

Salvation Renovation, part 2

1 Peter 1:13-25

(preached Pine Grove 8/25/19 Sun PM)

Introduction

If you have watched TV over the past decade, you have seen numerous house renovation shows.

By far, the most popular one is Fixer Upper, starring Chip and Joanna Gaines.

They are the standard by which all home renovations are now judged.

Based in Waco, Texas, they often work with couples who are in the process of purchasing homes.

They help them choose a home.

They propose renovations to the home.

They complete renovations on the home.

And then they bring the owners to unveil the new home to them.

Now I have thought that the homeowners were the big winners.

Sure, they buy the home, but they get it updated and renovated for free.

But I looked online and the owner must agree to put up at least \$30,000 for the renovations.

Though the show is extremely popular and profitable, it still holds the homeowner accountable for some of the cost.

Last week, we moved in the section of 1 Peter that I call salvation renovations..

What I mean is this.

Salvation is glorious and eternal and forever, but we are still responsible for the renovations after salvation.

Yes, the Word sanctifies us.

Yes, the Spirit guides us.

But we renovate ourselves.

We pull down the old paneling and the outdated kitchen..

We paint, we install new fixtures, we rearrange.

In short, we are a fixer upper before Christ that is now being transformed into something far greater.

And the next few chapters in the book of 1 Peter speak of some of these renovations that we need to tackle..

Last week, we look at 3 duties that face us after salvation.

Yes, we are saved.

Yes, we are forgiven.

Yes, we have the hope of heaven.

But we still obey the Lord, and Peter gave us 3 commands last week to follow as we strive to get our lives in obedience to Scripture.

The first duty was found in verse 13..

fix your hope completely on the grace [m]to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

And we talked about how salvation renovates our thinking.

We don't fill our minds with worthless worry, anxiety, speculation, conspiracy.

We don't play the "what if" game or the "what did they mean by that" game.

We focus on truth found in Scripture.

We focus on being obedient people.

We focus on prayer and our own sanctification.

As we talked about last week, we gird up the loins of our mind.

We don't let our minds be entangled with every possible thought..

We grab up the loose ends so they don't impede our minds from working properly.

I failed to mention this last week, but one commentator said this..

"Loose thinking creates loose living. A person who lacks mental discipline will lack the ability to fight against anxiety and worry."

I was also thinking about bell bottoms terms of this verse.

We may not wear robes, but a lot of people have worn and still wear bell bottom pants.

So of those bell bottoms are so long that they drag the ground when they walk.

Often times, the edges of those pants get dirty and filthy and ragged and gross..

In a sense, they would hamper you just like a robe would in Peter's day.

The call of this verse is gird up the loins of your mind.

To keep them clean of the filth of the world, so that your mind can run and function properly.

And when I say dirt and filth, that wouldn't mean just immoral thoughts, it would also include the unnecessary thoughts and speculations of your mind.

You can't run in nasty dirty bell bottoms and robes, and your mind can't function as it should if all you do is speculate and worry and be anxious.

So fill your mind your mind with truth and set your hope on the coming Christ.

A second duty we saw last week, and no I don't plan to re-preach the sermon was found in verses 14-16..

Be holy.

Not only do we renovate how we think as a result of our salvation, we renovate how we live.

We pursue holiness.

And what is holiness?

Two things..

Holiness is not how you used to live before Christ.

It is the opposite of your former lusts, as Peter puts it in verse 14..

But holiness is also defined by who God is.

Be holy like God.

God is love. God is just. God is patient. God is kind.
God is moral. God is pure.

And then we ended last week with duty #3 of the believer..

Verse 17.

17 If you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each one's work,

In other words, if you call God your Father..

If you are saved..

conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay on earth;

Duty #3 is to be reverent.

As believers, we live with respect and fear of God.

Yes, we are redeemed.

Yes, God is our Father.

But yes, we live under his authority. We obey His commands and we maintain a fear of him even as His children..

One of the renovations that we do as a result of salvation is change the way we view God.

In our old nature, we may have feared the Lord.

In fact, that may have been a motivation to be saved.

But salvation doesn't erase that fear of the Lord, it simply makes it better.

I fear God today not as an enemy but as a son.

I have a reverence for God that guides my decisions every moment..

But why should I have that reverence for God?

Why should we, as the verse says, ***“conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay on earth;”***?

Well, let’s look more closely at verses 18-21..

Why should a believer have a healthy fear, respect, and reverence for God?

Simply put, because God spilt the blood of his own perfect son to rescue our imperfect souls..

Your fear of God is tied to the unthinkable atonement of God’s only Son.

Look at verse 18..

18 knowing that you were not [r]edeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers,

First motivation to live in reverence.

You didn’t deserve to be saved.

Verse 18 describes our life as futile before salvation.

The word literally means empty.

And that is what our life was.

It was without meaning before Christ.

And that was a consequence of sin.

Sin corrupts everything, but sin also devalues everything it touches.

Our life before Christ was empty and devoid of meaning, and that is exactly what we deserved because of our sin.

The Bible is clear.

God would not be unjust to simply let us go our way straight to hell.

We would have simply gotten what we earned.

Yet, salvation is redemption from futility.

WE didn't deserve to be saved and rescued from our worthless way of life, but God rescued us anyway..

And to add to the glory of what he did.

He rescued us in the grandest way possible.

Verse 19..

***19 but with precious blood, as of a lamb
unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.***

Our life was worthless because of our sin, but God didn't throw a little round float our way to keep us from drowning.

He didn't step it up a bit and send a wooden life boat.

He didn't send a nice yacht to get us.

As we were drowning in the sea of our sin, God sent Carnival Cruise Lines to pick us up.

God sent His very Son to get us.

And Jesus didn't come to grab us up to heaven.

He came to shed his blood in the place of our blood.

Jesus came to die.

I often tell people that God could have done anything He wanted to redeem us.

He could have simply forgiven our sins form
heaven.

He could have simply opened heaven and let us
walk right in.

But that was not what God did.

He sent the best to die in the worst way to redeem
the worst of sinners.

We were drifting to the waterfall of death and got
picked up by the greatest luxury ship in history.

This is overwhelming love and mercy and grace of
God.

We were not deserving of salvation yet God sent
His best to save the worst.

It is truly unimaginable.

God reduced the worthless by offering the most
valuable.

I have a tiller that keeps a flat tire.

It has a pretty sizable leak in the tire.

I don't use the tiller much so I simply pump it up
and use it for 5 minutes..

However, let's say that I fix the tire by taking a tire of my van, cutting it up and using a piece of it to patch my tiller tire..

Yall would laugh and call me crazy.

Nobody would take a tire that is more valuable and more necessary and use it as a patch for a tire that I hardly use.

Let me tell you something.

We are much less valuable than a tiller tire and Christ is more much valuable than the tire on my van.

Yet, God took the most valuable and sacrificed him for the least valuable.

And please take notice of what Peter says in verse 20 and 21...

20 For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared [s]in these last times for the sake of you 21 who through Him are believers in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

Why would God do such a thing as sending His Son to the cross?

He did it for the sake of believers.

What kind of love is this?

Sacrifice a sinless Son for a sinful man?

This is irrational.

This defies logic and reason.

Yet, this is saving nature of God.

Give up the best for the worst so that the worst can have the best.

God's plan to sacrifice His Son was an eternal plan.

Peter writes that Jesus was chosen for this irrational redemption plan before there was ever a world.

Before Genesis 1, God had predestined His 1 Son for the cross.

Before there was sin, there was a sacrifice for sin.

Before there were people to die for, Christ was headed for the cross..

And what is the Peter's point in highlighting the incredible nature of salvation and redemption?

To remind us to live in reverence toward God.

I always had an incredible respect for my grandparents.

And why was that?

Is it because they demanded that?

No, they were incredibly kind and loving to them.

The reason I respected them is because of all they did for me.

Generosity and kindness earn respect.

Before you were saved, you feared God because of his incredible wrath.

After you are saved, you fear God because of his incredible grace.

It is our duty to conduct ourselves in the fear of the Lord during our time here.

But there is a fourth duty that comes to us as a result of our salvation..

It is found in the closing verses of chapter 1..

WE will call this..

IV. A Duty to Love (22-25)

Let's read these verses...

22 Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a [t]sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from [u]the heart, 23 for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God.

24 For,

*“All flesh is like grass,
And all its glory like the flower of grass.*

*The grass withers,
And the flower falls off,*

25

*But the word of the Lord endures forever.”
And this is the word which was [v]preached to you.*

As we get to verse 22, Peter turns to the duties that we have toward other believers...

Verses 13-18 are our duties to God as a result of our glorious salvation..

But we just don't renovate our relationship to God as believers, we also renovate our relationship to others..

And the first group of people that Peter brings to our attention is how do we treat other Christians as a result of our glorious salvation..

And the first duty we have to other believers is to love them..

Look back at the end of verse 22..

fervently love one another from [u]the heart,

This is the command...

This is the duty.

Now, let's consider a couple things..

First, how is it possible for you to love other believers?

The first reason is found in the first part of verse 22..

We love other Christians because we are obedient to the Lord...

“22 Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a [t]sincere love of the brethren

In other words, you love believers because you have been given a heart of obedience to God.

You love other Christians simply because you love and obey God.

It is amazing how many children follow in their parents footsteps in terms of careers and interests.

Why is that?

Many follow simply because they love their parents.

The parent may never tell them what to do, but children follow because they love the parents that God has given them.

Do you know why I love the church?

Because God loves the church.

Do you know why I love the Bible?

Because God loves the Bible.

Do you know why I love other believers?

Because God loves other believers.

We can love others because we love God and obey His word..

And then there is second reason that we can love other Christians..

This reason follows the command to love..

23 for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God. 24 For, "All flesh is like grass, And all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, And the flower falls off, 25 But the word of the Lord endures forever." And this is the word which was [v]preached to you.

We can love Christians because we have been born again through the word of God.

In your life before salvation, you found it hard to love anyone.

Now that you have been born again, your find it hard not to love everyone.

This is the new nature.

Hearts that hated are now hearts that love.

You can love other believers because you now have a heart capable of love for others..

So we are able to love because we desire to obey the God we love..

And we are able to love because we now have a new heart..

But the final question is how do we fulfill our duty to love?

Is it just a matter of saying we love others Christians?

It is just a hug or a smile or a nice disposition to other believers?

Well, let's look a little closer at the end of verse 22..

The command is to love fervently..

Some translations say to love deeply or earnestly.

Sadly, no English word really captures what the original Greek word means...

The word is ektenos.

And it means to love strenuously...

The word is used in terms of stretching something.

We had John Andrew's birthday party last week, and we took some trash bags with us to collect all the left over food and wrapping paper and cups and plates.

But when we got there and went to put a trash bag in, it is a little too small.

So Tonya grabbed the trash can, and I stretched the bag to its limit to get it over the edge of the can..

Ektenos means fully-stretched..

Fully extended..

I put a bird feeder on the porch last week, and I had a step ladder to help me hang it on the hook I screwed it to the porch...

But I had to climb to the top step and reach as high as I could to get it over the hook..

This is the picture of ektenos in the Greek..

And this is how we are commanded to love other believers..

Love them fervently.

Love them full extended.

Love them in a way that stretches you.

It may stretch you financially to love other Christians...

It may stretch you in terms of your comforts to love other believers.

It may stretch your schedule to love other Christians.

It may stretch your comforts and time and convenience to love other Christians.

But ultimately, this is what we are commanded to do.

Sadly, we often love in the church in the same way that unbelievers love..

And how do unbelievers love?

They love those who love them.

They love those who look like them.

They love those who can do something for them in return.

They love those who fit in their schedule..

Look church, our duty.

Our command from the Lord is to love other believers in such a way that it stretches us to do it..

It extends us.

Love someone in a financial sense that cause you to do without something you want.

Love someone in sacrificial way that causes your day to have to be rearranged..

Don't love when it is convenient for you.

Love a believer when it is inconvenient.

Love another Christian in such a way that they could never pay you back..

This is love that stretches us and extends us and pushed us to our limits..

But this is the the extent of the love that we should have for one another in the church.

It is fervent love.

An active love.

It is a love that costs us in some way when we express it.

It is love that inconveniences us and causes us to do things that we normally wouldn't do..

But this is how we are to love our fellow believers..

Conclusion

Let me end with one of the great illustrations of how to love fervently in all the Bible.

Jesus tells the parable of the good Samaritan to explain who our neighbor is, but also how to love our neighbor..

This is Luke 10:30-35..

30 Jesus replied and said, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among robbers, and they stripped him and [n]beat him, and went away leaving him half dead. 31 And by chance a priest was going down on that road, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. 32 Likewise a Levite also, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. 33 But a Samaritan, who was on a journey, came upon him; and when he saw him, he felt compassion, 34 and came to him and bandaged up his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them;

At this point, the Samaritan is stretched a bit..

He is on a journey.

He probably has a schedule to keep, so stopping was an inconvenience for sure..

It was stretched more with bandages and medicine..

But for the most part, he could leave and get back on schedule..

But then we read this in the second half of verse 34..

....and he put him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn and took care of him.

Ok, this love is beginning to stretch more now..

Brought him to an inn..

Took care of him.

This guy is a stranger.

Just drop him off and the inn and get back on the road.

You have done enough..

But let's his love a little bit more..

35 On the next day he took out two [o]denarii and gave them to the innkeeper and said, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I return I will repay you.'

Not only did he pay for the stay, he vowed to return and pay any extra..

That is fervent love for his neighbor.

This stranger could be a crook.

The innkeeper could be a a crook.

There are 100s of ways that this could go bad, but fervent love doesn't look at what is wrong.

Fervent love is looking at what is right and loving beyond our limits.

Now you may say, "well, I don't meet to many beat up people on the side of the road."

But guess what, there are plenty of beat up people in our church.

There are lonely people who need a visit.

There are people who need some financial help.

There are sick people who need your concern.

There are people struggling spiritually who need your arm around them.

We often don't get ourselves involved in the lives of other for fear that we will have to do something for them.

Shame on us.

There are believers who need us to love them fervently.

It is so easy to come and sit and listen and go back to our nice homes and our nice lives and our convenient schedules..

It is so easy to say nice things and look like we love others, but it is really hard to be stretched in how we love other believers.

May God grant us mercy and enable to love one another fervently.

Let us pray.