

Peter 1:1-5

No Spot In You

Today our text will be vs 1-5. My original intent was what we read as our morning scripture reading 1-12 but I realized we would all like to be home before dinner. So, my hope is to get through vs 5 this morning.

As we look at these 5 vs. my intent is to point out 15 different ways that God has blessed true believers, with a focus on what Peter says at the very end of vs. 2. ***Grace and peace be yours in abundance.*** By the time we get to the end of the study I hope we can all see that as a result of all we will be looking at today it will be plain that when God sees us, the redeemed of the Lord, He sees no sin in us, He sees no spot. That is the title of this mornings study **“No Spot In You”**. So let’s start right off with #1.

#1 As we look at vs 1 we see that the apostle Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, is identified as the author. Being an apostle was a high honor as it was the highest office in the church. As Paul puts it in ***1 Corinthians 12:28²⁸ And God has placed in the church first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, guidance, and of different kinds of tongues.*** To be an apostle gave a person gravitas, authority. If a letter came from an apostle it was important and should be heard. Peter was well known as a pillar of the church and his authority was certainly recognized.

#2 The 2nd part of vs 1 identifies for us who the letter was written to ***“the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia”***, This was a large piece of real estate and corresponds to what we know as Turkey, in other words a territory about the size of the state of Texas. Peter would have dictated this letter, then it would have to be hand delivered to all these different regions because in those days there was no such thing as Postal service type mail delivery service. But yet somehow they got the letters to the right people in each of the regions and by Gods divine purpose the letters were preserved and are now part of our Bible, the Word of God, for our edification and for fellowship with each other and God.. We have talked about Peter, but who are these ***“strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia”***? Vs 2 gives us a very clear indication, clearly identifying them as the ***“Elect***

according to the foreknowledge of God the Father,” This is the next point we are going to explore a little.

#3 The elect, chosen by and through the foreknowledge of God the Father. So we are talking about the same special kind of people as Paul would speak to in his ministry, the gentiles Paul says in **Eph 3:1-6 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.** ⁴**For He chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love** ⁵**He predestined us for adoption to Sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with His pleasure and will—** ⁶**To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved”.** Peter we know was primarily an apostle to the Jews where Paul was pretty much an apostle to the Gentiles. But we can rest assured that rather Jew or Gentile, this word from Peter, by Gods divine purpose, is intended for all the church. What does it matter to God? Let’s take a look **at Galatians 3 starting with vs 26:** ²⁶**For you are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.** ²⁷**For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.** ²⁸**There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for you are all one in Christ Jesus.** ²⁹**And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.”** As Paul says in other places such as Romans 8:29: “ ²⁹**For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son.....”**

And then as we go back to our text, we will stop by **chapter 2 of 1 Peter vs 9** **“But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that you should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light:** ¹⁰**Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.** ¹¹**Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;** Taking these three readings and looking at them as a whole, we can see that all of God’s people have the same single thing that binds us together, and that is our being chosen in Christ. We are all sojourners, strangers and pilgrims in a place that is not our home, God’s elect, strangers in the world. Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male or female and we have all had our time of being at enmity against God, followers of the prince of the air, the prince of darkness as Paul speaks to in Ephesians 2. But when it pleased God to reveal His Son in each of us, we were adopted into the kingdom of Light. We are all under the One Glorious God and Savior. We are all of that chosen generation, that royal priesthood, Holy nation, strangers in a foreign land. We, the elect, are of Abraham’s seed, the true Jew, heirs of the promise. What that all means is that just because Peter was writing to a primarily Jewish audience doesn’t mean it doesn’t apply to us any more than when Paul wrote to primarily Gentiles it didn’t apply to the Jewish believers. God’s word was intended for all his chosen, Jew or Greek, bond or free, male or female. We are all one chosen in Christ in the foreknowledge of God.

#4 Vs 2 goes on to say ***“through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to be obedient to Jesus Christ and sprinkled with his blood:”***

The sanctifying work of the Spirit. Among the many things that the Spirit does is He is the one that carries out the call, He is the one that dwells in us, He sets us apart, He quickens us, He makes us alive. If we don't have that Spirit of Life in us, we are dead in this world, spiritually dead. Paul makes this clear to us in Romans 8:9-11:

⁹ You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. ¹⁰ But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. ¹¹ If the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

So how clear can it be how great of a gift the work of the Spirit is, the Spirit of Christ sanctifying us? He dwells in us, guarding us, opening our minds to the truth of God's word and all His blessings, giving us that life, removing that enmity against God. He is that peace that Peter refers to right at the end of vs 2 when he speaks of Gods "multiplying peace".

#5 Vs. #2 goes on to speak ***of our obedience to Christ***, which is part of what we just spoke about as the sanctifying work of the spirit. Our obedience comes strictly from Christ and Him alone. Our good works, our efforts are all of God in Christ. As Paul tells us ***in Ephesians 2 ⁸“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹not a result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”*** There is no room left for boasting which is good because God loves the humble. The Spirit who dwells in us will guide us in the good works God has prepared in advance for us to do. Isn't it great to serve a God of order? All things planned in advance and in the proper time and order. Peace in abundance.

#6 And then vs 2 finishes by saying ***“for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by His blood”***. The sprinkling of the blood, an essential part of our salvation. In the Old Testament times there was a lot of sprinkling of blood. There were a lot of bulls and goats and lambs whose blood was used for sacrifices by the priests for the people of Israel. And they had to perform these sacrifices over and over again and it was done by many different priests. But in ***Isaiah 1:11*** God says this about those sacrifices: ***““The multitude of your sacrifices--what are they to me?” says the LORD. “I have more than enough of burnt offerings, of rams and the fat of fattened animals; I have no pleasure in the blood of bulls and lambs and goats. ¹²When you come to appear before me, who has asked this of you, this trampling of my courts? ¹³Stop bringing meaningless offerings! Your incense is detestable to me. New Moons, Sabbaths and convocations***

— I cannot bear your worthless assemblies. ¹⁴Your New Moon feasts and your appointed festivals I hate with all my being. They have become a burden to me; I am weary of bearing them.

From the beginning God has always been very clear, **why are you burdening me so?** Sacrifices and offerings brought by the hands of men have NEVER been acceptable. The story of Cain and Able gives testament to that. And he certainly did not care for Adam and Eves attempt at making a covering for themselves to cover their nakedness. The sacrifices of old were detestable to Him as he plainly states, meaningless and a burden to a righteous God. He as much as saying **“Get away from me with those worthless offerings”**. But here we are, near the conclusion of vs.2, again speaking of a sprinkling of blood. But what makes **this** blood to differ? **This** blood is effectual and acceptable to God. **This** blood is our Saviors blood that He shed for us at Calvary, and it became acceptable in God’s eye because of the Son’s perfect obedience to God the Father, obedience even unto the cross. He is our example, the obedient Son, the source of our true obedience. **Our** High Priest, unlike all the others, only had to sacrifice not yearly but once for all His elect. And after that sacrifice, no more sacrifice was needed.

The author of Hebrews tells us this: *_. **You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, ²³to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the Judge of all, to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, ²⁴to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the **sprinkled blood** that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.***

You have come to the more perfect sacrifice, the more perfect covenant of which Christ is the mediator. The sprinkled blood that was better than that of Abels and all that came after. And then note the line, **“whose names are written in heaven”**. It’s a point that will be brought out several times as we go through this study.

Just one more verse dealing with this point, it’s such a beautiful blessing. ***Rev.5:8-10:** ⁸Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. ⁹And they sang a new song, saying: “You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; for You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood. Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, ¹⁰and have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth.”*

Worthy is the Lamb. He was slain and by His blood He redeemed us, he reconciled us to God. He has done it all and all glory and praise is due Him. We see all of what we have spoken of so far. We have redemption by His blood, that precious sprinkled blood. And

He has applied it to every nation, tribe and tongue. And he has made us kings in that Royal Priest Hood, that Holy Nation that Peter spoke of back in 2nd Peter 2.

As we read the last sentence in VS 2 of our text in chapter 1, we are looking at what the next 10 verses are teaching us and that is how God gives us abundant grace and peace multiplied. I think we have already seen enough this morning to know that both of these, abundant grace and peace multiplied, are true. The abundant peace that comes from just knowing that we have been sanctified by the Spirit, set aside in a holy nation, covered by the blood of Christ, made alive in Him, redeemed in Him. This talk of abundant grace and peace multiplied is what sparked my desire to bring this study today. Paul, who describes himself as the chief of sinners says this In **Philippians 4:7** ***“And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”*** Then in Colossians 3:15 Paul says this: ***“Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.”*** We will keep all this in mind as we go on to the next 3 verses.

#7 In these next 3 vs. we are going to see a whole host of blessings given us in Christ through His abundant grace. There is no end to the Spiritual Blessing we have in Him. In vs three the first few words give us a couple things to dwell on. The first thing we see is that we have a Father in Heaven, a Father who is abundant in Grace and peace. A Father who has provided us everything we could ever need and blesses us every morning with new mercies and grace. And that leads us to the 2nd thing we see, God gave us the most perfect gift he could give us, He gave us His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. The greatest gift ever given to mankind and especially revered by those upon whom His favor rests, those whose names are written in the Lambs Book Of Life. For God so loved the world He gave His only begotten Son....Oh grace abundant!

And then talk about the gift that just keeps on giving----here’s number

#8 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, ***“which according to his abundant mercy.”*** We have a God who is also abundant in Mercy. We have spoke of grace and peace, now we will bring in His abundant mercy. It’s in full display in each of our lives. But how do we see it? Is it like Paul sees it? Let’s look at **1 Timothy 1:13-14:** ***¹³Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief. ¹⁴The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.¹⁵Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am chief. ¹⁶But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his immense patience as an example for those who would believe in Him and receive eternal life. ¹⁷Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.***

So Paul recognizes here that he received not what he was due, but instead abundant mercy from God. In vs 14 he shares a testimony which is the testimony of all Gods

redeemed. We recognize the abundant grace and mercy of God and how it doesn't stop there but comes with the faith and love that is in Christ Jesus. I've used this expression before, and it's appropriate here to, it is this: "There is no way we can ever understand **how good** the good news is until we know **how bad** the bad news is." *Pastor Tom Horn Ella Grove Baptist Church.* Paul completely understands both, the good news and the bad news. Paul recognizes God's grace and abundant mercy but also sees himself as the chief, the worst of sinners. A persecutor of Christians, a blasphemer and a violent man. Now **if we** don't see ourselves in that same way, what do we really know about the bad news?? Paul knows, that's how he can conclude his testimony here with the saying: "**Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.**" It **all** belongs to God. Those that God the Father has chosen to include in His Son have all received that same abundant mercy. We all will become conscience of the difference between the good news and the bad news. We rejoice at the good news and try our best to forget the bad news. We know we have received what we do not deserve, but that is the true meaning of abundant mercy and abundant grace, one without the other leaves something lacking. The two together just shout out the words Paul closes with "**Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.**"

Returning to our text and the next blessing that is given us by our merciful, gracious God **#9** *Which according to his abundant mercy "He hath given us new birth".* We have by His mercy and grace been born again, been given a new life. So many things to say, so many vs. of scripture we could go to, but I really am trying to keep it down. But when talking about this new life, it's hard to do so. I would like to quote Paul *where in 2nd Cor. 5:17-18* he says *"¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: the old has gone, the new is here! ¹⁸ All this is from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ...."* If we are truly in Christ, bought and paid for by the blood of our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ, we have become a new creation, the old has gone and the new has come.

Christ explained this to Nicodemus when He said that unless a man be born again, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God. Nicodemus of course missed the point thinking Jesus meant a 2nd **physical birth** but of course Jesus meant the spiritual birth. The old, dead man has gone and now we have a new life in Christ. When it comes to our first life, we messed that up really good. And we can't lay it all on Adam, we did plenty of the damage ourselves. It's beyond repair. Just like a car I wrecked one time, it was totaled, determined unrepairable so the insurance company got to buy me a nice replacement car. *Well that body in Adam, it needed to go, it was totaled beyond repair so a new body was purchased.* In Christ. Given enough time I was quite capable of wrecking that replacement car I got, but this new body in Christ is forever. It is indestructible, free from sin, free from the consequences of death. It is not going to be corrupted a second time.

Now we can go back and finish that vs in John 3:16 that we started just a short while back, you know, the one about God giving His only begotten Son “**that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life**”. We have that new life, free from sin. We believe in Him and we have that eternal life. That doesn’t mean we don’t sin anymore....that sure is not me....but it means in our new life in Christ when God looks at us, we are **spot-less**. We have nothing on our record that would disqualify us from being in His presence, nothing that would disqualify us from being able, in Christ, to approach the throne of grace with boldness. We are all poor sinners and nothing at all, but we have our Savior Jesus Christ who is our all in all. The **Song of Solomon says this in chapter 4** as Christ looks upon His bride “**You are all beautiful My love, There is no spot in you.**” Only by the abundant grace of God can that be true. OK, back to our text and

#10 The next gift of grace He has freely given us, a new birth “**into a living hope**”. A living hope. And this hope does not mean what it usually means to us in our day to day conversations. This is not the kind of hope we have when we hope something good will happen today or maybe hope that something bad DOESN’T happen today. This hope is a surety, something we know is happening and we are anticipating, yearning for it to come. Maybe patiently. Maybe a little impatiently, but our hope is in Christ and we know that he has promised that someday, no matter the state we are in on that day, we will be with Him. Whether we live out our predetermined life here on earth and then absent from the body is present with the Lord, or if it’s when He returns we will raise up into the clouds and meet Him in the air. We know by our hope in Christ it will happen.

And that brings us to the next blessing given by His abundant grace, number **#11**. *He has given us new birth into a living hope “**through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead**”*. We serve a risen Savior, a living Lord. Our Savior was crucified, buried in a tomb but on the 3rd day He rose again to life. To get the whole story, let’s turn to **1 Cor. 15:12-19** ¹²“**But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?**” ¹³**If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised.** ¹⁴**And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith.** ¹⁵**More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead. But He did not raise Him if in fact the dead are not raised.** ¹⁶**For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either.** ¹⁷**And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins.** ¹⁸**Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost.** ¹⁹**If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.”** So, this, this is a pretty sad hypothetical story. Fortunately for all God’s elect, it’s not real, it is only hypothetical, yet a hypothetical that was being preached and according to the text believed by many at the time. Peter even refers to it in II Peter 3. If Christ had not come out of that grave then He would not be alive and we would not have that promised savior, we all would be

lost. We would all still be hopelessly mired in our sins. Our living hope would be a dead hope and futile just as our faith would be as was declared by Paul. We would not have that hoped for resurrection that has been promised to us. It really makes me glad for that word "Hypothetical"! Why? BECAUSE

Verse 20 tells us the rest of the story, the real story, that we do have a living, risen Savior and our living hope, which is in that risen Savior, is alive and well. **1 Corinthians 15:20-23:** says *"²⁰But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruit of those who have fallen asleep. ²¹For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. ²²For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. ²³But each in turn: Christ, the firstfruit; then, when He comes, those who belong to Him.* So, the good news of the Gospel is declared here. Christ died, was crucified, then buried and rose again on the third day. If He arose, then shall we. We rose figuratively with Him assuring our eternal security in Christ is fully realized, our place in paradise with Him secured. Look again what it says in vs. 23.

²³ But each in turn: Christ, the firstfruit; then, when He comes, those who belong to him. Christ the firstfruits which happened some 2000 years ago, and then **those who belong to Him!** Will be at the second resurrection. We are of the "Those who belong to Him."

#12. We have an inheritanceSo, we are not only born again into that living hope, but that rebirth also promises us an inheritance. **"And to an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade."** As strangers dispersed throughout the world, chosen of God, we have an inheritance, an inheritance that can never perish, it can't be taken away from us, we can't ruin it....that's really important....because if we could, we would. But we cannot spoil it, and it will never fade away. When we speak of that peace multiplied, is there anything that can bring you more peace than knowing you have an inheritance in and with our Lord and Savior? It's what that living hope in Christ we just spoke of speaks to....we have been resurrected in Christ, made new and as a result, we have this inheritance. And this inheritance is in Heaven and in Christ Himself. The prophet Jeremiah says (*Lamentations 3:24*) **"The LORD is my portion, "says my soul, "therefore I will hope in him."** David said in *Psalms 16:5* **"LORD, you alone are my portion and my cup; you make my lot secure.** " And isn't that what our hope is? To be secure in the Lord clear into eternity? For the Lord to be our portion it means that He is our inheritance. He is our lot, our inheritance. He is that which we have been allotted. We have been given Him by the Father, we have been betrothed to Him, given in marriage, we are His bride. We have been joined to Him. He is our inheritance and all that He has is ours. We are God's children and joint heirs with Christ. Paul tells us in *Romans 8:14-17:* **"¹⁴for those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. ¹⁵The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship And by him we cry, "Abba Father."¹⁶ The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are**

God's children. ¹⁷ *Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in His sufferings in order that we may also share in His glory.*” If any of you have experienced adoption you understand that those adopted are now every bit your child as much as any child by natural means. We all now share, the good and the bad as one family. So what is Paul telling us? Paul says that we "have received the Spirit of adoption," and that we cry, "Abba! Father!" "Abba" is a term of endearment, much like calling someone "Dad". It speaks to our relationship with God the Father, the warmth and closeness we have with Him. He is our Dad so to speak and it's this spirit that makes us heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ Himself. And once again, we have an inheritance that will never perish, never spoil, it is incorruptible and will **never** fade away.... how can I so confidently declare that? Well, that's point

#13, "This inheritance is kept in heaven for you. “ That's where my confidence comes from. This declares our inheritance cannot be given to anyone else, it can't be sold, it can't be stolen. We have all heard about the "Book of Life" written from the foundation of the world. Revelation has, I believe, something like 7 references to the Book of Life. But it's nice to know that the book is kept in Heaven. Your names are written down in the book of Life that is kept---.... in Heaven. In the book of Luke Jesus says **“do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written down.... in Heaven.”** (Luke 10:20) In a bible lesson I brought many **uhhh**many birthdays past, let's just say, I made the statement that “there will be no empty chairs in Heaven” Well I would like to expand on that and say there will be no one marked absent when the names in the book,.... kept in Heaven, are read. When the Roll Is Called Up Yonder, every name will be marked present. No one will even be marked tardy, God is so much in control that everything has been predetermined to happen when it is to happen. God has promised it. **Jesus has said I will not lose not even one of all my Father has given to me, but raise them up at the last day.** (John 6:39) We will all be there, marked present and on time. Our inheritance of Heaven is secure in Heaven.

Now as we go on to vs. 5, we see one more example of Gods abundant grace.

#14: 1 Peter:5 This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, ⁵ **who through faith are shielded by God's power** We are kept by the power of God which for us means we have complete, absolute, security. Security we do not deserve by our merit, but we have a merciful God. Because of Him this mercy is not in doubt, our sanctification by the Spirit is not in doubt, our new birth is not in doubt, our resurrection is not in doubt, our inheritance is not in doubt. We are Gods children and He has the will, the purpose and the power to make sure NOTHING EVER CHANGES THAT! We call that the perseverance of the saints but it's not by our efforts, but by God through His Son in whom all God's power resides. He causes us to persevere! It's by His obedience we are kept. By the faith of Christ that has been gifted to us, we can say as Paul says in his 2nd letter to Timothy ⁴² **For which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day.”** (II Timothy 1:12) You know, some scholars

say that the vs. in 1 Peter 1: 3-5 belong in the book of Psalms, that they sound as a Psalm all unto their own. Maybe we will have to put together Psalm 151 and end it with "all praise and Honor to the Lord God our Savior". But can we add this vs of 1st Timothy 1:12 also? It is such a praise worthy verse. Another great vs that fits the context here we could also include in Psalm 151 is found in Jude. Sorry, Mike, not trying to horn in on your study but I'm sure that by the time you get to the end of Jude this will be forgotten. But **Jude 24 and 25 say: To him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy—²⁵ to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.** Words that are in complete harmony with Paul's statement to Timothy. Paul and Jude demonstrate they know who did the work..., it was Christ Jesus. He did it all, even our perseverance is in Him. Why would we ever let ourselves fear? He is able to keep you unto that day. In Philippians Paul says: **"⁶ being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus" (Philippians 1:6)** The Day of Christ Jesus. That is the day we are talking about!

(Maybe cut out if time requires)

(And then of course we can't leave this without looking (turn) **at Romans 8:35-37:³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?³⁶ As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered. ³⁷No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, ³⁹ neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. AMEN!** We have all the security we could ever ask for. We are God's elect, His children, We have His abundant Grace and mercy, we have Christ's death and resurrection, we have Christ the intercessor acting as our advocate, God our protector. All those things we have been speaking to.)

One thing this tells us though, no believer should have any reason to not be fully persuaded and confident that God's power will shield you unto completion until that day. Jesus assures of that when He says in John Chapter 10:

²⁷ My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:²⁸ And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.²⁹ My Father, which gave them to me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. ³⁰ I and my Father are one. There is one thing that really stands out to me in those few vs, something that should give you the utmost of confidence. He says that he has all the sheep, all the elect that the Father has given him, they are all in His hand and no man can pluck them out of His hand. Then He goes on to say that His Father who is greater than all has them, us, in His hand and no man is

able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. Me and My Father are one. They both have all of us, the whole entirety of the true church in their hands. Two hands, as one, possessing all the power in the world protecting the whole church? So I ask, are you persuaded? You certainly should be. It's all a promise from God Himself.

Ok, so let's move on to the final one of the promises we've been looking at this morning, **15th** *"5 who through faith are shielded by God's power, and here's the last thing: **"until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time."*** This is the day that brings us to the culmination of God's divine plan, the day of our ultimate salvation. Whether we are in our grave or among the final survivors of this totally defiled, corrupt, sinful and unfit earth....things are going to change and I believe in an instant. In one moment we are yet of this earth and in our sin corrupted bodies, then in the blink of an eye we are being lifted up in to the clouds to greet Jesus and all the angels and all our brothers and sisters in Christ who have previously passed.... Well let me have Paul explain it to us. Turn to **1 Thessalonians 4:13-18** *"¹³ **Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope. ¹⁴ For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. ¹⁵ According to the Lord's word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. ¹⁸ Therefore encourage one another with these words."***

Paul starts out talking about those who had gone on before in death, who sleep in death, and encouraged his listeners to not grieve their passing on like the rest of mankind do who have no hope. Well, we do grieve, but I think that the hurt is not so much for the loved ones who have gone on, they have gone on to a place we all want to go. They are now where there is no more death, no more pain, no more tears, no more mourning no more sickness. We grieve for the hole that they leave in our life, we miss their smiles, their voices, their hugs, we miss them. But we can rejoice for them that their spirits did not remain in the ground but went from the body to instantly being with the Lord. And they have joined in with the rejoicing and praising of the Lord and perhaps as some old country gospel songs proclaim, they are playing in the angel's band and singing in the angel's choir. What hope we have in anticipating that we too will realize those same blessings....in the Lords timing. Yes, Christ did arise and we will be blessed participants of the 2nd resurrection. We will then have our new bodies given having been conformed to the image of the Son. And we certainly will be fully persuaded that we have been kept by the power of God to the salvation being revealed on that very day.

Conclusion

So in conclusion, I would just like to encourage you all to rest in the work God has done on our behalf. Encourage each other with the good news of the gospel. That's why we are encouraged to not abandon the gathering together as believers. It's important for each of our edification. When Peter wrote this letter to the Jewish elect they were suffering a lot of persecution. But yet they were encouraged to praise God together for His abundant grace, mercies and his multiplying peace. So in the down days that we all suffer at times, those days full of doubt, wondering can it really be that God loves me. Just remember. God loves his children. And Christ died for our sins, shed His blood for our sins and rose again leaving them all behind. And we are told they have been buried in the deepest of seas, never to be remembered **NO** more.. These are past, present and future sins, all of them. When God sees us now, and really in all of time, we are faultless, no sin to be found, covered in Christ's robe of righteousness. These are all a result of his abundant grace and peace that surpasses all understanding. And I always think of Paul's plea, ***"Oh wretched man that I am, who will deliver me from this body of death"?*** And what's his answer? ***"Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord"***. And how does our Lord see us? With this I will close...Christ Speaking of His bride , ***"You are all beautiful My Love, there is no spot in you!" Amen!***