

*17 If you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay on earth; 18 knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, 19 but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ. 20 For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these 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.*

We have an interesting topic this morning. And again, one that we are so far removed from in the 21st century that we need to stop and reconsider what this meant to the original hearers and perhaps see what it means to us in 2017.

*17 If you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each one's work,*

Peter reminds his hearers of the gravity, the serious business of calling on the God who judges all men impartially, and appealing to Him as Father.

So Peter begins his argument; *If you address as Father* and in the greek there is the sense of a calling on God. If you are appealing to God and addressing Him as Father. God as father.

When that was written, it was a foreign thing to the jews, and utterly incomprehensible to the gentiles. Appealing to the God of creation, who is the Holy and impartial judge of every man, as father.

In 2017 this idea has been cheapened by the world going wholesale in the opposite direction. If we had a nickel for every time the television tells us we are all god's children, we could make a house payment.

There is this universal idea of a grandfatherly god person and somehow we are all the children of his delight, and of course, we all go to heaven. That is satanic. The idea of God is cheapened by that. A toothless old

god who adoringly watches over his children and brings them to heaven.

That isn't the God of the bible. That's the god the world has invented. A nice, non judging god who looks the other way and says, well, boys will be boys, and girls, well the girls just wanta have fun.

But Peter grounds us in the real God of the Bible. And he begins; *If you address as Father* the Holy God who judges . . .

Why does he say that? Why does he go there?

So I picked up my father's old Strong's exhaustive concordance of the Bible and turned to the word father. And I found something interesting. In the hebrew lexicon of the thousands of hebrew words that make up the old testament, you look them up by number to go deeper into what the words meant, and to my surprise, the hebrew word for father, ab, (awb) is the word assigned to the number . . 1

Now the hebrew Bible is the story of father's. Beginning with, you guessed it, Adam. And then we have the thousands of begets. From one father, a literal Adam, all of us are begotten.

Not until the Psalms do you find any reference to God as a father. And then it's rare, a few times in the Psalms and Isaiah and Jeremiah, and always there is the sense in the old testament of a future tense. *I will be a Father.*

And that is because of sin. We are Adam's children, born into sin, and a Holy God cannot be father to an unholy sinful race. That seperation is always there in the old testament. The jews did not think of God as Father.

But then something remarkable happens. Ground breaking! Earth shatteringly different. Something entirely new and foreign to the jewish mindset. Jesus comes on the scene, and when He teaches the disciples how to pray, He says: "Pray, then, in this way: '*Our Father who is in heaven*'"

Unheard of by the Jews and unimaginable to the Gentiles. Something totally new. God, Holy, untouchable, Judge of all men, as Father.

The situation spoken of only in the future sense in the Old Testament has become a reality. *Our Father who art in heaven* and Peter is capitalizing on that idea. A God who was far away, brought near to you by Jesus, something altogether new, and you call on Him as Father. Indeed, Jesus told you to do just that.

Peter's purpose here goes back to the previous verses that we looked at last week. *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."*

Peter's argument is in that context. God is frighteningly and unattainably Holy. That should be planted firmly in your mind when you call on Him as Father.

This Father thing is new. But it didn't pull God down to your level, in fact, positionally, you were raised up to His. And Peter is going to drive that idea home.

The fact that we who had no claim on God except a certain terrifying sense of impending judgment and doom, can now address Him as Father, that incredible profound position, had nothing to do with us.

It is only through His true Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shed His blood to purchase us out of this sinful world, that we, alive together with Him, can call God, Father.

The only safe place to consider God as Father, is in the safety of being IN Jesus Christ. We, alive in Him, are adopted sons. His favor on us has everything to do with the obedience of Christ, and nothing to do with us.

God is our Father, positionally, if our lives are hidden in Christ. To the rest of the world, He is a terrifying Judge.

Now, with that in mind, listen again to what Peter says here;

*17 If you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay on earth;*

Our current "Jesus is my bro," rub-a-dub-dub thanks for the grub christianity doesn't fit very well with Peter's words. Yo! God! Dude can you help me find a parking spot?

Peter says we need to take an accounting of the depth of the riches of being able to call on the God of creation, as Father. That reality was brand new to his hearers.

I'm searching for words here to try to convey the ideas. It's like we won the lottery but because we don't comprehend the depth of the riches we treat it like a peanut butter sandwich. The reality of our actions does not match up with the reality of our inheritance.

So Peter says think about what you're saying when you call on the God who spoke the creation of all the universes into existence ex nihilo, out of nothing. That God. And He is your Father. He has graciously purchased you at infinite cost. So, think about who you're calling Father.

*17 If you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your exile on earth*

This is a classic if - then argument. If this is true, then this response is required. If the impartial judge of every man's work is your Father, then that logic requires an equal reaction. *conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your exile on earth*

We will be sons and daughters forever. Our stay on earth is little more than a temporary exile according to Peter. A blip in eternity. But, Peter says with that in mind, God is judge, He's adopted you into His family, He's told you to call on Him as Father. How do we then live?

Does what we do now in this life during our exile here, matter for eternity? Peter says we should conduct ourselves in fear during this exile.

What does he mean? Let's look at a story in Mark's gospel and get our answer directly from Jesus. Mark 10 : 17 *As He was setting out on a journey, a man ran up to Him and knelt before Him, and asked Him, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" 18 And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good except God alone. 19 "You know the commandments, 'DO NOT MURDER, DO NOT COMMIT ADULTERY, DO NOT STEAL, DO NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS, Do not defraud, HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER.'"* 20 *And he said to Him, "Teacher, I have kept all these things from my youth up."* 21 *Looking at him, Jesus felt a love for him and said to him, "One thing you lack: go and sell all you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."* 22 *But at these words he was saddened, and he went away grieving, for he was one who owned much property.*

Jesus seems to be saying, if you make an investment in this life, an investment in a relationship with the saviour that makes Him more important in your life than anything else, you will have treasure in the next one. Jesus says that constantly, everywhere He goes. Plant now, reap later.

Give a cup of water now, visit someone in prison now and receive unimaginable riches when you inherit the Kingdom. He says the same thing multiple times and multiple ways. Lose your life now, for my sake, and find it, later in the Kingdom.

We are pretty flippant about these truths. The idea of being deadly serious to the point of a sobriety that Peter describes as conducting yourselves in fear during this exile, is for somebody else, not us. It must be because I don't see the church doing this.

Are we supposed to fear God? Like He's going to squash us like a bug, that kind of fear. OK, use your imaginations a little bit. Suppose God

dispatched an angel. Told an angel you go down to Tonopah Community Church and after the meet and greet part is over, you walk right in the double doors and about half way up the aisle.

An angel so bright and glorious we need those glasses that the people watching the atomic blasts had to put on. Are you imagining that? OK, now I'm going to play psychologist. How would that make you feel? Would you crumple on the floor in a little melted heap of terror?

That's just an angel. We're talking about God here. Should we conduct ourselves in fear. It's the fear of respect and worshipful awe for an all powerful other. That angel is no big shakes. Compared to the God of the universe. Peter says, think about who you're calling Father, here. Conduct yourselves accordingly. With a view to the fact that this is just a temporary exile and what we do or don't do here, has eternal consequences.

And then Peter launches into one of his impossibly long sentences describing just how it is that we woke up one morning adopted into the Royal family and our Father is God.

It isn't because we're anything special. It isn't because God looked down from heaven and said, you know, that Jim is pretty special. It wouldn't take much to call him my son. He's just practically there already.

No, it's more like He looked down and said, that Jim is pile of steaming filth and my eyes can't look at him and if I were anywhere near him I'd have to destroy him, and Jesus comes along and says, how would it be if I took all of that filth to the cross and died the death jim deserves, and then I gave him My righteousness. Then you could adopt him as a son.

Peter says it so much better than I ever could. *18 knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers,*

Note the term forefathers. We can call God of very God our Father but Peter reminds us of our real fathers. Our human fathers. And what we inherited from them was futility. Worthlessness. The futility of slavery

to sin.

We were hopelessly worthless and lost, we inherited it from our earthly fathers who inherited it from Adam. And our only hope was for someone to purchase us out of that slavery. We were helpless to do anything about it.

Peter says you weren't purchased with silver, or gold. We were purchased with something far more valuable than the elements of most value in this world.

*19 but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.*

We were purchased with blood. Blood always symbolizes death. *The life of the flesh is in the blood.* Lev. 17:11 Blood = death. When we're talking about salvation, the two are synonymous.

The wages of sin is death. The punishment for my sin is eternal death. Someone would have to take the punishment due us, in our place. Jesus shed His blood for you, and me.

Hebrews 9:22

*According to the Law, in fact, nearly everything must be purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.*

Notice the blood is required of a spotless, unblemished sacrifice. God required that in the old testament as a type of His sinless Son. If Jesus was just like us, if He had ever sinned, His death couldn't be accounted for someone else. But He was spotless. Sinless. The only viable substitute for sinners.

God took the most precious thing in the universe, His own Son, and His blood was shed to purchase you.

*20 For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you*

This term foreknowledge gets a lot of discussion. The free-will people who struggle with God being a sovereign King who elects some for glory and some for wrath have a desperate need to save God from His own bad press and make this word mean less than it does.

In their minds they need to understand this as everything is controlled by free will and God simply looks down through eternity because He isn't locked into space and time, and He says, Oh, I see, Jim chose to be saved, and then when he figures out that I did that by my own free will, he places my name in His book in eternity past. But everything teetered on my free will choice.

That forces you to take this verse about Jesus and say, God looked down through eternity and said, Oh, I see, this fellow Jesus was born of a virgin and has lived a sinless life. He did that somehow by His own free will.

You might confuse me with the part about me and free will but it doesn't work at all for Jesus. Same word. So we need to be honest with this word. What does it mean. It means that before anything was created God had a love relationship with His Son, Jesus. For all eternity. And likewise it means He chose you to be His adopted sons and daughters for all eternity.

God knew and loved Jesus for eternity, but He has appeared now, for a specific purpose in time and space, and that purpose was for redemption, the purchase of all of God's adopted sons.

*20 For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these 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.*

I want to come full circle this morning. We've been speaking of the astounding, astonishing truth that we can call on the God of the universes and not only call on Him, but address Him as Father. Indeed not less than the Son Himself has taught us to do so.



It's a humbling truth and we are reminded that we did nothing, and He did everything to bring it about. But we might stand at a distance in awe at the very possibility, except the indwelling Holy Spirit invites us to come close to God and enjoy His love.

Ro. 8:14 - 16 says; *For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. 15For you did not receive a spirit of slavery that returns you to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" 16The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children....*

There is one sense where we understand our position, purchased with the blood of the Son of God, we understand the immense cost and the indescribable privilege of being made sons, and calling God of very God, our Father.

And there is another sense where the indwelling Holy Spirit causes us to cry out, abba Father, like a little child would call out to his daddy. And then with Peter we say, How should we then live!!??