

• *Godliness - two more reasons*

1. God's judgement will be impartial

• *The fact that God is our Father does not mean that He will compromise in His judgement*

• *Judgement day will be an individual assessment of how we have lived and what we have done*

• *This judgement ought to produce healthy fear in us*

• **This judgement ought to release us from worldliness**

• *Laziness, love of money and comfort, without love or compassion.... Will suffer loss in the judgement day*

• *Not loss of salvation – but it is nevertheless a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God*

2. The blood of Jesus Christ was intended to purify their lives

Peter has two further arguments to persuade these Christians to live godly lives.

1. **He warns them that although God is their Father, His judgement will be impartial**¹.

Peter says '*And since you call on a Father who judges each person impartially according to his or her works, live your lives throughout this time of being strangers here, in reverent fear*'¹.

God will not compromise in His judgement day. These Christians know God as their Father. They often pray to God, and when they do they call upon Him as their loving and tender Father who will hear their prayers and meet their needs. This might make them think they are heaven's favourites and that somehow they will be more lightly judged when judgement day comes. But this is not so at all. The fact that God is our Father does not mean that He will compromise in His judgement.

This judgement day will judge individuals. God 'judges each person'. It will be based on works. It is not a judgement about faith. The Christian is saved by faith only, but his reward in the last day is not a matter of 'faith only'. It is an assessment of how we have lived and what we have done.

This judgement ought to produce fear in us. We might ask: is the Christian to be afraid of God? I answer 'yes and no'. It is not a fear of eternal punishment. It is not a fear of lost salvation. But it is the knowledge that in some way we shall be repaid for how we have lived. The Bible often uses the word 'repay'¹. We live with a healthy fear of what it will be like to be 'paid back' for the way we have lived.

This judgement ought to release us from worldliness. By worldliness I am not thinking of trivial little habits of drinking or cinema-going – or whatever. I am thinking of the fact that in one's day to day life, so many of us tend to be no different from the world.

Christians who are lazy, Christians who live for money and for comforts, Christians who defend themselves in sinful situations, Christians who are without love or compassion, Christians who pray little and do little for God – they will all suffer loss in the judgement day. I do not know exactly how it will all work. I do not believe any Christian loses his salvation in judgement day, but I do believe that 'salvation through fire' is a very fearful thing. Even for Christians it will be a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Only of those who overcome the wickedness of the world will it be said that 'they will not be hurt by the second death'. Even Christians will 'suffer loss' for every aspect of their lives which has not been pleasing to God. Even towards His own people God will show no favouritism. And in the time sequence of judgement day, Christians will be judged first¹.

2. **Peter reminds them that the blood of Jesus Christ was intended to purify their lives**¹. He says '*You know that you were redeemed from the futile behaviour inherited from your fathers, not by means of corruptible things, such as silver or gold*'², *but you were redeemed by the precious blood of Christ as a lamb without blemish or spot*'³.

¹ 1:17

¹ 1:17

¹
Romans 2:6; 2 Timothy 4:8, 14

¹ see 4:7

¹ 1:18-21

² 1:18

³ 1:19

Redemption means four things

(i) We were captives to sin

(ii) Jesus paid the price to set us free from the penalty and the power of sin

(iii) The price of our freedom was the death of God's son

(iv) God is our new owner

• Peter asks us to abandon our wicked ways – those we have inherited

• Futile behaviour – does no good and will be burnt up

• Cooperate! - Let Jesus have what He has paid for!

What is 'redemption'? It is when a person is a slave or is condemned to death, but then is released by the payment of a price. It means four things. (i) Before our salvation we were in captivity. We could not break free from sin. We could not escape from the spiritual death that came as a result. (ii) Jesus Christ paid the price for our release. He wants to set us free from the power of sin and from the spiritual 'death penalty' that hangs over us. (iii) The price was the death of God's Son. He had to live a sinless life first. He could not have redeemed us if He had sinned. When God asks us not to sin, He is only asking us what He asked from His Son first. Jesus had to be 'without blemish or spot'¹. (iv) All who have been redeemed are owned by God. He has bought us with the blood of His Son. He was sacrificed like one of the sacrificial lambs of the Old Testament. He has put down the price not simply for the forgiveness of our sins but in order to own us. When we put our faith in Jesus, we are at the same time recognizing that Jesus has put down the price to buy us and own us.

So Peter asks us to abandon our wicked ways. He specially mentions 'futile behaviour inherited from your fathers'. Can I ask you: what aspects of your life are sinful but were inherited from your fathers? Every nation has its tribal customs, whether it is Britain or Africa, America or India, whether it is this little tribe or that little tribe – every tribe has some wicked ways. What ways are in your life that you have inherited? They are wrong but your father lived that way, and so did your grandfather.

Peter speaks of 'futile behaviour'. Much of our behaviour is 'futile'. It does no good. It gets us nowhere. It will be burnt up in judgement day as useless.

Peter says: you know all about this. You know that Jesus died to release you from those old futile ways of yours and make a new person of you. So cooperate! Let Him do it! Acknowledge that you are owned by Jesus Christ, and turn aside from every futile way that is displeasing to Jesus. Even if your father and grandfather lived that way – you be different. You have been bought by the precious blood of Jesus Christ. Let Jesus have what He has paid for.



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