. You're a block and a half from the store. Out of eggs? Go get them.

They're at the store. Right? The grace has been delivered. It is being delivered.

It's available. It's right here. Remember the thing? You don't have to go up in heaven and bring Christ down.

You don't have to go to the depths and bring Him up. It's near. It's in your heart.

It's on your lips. It's not far away. It's being delivered.

So, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, the former driving factors, the former limiting factors. I'm free of that. I'm delivered.

It's given to me day by day. The grace is here. It's flowing in the present.

When you were ignorant, before you knew the revelation. See how this ties together? The revelation that came from the prophets, the revelation that came from the witnesses who verified that the prophet's prophecy had come true. You're not ignorant anymore.

You know this. That's where the grace comes. It's in the Word of God.

It's not just the Bible. You don't carry it like a talisman or strap it to your head in a phylactery. It's the concepts.

It's the propositional truths. It's the claims, the statements, the promises, the principles, the

doctrines. We have those.

They are imbued with grace. The Catholic Church wants you to believe that there's grace in the host. There's grace in the Kool-Aid.

There's grace in the cracker. There's grace in the holy smoke. There's grace in the church.

There's grace in a candle. There's grace in a bead chain there. Rosary.

There's grace in saying a certain number of Hail Marys. There's grace if you can get one of the dead saints to intercede on your behalf. I was asking a Catholic guy.

I've been pressing this guy for two or three days now. I keep asking him. He says, Oh, you know, prayer to the saints.

They intercede for us. You know, Saint this and Saint that and Mary of course got all kinds of influence. So I gave him the verses out of Romans and out of Hebrews that say that Jesus Christ sits at the right hand of the Father where He lives to intercede for us.

In Romans, it says the Holy Spirit intercedes for us with groanings that cannot be uttered. Now I ask you, given a choice, do you want some dead, bald-headed, old, dusty saint to go in and try to intercede for you or do you want God the Son and God the Holy Spirit to intercede? I'm checking the box next to members of the Trinity for my intercessor. You go pray to Mary and good luck with that.

You get Saint Francis of Assisi. It is to laugh. The grace is not in the saints.

It's not in the Catholic Church. It's not in ritual. It's not in actions.

It's in the revelation. The grace is available. Who's talking here? Who's telling us this? This is Peter the fisherman.

This is Peter the Galilean businessman. This is Mr. Practical. He's not a theologian.

He says, look, you scattered saints living through difficult times, you want to know how to get through this? Let me tell you, you've got the real deal. You've got the actual faith. So work it.

Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. Not conforming yourselves to the former desires when you were ignorant. This grace wasn't flowing through the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Verse 15, but just as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct. Well, we don't need a lecture in what holiness is. Holiness is conformity to the plan and purpose of God, right? Avoiding sin.

Avoiding evil. Avoiding patterns of ungodly behavior. Being an obedient child.

Doing what God desires. That's holy. He's holy.

We should be holy. He's the Father. We're the Son.

We should be chips off the old block. Jesus Christ is our righteousness. He is our peace.

He is our sanctification. How do we get that holiness? It's easy to say, be holy. It's something else to actually be holy.

You're telling me to be holy? God's holy. I should be holy? Well, He's God and I'm not, so how does that work? The deliverance, the grace, is in the message. It's in the revelation.

You want to be holy? Get that revelation girding your mind. Get that revelation to establish self-control and move forward in that grace. Expect deliverance.

Be confident that because you have done these things, God is going to hold up His end. He's going to fulfill His promise. That's how you are holy.

So when you've done these things, as He who calls you is holy, you also can be holy in all that you do. It says, in all your conduct. This word is anastrepho.

And this is composed of two words. It says ana means up or again. And it has the idea of your behavior, your conduct, your way of life.

And then He quotes what? Old Testament Scripture. It goes full circle back. He says, remember the prophets of old that wrote? He's going to talk about that more.

Peter is the one that tells us as men moved as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. Be holy in all your conduct because it is written. Be holy for I am holy.

So you've got the Old Testament exhortation. You've got Peter's exhortation. You've got the means, the motive, and the opportunity.

So what's stopping us? Verse 17. And if you call on the Father who without partiality judges, if you call on the Father, this is another point I made in conversation this week. People say, well, I'm going to pray to a saint or I'm going to pray to the Holy Spirit or I'm going to pray to the Lord Jesus.

What does the Word of God say? Everlastingly, consistently, from beginning to end, it says we pray to the Father in the name of the Son, in the power of the Holy Spirit. You endlessly hear people praying to Jesus. Dear Jesus, please do this, that, and the other.

In Your name I pray. I'm sure God is patient in the same way that we will respond to a child even if they make a request with an ungrammatical sentence. But we ought to know better.

The Word of God tells us how to pray. The disciples asked Jesus how to pray. He says, when you pray, pray like this, Our Father.

He didn't say, after I'm gone, feel free to pray to me. He didn't say, when I'm gone, I will send you another comforter. Feel free to pray to Him.

John 14.6 says what? I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man comes to the Father but by Me. Our relationship is with the Father.

Jesus brought us to the Father. He is our Heavenly Father. Jesus is the firstborn among many brethren who claim the Father.

We don't pray to our brother, we pray to our Father. Seems like a fairly simple point, but if you mess this up, and you ought to know better, have you ever taken a test and you almost got it right, but because you didn't do something you were supposed to do and the teacher told you over and over you should do, you get no credit. I told you this was supposed to be typed double space, and you hand wrote it single space.

Sorry. Might have been the greatest paper in the world. You might have cracked the greatest conundrum in the earth's history.

But if you didn't type it double space, no credit. We know better. We're held to a higher standard.

Pray to the Father in the name of the Son in the power of the Holy Spirit. So Peter says, if you pray to the Father, prayer is one of the most underrated and underused tools in our toolbox. One of the most underexploited parts of the grace that came to us.

It is a privilege to go before the throne of grace. Hebrews chapter 10. Enter into the throne room.

Come before God. Hearts having been sprinkled from an evil conscience. Bodies having been washed with pure water.

How does that happen? We know. It's part of the mind girding. Be ye holy for I am holy.

It's a tall order. It's a big requirement. And of course, we mess it up all the time.

But it doesn't change that it's the goal. It doesn't change that that's what we're striving for. A guy can play a thousand rounds of golf.

He can swing his club ten thousand times at a golf ball. He's always striving for that perfect stance, that perfect swing, that perfect drive, perfect chip, perfect putt, hole in one. You know, if you did it exactly perfect, you'd get a hole in one every time, right? Well, you don't get a hole in one every time, but it doesn't mean you don't strive for the perfect swing.

You don't strive for the perfect drive. It is the striving that makes us better. What would happen if

every time you swung the club, you got a hole in one? How much golf would you play? Unless you were playing for money, it would very quickly become boring.

You know, you could never lose. It is the striving to fulfill that command that makes us better. There will come a day where we will be holy without effort, but the depth and the level of that is going to be dependent upon how much striving we did in this life, how obedient we sought to become.

Well, apparently this is a good place for us to stop, so we'll conclude at this point for tonight, and we'll pick up in 1 Peter 1, verse 15 next time, but let's close here in a word of prayer. Father, thank You for the truth of Your Word. Thank You for this message of encouragement and deliverance and grace that comes to us over the centuries and across the gulf of time through the ministry of Your Spirit, and we pray that through His presence and through the revelation of the Lord Jesus that we have in our souls that we can fulfill these exhortations, we can live in a way that is pleasing in Your sight and that reflects the glory of the Lord Jesus and be an encouragement to one another and a blessing to those who are looking for someone who has hope and is ready to ask a reason for that hope.

We pray all these things in Jesus' name, amen.