

The Call to Holiness

1 Peter 1:10-17

Pastor John Miller

I'm going to start by reading verse 10 down to verse 12. I want you to follow with me in your Bibles. Peter says, "Of which salvation...." Now from verse 10 to verse 12, that's still the theme so great a salvation or celebration of salvation. "Of which salvation the prophets..."—verse 10—"...have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you; searching what, or what manner of times the Spirit of Christ which is in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ..."—so His crucifixion—"...and the glory that should follow." That's His coming again; either the Rapture or the Second Coming. And then, verse 12, he says, "Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves..."—that is, the Old Testament prophets—"...but unto us they did minister to the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven; which things..."—that is, the things of your salvation, the things of the gospel—"...the angels desire to look into."

Peter continues to, in these verses, remind the suffering saints of the greatness of their salvation. Now I want you to notice the repetition of that phrase in verse 5. He says, "of whom" or "whom are kept by the power of God through faith unto..."—what?—"...salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." Then jump down to verse 9. "Receiving the end of your faith, even the..."—what?—"...salvation of your souls." Now for the third time, in verse 10, he says, "Of which salvation the prophets inquire and search diligently." So the theme is still, from verses 1 to 12, the salvation. He wants us to celebrate our salvation. Now why is he going into the doctrine of salvation? Theologians call it "soteriology." That's the study of salvation and how God saves us. He's doing it for one reason and one reason only. They were being persecuted; they were suffering and they were going through trials and temptations. And he knew that if they understood how great their salvation was, that this would undergird them, that this would strengthen them, that this would hearten them, that this would cause them to rejoice, even in their sorrow and their suffering and their trouble. And I would propose to you the same thing is true. If you're facing trials and temptations and difficulties and hardship—Someone said, "When the outlook is difficult, try the uplook"; amen? You're going to heaven.

And so what he's telling us as he comes down to these verses is you were elected by God, verse 2, that you were sanctified by the Holy Spirit, verse 2, and that you were washed in the blood of Jesus Christ. So God the Father chose you, God the Holy Spirit set you apart, and God the Son, Jesus Christ, verse 2, died on the cross for your sins. And then you were born again, verse 3, to a living hope. He describes it in verse 4 as "an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, that fades not away, reserved in heaven for you." And that you are being "kept by the power of God...unto salvation." We saw last Sunday in verse 6 down to verse 9 that even though we are going through heaviness and manifold trials and testings, that, verse 9, we can receive "the end of our faith, the salvation of our souls" and that we "rejoice..."—verse 8—"...with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

Now you go, “Why did you go back over all these verses?” And I told you the answer to that last Sunday. What was it? Context, context, context, context. I don’t just want to preach from a few verses. I want you to see them in the context of what Peter is trying to say. You were chosen by God the Father, you were sanctified by God the Spirit, you were washed in the blood of Jesus Christ, God the Son, you were born again to a heavenly hope, you’re being kept and you’re being prepared. So you can say it like this. You were born for glory, you’re being kept for glory, you’re being prepared for glory. And all the way to heaven is glory. “A little faith will take your soul to heaven; a lot of faith will bring heaven to your soul.” It’s all about your great salvation. And the whole reason he says this is because he wants them to be encouraged. And I believe that we can be encouraged in the same.

Now he’s not over yet. In verse 10 to verse 12—and we’re just going to touch on them, because I want to get to verse 13—he’s going to tell them some more things about how great their salvation is. If you’re taking notes, write them down. He tells them, first of all, that their salvation was the theme of Old Testament prophets. It was the theme of the preaching of the Old Testament prophets. And notice in verse 10 the salvation the prophets inquired in, they searched diligently, “who prophesied of the grace that should come to you.” So in the Old Testament, they prophesied about God’s grace, about God’s saving grace. And yet they didn’t fully understand it or comprehend it, because it also applied to a future generation, even us who live in this church age. So they peered into it—the prophecies.

Then second thing—write this down—verse 11, it was the theme of the Spirit’s inspiration. So our salvation is so spectacular, so wonderful, so marvelous, the prophets predicted it, and the Spirit inspired them to write about it, verse 11. “Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which is in them...” Now don’t be confused. That phrase “Spirit of Christ” I believe is a reference to the Holy Spirit. It’s not two different spirits; the Spirit of Christ and the Holy Spirit. It’s referring to the Holy Spirit, which is called the Spirit of Christ. Why? Here’s the reason why; I’m glad you asked. Because the primary purpose or work of the Holy Spirit is to do what? Glorify Jesus Christ. I’d like to shout that from the housetops. Whenever the Spirit of God is working, guess what He’s doing? Pointing people to Jesus; amen? If it be our life, if it be our church, if it be my preaching, if it be whatever—worship—the Holy Spirit is pointing us to Jesus, drawing us to Jesus, causing us to love Him and worship Him and serve Him and obey Him. When the Spirit of God has come, He’s come to glorify, He’s come to magnify Jesus.

This is why you can always use it as a little test. How do you know if a ministry or a minister or a movement is truly the work of the Holy Spirit? Ask yourself, “Is it pointing people to Jesus Christ?” If they’re pointing people to an organization or to a messenger, if they’re pointing even to their message, if it’s not Christ, then it’s not the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is pointing us to Jesus Christ. So these Old Testament prophets—they had the Spirit of Christ, because they prophesied of Him, spoke of Him and they anticipated His coming. But, by the way, verse 11—a little footnote for you Bible students. This is support for the Spirit’s inspiration of the Old Testament Scriptures.

And then I want you to notice, thirdly, in verse 12, that our salvation was not only the theme of

the prophets—they predicted it—not only the theme of the Spirit—they inspired it—but it's also the theme of the Apostles—they preached it. Notice it in verse 12. "Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves." So the Old Testament prophets were speaking of things that weren't for "themselves, but unto us," verse 12. How this would have encouraged these discouraged, disheartened saints of God. And it should encourage us. "But unto us they did minister the things, which they now report unto you..."—how?—"...by them which have preached the gospel." That's a reference to the Apostles. So first we have the Old Testament prophets—they predicted it. Then we have the New Testament Apostles—they preached it. All that was given by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. They preached the Gospel unto you by or with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven.

Now there's a fourth thing I want to point out, and it's in verse 12. It's the theme of the angels' examination. So it goes like this: The prophets predicted it, the Spirit inspired it, the Apostles preached it and then the angels examine it or ponder it or look into it. Look at the end of verse 12. "...which things..."—that is, our great salvation—"...the angels desire to look into." Isn't that amazing? You know that angels stand in awe and wonder that God would save you and me? They're scratching their heads. Now they've gotta use their wings, so they kinda go [screeching]. They're like, "I can't believe you saved John Miller. The guy is such a dope." They're gonna go [screeching] with their wing; you know? It's like, "I can't believe you let him preach; he's such a dodo bird." Don't laugh; he's saying the same thing about you right now. Gabriel, Michael, these angels—they're like, "I can't believe! Look at those people! God actually saves them!"

Now I gotta watch myself; I went way too long first service, so I gotta kinda pull it in a little bit. But angels are created by God. They're spirit beings. And at some time in eternity past, angels rebelled against God. Some of them; not all of them. A third of the angels the Bible would seem to indicate rebelled against God under the leadership of a really beautiful, powerful angel. His name was Lucifer, which means "son of the morning" or "light bearer." You can read about his fall in Isaiah 14. So there was an angelic rebellion. Lucifer lead other angels; they fell. Those angels can never be redeemed. They cannot be saved. They are lost forever. They are fallen angels. Some of them are so wicked and so bad, God has then chained up in the "abusso," the abyss, waiting for their final judgment in hell. But the good angels are still free to be ministering spirits sent forth, the Bible says, to minister to those who are "heirs of salvation." You would have been in a wreck yesterday if it hadn't been for your angel watching out. Some of you put your angels to real tests. The way you drive, they're [huffing and puffing]. "I can't keep up with this guy!" Falling off the roof. Things that are happening. It's like your guardian angel—and Scripture indicates—and I gotta be careful here, because I'm going into angels too much—but indicates that even children have angels assigned to them to watch over them. One day we'll judge angels, and they're scratching their head with their wing about it. "They're going to judge us? How's that work?"

You know when we gather this morning, Joel was talking about there being a little taste of heaven and how awesome it is to worship? Guess what? Angels are here watching our worship. If you're just looking at your watch and yawning and everything, they're kind of like,

“See, I told you so. He shouldn’t have saved him. Especially that one right there; that’s a flake.” Angels go, “Shhhh! They’re worshipping at Revival Christian Fellowship. Let’s listen.” They actually look into—the Greek there indicates they desire intently to understand how could God save sinners. Why would He save sinners? And they marvel and they’re amazed that we can be redeemed.

So how great is our salvation that even angels stand in awe. The Bible says that angels of heaven rejoice over one sinner that repents. You want to cause an angel party today? Get saved. They got their party hats on, their little things ready to blow, and whenever they have an angel party they always eat angel food cake too. That’s the only kind of cake they eat; right?

But three things—notice he mentions prophets, prophesied; the Apostles, them who preached, preached; and the angels look in. Isn’t our salvation amazing? We were born for glory, we’re being kept for glory, we’re being prepared for glory, we have glory right now. All this and heaven too. And the prophets spoke of it, the Apostles preached of it and the angels inquire into it. What an amazing thing.

Now we come to verse 13. I want you to note that verse 13 is the beginning of the application of 1 Peter. From verse 1 to verse 12 is introduction. It’s a celebration of our salvation. But now he appeals to them to live holy lives. Notice it in verse 15. He says, “Be ye holy in all manner of your life.” “Be ye holy...”—verse 15—“...in all manner of your living.”

Now only God is perfectly holy. And God being holy means there’s no sin in God, that He’s perfectly righteous. So it’s got a negative and a positive. Nothing unholy, unrighteous or sinful in God. No darkness at all. “No shadow of turning.” And that God is perfectly just, loving, righteous and fair. So it’s a positive and a negative. Holiness means the absence of sin and the presence of good. Only God is perfectly good. So God is holy. But God has that attribute of holiness that can be communicated to you and I, His people. Because God is holy, we can be holy. Now we can never be omniscient, know all things. We can never be omnipresent. We can never be omnipotent. But we can be holy and righteous and loving like God.

Now he’s going to give us three reasons why we should live holy lives. And I want you to write them down. First of all, because of the coming of Jesus Christ. What are the motivations or the incentives to living holy? What do I need in my life if I am going to live like God in true holiness? And by the way, holiness isn’t the absence of sin; it’s the presence of good. It’s both negative and positive. Too many churches only focus on the negative. Don’t smoke. Don’t chew. Don’t hang out with those who do. I grew up in a holiness environment in my childhood in a church. To be a part of the youth group, we had to actually sign a pledge. “I won’t use alcohol. I won’t use tobacco. I won’t go to picture shows. I won’t go to the theater. I won’t dance, and I won’t listen to secular music.” Now you could sign your name on that pledge and in your heart be as worldly as anybody else. And you start taking pride, “Well, I don’t smoke and chew and I don’t go to picture shows and I don’t dance and I don’t do this. And I have a Christian haircut too. And I wear Christian clothes.” [Clapping] Aren’t you awesome?

But God looks at your heart. God looks at your heart. Holiness isn't coming to church on Sunday or sitting in a pew or giving to God or singing songs. Holiness is a matter of the heart. It's the righteousness of God not only imputed to you but imparted to you in the way you live. You can live like God. The more like God we are, the more holy. And when we get saved, we have positional holiness, perfect and can't change. But as we walk with the Lord, we grow in practical holiness. This is called "sanctification." The word "saint," "sanctify" and "holy" all come from the same root word in the Greek. It's the word "hujos." And it means to be "set apart" and to be made holy by God.

So what motivates me to holiness? Let me get to these points. Number 1, the coming again of Jesus Christ, the hope of Christ's coming. Notice it in verse 13. He says, "Wherefore..."—now that "wherefore" or "therefore" takes you all the way back to verse 2, to verse 12. Because you've been born for glory, kept for glory, prepared for glory, because you've been saved, the prophets preached it, the Apostles, the angels looked into it—"Therefore, gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you..."—when? —"...at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

So the first "therefore" or "wherefore"—by the way to this point on to the end of the book of 1 Peter, it's a long series of imperatives or commands. "Do this. Do this. Do this. Do this. Do this. Do this." So he lays the doctrine down, then he gives us the duty. He tells us what we have in Christ, and then he tells us how to live in Christ. The first thing we're to do if we're going to be holy is we're going to live in expectation Jesus Christ is coming again.

Now I know that good Christians can disagree on whether there's a Rapture before the seven years of Tribulation or whether we're just looking for the Second Coming. And we divide into different positions on that. I happen to be a "preTribulationist." I believe in a preTribulation Rapture. I believe that the church will be "caught up to meet the Lord in the air," and we will be with Him in heaven during the seven years of Tribulation on the earth.

You know, there's a phrase that we just read that I forgot to point out at the end of verse 11, where the prophet spoke of two things. At the end of verse 11, "...the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." They prophesied of His first coming and His Crucifixion and His Second Coming and His glory. So they prophesied of His first advent and the second advent. And it even stumbles Jews today; they don't believe Jesus is the Messiah because of His suffering on the cross. Their Messiah is only "the glory that should follow." But did you know between those two statements "the sufferings of Christ" and "the glory that should follow" there's now been 2,000 years? There's a 2,000-year gap between those statements, "the sufferings of Christ" and "the glory that should follow." That's known as the "church age." From the day of Pentecost to, I believe, the Rapture of the church, when "we which are alive remain are caught up to meet the Lord in the air." Those who have died before the Rapture—their bodies will be resurrected and reunited with their spirits, which are in heaven, in what will be a union. So when the Rapture takes place, there is the resurrection of the dead in Christ, there's the translation of the living in Christ and the whole church is reunited in Christ in heaven. So between His first coming, "the sufferings of Christ," and the Second Coming, "the glory that

shall be" there's been the church period. We live there right now. We look back at His cross; we look forward to His coming again.

But I do believe that before the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, guess what is the next event on God's prophetic calendar? It's called the "Rapture." Now some people say, "Well, don't you realize the word 'Rapture' is not in the Bible?" I say, "Yeah, I realize it's not in your English Bible, but if you had a Latin Volgate translation, the word 'rapturous' is in there, and that's where we get our word 'Rapture.'" And the Greek word that is used for "caught up" "harpodso," means to "snatch up" or "to take by force." So you might call it the great "harpodso." We're going to be "harpodsoed" any minute. We're going to be raptured, we're going to be snatched up. Now I don't know about you, but that's the way I want to go. Right? Amen? In a moment, in "the twinkling of an eye," there's two things I want to be doing when I get raptured—one of two, either one—preaching, which would be the ultimate, or surfing. I'd love to take off on a wave, be riding a wave and just cruising on this wave and all of a sudden, boom, I'm gone. The surfboard just goes bouncing onto the beach, you know. I think that'd be cool.

But either way, I'm living in light of His coming. Now this is a motivation to holiness. In verse 3 he says you have the "living hope." Now in verse 13, he says that you are to set your hope on His coming. In 1 John 3:3 it says, "Everyone that has this hope..."—that is, the hope of the Lord's return—"...purifies himself, even as He..."—that is, Christ—"...is pure." Now, how to do that? Notice it in verse 13. "...gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end..." So there's three commands. Remember I said from here out, there's going to be a bunch of commands. Here are three of them. Number one, "...gird up the loins of your mind..." You go, "What do you mean, 'the loins of my mind'?" Now this is kind of a freaky statement that we don't really often understand. Because we don't sit around and wonder, "How are the loins of my mind doing?" It's a figure of speech, taken from the time, based on the clothes that they wore. Everyone wore robes in those days. I'm so glad I didn't live back then. The guys had to wear robes, a little skirt thing, you know, and your legs are sticking out. So it would be like when you're gonna do some work, or you're gonna be really busy, they would pull up their long oriental robe, they would tuck it in their belt and then they could run. Or they could work and it wouldn't get caught. The figure of speech would be the same for us today; "roll up your sleeves and get to work." "Let's roll up our sleeves and get to work." So it's a figure of speech which means to "reign in your thoughts." Pull in your mind, because, like the robe, it would get caught on things and trip them or cause them to stumble.

So often when I do a wedding, I come to rehearsal, go through the walking down the aisle, coming up on the stage—we don't have steps here in this church, but we put steps in—they come up the steps. Inevitably, when the bride or the bridesmaids are coming up the steps, they forget to pull their dresses up a bit. I've seen so many brides do face plants on the stage. It's like, "Whoa" and they step on their dress. So if you're getting married pretty soon, don't forget to lift your skirt when you come up the steps. Not too high, but just lift it up to get up the steps. Moving right along here. You know what I mean! I start sweating for a second there.

So the metaphor is to say, "Don't let your thoughts go wherever they might to get hung up or to

catch up. F. B. Meyer said it like this. He said, “Our souls are clad with the flowing garments of various tastes, appetites, affections, propensities, which hang loosely around us, constantly catching in the things of the world and hindering us in the Christian race.” Kind of like Absalom’s hair, that got caught on the tree and hung him up. You might say he was “hung up on his hair.” So you don’t want your thoughts to cause you to trip or to stumble, but you want to “set your affection on things above.”

And then flowing right into the next command is in verse 13, “be sober.” So it means to gird up your mind—have a healthy mind—and be sober minded. The word literally means “don’t be drunk.” Choose here, again metaphorically to mean, “mental sobriety.” It means to be self controlled in your thinking and in your life. You ever seen really, really drunk people out in public? They say stupid things. They do stupid things. They’re not mentally alert. They’re not with it. We need to be soberly minded. I don’t think that we should be drunk either. The Bible condemns drunkenness. I don’t know what it is; drunk people are drawn to me. I have hundreds of drunk stories. Not me being drunk, but drunk stories. My wife and I were at a restaurant one time eating dinner, sitting in our booth just minding our own business, eating dinner, and I look up and there’s this great, big, burly dude standing right there at our table, and he starts to double up and come at me with his fists. And he starts yelling at me so loud, the entire restaurant could hear. He goes, “You stole my wife! You stole my wife!” And he’s coming at me. I’m thinking, “My wife’s sitting right here!” So I dove under the table saying, “Kristy, do something! Kristy, do something!” I’m kidding. All the other busboys and waiters—they all grabbed this guy and took him out. Then his parents, who were there with him, came. So embarrassed and apologetic. They said, “Our son’s wife just ran off with another man, and he’s been drinking too much and we can’t control him and we’re so sorry. Please, please forgive him.” And I understand. But this guy is yelling, you know, “You stole my wife!” Everybody’s looking over. “That’s Pastor Miller over there! Oh, stole the poor man’s wife!” Like, “No!” It’s crazy.

I was going to speak up in the mountains—This is just a couple of drunk stories I have—way up in Big Bear at a retreat, it’s in the dead of winter, it’s dark and stuff. And I tried to take a back road up and I got lost. I was again with my wife. I pull up in front of this little market, and it was like a full-on little kind of Twilight Zone kind of vibe, you know. So I said, “You stay in the car. Lock the door. I’m going to go out in there and get directions, you know, and find out how to get to this camp where we’re going.” So I go in this store and there’s another drunk dude in there. And he sees me and comes right over to me. And he looks at me and starts to cry. “Am I bleeding!? Am I bleeding!?” Had a little scratch on him. Just like, “Whoa!” And he’s right in the middle of looking at me. “Am I bleeding!?” And he just stops. And he looks at me and goes, “You have nice hair.” And I’m like, “I am so outta here!” Whoom! I ran outta that store. Drunk people on airplanes love me. All kinds of stuff. I didn’t need to go into all that detail.

But the metaphor is for our spiritual sobriety. Don’t let your thoughts go where they want to go. They’ll tangle up. They’ll trip you. Be careful what you think about. God’s looking at your thoughts. Sow a thought; you can reap an act. Sow an act, you can reap a habit. Sow a habit, you can reap a character. Sow a character, you reap a destiny. You know that your mind

matters? Don't let your mind dwell on sinful things. Don't let them dwell on negative things or lies. Think about what is good and true and righteous and holy. Gird up your mind. And then live soberly. Don't be intoxicated by the culture around us and the things of this world.

And then, thirdly, "hope to the end," in verse 13. So, I gird up my mind, I live soberly, I hope to the end for the salvation that will come.

Now here's the second motivation for holiness. And that is, the nature of God. God Himself is holy, verse 14. "As obedient children, do not fashion yourselves according to the former lust in your ignorance." Now every word in this verse, and in the next couple of verses, is just potent with truth, and we can't tarry on them. But notice that we are to be "obedient" as God's people. That's holiness. And we're not to "fashion ourselves according to the former lust" or desires. That's our BC, before Christ, our BC days before we were converted. And we lived in our ignorance. We're not to live in that same pattern. But notice in verse 15. "But as He which hath called you..."—being God—"...is holy, so be ye holy..."—that's a command, that's an imperative—"...in all..."—and I've circled the word "all" in my Bible. Not some, not a few, not just some areas, but all—"...manner of life" or every area of life. Some translations have, and I like it, "Be holy because God is holy in every area of your life." In your marriage, in your work, in your service to God and the church. Wherever you go, our whole life should be marked and characterized by holiness. Now why? Verse 16. "Because it is written, Be holy for I am holy." Now that's a quote from Leviticus 11:44 from the Old Testament where God was telling Israel to be a holy people, to be separated from the world.

So why are we to be holy? Because Jesus Christ is coming again. That should motivate us to holiness. Secondly, because He is holy. And the idea there is that children inherit the nature of their parents. You know, it's a scary thing to see your sins walking around on two legs. Sometimes jokingly a husband or wife will say, "They learned that from you" or "They got that from their father." The truth is we get it from Adam. We inherit what's called the "adamic nature" from Adam the first. And it's sinful; it's bent on rebellion against God. Isn't it amazing that children have to be taught the truth? You don't have to teach them to lie. Lying just flows naturally; right? You don't have to sit a little two-year-old down. "I'm going to tell you how to lie. I'm going to tell you how to get out of a tight space." No, they're just professionals. They start lying when they're in the crib. They're not hungry, and they scream because they want you to think they're hungry. Or they want you to pick them up. You know, they just cry. The Bible says we're all liars. We're bent on sin and rebellion against God.

So we're born of God, Who is holy. What should we be? Holy. What should be the chief characteristic of a Christian? Holiness. You know what the number-one attribute of God is? Holiness. You know what God wants you to be? Holy. God actually says you're to be holy, because "I am holy." That's not meaning that you're going to be perfect or you're going to be sinless. But you're going to be like God, which, by the way, is what it means when we say, "He's a good person. She's a good woman," or "He's a good man." It means they're like God, because only God is perfectly righteous and perfectly holy. So in every kind of behavior, in every area of our lives.

Now the rest of 1 Peter is going to be holiness in our love toward others, holiness in our submission to others, holiness in our suffering and holiness in our service. So the entire epistle is going to be holiness, sanctification, sincere love, submission to others, suffering for Christ and our service. What an awesome, awesome thing it is to live a holy life.

But here's the third and last point I want to make in verse 17. Here's the third motivation, and I believe this is the greatest incentive and foundation for life of true godliness and holiness. It's called "the fear of the Lord" or "the fear of God." Notice verse 17. "So if you call on the Father..."—now he tells us that we're "obedient children." Now he tells us that God is our Father. Earlier he had said that we were born again. So we're born into God's family, we're His children, He's our Father. "So if you call on the Father, Who without respect of persons..."—in other words, God shows no partiality. So don't think that you're going to get away with a sinful life. And God judges according to every man's work, verse 17. This is what you're supposed to do. You're supposed to "pass the time of your sojourning here in..."—what?—"...fear." He's actually telling us in this last statement of verse 17, "Live your life as a pilgrim in the fear of God." And one of the lost-again truths of Christianity in modern Christianity today that is lost is the teaching in the Bible of the fear of the Lord. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." "The fear of God." It means that we love God and reverence God and respect God and obey God, because we fear Him, we reverence Him, we worship Him. It's not talking about a cowering fear. There's an element of that involved. But it's talking about I love God so much, I don't want to disappoint Him, I don't want to fail Him, I don't want to break His heart.

You know, what child wants to disappoint a parent? Children tend to want their parents' approval. They want their parents to be happy with them. Even into our adult years, if we know our parents are proud of us and that we're blessing our parents, it brings great joy to our hearts. You know, you have a Father in heaven, and He loves you. Don't disappoint Him. Don't disappoint Him. Walk in holiness. Walk in godliness. Don't do anything to break God's heart by the way you think or the way you act or the way you talk. It grieves God the Holy Spirit. It grieves God the Father. It dishonors God the Son. When we in our words or actions dishonor—"I'm a child of God, I'm a Christian"—but we live in a way that's not becoming of the Christian life—holiness is not the absence of sin, it's also the presence of good.

Can you imagine being in a city or a town trying to find a certain street? If all the street signs were marked of what the street was not. You're coming south down the 215 Freeway, and the off ramp sign says, "This is not Scott Road. This is not Clinton Keith. This is not Newport Road." You'd go, "Well, what is it?" You know, a lot of churches are all, "Don't do this. Don't do that. Don't do this." They never tell you what you should do. Holiness isn't just "I don't go to dances, I don't go to movies, I don't, you know, chew tobacco, I don't smoke, I don't play cards." Holiness is "I have His goodness, His love, His mercy, His kindness." "I'm poor in spirit, I'm meek, I hunger and thirst after righteousness. I am like God." People look at you. How much of Jesus do they see? How much of Jesus can be seen in your life? In your attitude? That's what we're going to talk about tonight, by the way, in Philippians 2. So I believe the fear of God as we, verse 17, are "sojourners—that we are literally pilgrims or strangers, that we are to walk in the fear of the Lord.

Now, three motivations: Jesus is coming, God is holy and we should fear Him.

Let's pray.