

Christ-like focus

Thank you, sir.

The man with the godan. That kind of rhymes.

The man with the godan. That was Reg's original guitar. Feedback a little bit.

Reg's original guitar. I don't know what you're hearing out there. Can you hear? Okay.

Anyhow, I'll let him make an adjustment as we go here.

I listened to Jamie this morning. This is not on my note. Don't start your watches yet. Listen to Jamie this morning. You know what he does a lot? He repeats. And I don't take that as a negative.

And you know, I see myself repeating a lot too. And I think it's maybe what God's just inspiring.

Maybe we need to hear things over and over again. And as you read that scripture this morning, or

this afternoon rather, Eddie, you can't hear that too often. You really can't hear that too often.

So thank you for that. Having the Christ-like focus. Eric mentioned that.

Thank you for that introduction, Eric. I'm going to go back a little bit, just for a page here.

On the Passover night, remember that? Right here. We all came together in unity.

To do what? To renew the covenant. We do that every year.

It's a solemn night. We know that. We follow Christ's humble example.

What do we do? The thing that stands out. We wash each other's feet.

It's something we don't normally do. If Eric came over to my place on a Saturday night, I'll guarantee you, him and I are not going to wash each other's feet. It just isn't going to happen. So we do that. Christ showed us the example. He washed all of his disciples' feet.

He started something new.

We all get that. We also went on a little further than that on that night. We ate, we took of the unleavened bread. representing what? His beaten body.

We drank also that night some red wine, representing the blood of Christ.

For what? The remission of sin. Because we are a sinful lot, aren't we? Yes.

We renewed the words of the Gospel of John. The ones that we promised at our baptism to live our

lives by. And this... Night ushered in the next part of God's perfect plan of salvation.

Right after that came the Days of Unleavened Bread. We had the night to be much remembered as well,

but the Days of Unleavened Bread came right after that. Now, before those days came to an end,

those seven days came to an end, we started to do something else. We started to count, didn't we? Forward to the very next. annual holy day, the very next appointed time.

And Christ, we knew, was on the cross for

quite a while, nine hours, something like that. Then he went into the grave for three days and three nights, being resurrected at the end of the Sabbath, just as the Sabbath ended.

It hadn't ended yet. He was resurrected.

Teaching us what? Because he was resurrected. teaching us that He was the very first of the

firstfruits. And it did not stop there, did it? Which brings us up to today.

Which day is today? In the count. 35, 7,

14, 21, 28, 35, 42, 49,

and presto, day 50, the very next day. It's a new beginning. Think about that.

Seven days of unleavened bread. then a new beginning. Very interesting,

isn't it? Think about the fall holy days. Seven days, we keep the feast.

What happens at the very end of the Feast of Tabernacles? Something else,

this isn't in my notes. Something else happens at the very end of the Feast of Tabernacles.

Another new beginning takes place. See how they coincide?

I'm getting goosebumps thinking about it. The last great day pictures what? Another new beginning.

The second resurrection. Back to my notes.

Entering through the narrow gate is what we want to do. That's where we're heading to.

Hearing those words, those famous words, those words that will bring us into eternal glory,

also fulfilling something else. Remember I said already that Christ was what? The first of the first fruits. We're following after him. We are going to follow up and also be first fruits.

Pretty exciting stuff. In the plan of the eternal, it's the chosen,

the elect of God, who are going to do what? The chosen and the elect of God are going to come up at

the seventh trump.

Got nothing to do with Donald. Coming up at the seventh trump.

Guess what? We haven't got there yet. We are still en route.

And this is what this 50 days pictures. Are you getting that picture?

Are you drawing a picture in your mind's eye of that? This is what these spring festivals are showing us. We know the church started on the day of Pentecost, yes. We're not going to talk about

Pentecost today. Now, in my last message,

if you remember, it was the last day of unleavened bread in Oshawa, somewhere there. I made a comment. I made a comment on that message saying that we wake up every morning.

What do we usually do? We look out the window to see what's going on out there.

It's just part of physical life. We want to know what's taking place outside in the environment.

We always want to know in this physical life what we're going to face that day.

Remember me saying that. I did say that. This is the part, and I said this too,

in our lives that we have absolutely no control over. Absolutely no control over that.

It's called the weather.

But what about the part that we do have control over? I mentioned that too.

This is a little bit of a review. What about the part that we do have control over?

Do you guys, do I, do we, do we really grab a hold of that and say,

you know what, I need to control this a little bit. Better.

Am I seeking? Are you seeking? When we come here on the Sabbath as a group,

we've got a pretty good group. Do we seek as a group to make these personal changes in our personal

lives, but not only that, in our congregational lives? It's important.

God sees everything. Sandy and I looked at it this week. He kind of sees everything. I don't know how it happens, but He knows what we're doing as to how He does it. If you figure it out, please let me know. Because I don't really have the answer to that situation. So what I want to bring out today in this message, this is in my notes, is the realization of where we are right now in the plan of God. For those of us who have been called out, and right now I think, how many is there here, doesn't? I think all of us feel right now in our guts. that we're being chosen. We're going to be chosen if we do something. Holding fast. I can see the smile. Holding fast to the end. And today's message, you ever heard of a laser-like focus or a razor's edge focus? Have you heard of that saying before? I have. I've caught myself a few times, by the way, with a razor's edge. It's sharp. Well, today's message, as Eric already mentioned, is having a... Not laser-like focus. Having a Christ-like focus. That's what we need to have. Now I brought out in messages that these 50 days that we are now in represent something. When I say, oh yeah, he has said that before. It represents the time in this life when we are growing in this grace and knowledge journey. This is the time between our baptism... And coming up at that seventh Trump, do you want to be there? Do I want to be there? Do we want to be there? Can you imagine coming up at that seventh Trump and we recognize everybody in this room? We're all there. We do a head count. There's Eddie. There's Brenna. There's Wilma. There's, oh, we're all there. I won't go through all the names. That's the exciting part about this. This first resurrection is the only one, brother, that we qualify for. Do we get that? Do I get that? My guess would be, I hope so. I really, truly hope so. Think about the covenant that we came into at our baptism. Every year, what do we do? We renew that covenant at the Passover service. And then what do we do immediately? No break in it. We move on to the days of unleavened bread where we're reminded to do something very, very incredibly important. If we don't do it, we won't come up at the seventh trump. We've got to put out the old man. We've got to put in the new man. I've got to put Eddie into my life. No. Oh, it can't be Eddie. It's got to be Reg. And if it's not Reg, it's Reg and Eric. No. They're not perfect. They're heading that way. We put our Messiah. We put the old man out. The Messiah takes the space. We don't leave the gap. No gaps. We're called to what? I say this quite often. But you really can't say it enough. We're called to perfection. None of us have that. But we're heading that way. Brethren, this process is of paramount importance because it readies us to be chosen and to be in that

first root elect group. When?

At the seventh trumpet.

It's so important. You can't read this stuff over quickly. You've got to think about this stuff.

It's important. And you know... was reading through Genesis this week.

I thought, I can't believe this.

I've almost forgot all this stuff. That's why Bible study. Remember last week, the two rocks? That's why those two rocks have to be in there all the time. Prayer, Bible study.

Prayer, Bible study. Not once a month. Daily. If we want to be in that

first resurrection, it's important. This is the training ground right here today.

Not tomorrow. Not next week. Not next year.

Now.

Let's go to Leviticus 23. Bit of a review, but I'm making a point here. Leviticus 23. This is for reference purposes here. None of us are in the grave yet.

The last time we checked right, we're not there.

Written right here in the book.

We're going to see this. It's going to jump right off the pages at you.

None of us are in the grave yet. That means right now would be the time.

to understand what this salvation process entails and how the plan of God is laid out for each and

every one of us in our personal lives. Now, why do I say that?

In our personal lives, I'll guarantee you this, I am not going to skid into the kingdom on Eddie Crookes' coattails. I'm going to be judged of my own work. And that applies to everybody.

None left, Doug. Now all the annual Holy Days, Leviticus 23, we see there, they're all in perfect order. You don't need to search through them to find the order. They're all there recorded for us to see in plain sight. Written there, Leviticus 23 verse 1, and I quote,

and the Lord spoke to Moses.

And the Lord spoke to Moses.

That has never been taken out of the way. Saying, verse 2, speak to the children of Israel and say

to them, The feasts of the Lord, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, these are my capitalized, my is capitalized, these are my feasts.

These are, I'm adding to it now, my appointed times. God makes it so clear, doesn't he? These are my feasts. No ifs, no ands, and absolutely no buts.

God starts off here in Leviticus 23 as well with something else.

Well, it's really not something else. It is the way it is. With the weekly feast days.

You know, today is a feast day.

52 of them throughout the year. If you want to look at your calendar and count them all up. 52 of

them. This is the weekly feast day. The Sabbath day. Right there in verse 2.

Taking place at the beginning when? Of every seventh day of the week.

Running clear through from Friday sundown till Saturday sundown. we have come to understand that

this period of time is also holy time unto God.

And we will see on the very, well, carrying on from there, from verse 3, for the next page and

almost a half, ending there in verse 44, what does it say?

Verse 44, Leviticus 23, right at the very end. So Moses,

Coming from God, of course. So Moses declared to the children of Israel, these are my feasts.

These are the feasts of the Lord.

Declared to the children of Israel. These are the feasts of the Lord.

Now, here we see the holy festivals of God written in this book.

They're all there.

Right here. And I got this new book this week. And the Bible in English has been translated into something like 300 and some odd different. Renditions. Brandon's got a new international version

there. It was a pile of other ones. What a...

How can I put it? What a blessing. Just in the English language to have that many renditions of it.

Just incredible.

These are my feasts. Not one of us can find any other annual holy days or weekly holy days in the

Bible other than those ones that we're seeing there in Leviticus 23. Not there.

God clearly tells us. These are my feasts. And we've come to understand that just is not enough to

know about them.

It's all fine and well. Oh yeah, I know about those feasts. It's not enough to just know about them.

Where does he enough? Where does that sit? It becomes enough when we actually keep them.

Actually do them. Actually put them into play. How many? Half? Three quarters?

Reg said it right. We're called to be all in. None left out.

None of the holy days are left out. That's what it is. I didn't make the rules. You didn't make the rules. A congregation here in Cort Lakes does not make any rules. We follow the rules.

It's like playing the game of baseball. Three strikes and you're out. Nobody else says four.

It's three. So

we're to be keeping them. This is built in. To the will of God, it's built in, brethren.

It's not my will.

It's the truth of God. It is their will. God the Father and Jesus Christ. They're the ones we're following here. We fully realize and understand that God is in the process of what? Of creating His

own personal family to become like Him. We're it. I've mentioned this so many times.

Somebody has to be it. Somebody has to be first.

God the Father and His Son have set out. They're a perfect plan, showing us the plan through the

weekly Sabbath and the annual Holy Days. And you don't just learn it the first year completely.

It takes a while. It takes a while. We all know that. Let's have a look at 1 Peter.

1 Peter, the first chapter. Because the journey continues forward one step at a time.

And just any old step will not do. We all need to be walking.

In the light, right? Christ's own words. We're going to 1 Peter 1. In John the 12th chapter it says

this, that we are to walk in the light for the one who walks in darkness hasn't got a clue as to where he's going. I changed it a little bit. The one who walks in darkness does not know where he

is going. Hasn't got a clue is the same idea.

That's John 12 verse 35 if you want to write that down. Our calling is to become children of light.

That's the next verse, verse 36. We're going to 1 Peter 1. During the days of our Lamb of Bread, we understood the instructions to be getting rid of something, which is called sin, be putting on the righteousness of Christ. That is something we work through during these 50 days

or 50 years, we could put it.

For each day is a year. We've heard that before.

Very interesting. We consider these things.

We're perhaps realizing that there's nothing easy about this. We heard a message a few weeks ago

that a man or woman,

as we strive through this cycle we're in right now, we strive through it,

it's not easy. Because the old man resurfaces or the old woman resurfaces every once in a while.

It happens. It comes with our daily life. It's called human nature.

And if we're honest, we must admit, we all struggle quite a bit with this,

don't we? Because with this calling, this covenant, we've entered into what comes, trials, and difficult, difficult situations at times.

A lot of times they're human situations. A loved one might die. That's not easy. I remember somebody here going through that. A couple people here going through that. It was not easy.

We

overcome these things, and we have to overcome. We have to continually strive to become like Christ, become like the Father, which is perfect, right until the very end.

Right until maybe our very last, well, not maybe, right until our last breath, or if Jesus returns first. I'm hoping it's the second one.

So, 1 Peter. This entire epistle of 1 Peter is loaded,

absolutely loaded with pertinent information, built on what was told here last week by one of our

members, built on hope that has a foundation of faith as well.

And that's how

we need to respond, in hope through our faith. Because you know what? It's all faith.

It's all faith.

Which, if we respond correctly, determines... The result,

which is what? Having the Christ-like form. That is the key,

isn't it? Look at this in 1 Peter, the first chapter. We'll pick it up in verse 4.

1 Peter 1, verse 4. Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the pilgrims of the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,

who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father,

in the sanctification of the Spirit, for what? For obedience and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, grace and peace be multiplied to you.

Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again unto a living hope,  
through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,  
unto an inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled,  
that does not fade away. Where is that?  
Reserved in heaven for you. So we read that,  
we consider that. Christ is going to be returning to the earth with some rewards, some fantastic  
rewards. We can't relate to it. Verse 13. Here's what it tells us to do.  
Gird, 1 Peter 1, verse 13. Therefore,  
gird up the loins of your mind. It always comes with thought, doesn't it?  
Gird up the loins of your mind. Be sober, especially spiritually.  
Be sober and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you.  
At what? At the revelation. Of Christ. Of Jesus Christ. That's what we're waiting for.  
As obedient children. Not conforming yourselves to the former lusts.  
As in your ignorance. But as he who called you is holy.  
You also be holy.  
In just some of your conduct. No. No cigar there.  
In all of your conduct. Be holy in all of my conduct.  
Be holy in all of our conduct. That's what it is. That's the calling. That's the deal.  
Why? Because it is written. Be holy, for I am holy.  
That's coming out of Leviticus 11. It's written back in Leviticus 11.  
So we cannot, brothers and sisters, throw out the Old Testament,  
as we call it. It's all there first. Right? Written there first.  
So here we see... The written word of Peter to the Jews on this day.  
When we consider what is being said here, this applies to all the body of Christ down through  
time.  
Like the Jews that were exiled for sure, because they lived as strangers in that surrounding  
culture they lived in. They were of what they referred to as the...  
diaspora, the diaspora is how you pronounce that, the dispersion of the Jewish people. They  
were  
dispersed out beyond Israel, pointing to God's people who shared values other than the ones in  
the  
surrounding area did. They were different. They lived in a strange area.  
They weren't living as God, these people in the Iran, right? Now, this diaspora in the Greek  
means  
simply a scattering. No question about it, there has been,  
brothers and sisters, a scattering of Jewish people for sure, as well as a scattering of God's  
elect, all down through time, even right to today. That's why fellowship is really super hard to  
come by sometimes. We're lucky to have this. I wouldn't say lucky. We're blessed to have this,  
is a better way of putting it. Now, the physical life we're now in boils down to taking The  
character and conduct of Christ. Right? Boils down to that.  
Our callings are to come out and to use the word, to use the Bible, right here.  
I've got a new King James up here with me. To use that to guide and direct our lives.  
Remember what Jesus did, though. When he was in the flesh, he stayed close to somebody.

And that somebody was the Father. He stayed close to the Father to be able to be led. through this existence that he had at that point in the flesh. Remember it says there that he was tempted at all points like we are, but yet without sin. In order to have that, he had to stay close to somebody. And it wasn't anybody physical. It wasn't any other human being.

He had to stay close to the Father. And that's what we need to do too, to Christ and the Father. Stay close to them. That's really the way of success right there.

It's the only way, really, when you think about it. of being successful and carrying out this plan we've been called to.

This is a foundational basic idea of what we're doing. We need to stay close to the two of the Godhead. This is a journey we've been called to. It's not an easy journey.

Not an easy journey. We're in school to learn to do them. How? By fearing God.

What does that mean? Fear God? I've talked about it before. We've heard it before many times. It's by hearing. It's by obeying. That's what it is. Fearing God.

Hearing and obeying.

And we do that as best we can every step of the way. How?

Through the precious blood of Jesus Christ. It's only done that way. We're still in 1 Peter 1.

Take a look at 1 Peter 1, verse 22. And I quote,

Having purified your lives, by obedience to the truth unto unhyprocritical,

that's in the center column reference if you have a New King James, unto unhyprocritical brotherly

love through the Spirit. Love one another fervently with a pure heart.

We all do pretty good at that as a congregation.

For you have been, it says born again maybe, begotten.

You have been begotten not from a corruptible seed, but from the incorruptible seed by the living

Word of God, which remains forever. And to add to this,

since we're close by, let's also consider another section of Scripture. 1 John 4, just a few pages ahead. 1 John 4, and I'm going to read 20 and 21.

Just a few pages ahead. 1 John 4, 20 and 21. If somebody says it starts off there Well, I love God,

but he hates his brother.

The very next thing it says, this one is a liar. He or she, says he, he is a liar.

For the one who does not love his brother, whom he can see, how can he love God, whom he has not seen? Verse 21, 1 John 4.

And this commandment we have from him, that he who loves God must also love God. brother also. Thus, having the Christ-like focus.

I put that at the end. That's my own addition to that. Back now in 1 Peter 1 again.

Just back again where you came from. 1 Peter 1, chapter 2. Having this Christ-like focus is sometimes not easy to come by because we face the reality and it's this.

Not one of us sitting in this room would ever, ever, ever enjoy persecution when it comes our way.

Ever been persecuted? When it comes your way, you do not like it. When it comes my way, I don't like it either.

Let's remember the calling into the Christian life. A life that what? Models Jesus Christ. Christian. Christian, right? Christ's name's in there. The Christ-like life models Christ. What does that entail? modeling Christ because we don't see him we got the book but we don't see

him well doing our very best to walk as Christ walked shows us that in the word this is something

we all need to be putting on and you know persecution can do one of two things it can either cause

growth because you had to go through this it's like pedaling your bike up you're pedaling your bike

on the flat And you come up to this big hill a month later, you've never pedaled up a hill before and you can't make it. You wonder why, because you've never done it. Right? That's kind of the idea. But when you have that persecution, and you're persecuted, and you overcome it. You overcome the persecution. What did it do to you? It caused growth. Because it was difficult.

Right? But, if you don't overcome, if you don't get up the hill, in other words, you can cause something else. Betterness.

And that's going the other way. That's going the wrong way. That's going up the one-way street the

wrong way. If you can picture that. You see it on TV all the time. Not only get killed, but if you tried it, it wouldn't last very long. So, our response to the persecution, our response to the trials, our response to these situations is, if it's a good response, it determines and brings about a good result. That's what we want.

Remember the words on the other side of the narrow gate. Remember those words. That's what we want to hear.

So, when? Here it is. When do we actually stumble?

Sonia asked me that. When do we actually stumble? Well, Peter tells us here in this letter that we

stumble when, 1 Peter 2, verse 8, in the last part we read.

Here it is. 1 Peter 2, verse 8. They stumbled being disobedient to the word to which they were appointed.

Stumbling at the word.

I've got another translation for that.

Read me, who's got a New King James? Read me that, 1 Peter 2, verse 8.

A stone of stumbling and a rock of offense. Okay, mine's different. Same idea.

I just want to make sure I wasn't reading the wrong verse. Thank you for that.

They stumbled being disobedient to the word to which they also were appointed. A little different,

isn't it? Same idea. Now, here comes what it should be.

Let this sink in. Reading this now out of the faithful version.

1 Peter 2 and verse 9. Write your name in here.

And I quote, 1 Peter 2 verse 9. But you. are a chosen,

your Bible will say generation. But think about that. You're a chosen generation.

I'm reading it like this. You are a chosen stock.

See the difference? Generation stock. You're a chosen stock.

A royal priesthood. A holy nation. A people for possession of God that you might proclaim His excellent virtues. who called you out of what? Remember we talked about that earlier?

Called you out of darkness into what? Something else that was totally different.

Into His marvelous light, who once were, here's where we were,

not of people, but now you are the people of God, who had not received mercy when you were in

darkness, but now have received mercy. End of quote.

And yeah, it is an amen.

Consider this. The calling goes out. Not to all.

We know the calling goes out to many.

But it's only the few. Right? It's only the few who make the right responses to this calling that you and I have received. You don't see 73,000 people crammed into this room. You see a dozen.

A dozen people out of all these people. Many called, few chosen. But it's up to us to make it through the narrow gate.

Think of the Israelites and how God rescued them from Egypt. You know something?

He rescued them from Egypt, brought them out with a high hand, and every one of them had potential

to cross over the Jordan.

Every last one of them.

But they didn't, did they?

Ancient Israel. Curse themselves. Curse themselves into the grave.

Can you relate to that? Can you understand that? Choices make every difference.

We have to be making choices. Guess what kept them out? The two biggest things.

I'm going to prove it to you in Ezekiel. Idolatry.

Do you know what the other one was? Say it louder. Sabbath breaking. Do we know that?

Let's see the proof of that. Ezekiel the 20th chapter. Ezekiel 20.

Let's turn there. We'll see it written there. Plain writing. It's not rocket science writing.

Real simple.

Ezekiel 20, ancient Israel removed from Egypt. However, Egypt was hard,

if not impossible, to get out of these people. It doesn't mean to say God changed his mind either, by the way. You can read about this account, the whole thing, later on.

I'm going to touch on a few verses here. It's Ezekiel 20, 1 to 24. I'm going to read just the highlighted parts. I've got it all written in my notes here, but I'm going to read the highlighted parts I've got here. In verse 1 it says, And it came to pass in the seventh year, Ezekiel 20, verse 1,

in the fifth month, the tenth day of the month, he names it exactly,

that some of the elders of Israel came to ask of the Lord and sat before me. Now who's me?

That's Ezekiel.

Down to verse 6.

We'll say verse 7. But before I read that, some of this is very,

very serious dialogue that took place back there. between Ezekiel and the elders of Israel. Pick it up in verse 7 now. And then I said to them, let each man throw away the abominations of his eyes.

What would that be? We'll get to it in a minute. And do not defy yourselves with the idols of Egypt. I am the Lord your God. And verse 8, and they rebelled. Can you imagine it?

And they rebelled against me. It would not hearken to me.

They did not throw away the abominations of their eyes, nor did they forsake the idols of Egypt. And I said, I will pour out my fury against them to fulfill my anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt. And verse 12, it carries on. You can read that section there between it later.

Verse 12, and also God gave them

Something else. And also, I gave them my Sabbath. We read about that earlier. Leviticus 23.

I gave them my Sabbath to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord who

makes them holy. It says sanctify. Same idea. Verse 13. But the house of Israel rebelled against me

in the wilderness. They did not walk in my statutes,

and they despised my ordinances, which if a man does,

He shall even live in them. And they greatly, it says here,

polluted my Sabbaths. And I said, I will pour out my fury on them and the wilderness destroy them.

And you read on down a little more about yourselves. We'll pick it up in verse 19. Why? I am the

Lord your God. Walk in my statutes and keep my ordinances and do them. And keep my Sabbaths.

How? Holy. And they shall be a sign between me and you. that you may know that I am the Lord your

God. But the children of Israel, what did they do?

Rebelled against me. They did not walk in my statutes,

nor keep my ordinances to do them, the ordinances which if a man do,

he shall even live in them. And they polluted my Sabbaths. And I said,

I will pour out my fury on them. to fulfill my anger against them in the wilderness.

Nevertheless, I withdrew my hand and worked for my name's sake,

that it should not be polluted in the eyes of the heathen, in whose eyes I brought them out.

So they weren't showing a very good example, were they?

Verse 23, And I also lifted up my hand to them whereabouts?

In the wilderness. swearing that I would scatter them among a heathen and scatter them throughout

the lands because they had not done my ordinances, but had despised my statutes,

had polluted my Sabbaths, and their eyes were what? After their father's idols.

End of quote. There it is. That's what they did. Sabbath breaking and idolatry.

That's what really kept them out.

Pretty basic, isn't it? Well, it's not basic. Human nature is not basic.

Thinking of today, is there really anything, brothers and sisters,

taking place under the sun here on planet earth? Is there anything different taking place?

This day we are keeping is a true seventh day Sabbath of God.

The only day the two of the Godhead have ever instituted as what?

As holy time. There's no other days.

Any other day, here's what it would be. If you got another day, what are you doing?

It's idolatry. You're telling God you got something better. That's idolatry. That's rank idolatry.

Any other day would be to tell God that he's wrong. God, you're wrong and I'm right. That's going

on all around us.

Let's not kid ourselves about that.

You and I have done this. We've studied this subject forwards.

backwards, upside down, and probably even sideways.

Haven't we? That's why we're all sitting here. That's why we're all coming here every seventh day.

That's why we're all contributing. That's why we're all trying to grow in grace and knowledge and

hear those famous words behind the narrow gate. Well done. Well done. What, Reg? Good and faithful

servant. Welcome to the joy of the Lord. I can't say that loud enough. I get excited thinking about

it.

We've all looked at this particular subject very carefully, in other words. And have come away with

what? It can't be anything else than having a Christ-like focus.

That's what it is.

Milo said, don't say that. But I'm not making it up.

I'm not making it up. We have to have the Christ-like focus.

Let's go back to 1 Peter again. We last read in 1 Peter 2,

verse 10. That was the last reading in 1 Peter. 1 Peter 2, verse 11.

1 Peter 2, 11 says this, and it points out that we're living in this world of strangers and sojourners. We're wandering, right? We're wandering in this land of unrighteousness, basically, is

what we're doing. But we're restraining ourselves against these fleshly lusts,

these fleshly desires. That all these fleshly lusts and desires, what do they have? They have the potential to pull us all away.

This is tough stuff. It's not easy. This epistle continues on to show us the way forward.

And as our journey continues, we realize this. We're not in this.

The calling is not to have cursings upon ourselves. The calling is to have what?

Just exactly the opposite. Blessings. I'm sure Reg doesn't come here to be cursed.

I'm sure Eddie doesn't come here to be cursed. I know for sure I don't. We're coming here to receive blessings. There's blessings for obedience.

Yeah. A little further ahead. First, where did I say? I read, I told you about verse 11, but look at 1 Peter 3. I just pointed out verse 11 to you.

It's the only one I wanted there. But 1 Peter 3, I'll read it, 8 and 9. 1 Peter 3, 8 and 9. Now the

goal is that all of you be of what? A whole bunch of different minds. Nope. Be of one mind, sympathizing, loving the brethren, compassionate and friendly. We do a great job at that. You think I'm reading this to correct you? No, I'm congratulating you.

Compassionate, friendly, not rendering evil for evil or abuse for abuse, but instead a blessing, not a curse, a blessing. That's why we're doing so well, because we're serving each other. Knowing that you were not called to this, but you were called to inherit just what I was talking about. Not a curse. We're called to inherit a blessing. That's it.

1 Peter 3, now verse 18. We also come to realize that Christ, 1 Peter 3, 18, Christ suffered once for sins. He was the just.

That's Him. For who? For the unjust. That's us. So that...

might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the Spirit.

Pretty amazing. Imagine the surprise on the apostles' mindsets when he was in the grave three days

and three nights and came back to life and was with him for 40 days.

Something just incredible.

1 Peter 4, this time. Verse 1 and 2. Therefore,

and I quote, Since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, tells us to do something very important here. Arm yourselves also with the same mind. There it is.

It's that Christ-like focus, right?

For the one who has suffered in the flesh has also finished living in sin.

And when we do that, we become perfect. That's the end goal right there.

Verse 2. To this end, there it is, to this end, that he no longer lives in remaining time in the lusts of men,

but to the will of God. Isn't that powerful?

How are we doing? How am I doing? How are we doing? I think we're doing pretty good.

This journey, pictured by these 50 days,

this count we're involved in, is one, brethren, of transformation. It will only be the Spirit of God. that will shape us into vessels of God's choosing.

You're on the potter's wheel being shaped into this fantastic vessel that God wants to shape you in.

Where our thinking is on the plane of holiness.

Remember we said earlier, be holy for I am holy. Let's go to 1 John 5 this time.

I'm going to read from 11 to 13 there. 1 John 5. So the important question to honestly answer is, am I really in the transformation process that will carry me across the finish line into the coming

kingdom, 1 John 5 we're going to? Because I'll tell you something what it says in Romans 8, verse 29. It informs us that the task at hand is to be in the growth mode through the perfection of

Jesus Christ. The victory, brethren, is to overcome the world.

1 John 5, verse 11, and I quote, And this is the witness that God has given us eternal life.

And this life, where is it? It's in His Son, in the perfection.

The one who has His Son has something really, really special. The one who has His Son has eternal

life. The one who does not have the Son does not or will not have eternal life.  
life.

These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God in order that you may

know that you have eternal life. Let's become believers in that.

And that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God because we are under difficult

times here in the end. It's going to get a lot worse. You think it's bad now? Brace yourself.

Brace yourself.

When God offered us eternal life, He was offering something that was very unique, only unto Himself, nobody else. Nothing else in the universe can offer us that.

A very much amount of difference from the way of life that we were living before our calling. That was the way of darkness. We talked about that a little bit earlier. At that time, guess what?

We were all dead. in trespasses and sins, because we are living a life that what?

That produced death. The soul that sin shall die.

Those still in the world continue to live that same kind of life that we've come out of.

Living by what? By basic, what we refer to as human nature.

That separates everybody who live that way. That separates from the close contact that any of these

people or if we were doing it that we would have with the Godhead. We don't want to be separated.

Remember how Christ made it? How did He do that? By staying close to Reg and Eddie.

No, I said that earlier. By staying close to only His Father.

Yep, there it is.

We walk as friends as Christ did. Because why? We agree with Him about this calling that we've been

given. And we do our best to remain where? Right beside him.

Not miles behind. Not two mountains behind. No, right beside him.

If not, we're not doing that walking in his footsteps. Maybe it'd be something else we could consider. And you know what? This is not easy to do. But, if we're seriously working towards it,

God's going to give us, He's going to take us from one degree of glory to another.

Now, if you want to talk about that later, you'll find that scripture in a second. Corinthians 3 verse 18. God takes us from one degree of glory to another.

2 Corinthians 3 verse 18. In our imperfect human state, we still try to do things of our own power and our own way.

I know. I do. I look in the mirror and see that in myself. I look in the spiritual mirror. I see that. It's not easy. Behind the scenes of all this, though,

God has a perfect way. He has a perfect plan, and we need to indoctrinate that into our lives.

That's what we're trying to do. And it all comes through His timing, right? All comes through as time. We're growing in grace and knowledge. We strive to stay on track by growing in grace and

knowledge. And we use it through this right here. Through this book.

And we do our best with it. We do our best with it.

We're imperfect in the human state. We know that we're human.

We're just in the flesh. That's just the way it is. What a blessing though, as I've already said, to have it translated. in the English language for us, to have it all right before us. The apostles never had that. I'm getting close to the end. Let's go to Proverbs 3. Proverbs 3,

I'm going to read verses 5 to 8. Let's turn there. And as a Christ-focused follower, there is something we can do that

will, if there's something we are doing that points us away from our walk with Christ, then It's not the right direction. Turn around and go the other way. We do that from time to time.

Remember this memory scripture. And you're going to Proverbs 3. Remember the memory scripture.

I think Sandy used it here a week or so ago. We're supposed to do this. Seek first the kingdom and

doing his righteousness. And that means doing what's right because that right is a root word of righteousness. So seek first the kingdom of God. and His righteousness, and all these things are going to be given to you. It goes along with what we're going to read now in Proverbs 3, verses 5

and 6. And I quote, trust in the Lord, verse 5, with all your heart, and lean not, or lean not rather, unto your own understanding.

In all your ways, acknowledge Him, that's capitalized, and He shall direct your paths.

Do not be wise in your own eyes. Fear the Lord and depart from evil or depart from sin.

Why? It will be health to your flesh and strength to your bones.

End of quote. Now, these verses are all about putting Christ and His will as number one or first, in other words, in our lives. The two of the Godhead need to have us.

putting them first into our thoughts and into our plans. Remember where it tells us,

and I'm going to quote Philippians 4 here right now, 6 and 7. You don't need to turn there. This will be my last scripture for today. But Philippians 4, 6 and 7 says this.

Be anxious for nothing,

but in everything, how? By prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving,

letting your requests. be known to God. And the peace of God,

which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Jesus Christ.

That's an important portion of Scripture. And you can read on beyond that.

It gets even better. I'm not going to quote it.

End of quote there, by the way. And I've already mentioned this. I want to mention it again.

Because it bears us being really serious and thinking about this. A couple of sermons ago, it was Mike James up here on the screen behind me. He said, every once in a while,

the old man, the old woman is going to show up. And we've got to push back on that.

It doesn't always come real easy, does it? We've got to push back on that sort of thing so that it doesn't roll over us and take us out of the play.

Growing in Christ, growing in the Father, growing in the truth, growing in this word that we use all the time is the number one purpose.

We have to actually regard it as a vocation of our lives right now.

We're done with the old stuff.

This is a premier calling we've been given. It's what's most important.  
We want to get a touchdown, don't we?  
We want to kick a field goal, however you want to score the goal, however you want to put it.  
That's what we want. This game is serious. It's life. It's a game of life.  
If you don't make it into life, guess where you're going to make it? There's only one other guess.  
Death. Life or death. That's what it is. We are coming close to the last days of man's rule where  
eternity in God's presence is going to begin. It's not that far down the road.  
Now, until that time, we continue in God's ordained and led sanctification process.  
Right? We continue in that. It's no small thing. He began it in us the moment He drew us to  
Himself  
in Christ. He drew us to Christ. There's the perfection there. Follow that. That's really what it  
is. Brethren, God wants to call us beloved ones.  
That's what He wants to call us.  
Let's enjoy every moment of our walk with God the Father and our Messiah Jesus. As the mold  
changes  
what we are into the mold that they're choosing and that they create us to be.  
And right now, we're not there yet, but we hold that first fruit status that is so,  
so important. It's all in Christ. Being continually faithful,  
staying close to God, studying His Word, remaining eagerly prayerful will be our response back  
to  
them as we press forward. toward the upward call that God has given us through Jesus Christ.  
And I love that, Eddie, what you said earlier. Just a closer walk with thee.  
When you said that, let's focus on the words. Well put,  
sir.  
Let's be dedicated to having a Christ-like focus as we come closer and closer and closer to the  
narrow gate and enter into eternity and the God family.  
that awaits us. It's going to be a fantastic time. I hope that was helpful.  
I will pass it back to our worship leader, Eric.