

## Hidden Mysteries

[00:00:13] And by doing good. It's a nice Chris. Got to love that right. A whole bunch of snowy Sundays. We'll take a nice although it's pretty chilly out there was like 18 when I drove in this morning. Hopefully it will warm up a little bit. Hey a couple of things to let you know about. One is we had just a really special evening two nights ago Friday night for night to shine. It's something that the last two years King Street has hosted. But this year because of the attendance we moved it over to Antrim B I C that a much bigger gym and over 150 honored guests those with special needs came it was just a wonderful night. In fact if you want to be inspired. We're going to show the video next Sunday but it's up on our Web site particularly Facebook. I saw that the reach had already like over several thousand people have already been touched by the video. So check that out on the Facebook page it was just a wonderful evening night to shine. I also have this announcement for table talk you're going to be hearing about this in the months and years to come. I just want to let you know what it is. It is a luncheon the second Thursday of every month. We're hosting it for now as long as there's space over in the Coyle library on the third floor. They have an atrium room up there it's really nice and we're it's basically it's an invitational lunch. Now just to be clear you don't have to invite somebody to come. You're welcome to come. But it is designed ultimately for you to feel free to invite guests. Five dollars for lunch. So ten bucks for you and a guest to come and especially guests who may not have any connection with a church or even perhaps knowledge of who Jesus is. It's really geared to an introductory kind of a lighthearted and yet hopefully really engaging opportunity for people to hear about Jesus so that's what that is. Get signed up every week. You can email or call the church office talk to Molly and we'll get your signed up for a lunch this week as Chick Fillet for five bucks. Can't beat that. Right. And hopefully then for you to bring a friend. But it's for everybody but that's kind of ultimately the purpose. So that's this Thursday open your bibles would you please to first Peter. Chapter 1 First Peter chapter 1 and we're continuing here. This study that we're engaged in. Peter is writing this epistle this letter. He is an apostle of Jesus Christ to God's elect to God's elect people that we see down here chosen according to the fore knowledge of God. They are exiles which means you're an alien in this world when you are a follower of Jesus. This world is no longer your home and God places scatters us wherever he wishes. But in this case throughout the provinces. Sounds pretty Canadian way of Pontas Malatia Capita SCEA Asia and Bethania. Grace and peace be yours and I'm really wanting us to capture the fact that you've been here these last few weeks. You know the polls. I'm not Paul Peter. Writing from Rome in around 63 64A.D. first century Nero is the emperor and Nero has it in for Christians. He hates Christians namely specifically because they won't bow the knee to to him. Now this was not just President men in charge emperors believed themselves to be gods capital G and they required worship of everyone in the Empire and Christians of course would only bow the need of Jesus so Peter is riding from Rome to everyone in the Roman Empire but specifically he's addressed this letter to be passed around in the churches of these provinces in what is modern day Turkey now.

[00:04:36] It's a large area. OK I want you to think North South Dakota Montana Idaho Washington Oregon parts of Nevada.

[00:04:48] That's how big this area is. Okay so and it's also a very rural area. Peter is writing to the believers that are scattered throughout these various provinces and just for my mind as I think about the fact that Peter was writing this to real people. OK people that are literally needing to brace themselves if you will against what Nero is unleashing throughout the Roman Empire and this particular province it was called Affinia. So this is now a modern day map of Turkey. I pointed this out a few weeks ago but I thought I'd kind of bring us back here too.

[00:05:32] I picked a dot on the map a place called Yena. Paths are all right straight up real place dot on the map. One of the cool things is you can drop a little yellow man into the map you know

you can do this right. And this is what you get. And I can't imagine Yena past our turkey.

[00:05:50] Ancient Affinia has changed much in 2000 years. Factis farmhouse looks like it was there back then. So this is a real place people lived here. And Peter is writing this letter to be circulated among numerous churches. I then thought OK just to kind of personalize this even more I googled farm wives of Turkey and I got one. This is one of the pictures that came up and I thought OK let's let's just single this woman out. I don't know her name but for the sake of illustration let's call her Elizabeth Elizabeth from Yenni Pazar.

[00:06:29] And let's imagine that Elizabeth lived in that farmhouse and she got saved someone came through the area and preached the gospel to her and she came to know Christ and then began attending a little house church there in the village. She's married her husband's a farmer he doesn't yet believe she has three kids you know. One's twenty one seventeen one's fifteen and she's she's trying to share faith with her kids as well. And Peter is in essence writing this letter to people just like Elizabeth who live in those days and he's saying to them it's not going to be easy. But praise God. Peter writes in verse 3 praise be to the God and Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ because in his great mercy he has chosen us to give us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus from the dead and into an inheritance. Elizabeth listen to me. You have an inheritance that can never perish spoil or fade. It's being kept in heaven for you.

[00:07:44] You're going to have to endure some some difficult times though. Elizabeth it's not going to be easy. You have to know who you are in Christ. You're going to have to understand how to respond in this world that is growing increasingly hostile.

[00:08:01] In fact next week we're going to shift gears out of the introduction and Peter for the rest almost the rest of. First Peter is addressing this question How do we respond to a difficult world.

[00:08:16] And Elizabeth you have to know what your future holds. And that's where Peter really lands if you will his introduction.

[00:08:26] He's really trying to drive home with Elizabeth and people like her and ultimately us we have to know what our future holds. He says in verse 6 and all this you greatly rejoice though for a little while you're going to have to suffer grief and all kinds of trials.

[00:08:46] But these trials are coming so that your faith may be proved genuine though you have not seen Jesus you know him you believe in him and are filled with glorious joy for you are receiving get this know where you're headed right.

[00:09:04] The Salvation of your souls the salvation of your soul.

[00:09:13] We are each made of unique parts our bodies our spirits our minds and emotion and our soul and the soul is the eternal part when we die our soul goes up to be either with Christ in glory or it goes into a place of separation from God ultimately a place of torment.

[00:09:40] The soul is the part of us that receives this great gift of salvation we ask you what is the most valuable thing that you have. What's the most valuable thing you have. And by thing I mean loosely thing.

[00:09:58] Because for a lot of people they think of things right of precious heirlooms or they think of you know jewels or gems as kind of the question of what if you knew you had a two minutes to get out of your house because it was burning down. What would you take with you.

[00:10:20] That question but in this case for those of us who are saved who know Christ the most valuable thing that we have far and away is our salvation or salvation. In fact just to drive that home even further a man named Francis Chan we've used his material here as curriculum on the Holy Spirit. He's a pastor a teacher speaker. Several years ago Francis Chan was giving an illustration. Of the great value of our eternal life with Christ and he used the illustration of a rope and I have just a little audio recording of it and someone added some graphics. Let's take a listen.

[00:11:12] Imagine this rope can pretend this rope just goes on forever. Now imagine that this rope. Is a timeline of your existence.

[00:11:24] You just exist forever. This is read part. This would represent your time on Earth. You've got a few short years here on.

[00:11:33] Earth.

[00:11:35] He's got all of eternity some work. And what blows me away is some of you always think about is this. Always. Think of our consumer.

[00:11:46] Man I can't wait to hear you know I'm going to work hard to save save save so I can really enjoy this more right here. You're consumed with your thinking on me when I get to travel. I'm going to do that during this part and like are you kidding me.

[00:12:03] This would have been what about all this stuff this is it's praising me because the Bible teaches that what I do during this little red part determines how I'm going to exist for millions and millions of millions of years for ever. So why would I spend this little red part trying to make myself as comfortable as possible enjoying myself as much as I can.

[00:12:27] Look I'm going to live my life for this mission. I'm going to spend my life invest my life for this moment when I cross that finish line.

[00:12:36] And forget about all the stuff I could enjoy.

[00:12:38] I'm not going to look around I'm going to be like a runner just looking at that moment when I face God because when I face him I don't get this chance over again we get one chance at this life honor. It can end at any second for any of us we've got one chance at this and then comes the turn of the people. Look at some of my decisions. Oh you're so stupid because that's going to really affect this.

[00:13:00] No you're stupid because it's going to affect all of that is sure he.

[00:13:07] I look at the way people live and I go Wow that is so crazy. You are so crazy. You're going to do that right now. Just enjoy right now. Not even knowing if you have a tomorrow and you think that's smart.

[00:13:32] It's quite a video isn't it. It's an eternal perspective in fact you can just google Francis Chan the rope illustration it'll it'll pull up maybe you can share that with a friend of yours that needs to know the fact that the most valuable thing that we can ever have ever possess is the gift of our salvation because we live not just for these few brief years on earth but for all of eternity. What is the most valuable thing and it is the gift of eternal life with Jesus Christ.

[00:14:12] How valuable is it. That's what Peter wants us to understand look back at first Peter chapter one verse ten. Well verse 9 4 you are receiving the end result of your faith the salvation of

your souls.

[00:14:26] Concerning this salvation Peter is now going to show with three illustrations of how valuable our salvation is and it begins with the fact that for millennium this salvation that is ours in Jesus the fact that Jesus was the one sent from God that he died on a cross that he gave his life for us that he was dead for three days that he rose again that he walked this earth for forty days that he ascended up in her glory that he sits at the right hand of God the Father. We know this is the gospel. If you didn't know that you know and now it's its history its reality it's its the truth of our salvation the basis of our salvation. But know this that. Fifteen hundred two thousand years. Abraham Moses David Elijah Kiel Isaiah Daniel Malakai all these great men of all. They didn't know this. They wondered what will this look like. They prophesied of a prophet that will come of a suffering servant David in a spirit of prophecy described in absolute detail in Psalm 22. What would happen to Jesus on the cross that they would divide his garments and yet he didn't know for sure what it would look like. We know it. This is the beauty of our salvation.

[00:16:05] Concerning this salvation the prophets who spoke of the grace that was to come to you Elizabeth to you gathered here today searched intently with the greatest care.

[00:16:21] I mean they dedicated their lives to understanding this trying to find out the time and the circumstance to which the spirit of Christ in them was pointing.

[00:16:36] When he predicted the suffering of the Messiah and the glories that would follow church this is how valuable this salvation is that the prophets longed to know what we know.

[00:16:54] It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you and me when they spoke of the things that have now been told to you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven.

[00:17:12] That's how precious this gospel is. This message of salvation. I can tell you when I was eight years old my father preached a message of salvation. He was a pastor and it stirred my heart and I remember to this day walking down that aisle giving my heart to Jesus. And that day I was born again.

[00:17:34] I was given the gift of salvation.

[00:17:36] On that day and for the last 40 whatever years I've been growing and learning and walking with Jesus Jesus but my salvation was was given to me by the for knowledge of God. The day that I was saved. What about you.

[00:17:53] What about you.

[00:17:55] Are you saved. Do you know Jesus.

[00:17:59] Have you invited Jesus into your heart. Have you by faith accepted this good news. You know what. Francis Chan describes he describes a world in which people sadly could care less.

[00:18:15] What difference does it make.

[00:18:19] Oh my goodness oh my lord because the second after they die they will realize that they missed it got it all backwards.

[00:18:36] They poured everything into the red little red part of the rope and they have eternity

separated from God.

[00:18:47] Church listen to me. This is the true we have been given a salvation in Jesus Christ.

[00:18:58] That when we trust Christ to forgive us of our sins we are given the gift of grace. Our sins are washed away.

[00:19:12] And we are adopted as children of God. You see God he's not going to force his salvation on anyone he knows. Yes who will choose him.

[00:19:32] But his knowing doesn't mean causing and you have the choice to to choose Christ and what Peter wants us to understand is the great value of this salvation that the prophets knew it was coming but didn't know when or how they didn't fully. Moses looked back at Deuteronomy 18. He predicted a prophet who would come and judge the world.

[00:20:02] David predicted a savior that would calm as I mentioned all of the prophets pointed to Jesus but they didn't know who or when.

[00:20:13] Second of all the holy spirit inspired both prophet and preacher. It's the same Holy Spirit.

[00:20:20] Get this the same holy spirit that is with us today and it is by the Holy Spirit that these truths are applied to our hearts. It's called conviction that when we hear this truth we believe we repent and believe it cuts to the core of our hearts. That is the work of the Holy Spirit.

[00:20:45] And thirdly you are receiving a salvation that even angels haven't understood what it says right. Look at verse 12.

[00:20:55] Even angels long to look into these things and I thought about that and that's that's that's crazy that the Angels the created angels of God.

[00:21:08] Angels were created before man and humankind ever entered this world. We know that Lucifer existed when Adam and Eve were in the garden and he had already fallen. And I thought wow Lucifer a fallen angels Satan he longs to look into these truths that even as Jesus walked this earth and gave his life on the cross Lucifer was in the dark about all of this he longs to understand and I'll tell you what he does not know when Jesus is coming back but he knows his time is short. For he knows that when Jesus returns his doom is see his doom as we are receiving a salvation that even angels haven't understood.

[00:22:08] Knowing where youre headed changes everything.

[00:22:17] Change is EVERYTHING changes the way we live changes our hope changes our perspective changes everything.

[00:22:27] We have the opportunity today to come to this table communion.

[00:22:33] Jesus instituted this celebration this remembrance and he took bread and he took cup and he said this bread is is my body that is broken for you.

[00:22:50] This cup is the new covenant in my blood he said. I tell you I will not drink from the fruit of this vine. From now on until the day when I drink it new with you in my father's kingdom we celebrate this.

[00:23:05] Looking back to the cross and looking ahead to the coming that's what we do as his children. This table is open to all of you as the bread and cup come by. I welcome you if your guest here today please feel at liberty to take the bread in the Cup however don't think for a second that by doing this it earns in any way your salvation. We cannot earn our salvation salvation comes by Faith and Faith comes by hearing the Gospel.

[00:23:42] So I invite you to take this. Maybe you're not saved today maybe right now even in this prayer in a moment. You want to give your life to Christ to receive him to apply his blood to your sin.

[00:23:58] And this act of faith and communion may be the first thing you do as a born again child of God. I welcome you to do that. Jesus we come before you right now. We thank you for the cross.

[00:24:13] We thank you for your amazing grace and love for us that you died in my place.

[00:24:20] That you suffered for me and that your blood pays the price of all of my sins. You satisfied the holiness of a righteous God. By dying on that cross for me and it is when I apply that blood to the doorframe of my heart by faith. And I say yes Jesus I believe I receive you. I thank you. I turned from my sin and I turned to you. And by faith Lord Jesus I thank you that I am a child of God born again. And it's in your name Jesus we pray.