



1 Peter

The Journey Home

Steering Toward Home

1 Peter 1:13-25

Message #3 of 12 – S679

Sermon given on March 6, 2016



Sunday Morning Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster

Steering Toward Home

1 Peter 1:13-25

Opening Comments

- Turn to **1 Peter 1**
- Today, we continue our series through the first letter from Peter – **The Journey Home**
- In the days of sailing ships the deck was about 20 feet above the water – could see about 15 miles
- To extend the distance they could see they would send a man up to the highest point on the ship – the crow’s nest
- Up there the sailor might be able to see up to 40 miles
- It is hard to imagine months at sea on an old sailing ship, with not a hint of land anywhere around you
- All the days run into one another, and frustration, boredom, terrible food, lousy living conditions
- The longer the trip went on, the harder it got
- And then suddenly the lookout cries out, ‘Land ho!’ and he points off into the distance
- Everyone on board strains to see what he see, but they can’t – they are too close to the water
- Peter has acted as our lookout in verses 1 to 12
- He pointed us toward heaven and said that is our home
- Peter is writing to people who are close to the water, life has been hard and they can’t see very far ahead
- On the ship when the lookout announced that land had been seen, everyone’s hopes would rise
- And Peter’s goal is the same, except our hope is the living hope of salvation in Christ Jesus – an eternal hope of an eternal home and an inheritance from the Father in heaven who loves us
- If you are able and willing to do so, please stand as we read today’s text as a sign of reverence for God’s Word
- Read **1 Peter 1:13-25**
- **Pray**

Teaching

- **Steering Toward Home**

- Once the lookout spotted the land, the helmsman would change course and steer toward it
- And that is what Peter is going to tell us to do, to change course and steer toward home – our home – heaven
- Steering toward home is an active thing - making conscious decisions and taking definitive steps

- First activities to Steer Toward Home – **Preparing your Mind**

- **1 Peter 1:13**

- Peter begins with a term that means nothing to our modern minds
- ‘gird up the loins of your mind’
- Is a term that has to do with how people dressed during that time
- They wore long robes, typically down to the ankles
- To work or fight they would gather up the bottom and tuck it into a belt to keep it from hindering them
- What Peter is saying, if you want to steer toward home, you need to get your mind ready to work and fight
- In Christianity we often talk about the heart, that God wants to and can change our heart – and that is true
- And ultimately the pathway to the heart is through the mind
- That’s why Paul said **Romans 12:2**

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

- If you want to change the course of your life, it will begin by letting the Spirit of God change your mind
- Peter also says, ‘be sober’ = don’t be intoxicated, but also implies meaning sober-minded – be clear-headed
- ‘rest your hope...’ – the grace = heaven
- Rest all your hope in heaven
- Our second activity to Steer Toward Home – **Change your Conduct**
- **1 Peter 1:14**
- Verse three says that God ‘has begotten us again’ = made us His children – verse 4 = inheritance

- As obedient children we will rest our whole hope on Jesus in heaven
- ‘not conforming’ = means you are going to live differently than you did when you didn’t know God and His Word
- The world is set up by the enemy of our soul to conform us into an image that is contrary to God

• God has a different plan for our lives **Romans 8:28-29**

We know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

- A sailing ship has to contend with the wind, waves, and currents as it tries to navigate
- We also have things in the world around us that threaten to take us off our course: trial, temptations, even our own desires can get in the way
- On the ship, the tool they use to resist those forces is a compass
- The compass helps them to see when they are getting off course so they can make corrections
- The purpose of a compass is to tell you which way north is
- We, in our journey need a compass to point us to true north

• **1 Peter 1:15-16**

- Our true north is God
- Peter quotes Leviticus, says God is holy
- What does it mean that God is holy – some say it means He is pure
- While that is true, it is too simple of a definition
- After all, there are a lot of things in this world that claim or are ‘pure’ – does that make them like God? Hardly!

• A more theological definition is this

Holiness is God’s transcendent majesty, his otherness, the sense that God is different from anything in the created order.

- God is perfectly pure morally and ethically in a way that is unlike anything else in the universe
- Peter tells us here, ‘you also be holy in all your conduct’
- This is not so much about you being perfect, but about you being different
- Different than you used to be, different than the world around you
- The question is, ‘How different does God want me to be?’

- Well, God wants you to be as different as Jesus was – He wants you to be like His Son Jesus
- I’m guessing that is an overwhelming thought for most people
- It was for some of Paul’s people also **1 Corinthians 11:1**
Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.
- Saying, if you are having a hard time figuring out how to live a holy life, a life like Jesus lived, find someone who is doing it and imitate them
- Most people are living lives without direction, just going wherever the wind blows
- Peter has told us where we are headed – going home to heaven
- To be good travelers, we need to get our mind prepared, take the journey seriously
- We also have a course – we are to travel by way of holiness – we do that by being like Jesus
- We do our best to live our lives the way Jesus would live it
- And if we are not sure how to do that, we need to find some help
- Like I said last week – circles are better than rows
- Get into a small group or into discipleship with another believer
- And then Peter reminds us that we are being watched
- **1 Peter 1:17**
- The word ‘stay’ near the end of the verse literally means, ‘the stay of a stranger in a foreign place.’
- Paul used this same word **Acts 13:17**
The God of this people Israel chose our fathers, and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt, and with an uplifted arm He brought them out of it.
- God is watching us to see how we are living this life He gave us
- Peter says, we should make this journey in fear – in fear?
- The key to understanding fear in this context is found in the word ‘Father’
- Peter didn’t call God, Almighty God, or something fearsome like that
- He used the familial title, Father
- It is not the fear of punishment - One commentator wrote
This is a fear of offending, disappointing, or misrepresenting, a fear born in reverence in a spirit of adoration.

- God is watching how we are living this life
- He is doing that because He gave a lot to save you and to make you a part of His family
- **1 Peter 1:18-19**
- All of us, before we became Christians, were living the lives that were given to us by our parents or by our circumstances
- And Peter says through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit that our conduct was aimless
- Aimless = empty, devoid of significance, point, or benefit – useless
- As Christ-followers, we have been bought out of that kind of lifestyle
- And the price was the highest price possible – the precious blood of Jesus
- Jesus had to die to save us from an aimless, pointless, useless life
- And we are being watched to determine if we are living a life worthy of that cost
- It has always been God’s plan to save us and give us a better life
- **1 Peter 1:20-21**
- Jesus died for the sins of the whole world, and for yours and mine
- And God raised Jesus from the dead
- And because of that we can have faith and hope in God
- Faith that God is going to do everything that His Word says that He will do
- And hope that throughout this journey we call life, God will be with us, and He will get us all the way to heaven, where we will be with Him and enjoy Him for all eternity
- Our third activity to Steer Toward Home – **Purify your Soul**
- **1 Peter 1:22**
- Peter gives us our motivation for purifying our soul – ‘love one another fervently with a pure heart’
- Love is important to God – 1 John = God is love **John 13:35**
By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.
- One another refers to Christians loving other Christ-followers
- Which Christians are we to love? All of them – especially the ones we have the closest relationships, and are sometimes the hardest to love

- Want you to notice that to love them fervently, they don't need to change – your soul needs to be purified more
- Three things you need to purify your soul
- First thing – **Willing to Obey**
- Obey what?– **The Truth** - The truth is God's Word
- Third thing we need – **The Holy Spirit**
- The Spirit empowers the Word of God within us, He is the one who inspired the authors to write it, and He is the one who enables us to obey it
- Love is not optional for Christians
- If you are struggling to love someone on your journey toward heaven, then you will probably need help purifying your soul
- The best place to do that is in a small group or in discipleship
- And the best time to do it is right now
- **1 Peter 1:23-25**
- Peter is quoting Isaiah to remind us that this life is short
- Don't waste any of the time God has given you – no one knows how much time he has left
- And don't wait to start steering toward heaven
- God wants to help you on your journey with Him and to heaven
- But He is not going to force you to live a better life, you have to be willing to do your part
- Prepare your Mind – get your mind ready to change the course of your life
- Change your Conduct – Imitate the life of Christ
- Purify your soul – Let the Holy Spirit teach you how to love others as God loves you
- Only you can change the course of your life
- Peter has pointed the way – now you have to decide if you will turn the wheel of your life and steer toward heaven – your eternal home
- Amen–**Pray**
- Join us tonight at the Sunday evening service at 6:00pm – How to Study the Bible – hope to see you there – having a potluck – sign up in the back