

# 1 Peter: Hope and Holiness

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[ 0 : 0 0 ]     How you guys doing? Oh, come on. I mean, I literally have, you know, I've tried not to say that for like a year now because my wife is getting on me because I said that every time I got up to preach and she's not here right now.

So I figured I could get away with it at least one time. And then that's the response. That's not very good at all. How you guys doing? Okay, that's good. When she comes back next week, don't tell her I said any of that, okay?

Because that's just not good. But, you know, it's great to be back in Hong Kong with Watermark and we had a great summer.

And you guys, the staff did better without me here than when I'm here, which is a great sign, right? It means it's not dependent on one person or things like that. And so we were back in the summer and I just got to tell you, for me, oh, by the way, if you've been here for four weeks, my name is Tobin.

I'm one of the staff here. So, yeah, so welcome to Watermark. We're glad you're here on this journey with us because it's a journey and we're learning and God is teaching us so many things.

[ 1 : 0 6 ]     And for me, I just continue to learn how much I need. I'm just thinking of that song when you're saying, Lord, I need you, Lord, I need you, you know, I need you. And I'm just wondering, what do we think when we sing that song?

What comes to your mind when you say, God, I need you? Lord, I need you. You know, I said that a lot this summer, parenting and learning how to parent four kids that brings a level of chaos into our house.

And it never fails. You know, right when you're about to go off on this long trip and you have eight people packed because you have grandparents packed in the minivan and you're about to go and you're going to drive for five hours on one of the dangerous, terrible roads in Texas from Dallas to Austin.

It should take you two and a half hours, but it ends up taking about six hours because of construction. And you're on the road in about 30 minutes. You're the littlest one. And they ask that question that all parents dread. You know that question.

You know what I'm talking about, right? What is the question they ask? Are we there? No, they ask you, when are we going to get there? And I'm like, oh, it's going to be about four and a half hours. And she goes, I hope we get there in an hour.

[ 2 : 2 0 ]     And I'm sitting there. And for the next four and a half hours, I hear, when are we going to get there? And I hope we're going to get there in an hour. And I started hoping a lot of other things, which I probably can't share because I'm a pastor.

You're not supposed to share bad things. But I did. But this summer was a summer of hope. I learned a lot. I continue to realize how much we need God in every area of our life.

And if we ever get to a place where we don't need him, we're lost. Because what that means is we can do it on our own.

I watched TV this summer like I've never watched before because my in-laws watch it and watch the news over and over. And the theme that kept coming up over and over was this theme of need.

It was amazing to watch the radio and watch the news and listen to the radio and hear people talk about just the hopelessness in the world around us, the need people have for somebody to come in and to fix their lives, to make things right.

[ 3 : 31 ] It seems like everywhere we look, people were without hope. They're without hope on a mountaintop running for their lives with no food. They're without hope within the borders. They're out without hope with the political system.

They're without hope in the judicial system. People have given hope in the governments. People are giving up hope in themselves. And everywhere, and all of a sudden this guy on the TV, he says this thing that I'm like, yes, yes.

He goes, now, you know, we used to be the now generation. But it seems like we're turning into the hopeless generation. And I watched it, and I almost wanted to turn it off because I was just so depressed with the hopelessness that we see around us in the world.

And Scripture talks so much into that. It speaks so clearly to that. It gives us a hope that transcends everything. It gives us a hope beyond our own understanding.

It gives us a hope beyond ourselves. It gives us the hope in a man, God, named Jesus Christ, who came to make all things right, who came to fix all things.

[ 4 : 44 ] And I watched these stories, and I just felt this incredible sense of hopelessness until I remembered who I was in the hope that God has given us through his son, Jesus.

Have you ever felt that way? We talked about it last week in 1 Peter 1, verses 1 through 12. And in it, we came down to this realization that we all, if we are God's children, no matter what's going on, because it's very interesting, because 1 Peter's happening amongst his persecution, the Christians have gone out, things are getting really tough in the Roman Empire.

I mean, you know, we think our lives are hard and difficult because we've lost our job and other things, and those things are hard. But these people, they're like the people on the mountaintop. They have no food.

They're running for their lives, and the people behind them, they're killing them. And that's what's going on here, and that's what Peter's speaking into. And he's saying, this is what it means to be without hope, but this is where hope comes from, and hope comes from God who cares, even amidst the craziness.

And he reminded us that if our hope is just here and now, if we just hope in what's going on around us, we're going to be lost. Because the here and now is not our home. The here and now is just a temporary resting place for us.

[ 6 : 00 ] But eventually, we're going to get to a true home. And Peter reminds the Christians, and he reminds us over and over that we need to remember where our true home is.

We need to remember who our true Father is. We need to remember who we are. And the moment we forget that, we lose hope. We lose purpose.

We lose meaning. Today, we're going to look at the next step of that. And the next step is this, and it's going to be one of these topics that pastors sometimes hate to talk about, because every time we talk about it, people roll their eyes.

And my greatest fear is when I talk about it, you go, well, he must have his act together, or he's not that all together. And let me tell you, I don't have my act together, and I'm not all that together. And I'm probably the most broken person in this room, and I continue to learn God's mercy and his grace.

And what Peter says in 1 Peter 13 and 16, and we're just going to look at the first three verses, because what he's done up until this point is saying, this is what God's done for you. This is what God's done for you.

[ 7 : 02 ] This is what God's done for you. Now, this is what we need to do as God's people. Now, if you're here right now, and you're not God's people, you're listening, you're exploring, these words aren't for you.

I mean, our hope and our prayer is that one day they will be for you. Don't take these words and put them on people in your office and say, this is what you need to be doing, because if they're not in the family of God, it means nothing to them.

It doesn't belong to them, and it has no power over their lives. But if you're here today, and you say, I'm a Christian. I've invited Jesus Christ into my life. I've repented of my sins.

I turn daily and just ask for God's forgiveness. I sing that song, Lord, I need you, and I understand what it means. Then this passage is specifically for you. This passage is specifically for Watermark.

And the passage is going to talk about holiness. What does it mean for us as a people of God to be holy? To be honest with you guys, I didn't even know if I was going to be able to get up here today.

[ 8 : 02 ] I've had food poisoning all night. I was sick all night. At about 3 o'clock in the morning, my gosh, this is the bad thing about not having a wife who cooks your food, right?

Ladies, if you go away, please cook your husband some casseroles or something that's safe. But so God is just, so I'm praying for this time that God would speak to us as a church despite me communicating in the feeble way.

Probably I'm going to make up some words, which I usually do when I'm getting sick. Just write them down, and we'll clarify those words later. But we're talking about holiness. And what I want to look at in this passage is I want to look at or try to look at three things.

I want to look at just this idea of what is holiness? What does it really mean? Why should we be holy? And how do we grow in our holiness? What is holiness? What does it really mean?

And why should we grow? Or how do we grow in our holiness? And so the first thing we just want to look at is what is the idea of holy? And I realize that often when we talk about holiness, people just roll their eyes, and they just kind of, okay, here's one of these talks again.

[ 9 : 09 ] We're going to talk about all these things, and I just want to give up because it's too hard. This is what C.S. Lewis said. He said, holiness is the great myth. He says that we think to be holy is a bad thing.

We think that if we're holy, it will ruin our life. We think that if we're holy, it will take away our fun. It will take away our joy. But Lewis says, in fact, that whenever we see holiness, there's nothing more captivating to us.

There's nothing that enamors us more than holiness. And when we meet a holy person, a tender person, a gentle person, a loving person, we're drawn towards them.

I struggled with this when I was a young Christian, right? And when I heard people talk about holiness, what I thought it meant is, okay, forget everything. You're going to marry an ugly wife, and you're going to move to Africa.

Now, that's just what I thought, okay? So it tells you, I was a young Christian, 16 years old, and guys were talking about being holy and walking with the Lord. And my view of holiness was, you marry an ugly wife, and you move to Africa.

[ 10 : 25 ] And that's just what holy people did, because that's all I experienced. And so I know that's not true right now, right? I married a beautiful wife, and we moved to Asia, right? But in those days, you know, help me get out of this.

I don't know. But we struggle with the idea of what does it mean to be holy, and we look at these things, and we don't realize that it's something so far beyond what we talk about. What the Bible says is this.

When you come to faith, God puts his spirit inside of you. That Holy Spirit enters into your life, and that Holy Spirit begins to change you.

It changes how you talk. It changes how you think. It changes how you live. It changes how you view your money. It changes what you do with your time.

It changes how compassionate you are, and how gentle you are, and how loving you are, and how kind you are. It changes all of those things in us.

[ 11 : 30 ] It makes us different. The Bible says that as Christians, we should be very different than the people who don't have God's spirit inside of us.

The problem is that as I talk to people in Hong Kong about Christianity, one of the main reasons they reject Christianity is because the people that they know as Christians act, talk, think, use their money, vacation, and live just like they do.

And so when we talk about Christianity and Christianity being different, they look at the people around them, and they think, why would I want this to happen? Because those people are no different than myself.

They have the same values that I do. But what the Bible says is that when you come to Christ and God's spirit enters into you, you begin to become holy.

You begin to change. You take steps towards the Lord, and as you take steps towards him, his spirit inside of you changes you, and you're different.

[ 12 : 55 ] Has that happened to you? Are you different? Are you more loving?

Are you more kind? Are you more gentle? The Bible says if God's spirit's inside of us, then we start to change, and that change is defined as holiness.

In verse 16, it says, you shall be holy, for I am holy. There's two focuses there. The first focus is on God, and when it says God is holy, what it means is he's pure.

He's true. He's loving. He's untainted. He's beyond. He's transcendent. He's beyond our imagination. Holy is the adjective that describes God in everything.

He's holy love. He's holy compassion. He's holy gentleness. He's holy wrath. He's holy judgment. It just supersedes every one of his characteristics. It tells us that he is so far different than we are.

[ 13 : 58 ] It tells us, it should tell us, that he's so far different than we are that we can trust him because he will always remain true. He will always remain faithful.

He will always remain loving. No matter how hard you feel things are going, no matter how much you feel disappointed in him, God is always there. His holiness demands it, and he's there.

When it says you shall be holy, it's a little different focus. It's the same focus of we're a mirror. We reflect God. We're doing everything that God does, and we grow. We don't become there right away. We're never going to get there right away.

We're growing in that holiness. It's a step that we take baby steps towards him, and we're learning, and as we do things to prevent our old life from coming back in, God's spirit, that seed, the Holy Spirit, grows and changes and transforms us into something amazing.

But for me, the easiest way to understand this is basically this. When it says you are holy, you are holy if you are God's people, all of it means is that you belong to God.

[ 15 : 08 ] Do you know that? What does holiness mean for you? What does holiness mean for the Christians at Watermark?

It means that you belong to God. When you walk in that office on Monday, you belong to God.

God has placed you there. It's not an accident. When you walk into that marriage relationship that's incredibly difficult because both of you are so self-centered and selfish, and there's been so many scars, God has called you to be holy.

You belong to him. You allow that spirit living inside of you to change you and to make you different. We, as God's people, have to be different than the people who are not God's people.

How are you different? How are you different in your classrooms? How are you different at work?

[ 16 : 38 ] How are you different in your families? What does it mean for you to live a holy life where God has placed you? I'm not going to tell you this is what it means because you need to find that out on your own.

I can give you some guidelines because the spirit's working inside of you. You're reading God's word. You're experiencing your past. I don't know your past. You know your past. So some of you, it means to get rid of these things. And for some of you, it means to embrace these things.

And for some of you, it means just keep walking day by day and taking little steps and just trusting the Lord and knowing that He's going to take care of you and you don't need to worry so much. But if you're the child of God, the scripture says that you are holy positionally, in front of heaven, progressively, you're walking every day trying to become more holy.

And then one day when you meet Christ face to face, perfectly, you're going to look just like Him. The question is, are we different?

Why are we called to be holy? Well, the first reason we're called to be holy is because God commands it. And whenever God commands something, it's a good idea for us to obey it. Right? Whenever God says, don't do this or do this, it's a really good idea for you to obey that.

[ 17 : 54 ] I think the problem I have sometimes is God didn't ever ask me before He did the law. And I wish God had asked me before He said, don't do this or only keep this amount or act this way because I really wish He, He needs my input, but God didn't ask me because He knows what we need and He's God.

So the first reason that we are holy or that we pursue holiness is because God commands it in our life. How are we doing obeying that command? And there's a ten reasons I could give you why we should be holy, why we should be living in the mouth.

Some of them are self-serving because we just know that to be holy is just the best thing causes the least problem. There's a lot of people who aren't Christians, but they know, hey, if I don't do this and I don't do this and I read these things and I'm just a better person and those are some things that happen with holiness.

But the thing I want to share with us for Watermark today is one of the reasons that God has called us to be holy as His people. I was in a funeral yesterday. About 450, 500 people there.

Young lady killed in a car wreck, Taiwan. Three incredibly beautiful kids. They live right next to us in our apartment complex. And I sat there and I thought about what kind of testimony had they had from the body of faith.

[ 19 : 25 ] Think about this. In the Old Testament, all the other nations, all the other tribes, all the other religions, they had gold idols, they had wood carvings, they had rocks, they had different things, and all these things represented their God, they represented their deity.

And so when you were in Babylon and you wanted to see God, you went to the temple and you saw Dagon right there. Or when you were in Assyria and you wanted to see Kamesh, you'd go right there and you'd see them sacrificing little kids in front of it and we said, show us our God and they said, your God's right there.

But the people of God didn't have those things. The people of God didn't have idols. They were successfully forbidden to do idols because God was so infinite.

God is so great. God is so totally other. There's no way you can capture him within those pieces of wood or gold. And so what instead God did in Leviticus was he placed his imprint inside of us.

When you think about it, the three books of the Bible, the first three, right? Exodus is God choosing a people. I mean, Genesis, God choosing a people. Exodus, God taking a people and giving them out of bondage and freeing them.

[ 20 : 38 ] Leviticus, God gives his people relationships within a law. So now there's these rules about what it means to be holy.

And it's just not actions. It's just, you know, don't do this or do this. But there were certain things that were holy. There was a pen that was holy. There was a day that was holy. There was certain land that was holy. There was certain land that was unholy. Holy land would be like Texas.

Unholy land would be like someplace else. I'm not going to say anything. But clothes were holy. So clothes didn't have to do anything with their actions or anything like that. Food was holy.

Food was unholy. God's people were holy. So that when the people of the world looked and they said they wanted to see God, what did God do?

He said, well, look at my people because my imprint's on them as you see them love, as you see them care, as you see them do justice, as you see them show compassion, as you see them give mercy, as you see my people do these things which are my character, you see me.

[ 21 : 56 ] watermark. We're the imprint of the God of the universe.

His characteristics and his qualities have been put inside your life. And his spirit is growing those things and changing you.

So the question is, when we go out into this community of Hong Kong on the western side, the central side, the eastern side, Kowloon, what do people see of God through our lives?

What's their takeaway of God through us as a community? All the other nations could go, oh, here's the gold idol.

Here's the wood. Here's the stones. Here's the mountain. But God's people said, here's the community. Within that community, you see God.

[ 23 : 07 ] How are we doing as a community? Are we giving the hope that the world around us needs? Are they seeing God live out through us?

Are they seeing God's love and compassion? That's what it means for us to be his people. That's what it means for us to be holy.

Does that make sense? Everybody's really quiet. That's an incredibly challenging thing for me. It's an incredibly challenging thing for me to know that every day I walk into a place and I represent God.

It's an incredibly challenging thing for me to think about and just pray through because I make mistakes over and over. And again, we're not talking about we're getting there, but we're taking little steps to move towards holiness.

What does it look like when people look at me? They see me impatient with my kids. I realize more and more how much I need grace and God's mercy in our life.

[ 24 : 16 ] And my prayer for us, each one of us in here is we would realize that. That we need to be focused on Christ over and over and over.

So what is holiness? It means we belong to God. Why should we be holy? Well, God commands it. We need to obey him. And we're the community. And if we're not holy as a community, then everything we teach means nothing.

If we're not loving as a community, if we're not reaching out as a community, if we're not caring as a community, if we're not helping as a community, if we're not giving hope as a community, if we're not being good friends as a community, then everything else, our representation of a holy God means nothing to a world that needs hope.

And finally, how do we develop that hope in us? Because there's a two-part section here. I think often when we teach, we just say, well, God's giving you hope and you just trust him and that's it.

Take care. Let go and let God. And you'll get more holy. Trust me, you'll work. That's not what Peter says here. Is that what Peter says here?

[ 25 : 21 ] Peter says, if you are holy, if you're walking with me, here's what I need you to do. Look at your verse 13. He says this, prepare your minds for action. Keep sober in spirit.

Guard, keep sober in spirit. Fix your hope completely on the grace we brought to you as a revelation of Jesus Christ. That's kind of a command. Why do we need that command?

Verse 14, it's the reason why. Because as obedient children, we tend to be conformed to our former lust. We tend to go back to our old ways. Here's an example. Don't do that.

The Holy One. Look at Him. Follow Him. Watch Him. And in Him, you'll be like Him. So how do we become more holy?

I just want to look at it really quickly and we'll finish up here. Verse 13. The first thing that Peter says to us to do is we need to prepare our minds for action. It's a very powerful word here.

[ 26 : 17 ] It actually comes from the Passover. Usually when we did a communion or Passover, the Jewish people would lay down and they would sit down and they'd just relax and have fun. But this comes from Leviticus and in Exodus and it's right before the people are about to leave Egypt.

And when he says prepare your mind for action, it actually means gird your loins. So in Jesus' day and long before that, men wore long shirts all the way down here and then they wore a belt.

And usually they wore a mantle over that shirt but they just wore these long shirts half cut off, they still do today, all the way down here. And whenever a guy did work, he had to come down here, grab his shirt, tuck it up, and then stick it in the belt.

It's called girding. And so most guys would never do that unless they were in a battle or they had to run or they had to do work because it was undignified. But in a battle and running and working it was okay and so they left their things down here.

But what Peter says is now that you are Christians, you need to prepare your minds for action. You need to gird your loins and the idea is we need to get ready for work. We need to think about what it means to be God's people.

[ 27 : 21 ] We need to understand what it means to read God's word and allow it to affect us and change us. We need to think about what it means for us to be a Christian in the workplace. It's amazing to me how often people take jobs and they never think about so what will this mean for me as a Christian here?

So often people take jobs and just realize well I just need a job, I'm going to take any job or so people move to a different area but they never think about how that's going to impact their Christian life or their family. Can I be a good Christian witness here?

Maybe it's an environment where it's almost impossible to be a good Christian witness here. I still need to do it if God's called me to do that but what does it mean for me to do it well? Well that's what Peter says.

He says you need to prepare your minds, you need to gird up your loins, you need to think about, you need to get your mind in order, you need to think about what does it mean for us as God's people to live out a holy life wherever God puts us.

The second thing he says is you've got to keep sober and again these are all choices guys, these are all choices. If you're here and you're a Christian and God's put his spirit in you, the spirit's there but I think so often most of us we don't even read God's word, we don't pray, we're not in a community and we just think well God's going to take care of me because he promised to take care of me and I don't really need to do anything and it's kind of like this socket right here, it's like this power source, I'm going to get in trouble, I know.

[ 28 : 44 ] But this is kind of like God's word and the Holy Spirit, right? And we're plugged in here and we're receiving God's word, I don't want to unplug my sound. But most of us don't even plug ourselves into God's spirit and power source.

Most of us don't even read God's word, most of us don't even attend community, most of us don't think of God and there's this power source here and we wonder why our lives are a mess and why things are out of control.

The word there actually means to be sober, don't to be drunk, to keep focused. Peter says as Christians one of our responsibilities to this Holy Spirit and God in us to grow and to change is to be sober, to keep a clear head, to think well, to stay focused, to understand what God's word says.

What does the Bible say? To be able to reject false teaching and to follow true words. It's amazing to me whenever a new movie comes out like The Da Vinci Code or other things like that and they had this slant about Christianity or the Bible, how often the church just freaks out.

And the reason is is that most of us are pretty shallow in our understanding of God. I mean, most of us, if we did the research that we've done since we've been a Christian at our workplace for our new job, we probably would have been fired a long time ago because we wouldn't even have known how to turn on the copy machine.

[ 30 : 25 ] But for some reason as Christians, we think that's okay. And so we treat God's Word really small. And we treat God really small.

And we wonder why our lives become really small. And Peter says, be sober. Think clearly.

Understand God's Word. understand the implications of it in your life. Be in a Bible study. Be in a community group. Gather with people who study the Word.

Meditate on God's Word. Memorize God's Word. Allow it to understand it. Allow it to be barriers in your life. So the next time you hear something in your life and it causes you an incredible amount of tension and trouble, you can say, well, what does God's Word say?

Nope. Next. But most of us hold it up and they go, well, Pastor, what does God's Word say? And I'm like, you can look that up.



[ 31 : 35 ] What do you think God's Word says? I'll give you the verses. Let's read it. Verse 14, he says, as obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lust which were yours in your ignorance.

And that idea is like a jello mold. Jello mold. That so many of us, we've gone off as Christians and now we're new Christians but we don't know what the boundaries are.

We haven't read God's Word. We're not sober. We're not focused. And our old nature is like this magnet and our old sin nature comes in and it grabs us and it tries to squeeze us into this mold. Peter says, be careful when it does that to you because it's going to destroy your life.

I'm going to be in trouble here but I think this is why Christianity is so shallow in Hong Kong and America and the rest of the world.

Because I think most of us come to Christ and we say a prayer but we really don't understand what that means. Most of us haven't repented of the sins that we used to do.

[ 32 : 54 ] Many of us still do the same sins we did before. Many of us still act the same way we acted before. And our Christianity is like that deep.

And the sad thing is the only person we're fooling is ourself. Because everybody else around us especially non-Christians see that our Christianity is that deep.

We came to Christ I said the prayer but and I'm speaking to myself many of us did it selfishly so that we don't have to be selfish on our own we let Jesus be selfish for us right?

Jesus is going to be selfish Jesus is going to get us the Rolex he's going to get us all those really cool things that we want Jesus is going to do it now we're just going to pray and Jesus is going to do it. We never repented we never said that's wrong we never said sin is bad we just said so I was in a church this summer and I'm really thankful it wasn't our church and we would check out some churches and they had a testimony and we probably need to cut this off and in the testimony several people came to be baptized and the first person came up and they said you know I needed a job and I really wanted this type of car and I prayed about it and you know what I got this job with this company and they gave me that exact car God must be real I'm here to get baptized today no repentance of sin no confessing their need for God no talking about their brokenness next person got up you know I've been single for a long time and I've been praying that God would give me this guy that was this tall he had this color of hair he had this kind of job he made this amount of money and he drove this type of car and he was fun and you know what that guy came into my life praise the Lord

God must be real so that's why I became a Christian today no mention of sin no mention of need no mention of God's holiness and not ours and I wonder why Christianity in Hong Kong is so shallow no wonder we have a hard time forgiving each other and being nice to each other and loving each other because we never understood that that's what God did for us we just think God gave us a nice car and a good boyfriend or a girlfriend Peter says be careful because your old nature your old ways is going to try to drag you back it's going to try to consume you it's going to try to stick you in this jello mold it's going to try to make you act the same way that you've always acted and probably for many of us here we say that's already happened

[ 36 : 15 ] I don't need to worry about that and finally verse 13 Peter says God has done all these things now this is what you need to do to continue to grow in holiness and be the people of God and be the people that a lost world a hopeless world needs to see this is what you need to do is fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ actually if you read it in Greek that sentence says this because that's the only command in this sentence what that sentence says is fixing your hopes completely on the grace to be brought to you at the resurrection of Jesus Christ preparing your minds for action keeping sober in spirit so the main focus is we fix our hopes completely on what grace and when he uses that word what he means is it's the totality of everything that God has done for you it's the totality of God's mercy his goodness his blessings his grace it's what Peter says if you want to walk with the Lord if you want to grow in holiness if you want to be

God's people if you want to be a reflection of what it means to be the church this is what you do you fix your hope solely and completely on all that Jesus has done for you you think about it every day you ponder it you wonder about it when you get into difficult times you bring that up and you say yes but you know what Christ has done it is so far greater than what I'm experiencing right now I can trust him because he's good how are we doing fixing our hope what are we fixing our hope in today what are the things that go through our mind what are the things that it capture and enamor us what are those things the passage the passage says an amazing thing it says you and I were lost and the thing about is we didn't even know we were lost and God the creator of the universe sends his son he sends a lamb and that lamb's blood was shed and that lamb's blood is so much more precious than anything you're going to collect here on earth it's more precious than your cars more precious than your house more precious than your MPF more precious than anything that you have that lamb's blood is so much more precious and what it means to you and to the people who see you is so much more greater than anything else that you can bring and collect in your life and the passage ends and the question is how do we respond to that that's God's people what's our response how do we spend time with the Lord after all that

God has done all these things for us this is now what we're to be as his people this is how we're to act this is how we're to love this is how we're to grow in our holiness the question is will we will we let's pray father we thank you for this day I realize right now that even as we speak in the midst of my words which I just pray that you would make them forget anything that wasn't of you and you would not let them forget what is of you I realize that there are some people in here right now who've been living lives that are far far away from you they've been living lives that are self-centered and self-focused and you've been continually touching their heart you've been continually touching their mind you've been continually opening their eyes the fact that they're here and they're not Christians is not in a mistake it's because your spirit is moving in them and I pray for them

Lord I pray that you would open their eyes to your son and that they would enter into the family they would choose him they would find their hope in Christ alone and realize that all that you've given is so much more precious than what they're striving for right now Lord I know that there are some of us in here who are just faking it we're faking it outwardly we're one way inwardly we're another way one way at church we're this way outwardly at work we're a different way and maybe vice versa and when we look at consistency and reality and holiness we realize that you haven't called us to be half holy or partially holy that you've called us to be all holy every part of us and we know that that's steps that we take towards you Lord I pray for my brothers and sisters who are faking it that they would stop life is too precious funerals funerals happen too often and if the life that we're living isn't a beacon and a reflection of your mercy and grace

I pray that we would stop I pray that you would make us stop take us out of the picture because your grace and your mercy and your word and your name is too holy to be profaned by us Lord I pray for all of us here we all need you desperately we'll never get to a point where we say okay I'm okay now everything's good but as Peter says that we continually fix our hope on the grace and mercy to be brought to us through your son Jesus Christ Lord I pray for us as a church help us to be a church that's different help us to be a people that's different Lord I pray for us as men help us be men that are different because we're Christians Lord help us to be wives that are different because we love you help our families to be different as we walk amidst the darkness the people desperately need to see your son Jesus

[ 43 : 07 ] Lord we just help us to repent to confess our wrongdoing to confess our brokenness and our sin Lord I pray that we would turn away from those things and follow you Lord we know you're not asking us to be perfect but you're asking us to be a people who are yours that belong to you may that be true of all of us in here may you use those things to change Hong Kong and beyond Father we love you and we pray these things in your son Jesus holy name amen you