



Equipped for The Inevitable

“Position and Privilege For A Purpose “ (Part 3)

1 Peter 2:9b; 11-12

As sincere followers of Jesus, we know and understand that God does not “make things up as He goes.” We believe that no matter what the situation or circumstance, God has a purpose in all of them. Therefore, the most valued work of God is the salvation of those whom He has called, and it is this work of redemption that has an incredible privilege and purpose.

It is God’s design that His people reflect His purpose in all that we say and all that we do. This is true even, and especially, in the midst of hostility toward us from the world. Christ and Christianity are under an assault from an unbelieving world. Instead of running to a safe holy huddle, we need to be on the offensive for the gospel. Now more than ever the church should heed the author of Hebrews exhortation to “...***lay aside every encumbrance and the sin that so easily entangles us...***” (***Hebrews 12:1a***)

We as born-again followers of Christ are brought from spiritual death to spiritual life so that our words and our actions demonstrate the power of the cross of Christ. All that we say and all that we do prove Christ is who He says He is. Or all that we say and all that we do will prove Christ’s work on the cross has no effect at all. It is important for us to resist the temptation to think and live as the world thinks and lives.

Thus far in the section of 1 Peter 2:4-9; 10, we have learned:

The privileges and priority of our life in Christ.

The final point Peter makes in this passage helps us to gain the perspective that we are redeemed for a life lived in the present with a specific purpose.

The purpose of our life in Christ (1 Peter 2:9b; 11-12)

Peter gives us the purpose of our life in Christ in two specific truths.

***** The people of God are to prove the reality of Christ by their words. (vv.9b)***

Throughout history, the unsaved world has faced two kinds of darkness: intellectual and moral. Intellectual darkness is ignorance - the inability to see and know the truth. Whereas moral darkness is immorality - the inability to see and do what is right.

Peter gives the core purpose of our redemption - to **proclaim** it. **Proclaim** is from a Greek word that appears only here in the New Testament. It means “**to publish**” or “**advertise**” and to do so in the sense of telling something otherwise unknown.

In this regard there is no silent witness. There is no excuse - we cannot hide behind the “I don’t have the gift of evangelism” argument. If we have been truly, effectually, saved by God through

Christ, because spiritual privilege and grace of our salvation, we have a responsibility to speak to all people of Jesus Christ's message and to make His name great. We all have a story.

**** *The people of God are to prove the reality of Christ by their actions. (vv. 11-12)***

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus told everyone who would sincerely follow Him, ***“Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.” (Matthew 5:16)***

That is the essence of what Peter is telling us to do: live godly lives. This is the single most effective foundation for making the gospel attractive and believable. We are to fortify our witness with two crucial aspects of righteous living: a personal, godly discipline that is inward and private; and a personal, godly behavior that is outward and public.

We are exhorted to live godly lives because we are His beloved. This term has a special meaning because it is much deeper than friendship to a higher dimension of affection. We are the ones whom Christ loves, and we are the objects of God's immeasurable love. Therefore we have a duty to obey the One who loves us.

Since we are not of this world, we must **abstain from fleshly lust, which wages war against the soul**. Even though regeneration produces a new disposition with righteous longings, that new life-force remains incarcerated within the old, unredeemed, selfish human flesh. This is an ongoing battle between the spirit and the flesh.

Believers are no longer slaves to unrighteousness, and sin is not our master; we are free from its dominant power. The command to abstain signifies that Christians have the ability by the new life and the indwelling Holy Spirit to restrain the lustful flesh, even in the midst of a postmodern culture dominated by sensuality, immorality, and moral relativism.

So that we can effectively evangelize, our transformed lives must be visible to the outside world. Peter commands us to **keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles**. **Excellent** translates a Greek word rich and varied in significance, usually meaning, **“beautiful of outward form.”** At least six other English words and expressions offer insight into its meaning: lovely, fine, winsome, gracious, fair to look at, and noble.

We must live our lives in a very determined, intentional holy way as that type of lifestyle brings credibility to the gospel. Peter uses the expression, **day of visitation**, to show that because of Christian virtue and good works in the lives of believers, unbelievers will **glorify God** when He brings them salvation on their **day of visitation**.

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