

1 Peter 2:4-10  
Remember Who You Are

If you are a parent this AM or have a Television or Radio then you know a few years ago the whole world was on fire for a movie called Frozen. Just the other day as the cartoons were in the background as the kids played, I saw an advertisement for a Frozen toy! They just can't let it go. (You see what I did there.)

When I was a child, the movie was The Lion King. There is a scene in that movie that sticks out more than any other to me. (Spoiler Alert) While Simba is away trying to make sense out of life with his buddies, Timon and Pumba and an old mystic monkey named Rafikki comes and confronts Simba with the reality of who he is. Simba has a vision of his father, Mufasa. You remember the scene, the clouds part and Mufasa appears in the clouds with James Earl Ray's voice booming calling Simba's name. He tells him, "Remember who you are, you are my son and the one true king. Remember, Remember, Remember..."

I want to talk to you today about two things: Who you are and what you do. We often confuse those two things. We think that what we do determines who we are. Who are you? I work for the city, or I am a teacher, or I sell real-estate. No wonder so many are unsatisfied. We don't even know the answer to one of the most basic questions of life – Who am I? Our age is an age filled with dissatisfaction because we have misplaced our treasure. Some have said we can do more things faster, have more money than most of the world, and still find ourselves dissatisfied and feeling like we are getting nowhere fast.

I want to do my best to get you off of this cycle of purposelessness, and the only way that I know to do this is to expose you to the power of the gospel. The gospel changes lives, the gospel can take your hopelessness and give you hope, can take your despair and give you joy, can take death and from death give life. There is a glorious journey that our Lord has called us to embark upon, a journey of being his disciple and making disciples of him.

You say, why do we have to go on a journey? Why can't I just keep quiet about my faith? Why can't I just enjoy my warm spot on the pew? I sure am glad that someone didn't think that way in my life. I am glad that someone prayed for my daddy to come back from war and then led him to Christ when he came back home. I sure am glad that he and Mom took me to church and prayed for me. I sure am glad that 2,000 years ago a group of people who saw a man who was dead come back to life again decided to obediently tell the world that Jesus is alive and that the ones that they told came and told someone that you know. How could we be silent if what we say is true – if God has saved us and made us his own through Jesus.

We have been studying the Protestant Reformation and have learned:

*Salvation (Our only hope in life and death), according to Scripture, is in Christ alone, by grace alone, through faith alone, to God's glory alone.*

This is the gospel of grace. If what we have before us is true then all of life centers around these truths. If this is true, this is the greatest news the world has ever heard or will ever hear. If this is true, we cannot rest until the whole world hears this good news! If these staggering truths of God's grace are true, then our every endeavor will be motivated to align with God's purpose of glory!

I want to share a passage of text with you before we get into our main text. Jesus said in John 14:12-14:

*“Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it. (ESV)*

What are the greater works that our Christ is referring to? What is the one thing that we know Christ has left for us to do? He has called us to make disciples. Remember who you are. How could we not engage in this great adventure called the Great Commission?

The Reformation recovered amazing grace and set the world on fire with an unquenchable flame of salvation in Christ alone, by grace, alone, through faith alone, to God's glory alone! You'll know if your heart is aflame by these truths when you make the Great Commission a priority in your life and in the life of your church. What we mean when we use a phrase like the Great Commission is that task that we set our attention towards that seeks the spread of the gospel to the ends of the earth. John Calvin, probably one of the greatest of the Reformers, one who had a firm grasp on the gospel often prayed with a prayer like this:

We pray to you now, O most gracious God and merciful Father, for all people everywhere. As it is your will to be acknowledged as the Savior of the whole world, through the redemption wrought by Your Son Jesus Christ, grant that those who are still estranged from the knowledge of him, being in the darkness and captivity of error and ignorance, may be brought by the illumination of your Holy Spirit and the preaching of your gospel to the right way of salvation, which is to know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

A heart aflame with the gospel is a heart that can pray this way. This is far removed from cold orthodoxy; this is a living faith in the crucified and risen Son. Oh, that our hearts would burn for the glory of God in all the earth.

To that end, take your Bible and turn with me to 1 Peter. I want to end our series on the Reformation by teaching you that the truth of the gospel affects your every endeavor. You have been called to proclaim his excellencies to those in darkness.

## READ TEXT

There it is. Who we are propels what we do. Don't miss the great emphasis on grace. I can't overemphasize this enough; our whole life is a gifted response to Christ. Let's walk through this text together this morning. I want to show you three things. Two truths showing you who you are and one showing you what you do.

### 1. We Have New Sight

There's a phrase in verse 4 that I don't want us to gloss over too quickly. It's the first phrase, As you come to Him. This is the message of Christianity in summary form. We come to him who has come from heaven seeking and saving us. We come to him who both commands us to come to him and who welcomes our coming with open arms. We never grow weary of coming to Him, and he never grows weary of receiving us. He is as patient with us today as he has always been or ever will be. He is pursuing us as vehemently as he ever has, and he is ready to draw us deeper into his abiding love. We come to him continually. His never growing weary of us compels us never to grow weary of him. His delighting in us means our eternal delighting in him, and so we are marked by these words – As you come to him. Why? Look at the words before verse 4 - Because we have tasted that the Lord is good.

But remember, when we come to him we come to him whose body bears the marks of crucifixion. His hand that reaches out to us are hands that have known the cruel steel of the nails. His head that received the oil from Mary's flask has felt the crown of thorns. His feet that walked across the stormy waters were driven in place by a Roman hammer. His side which held Lazarus and John so close was riven by a Roman spear. As we come to him we come to one who was rejected by men, but precious in the sight of the Father, and in our sight. We don't see wounds; we see healing. His coming to bleed and die and be raised again has left as William Cowper visualized:

*... a fountain filled with blood,  
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,  
And sinners plunged beneath that flood  
Lose all their guilty stains*

You see, we know

*Dear dying Lamb, Thy precious blood  
Shall never lose its pow'r,  
Till all the ransomed church of God  
Are safe, to sin no more;*

This is why we come to him, because

*E'er since by faith [we] saw the stream  
[His] flowing wounds supply,  
Redeeming love has been [our] theme  
And shall be till [we] die*

The world rejected him, crucified him, shut his body in a grave cut out of the rock, but he is a living stone, alive from death, rejected by men, but in God's eyes and our sight, precious. We come to him because we see him as he is our *entemos*, our intimate, our precious, the one that we hold dear, who more than us holding him is holding us.

His life is now our life. What are some of the markers of his life? Yes, chosen, precious, victorious, but what else? Rejected, condemned, crucified. This one that we come to is always the one who accomplished glory through the Cross. He calls us to follow him.

The second characteristic that is ours because of Christ may sound strange, but it is entirely true:

## 2. In Our Dying, We Live

His rejection is our rejection. His glory is our glory. Look at verse 5. He is the living stone; we are like living stones. This language of comparison seeks to demonstrate our connection to Christ. The connection is organic like a building that fits together with the Christ as the cornerstone.

Through his life, he is forming our lives to be a place of worship. Where do you worship? Some might say. Where do we not worship? Is a better question. On your job, worship. In the classroom, worship. As you are flipping through the TV or attending to whatever activity that you do, remember who you are, you are a person being fit together to Christ as a priest who offers spiritual sacrifices. This is why Paul tells us in Romans 12:1-2

*I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.*

Who are we? We are those people who die to the fleshly desires that wage war against the spirit. The appeal that Paul makes in Romans 12 flows from what he has said in Romans 8. In verse 13 of Romans 8 Paul says, *For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.* Do you see this great reversal? We have found what life is about. Life is about longing for more than what the world sees as precious. We see something that they rejected as precious. And we see something that they see as precious to be rejected.

But who has the right sight? Look at Peter, look at verse 6. How do we know who is right? Scripture! And what does Scripture say that Christ fulfilled? Read it.

There is so much wonder in these verses. The plan and purpose of God to save sinners is amazing. God saw us on a pathway leading to death, destruction, hell, and sent a Savior who would be a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense. God has dropped a stone in the center of the path, some stumble over it, others believe. Those who believe give praise to God, those who do not believe have no one to blame but themselves. As the last part of verse 8 says, They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do. Sinners don't decide their fate; their fate is sealed by unbelief. Our fate is sealed by a God who causes our belief (see 1:5,9). God is sovereign, and man is responsible. Salvation is all of God, and damnation is all of man.

But look at verse 9. What a startling contrast between the They of verse 8 and the But of verse 9. Look who we are. We are His! He is ours! So, what do we do? Number 3:

### 3. We Go and Tell

Do you see how these truths launch us into what we call "missions?" There is a mission for us, a great endeavor started by the God of grace to seek and save lost ones. We are the proclaimers of this message, the carriers of this mission.

Look at verse 9. Underscore this phrase in your Bible –that you may proclaim. God has saved us. His grace has wrecked us and remade us, and caused us to be His own so that we can worship in a world full of darkness by telling others in darkness that at one time we were blind but now we see; at one time, we thought we knew what life was, but now we know that our living was really dying all along; and now that we have seen, now that we are alive, we live to tell. Once we were not a people, but now we are God's people; once we had not received mercy but now we have received mercy.

I will never forget my first trip to Israel. To walk where Jesus and the Apostles walked, to see where the Church was birthed, to cross over the Sea of Galilee – amazing! But my most memorable event came when we were standing outside the Tomb of Jesus. We went in and guess what, it was empty! There was an old British Baptist Missionary who was there. He was gray, bearded, and bent over his cane. He called all of us to attention, climbed on a little rock to elevate himself just slightly above us, and said, "Many of you have been on a pilgrimage, a journey. You have made it this far to Jerusalem and have come and seen that the Tomb of Jesus is empty." And I'll never forget what he said next. "Now that you have seen, go and tell."

You know why we struggle to tell others about Jesus? It all goes back to verse 4, we don't come to Him often enough. We don't consider him, we aren't concerned that our affections for Christ have grown cold. We don't even notice that we are chasing other things, even if they are in his name. The time that we waste chasing other things is time that we could have been coming to Him. How can we encourage others to come to him if coming to him is not the deepest desire of our own hearts?

Remember who Christ is. Remember who you are. Remember your mission. Let's spend our lives together proclaiming the excellencies of him who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.