

• A third reason for holiness

1. Our salvation is part of a large-scale plan of God

• Before the beginning of the world

• Refusal of the life of holiness is resistance to the age-long plan of God

2. Jesus was sent to bring us to God the Father

• We need a mediator to approach God – Jesus

• We do not need a mediator to approach Jesus!

3. God put Jesus in a position where He is able to minister to us

Peter is giving us reasons for holiness. One is the character of God ('You shall be holy, for I am holy'). Another is the impartiality of God; He is 'a Father who judges each person impartially'. A third motivation is that the blood of Jesus was designed to release us from futile behaviour¹. It is this point that Peter takes further in verses 20–21.

1. **Our salvation is part of a large-scale plan of God.** Peter says: 'He was destined before the foundation of the world but he was revealed at the end of the times for your sake'¹. It is a mistake to look at salvation in a small way as if it were just a little bit of forgiveness, or a little bit of religion to add on to our lives. In fact salvation is part of a massive plan. Before the creation of the world God was 'foreknowing' – setting His heart on – His people² and on their Saviour³. He was determining that His Son would be the sacrifice that would cover the sins of all who received Jesus and would purify their lives from futile ways.

It was planned thousands, even millions, of years ago. But it is only being fully revealed now. This means that any Christian who resists the purifying power of the blood of Jesus is setting up in opposition to something that God has been resolving to fulfil in us for millions of years! Refusal of the life of holiness is resistance to the age-long plan of God. It was planned before Jesus came; it is being made obvious now. But Christians must realise that God's plan involves their release from the profitless ways of sin.

2. **Jesus was sent to bring us to God the Father.** The way in which God's plan works is like this. Jesus is sent 'to bring us to God'¹. 'Through him you are believers in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God'². Jesus brings us to God. We believe in Jesus but He leads us to the Father, so that we believe in God the Father. We would not be people in relationship with God if it were not for Jesus bringing us into this position. Jesus is the only way to make any contact with the Father³. Without Jesus no one truly relates to God, or has true trust in God. There are plenty of people around who talk about God and think they worship God, but the only way to have any relationship with God is via Jesus. 'Through him you are believers in God...'. It is necessary to have a Mediator, an Intermediary, a Go-Between, in order to get to God. Yet it is not necessary to have a mediator to approach Jesus! We come to Jesus directly, and put our faith in Him. He leads us to the Father, and we put our trust in the Father via our knowledge of the Father through Jesus. 'Through him you are believers in God...'. It is God the Father that we relate to more than any other person of the Godhead. Although it is possible to pray to Jesus⁴, yet it is mainly to the Father that we pray.

3. **God put Jesus in a position where He is able to minister to us.** Peter speaks of 'God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory. . .'. Jesus is the way to the Father. The Father is the One who put Jesus into the position where He is able to be our Saviour and Intercessor. God gave Him all authority and power by raising Jesus from the dead.

¹ 1:18

¹ 1:20

² see 1:2
³ 1:20

¹ see 3:18

² 1:21

³ John 14:6

⁴ note Acts 7:59

• *The resurrection brings new possibilities for holiness*

• *Jesus is King of the Cosmos and his resources still flow from his heavenly throne*

4. Through Jesus, the Christian lives a holy life through faith and hope in God

• *Hope – our sure and certain expectation that we will inherit what God has preserved for us*

The Father raised Jesus from the dead. This raises new possibilities of holiness for the Christian that is drawing upon the power of a resurrected Lord Jesus Christ. Since His resurrection from the dead, all power has been given to the God-man, our Lord Jesus Christ, and He promises to be with us to the end of the age.

God ‘gave him glory’. The Father put Jesus in the position of Ruler over the entire universe. From His position of King of the Cosmos, Jesus rules on our behalf. Nothing can stop Jesus’ people from moving forward in God’s will. No devil, no circumstance, no enemy, can prevent the Christian from growing in submission to God. Peter was writing in a situation where the Christians were being persecuted and the persecution was about to get worse. But Jesus is still king. His resources still flow from His heavenly throne.

4. Through Jesus, the Christian lives a holy life through faith and hope in God. God gave Jesus this glorious position ‘so that your faith and hope are in God’. The Christian is one who has been brought to God by Jesus and, via Jesus, is able to go on trusting God. The Father’s greatest gift for us is His love. It was He who sent Jesus in the first place. We now are able to exercise trust and confidence in Him.

We also put our hope in Him. ‘Hope’ is our expectation that He will be with us, that He will enable us to live for Him despite any pressures that might come from enemies and critics. ‘Hope’ is the sure and certain expectation that everything we do for God is preserved in some way for us and will one day be inherited. We may experience trials and troubles, but we are heirs with Christ. We are living with our sights on glory. By faith we are there, already walking in the streets of gold! We can see the new world, with the eyes of faith. We see a world shining with the glory of God, ‘and its brilliance is like that of a very precious jewel’¹. Our hope is set on God. Jesus has brought us to the Father, and the Father will fulfil all of His plans for us.

¹ Revelation 21:11



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