

# The Content of Fear

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[0:00] Take your Bibles, will you, this morning and open them once again to 1 Peter, 1 Peter chapter 1.

Yes, we're still in 1 Peter chapter 1 and we are returning this morning to 1 Peter chapter 1 after a one Sunday break.

And so, by way of review, it's always good to review. We have been considering each of the four commands, and there are four of them issued by the Apostle Peter in chapter 1, starting with verse 13, running all the way through to the end of the chapter.

Four commands, and so what I want to do, by way of introduction, is read those four commands again. You'll find the first one in verse 13. Do you see it? Verse 13, 1 Peter chapter 1, verse 13. Here's the command. Rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

[1:28] That's command number one. I'm reading from the New King James. Your translation might say, fix your hope.

Completely. Completely. On the grace of God that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. There's command number one. Command number two is found in verse 15.

As he who called you is holy. And here's the command. You also be holy in all your conduct.

There's command number two. Command number three, verse 17. And this is where we are today. Where we were a couple of Sundays ago.

The last phrase of the verse. Just conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear. That's a command.

[2:28] In the form of a command. The fourth command, which we have not looked at yet and will look at in a few weeks. It's found in verse 22. Love one another fervently with a pure heart.

All right. So, four commands. And this morning, we're back looking at this third command. And we started Sunday before last to explore what Peter means by commanding us to conduct ourselves in fear.

Now, I'm spending quite a bit of time on the fear command. Spent a couple of weeks, I think, on or one week on the hope command. And a couple of weeks on the holy command.

And here now, this is the second sermon on fear. And actually, I think the third. And we're going to be back on it next Sunday. What does Peter mean by this?

You see, if God is going to give us command, we need to understand the command. It's not necessary that we understand all the why and wherefores of them. We'll talk about that in a little bit.

[3:47] Although Peter gives us the why and wherefore of obeying this command. But what does it mean to conduct ourselves in fear?

And we started a couple of Sundays ago by dealing, first of all, with the biblical concept of fear.

That's where we need to begin. Begin with the word fear. And the concept of it.

That is from the biblical perspective. And I mentioned that it is the Greek word phobos. From which we get our word, our English word phobia. But that doesn't help us very much.

You know, phobias have kind of taken on, the word has taken on a new meaning over the years. So phobia, what does it mean to fear? And we said, if I might remind you, that depending upon your relationship with Christ, phobia either denotes, or phobos either denotes, a hopeless terror before God or a hope-filled reverence toward God.

Those two things. And we could say it a number of different ways. But just so that we can kind of categorize that in our minds. Depending on which side of the cross you're on. That is, which side of Christ you're on.

[5:03] Whether you're a believer or a non-believer. If you're a non-believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, you've not been born again. Then phobos, for you, is a hopeless terror before God.

And if you don't sense that now, one day you will. But if you're a believer, then it is a hope-filled reverence or awe or honor.

Well, we can use the word fear. Fear toward God. And, of course, based upon the context of the word fear in our text, we understand that Peter intended to convey the second of those two connotations of the word.

Because he's talking to believers. And so the idea here in the text, in 1 Peter 1, verse 17, is to have a or to conduct yourself with a hope-filled reverence toward God.

And based upon what precedes the word fear in the text and what follows it, and that's kind of the way we're approaching the text, is to start with fear and move out and backward and forward.

[6:11] And based upon that, then we understand the context being those in the family of God. We're talking about those in the family of God who are living as aliens.

That's who we are as believers. We're aliens in this world. Strangers. Sojourners. Refugees. We could use a number of other words. And we're living here as refugees in the domain or dominion of Satan himself.

The prince of this world. That's the context. And after that, I pointed out that Peter's primary concern here is not to emphasize some emotion of fear.

We need to define this. We need to get this straight in our minds. He's not talking about an emotion of fear. Some feeling of fear. Or some fearful attitude toward God.

Or some fearful demeanor before God. He's not talking about that. His emphasis is clearly on conduct. And we need to get that.

[7:18] It's conduct he's talking about here. And I might remind you again. Verse 17 opens with the Greek conjunction chi. It's and if.

Whether or not your English version decided to bring that out into the text. It's there nonetheless. And it's there for a reason. And it's there because the command in verse 17.

To live in fear. To conduct yourself in fear. That command is connected with the command in verse 15. That is the command to live in fear. To fear God.

Is connected with the command to live wholly like God. So they go together. It's moving forward in its meaning.

And this is important because it's important because in both commands. Conduct is the way to express obedience. Now surely you have that by now in your Christian life.

[8:15] Actually whether you're talking about in the religious or spiritual context. Or even the secular context. Obedience is the way to express. Or rather conduct is the way to express obedience to any command.

Right? It's conduct. That's important. In both commands. Conduct is the way to express it. Verse 15. I'll just show it to you very clearly from the text.

He said be holy. Here's the command. Be holy in all your what? Conduct. Or behavior. You might have it in your translation.

And verse 17. There's the word again. Conduct. Conduct yourselves in fear. Alright? So then we've discussed the concept of fear.

The context of fear. The conduct of fear. And now we're ready to move further out from the central word. The word fear. Move out backward and then forward.

[9:13] And consider the content of fear. The content. What is the content of our fears? Content of it.

Or may I put it another way? What's the substance of it? What's the substance of it? Is there any basis for conducting our lives in the fear of God?

Any basis for doing that? Other than the mere command in God's word. And maybe we ought to say that the command is enough. We don't have to know the why.

Kind of like as parents we tell our kids. You don't have to know why. Just do what I say. You know how kids are. You tell them to do something or not to do something. And they want to know why.

And it's not for them always to know why, is it? In fact, I would recommend to some parents that early on you ought to establish authority with your kids. And sometimes you tell them what to do and you don't have to tell them why.

[10:12] Just do it. That's because I told you to. Only here in 1 Peter, this command, in this command, 1 Peter 1.17, God tells us why.

He tells us why we should obey. In fact, God provides two very strong motivations for living life in the fear of God. Two very strong motivations.

And here they are. Two of them. We fear God because of who He is to us. And the implications of that.

And who is He? Well, according to Peter, He is loving Father and just judge. All right. So, number one, here's the why.

The motivation for living your life or conducting your life in the fear of God. Because we fear God because of who He is to us. And He is loving Father and just judge.

[11:13] Secondly, we fear God because of what He has done for us. We fear God because of what He has done for us.

And what has He done for us? Well, we've been singing about it since we started this service. I've not read the text again. But according to Peter, God has redeemed us with the blood of His Son. And all that that means to us. Those two things, you see. Now, let's take the first one. We fear God because of who He is to us.

And again, who is He? Well, according to Peter, He is loving Father and just judge. Now, give both those down.

That's what He is. Loving Father and just judge. Can He be both? Can He be both of those two things at the same time?

[12:36] I'm not talking about someone who puts the loving Father hat on at certain times and then puts the just judge hat on. And, you know, two different people in two different contexts, two different times.

We're talking about God being both loving Father and just judge at the same time. Can He be both? Well, that is the way Peter presents Him here in verse 17.

Would you look at it? I just read the command a moment ago. Now, let's read the entire verse. And if you call on the Father, or call on Him as Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear.

Now, you see both things there, don't you? Both of those realities about the nature and character of God. He is Father and judge.

He is Father judge. He is loving Father. He is just judge. Very clear right there in just a few words.

See, Peter takes the images of the love of a father and the justice of a judge and he folds them into the divine person of God, our God.

[13:58] He is both to us. Now, this is important. You may think it's not, but hopefully that will become clear as we go along. He's both.

Father and judge, both at the same time. And if we do not see Him that way, then we're going to have a distorted understanding and perspective of the nature and character of God.

And not only that, but we're going to find this command in 1 Peter 1, verse 17, hard to understand and even harder to obey. If we do not see God as both those things, Father and judge, loving Father, and that's interpretive on my part, but it's clear from the word Father.

It's loving Father and just judge, a judge who judges impartially. He is both of those things. I want to read something to you from Alexander McLaren, and you may not be familiar with that name, but he was a great preacher, one of the greatest preachers of the latter 1800s, early 1900s.

And I want you to listen to what Alexander McLaren wrote, and I quote, I suppose in Peter's days, as in our days, there were people that so fell in love with one aspect of the divine nature that they had no eyes for any other.

[15:19] People who so magnified the thought of the Father that they forgot the thought of the judge. That error has been committed over and over again in all ages so that the church as a whole, one may say, has gone swaying from one extreme to the other and has rent these two conceptions widely apart and sometimes has been foolish enough to pit them against each other.

Instead of doing, as Peter does here, braiding them together as both conspiring to one result, and what is that result?

McLaren says, to produce in the Christian heart a wholesome awe of God. Man, I wish I could put things like Alexander McLaren put them.

Incredible. See, God is both. You understand? He's both Father and Judge. As Paul said, though it was a different context, different application, Paul said in Romans 11, 22, consider the goodness and severity of God.

He's both those things. I have enjoyed over the years reading C.S. Lewis' Chronicles of Narnia, and I don't know if you've ever read them, but if you have, then you know that Aslan, the great lion in the Chronicles, represents the Lord Jesus, the Lion of Judah.

[16:55] And C.S. Lewis masterfully crafted into his character Aslan this dual reality of benevolent father, or benevolent king, savior, superior deity, benevolent deity, and just judge, even severe at times.

And Lewis establishes this reality early on in the Lion and the Witch and the wardrobe when the prevecencies have come into Narnia, you know, and they're in this brand new world, and thankfully, it's good that they found the beavers.

Remember, they go into the beaver's home, and the beavers, Mr. and Mrs. Beaver, you ever read the Chronicles? Animals talk in the Chronicles of Narnia. Mr. and Mrs. Beaver there, telling them about Narnia, but especially telling them about Aslan.

He's the great lion. And Susan asks the beavers, is he safe?

Is he safe? And Mrs. Beaver says, if there's anyone who can appear before Aslan without their knees knocking, they're either braver than most or else just silly.

[18:18] That's what she said. And so Lucy asks, then he isn't safe. Mr. Beaver says his famous line about Aslan, one that's repeated a number of other times in the Chronicles, he says, of course he isn't safe.

But he's good. He's the king, after all. You see? Now, the apostle Peter, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, unlike C.S. Lewis, but the apostle Peter, masterfully, braids together, as McLaren put it, braids together these two aspects of the nature and the character, the divine nature of God, and he does so with three poignant phrases, all right there, packed into less than half or half of a verse.

Three poignant phrases, and it's these phrases I want you to get. First of all, as Father, we understand that he loves us completely.

See? We're putting these two things together here. Father, judge, putting them together. Peter puts them together in the same verse. We need to understand that they go together.

We need to understand what that means to us and why then that ought to be the impetus or the motivation for us to conduct ourselves in fear. He puts the two things together.

[20:04] And so we begin with Father. Peter says, and if you call on the Father, that's how he opens this command. If you call upon the Father, or more literally, and since you call on him as Father, that's where he begins.

Let me give you a short lesson on Greek grammar. Don't worry about it. It's not boring. This ought to help us. A little lesson on grammar here.

It'll help us understand this text. When a writer wants to place emphasis on a particular word or thought, in the English, we, I guess, generally just add words.

Add words and maybe adjectives and whatever we may do to place emphasis on something. But in the Greek, the Greek writer just simply changes the order of the words.

And so when the Greek writer wants to emphasize a certain word or thought or idea, then he moves that word, that noun, to the front of the sentence or the phrase.

[21:16] That's exactly what Peter did here. Though you can't tell it in your English text. In the Greek text, Peter adds emphasis to the word Father. And he moves it to the front.

And he places the word Father in the emphatic position. And so it reads literally, and if Father, you call upon him.

That's pretty awkward. You wouldn't write that way in English. And then for the Greek, it makes perfect sense. And so when the Greek reader is reading it, they know that the emphasis here is Father. Because it's right there at the front.

And since Father, you call upon him. And does that make a difference? Yes, it does. Because, listen, the one who judges you impartially.

And therefore, you should conduct yourselves in fear. The one who judges you impartially, guess what? He's the one you call upon every day. Or should. He's Father.

[22:23] He's your Father. He's your Heavenly Father. And as your Heavenly Father, he loves you completely. You talk about connections in high places.

We're talking here about the Supreme Judge of all eternity. And guess what? He's your Father. He's your Father. That is, if you know Jesus.

If you're born again. The Judge is your Father. You see, that's why I think Peter has placed the word Father at the very beginning. Because he wants to get this relationship thing here, right on the front end.

Now, God is the Judge, and he judges impartially, and he judges according to each man's work. But it's the Father you ought to focus on. That Judge you stand before. That Judge you live toward and reverence.

He's your Father. He's your Father. Your Heavenly Father. I tell you, that's great stuff. And then Peter includes something else here in our text.

[23 : 25] First, as Father, we understand that he loves us completely. Third, or second rather, as Judge.

Because both of those things are there. Father and Judge. As Judge, we understand that he judges us impartially.

that's exactly what Peter said. Let's look at it again. Get this right in our minds.

And since, really is literally since, since you call on him as Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work.

And so we have this image of the judge. It's very clear in the text. He's Father, yes, he's also judge. As Father, he loves you completely. As Judge, he judges you impartially.

[24 : 29] In the King James Version, it's without respect of persons. And that's all out of one Greek word. You see, the English language really is a different language.

I mean, the Greeks just need one word and we need five or six. With our respective persons. And that's all right because they're trying to get closer to the real meaning of the word.

And a strict literal translation of the Greek word here would be this. Does not receive face. Does that help you? What? Does not receive face.

What does that mean? It means that when it comes to God judging, God does not consider anybody's face. face. That's good news for some of us.

Well, actually, it's good news for all of us. In a different sort of way. God does not receive face when he judges.

[25 : 30] We have the expression on the face of it. Or at face value. That's the same idea. God does not judge at face value. God does not judge on the face of it.

You see, he does not receive the face. He's not a respecter of persons. He judges impartially. You know, Samuel, or rather, well, Samuel, yeah, priest and judge, he had to learn that lesson.

Do you remember back there in 1 Samuel chapter 16? We'll not turn to it, but let me remind you of it. Samuel learned God's instructions in regard to God not judging on the face as Samuel had been instructed by God to choose a new king for Israel.

Because Saul, you know, he had disobeyed God and the kingdom was being torn out of his hands. And so, God sent Samuel to Jesse's house to anoint a new king for Israel.

And Jesse did what any proud father would do. He would bring out the cream of the crop. Had seven tall, strapping young men, kingly looking men.

[26 : 43] I'm kind of adding a little bit to it, but I think that's the idea here. And so, here are the seven sons of Jesse, or seven of the sons. He had more than seven. And he brings out these seven sons, and Samuel looks at the first one, Eliab, and he says, he's the one.

I don't have to look any further. He's the guy. Just look at him. He's tall. He's handsome. He's kingly. And so, Samuel says, God, he's the one, right?

And God says, no, he's not the one. And so, he looks to the second one, his name, Abinadab, and he looks at him, and he's very much like Eliab. He looks very kingly looking, and so, Samuel says, there's the one God, Abinadab, he's the king.

We'll anoint him, right? And God said, no, he's not the one. Goes down to the next one, is Shema, and very similar to the other two.

And so, Samuel says, surely he's the one, and God says, no, he's not the one. And he looks at all seven of them, and God rejects all seven of them. You know the story.

[27 : 55] Samuel says, do you have any other sons? And Jesse said, well, David, the youngest, he's out there watching a few sheep out in the field.

But, you know, you've got to read between the lines, but he's thinking, I don't think you'd be interested in him. And Samuel said, bring him. And as soon as he walked in the door, God said, he's the one.

He's king. Anoint him. And then God taught Samuel this lesson. God said to Samuel, for the Lord does not see as man sees, for man looks at the face of it.

That's not what it says there. Man looks at the outward appearance on the face of it, but the Lord looks at the heart. You see, he's the kind of judge who looks at the heart.

He does not receive face. He does not consider the face when he judges. So you just give up trying to fool God. Just give up trying to fool God.

[29:09] There isn't anything about your outward appearance, or maybe you're appearing to be holy, or appearing to be dedicated to him, or some works of your hands that look to be very spiritual and very high-minded and worthy of praise and reward, and God doesn't look at all those.

He doesn't evaluate those. He judges impartially. He does not receive the face of it. It's the heart. That's the kind of judge he is.

That's the kind of judge. We might say that in a sense he's like Lady Justice, you know, sword in one hand, scales in the other, blindfold around his face.

Lady Justice, although that's pretty sacrilegious, I think Lady Justice was Roman goddess by the name of Justitia. I don't know how to apply that to God, but it's fairly accurate on the face of it.

And yet there is a significant difference. Because as our loving father. And that is who Peter wants you to know about God first.

[30:30] As loving father, God judges with a heart of love for his children. In fact, in the Bible, the word, this long Greek word that's translated without partiality, or even translated longer in the King James, without respect to persons, that one word is more often used with a positive connotation in the Bible.

That's very interesting, and it's important in our understanding of the text. Because you see, here's the idea. God is not a critical judge. That is, a judge with a critical spirit.

And what I'm talking about is, I'm not talking about the fact that God does not critique everything, that God does not see everything that he passes over things. It's not that idea, but he's not a critical judge in the sense, in this sense, that he's not looking for some sinful defect in us so that he can zap us.

That's not who God is as judge. That's not the idea we get from this word, impartiality. evil flaw down in the nooks and crannies of your life, in your conduct, so that it would give him a reason to make us suffer.

Maybe he caused us to have cancer, or maybe kill our children. You know, he's looking for something there, going to get something inside of you, something evil there.

[32:06] I'm looking for it so that I can really have a reason to give it to you. That's not the idea. You say, well, I know that. But you'd be surprised how many Christians have that view of God.

That, I would say, hellish view of God. God's not a critical God in that sense, not in the sense in which Peter's talking here and in other places in the Bible when this word is used.

He's not looking for some reason to inflict punishment upon you for the least infraction of his law. Not a critical judge. No, no, no.

The idea here is that God is looking for the good. He's looking for the good in our works. That's what he's looking for. That's the idea, the concept here.

That God is looking for the good in our works. Those that are done for his glory and done in his power. And God expects to find those kind of works in your life.

[33:05] God deserves to find those kind of works in him. That are done for his glory. That are done in his strength.

And so then the focus of our fear then, if we put all this together, the focus of our fear in our conduct is that God would not find those kind of works. That he wouldn't find those things.

He deserves to find it. He expects to find it. He longs to find those kind of works. God glorifying works in the life of his beloved children.

He deserves to find that. And what he finds as impartial judge, he either rewards or he disciplines. He either rewards us or disciplines us.

And this brings father and judge together as we move along here. As father, he loves us completely. as judge, he judges us impartially.

[34:08] And then third and finally, as father judge, putting all this together here. As father judge, he disciplines us judiciously or appropriately.

As father judge, he disciplines us appropriately. Peter says, according to each one's work. Work in the singular, by the way.

Not each one's works. Each one's work. It's your entire life he has in view here. Though God does look at the works, he's looking at the work.

He judges as father, as loving father, and just judge. He judges us, rewards or disciplines us based upon or according to each one's work.

See, we should fear. I want to make sure we get this. We should fear the absence of holiness in our works.

[35:19] we should fear that. That adds a different perspective on things. You don't fear God that he's going to get you if you can.

You fear because you love God and honor God, reverence him and awe him. You fear the absence of holy works, holiness in your conduct.

I'm talking about works that are fleshly works. Those as opposed to holy works. Fleshly works.

That is works done in your own power, your own strength. Self-reliant works. Prideful work.

See, we should fear as God's children, the ones who call upon him as father every day. We should fear that our lives, which are under the inspection of the father's eyes every moment of our days, we should fear that our lives, our conduct would be void of God-honoring works, Christ-glorifying works, spirit-filled, Controlled, Dependent works, which are the only works that matter to God.

[36:42] that's all that matters to him. We should fear dishonoring God with our works. That's the idea.

But we should not fear, by the way, his discipline for evil works. Now, we ought to fear God and honor God in a sense that we would stay away from sinful and wicked works.

But the focus here in Peter is on the good works that God could approve, that God is looking for and God expects. Now, we ought to get rid of the wicked works and we know that God is going to discipline us for our wicked works, but we should not fear God's discipline.

We should not fear him. See, that's a different thing. That's a different idea. We don't fear him. In fact, we ought to welcome his discipline.

For wicked works. By the way, I'll remind you here and you can turn to it if you want to, but Hebrews chapter 12 is where you need to go to for this.

[37:48] Hebrews chapter 12 verse 9. Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrupted us or corrected us rather.

Some human fathers have corrupted us too, but that's not in the Bible here. May I start over? We have had human fathers who corrected us and we paid them respect.

Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the father of spirits and live? For they, that is, our human fathers, indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but he for our prophet, that we may be partakers of his holiness.

Now, no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful. Nevertheless, afterward, it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

I like the King James exercised by it. Have you ever had a father or mother exercise you a little bit? We don't fear God's discipline.

[39:01] We ought not to. We're not joyous during the time. It's not something we love. It's for our correction. We be partakers in his holiness.

We ought to welcome that. See, the object there is not fear, but here in Peter, the emphasis is certainly fear.

But it's not fear of God's discipline because of our wicked works. God's going to take care of that.

That's another issue. And you ought to askew evil in your life.

Ought to do that always. Certainly so. God will discipline you for that. But the idea here in 1 Peter is something different. It is God's desire to find good works, and therefore the emphasis is our fear that he wouldn't find them.

That we would dishonor him in that. To conduct yourselves in fear is to fear a conduct that does not glorify God.

[40:07] That's the idea. One other passage and we'll be finished. 1 Corinthians chapter 3 verse 11.

Turn to that. Because we'll bring all this together. Not the concept of it or the understanding of it. I think we understand that we relate to God as father and judge. Loving father, he loves us completely. As judge, he judges us impartially.

And as father judge, he disciplines us appropriately. And that begs the question, when is all this going to happen?

Is it happening right now? In a very big sense it is. God's judging impartially right now. He's looking for good works right now.

[41:06] But there is a sense in the text that Peter is referring to the ultimate day. That one day when all of our works are going to be manifest.

All laid out there. And God as our father judge, through the person of Christ, is going to be looking, looking, inspecting, looking for good works.

Looking for good works. That'll be the focus of that day someday. We understand it to be the judgment seat of Christ. It's a judgment for believers, not a judgment of sin.

Because all that was judged at the cross. It'll be a day when all of our works are manifest. To see what sort they are. God is looking for the good ones.

And that's what Paul is talking about in 1 Corinthians 3.11. Would you look at it? For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

[42:24] That's salvation. foundation. Now, if anyone builds on this foundation, foundation of salvation, relationship with Christ, take heed how you build on it.

anyone builds, he says, on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw.

Big difference between gold, silver, precious stones, and wood, hay, and straw. Each one's work.

Do you see verse 13? Each one's work. That reminds you of what Peter said there in 1 Peter 1.17. According to each one's work. Singular. Lifetime of work. When it's all over, all this life is done, and we stand at the judgment seat of Christ, it will be revealed there how we have built upon that salvation.

[43:36] Not salvation. That foundation no man can lay. That's Jesus Christ. But how we build upon that, all that will be manifest one day.

Each one's work will become clear, manifest for the day. Capital D. The day.

Judgment seat of Christ. That day, on that day, will declare it. Because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test each one's work of what sort it is.

Will test it. Now, that word test is an interesting word. Not the same word that is used or even related to the word that Peter used in 1 Peter.

1 Peter 1. 1 Peter 1 is talking about this day, primarily. And the word test here means literally to put to the test in order to approve.

[44:52] approve. That's different than putting to the test in order to find out what's bad there. The word here, the word translated test, is to put to the test in order to sanction, in order to approve what is found there.

You see, I'm not trying to give you the idea that sinful works, that we ought not care about those things or try to stay away from those things, that we ought not to, in some sense, fear God if we're going to choose a path of wickedness from Him.

It's probably more proof that you're not saved than the proof that you are saved and you're turning the wrong direction. I'm not saying you ought not to fear that kind of lifestyle. God is going to discipline you for it.

We should not direct our fear, our reverence to Him, our fear of Him for His discipline. No, no, I'm not saying we ought not do that. I'm talking about what Peter's talking about and he's talking about a day out there someday, maybe sooner than we think, when Jesus comes again and He jerks us up out of this world and we all stand before Him just before we go into the marriage feast of the Lamb and we stand before Christ at His judgment seat and He tests our works.

Tests in this sense. He appraises them to find approval. He's looking for the good. He's looking for what was done for Christ.

[46:33] He's looking for what was done for His glory. He's looking for what was done in His strength and by the power of the Holy Spirit. Done with prayer. Done in obedience.

Done for Christ and Him alone. He's looking for those things. All that's going to be laid out before Him. The good, the gold, the silver, the precious metals and some of it's going to be hay and wood and stubble and a great fire is going to come.

This is the testing. And what's going to remain after the fire of His judgment? Just the good. And all the rest of it's going to be gone. Do you see what He said?

If anyone's worked, verse 14, which He has built on it endures, that is, it makes it through that fire, that test. Because that's what God's looking for. He's looking for what He can sanction, what He can approve.

And that which remains, He will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, He will suffer loss.

[47 : 41] God's will not take it to mean this. You know, I fully expect to stand at the judgment seat of Christ and see some of the works that I've been so proud of.

So, I mean, God, I did these things for you. them. I fully expect to see a lot of that just burned up.

Because I did it for me. I did it to gain the approval of man. Or I did it without any prayer, without any reliance upon the Holy Spirit to empower me.

Or I did it without God's grace. I fully expect that to be burned away. It will be. It will just be gone.

That will be burned away.

He will suffer loss, but he himself will be saved, yet so as by fire. Because, you see, the foundation I didn't lay.

[48 : 59] you didn't lay the foundation of salvation. That was God's grace. God did that.

But he says, take heed how you build on it. Because one day, what's wood, hay, and stubble, will all be burned away. And only the good stuff's going to remain.

Gold, silk, precious. See, that's what Peter's talking about, I believe. And so, then, how should that affect our conduct?

How should that affect the way we live? If you're involved in work here in the church, and many of you are, how should that affect how you serve the Lord?

Just as a Christian, living your life in obedience to God's word, serving Him, being a testimony of His grace, and His power, His glory.

[50 : 21] should that affect your conduct? If you know that one day, one day, all those works will be laid out before the Lord, and you're hoping that on that day, you will have such honor, or give God such honor, and such glory, to lay your works out there that have been done for Him, for His glory.

Our fear ought to be that we would have nothing to lay there, that as He looks for the good, He wouldn't find it. You'll see the foundation, that's laid by Christ, but everything else is just one big heap of debris, and He just burns that away.

should we not fear? Should we not fear our confidence that we would have nothing to lay before Him that would glorify Him?

Thank you.