

2Peter 3:7-9 "Time Keeps On Slippin'.... Into The Future"

**2 Peter 3:7-9** <sup>7</sup> But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. <sup>8</sup> But do not let this one *fact* escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day. <sup>9</sup> The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.

This last section of 2Peter, as we have seen, concerns the last days prior to Christ's second coming. But, this is in connection to the false teachers who will be prevalent in the last days which is associated with the apostasy of the church that Paul speaks of in 2Thessalonians.

**2 Thessalonians 2:1-3** <sup>NAU</sup> Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, <sup>2</sup> that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. <sup>3</sup> Let no one in any way deceive you, for *it will not come* unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction,

You'll remember that this is where Peter was going in the second chapter.

2PE 2:1 "But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you...."

And so, we don't want to lose sight of Peter's warnings here when we talk about the last days. He wants us to understand that until Christ comes again we still have to contend earnestly for the faith in a world where false teachers of every stripe are contending against the truth found in Christ. But as Peter makes clear in our text, these false teachers and all ungodly men, will find a day in which Christ will return to judge the living and the dead.

The very process of contending for the faith necessarily means that we are expectant of our Lord's return. That's part of our faith in Christ; that His promises concerning this aspect of our salvation will certainly come to pass. And if we are expectant than our hopes run high and our assurance is sure, together with the joy of

knowing that, despite the trials in this world, we have a God and Savior who is coming back to take us to Himself.

This is what Peter is trying to instill in every believer, that despite the opposition from the enemy, despite the hardships we all face, despite the false teachers who would try to undermine our faith, our Lord still loves us, is still faithful, and wants us to follow Him despite whatever else is going on around us.

Those people whom Peter addresses in his day really struggled with much of this. Many of them were believing Jews who were ostracized from their families and were also looked down upon by the Gentile world to the extent that many of them were being persecuted for their faith.

Peter is trying to get them back on their feet and walking forward, doing the work of the gospel, while maintaining their sense of spiritual balance in a world which seemed to be out of balance.

He didn't want them to lose that sense of balance and purpose simply because someone came along and tried to rattle their cage with words and threats that Jesus had abandoned them and had no intention of coming back for them.

And that's why Peter uses this time reference in his argument. He knows we live in a world restricted to time and that time affects every moment of our lives, and so when someone comes along and says, "Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation," we don't have to be swayed because we trust in the God who created time and uses it to His glory.

When it comes to time Peter wants us to understand that the problem is not with God, it's with the scoffer who looks at time purely from a temporal perspective and loses sight of what God has done in time in the past, which will effect what He will do in time in the future, as His plan is unfolded. And that's what we saw last week.

2PE 3:5-6 "But they deliberately forget that long ago by God's word the heavens existed and the earth was formed out of water and by water. 6 By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed."

The past is not to be forgotten, though it is not meant to be lived in, in the sense that we never move forward with our lives. But the past is important because it shows us that the sure plan of God will

unfold in the future. And that's where Peter is going in our text this morning.

**2 Peter 3:7-9** But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. <sup>8</sup> But do not let this one *fact* escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day. <sup>9</sup> The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.

Here, we see into the future with the help of God's sure word. The future is that there will be a day when God will bring this present world to an end, though it is being kept, in tact, for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. After that time there will no longer be a need for the world in its present condition which has been effected by the curse of sin.

Peter also brings this out in verse 10 of our text.

2PE 3:10 "But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare." (Or be burned up)

We'll visit this verse next week in more detail as we continue in this study, but suffice it to say, that the present world we know, will one day no longer exist. Just as God destroyed the world the first time with water, the future judgment of this present, sin filled, cursed world, He will completely transform it into an inhabitable paradise for all the redeemed saints in their glorified bodies.

By the way, this fiery judgment was spoken of in a number of places in the O.T. Scriptures.

DEU 32:22 "For a fire has been kindled by my wrath, one that burns to the realm of death below. It will devour the earth and its harvests and set afire the foundations of the mountains."

ISA 34:4 "All the stars of the heavens will be dissolved and the sky rolled up like a scroll; all the starry host will fall like withered leaves from the vine, like shriveled figs from the fig tree."

ZEP 1:18 "Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to save them on the day of the LORD'S wrath. In the fire of his jealousy

the whole world will be consumed, for he will make a sudden end of all who live in the earth."

And so, it's not as though this is a new teaching which only N.T. saints were privy to. Peter is essentially teaching what he had been taught as a Jew all his life. Here he expands on it a bit as the Holy Spirit inspires him to write. He then goes on to explain something else about time.

2PE 3:8 "But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day."

This is a text which we've all heard at one time or another. And it's usually associated with God's eternity, which is certainly the case. But, there's more here that we should address.

Notice what Peter says at the beginning of this verse. "But do not forget this one thing..." I also like the way the NASB puts it. "But do not let this one thing escape your notice..."

The implication is that there is a tendency not to meditate on this important aspect of God's nature and His involvement in the life of man who is restricted to time in this world.

And so, Peter is pointing this out with the specific purpose of having us dwell on this and to remember the truth about who God is. Remembering certain truths is one of those exercises that God is always reminding people to do.

Since the beginning God has done this. When He gave the promise to Adam and Eve that He would send a Savior to crush the power of Satan through the seed of the woman they were also given the promise that God would curse the ground because of their sin.

Evidently, this curse on the ground was something which was not to be forgotten, but rather, passed on to future generations. We see this many years later as being remembered in the case of Noah's father.

GEN 5:28-29 "When Lamech had lived 182 years, he had a son.  
29 He named him Noah and said, "He will comfort us in the labor and painful toil of our hands ***caused by the ground the LORD has cursed.***

Even God Himself recognizes the importance of remembering when He made a promise to Noah after the flood.

GEN 9:15-17 "I will remember my covenant between me and you and all living creatures of every kind. Never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all life. 16 Whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and all living creatures of every kind on the earth." 17 So God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant I have established between me and all life on the earth."

God was recalling the covenant He made with Noah and the promises He gave to Noah and his family. God would certainly not forget which ensured that He always had Noah's best interest in mind, which would give comfort to Noah. And for you and me today it should give comfort as well since the same sign given to Noah still exists today every time we see a rainbow.

That should cause us to remember something about the faithfulness of God. Again, we have other instances where God has acted in a certain way and He commands us not to forget what He accomplished as in the case of the Exodus.

DEU 5:15 **Remember** that you were slaves in Egypt and that the LORD your God brought you out of there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm."

Here Israel was commanded to remember two very important things:

- 1) Don't ever forget where you came from and the conditions of your life in Egypt.
- 2) Don't ever forget who delivered you out of Egypt.

Why did God give this command, which by the way you'll find throughout most of the O.T. in one form or another? He was always reminding them that He was the One who brought them out.

We have a tendency to forget or to crowd out God's involvement in our lives as the deliverer that He is and the one who is certainly aware of every event in our lives. The Israelites had to deal with their problems for hundreds of years in Egypt. But finally, God came to their rescue and they were never to forget, nor were their descendants to forget. This means that the word had to be passed on to future generations who weren't there.

And what about the most important thing we are to remember about our salvation and deliverance from sin? Remember what our Lord instructed at the last supper?

1CO 11:23-26 "For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, 24 and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." 25 In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." 26 For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes."

"Do this in remembrance of Me." We must never forget where we came from and we must never forget what God has done on our behalf. This is essential to our ability to walk with our God out of gratitude for the life He has given us in Christ.

If we ever forget, or put this aspect of our salvation on the shelf, we will always put what's going on in our lives as the most important thing to remember and to dwell on, and we will lose sight of what God tells us to dwell on and that's His Son and the life we have in Him today and forever.

And so, when Peter tells us to "not forget this one thing", he is pointing out the importance of walking with God in the midst of persecution, trials and the false teachers who would teach anything to the contrary.

So, what are we never to forget?

2PE 3:8 "... With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day."

In other words, God is not bound to time though His plans will certainly be worked out in time. You see, Peter realizes that with you and me time is everything in this natural setting on planet earth. We wake up at a certain time each morning, we go to work at a certain time each day and we usually go to bed at the same time each night.

This passage, which Peter puts forth here, is an O.T. passage which I'm sure he had in mind when he recorded it. It's found in the Psalms.

PSA 90:4 "For a thousand years in your sight are like a day that has just gone by, or like a watch in the night."

Now it's important to keep in mind that the text Peter is quoting is a text most Jews would have been familiar with and it seems that this letter was addressed primarily to Jews when he first wrote it, though certainly it was meant for all believers.

But the passage in Psalm 90 speaks of the distinction between God's eternal nature and the shortness of our lives. It draws attention to the swiftness and the hardness of life here and the greatness of our God who is and who was and who is to come and who has hope for all who trust in Him.

And so, Peter reminds us that yes, in the last days, life will not be any easier than it was in David's day, who wrote that Psalm, but it is the same God, who was with David, whom we can trust today, right up to the time He comes again. And though you and I may be bound to time, God is not. And He will accomplish His will, in time, regardless of our timetable.

And Peter points out that you must not forget that, because this life and the circumstances of this life will always be trying to force that truth out of our minds and hearts. Instead, he reminds us that since God is eternal and is not restricted to time like we are, there is nothing to fear as we trust Him and know that He has all things under control.

Just because Christ has not come back yet doesn't mean He won't. Just because the mockers, and our own doubts at times, question His faithfulness, it doesn't mean they are right.

We count time in a way which measures our advances and our stay on this earth. When we were little it seemed that time was going so slow that we would never advance to where we wanted to go.

I remember when I was in grade-school it seemed like forever before I advanced to High school. Eight years in "Our Lady Queen of Martyrs". And finally, after all that time I advanced to "St. Thomas Aquinas High school". It was a new and fresh beginning, but it didn't take long before I was wondering when I would advance to my senior year.

I remember counting the days in my last year thinking, 'finally I'll be over all of this bookwork and teachers and classes.' But, my mom and dad wanted me to go to college and once again the thought of doing more time, four years, just bummed me out to the point where I just took a year off from school.

I never did finish college. I got three years in before I chose to go to Broadcasting School to be a radio announcer. I will say this about school; it was precisely because of college that I met my wife for which I praise my God. But, if I could have skipped all of the time with school and just gotten to that point in my life I would have been happy.

But as you get older, it seems that time begins to fly by. And I'm not sure why that is. I suspect it has much to do with understanding the importance of what we do with our time, as much as understanding that time does come to an end and it's not to be wasted.

How many of us, when we were younger, had any concept of the finality of life? If we had really understood it we wouldn't have done some of the stupid things we did that threatened our lives, especially when we were in our teens?

But as important as time is, it is not a problem with God. And part of what Peter wants to do here is to help us put into perspective that if it's not a problem with God then it shouldn't be as big a problem for we who have trusted in Him as Lord and Savior.

God wants us to understand that He holds the present and the future. He is the beginning and the end. And so, everything that He does is not bound to time or held hostage by time, despite the fact that it all takes place within time.

And so, just because it's been some 2,000 years since Christ was here on this earth as the God/man who came to redeem us, doesn't mean that He's forgotten the rest of His promises to mankind or that He somehow has forgotten about us personally.

As far as God is concerned one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years is like one day, which is just another way of saying that time doesn't restrict God, nor tire Him out regarding His faithfulness to us, or His sure judgment towards those who reject Him. It's all the same to Him.

And yet, this is not to deny that He works in time. This is why Peter goes on to say what he does.

2PE 3:9 "The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance."

You see, Peter recognizes that if a thousand years goes by, most people would consider that a slow way to get to the end. We understand time in that way. But what might be considered slowness to some is compassion to God.

In all reality, God didn't owe anything to man. As soon as Adam and Eve sinned God was well within His justice to have destroyed them at that point. Of course in hindsight, and what has been revealed in His word, we know that God had no intention of destroying man at that point because we know that from all of eternity He had every intention of sending a Savior into this world to save man.

So, it becomes a moot point as to what God could have or should have done when Adam and Eve sinned. But because God chose to redeem men He also chose the time in which the last person would be redeemed. You see, there was a first, which means there will be a last.

Since Adam was our federal representative, he became the first recipient of God's grace and mercy in this world after he sinned, as he embraced God's promise of the coming Messiah found in the seed of the woman.

But, in between that time and the end of this present world, many other people have, and will be called out by the Lord as He has turned their hearts of stone into hearts of flesh that now beat for their Creator by faith in His Savior.

And so, what many see as cruelty by allowing this world to continue in its depravity and sin, God sees as grace to bring all of His people, from every time period, into His kingdom. His patience toward sinful man is being demonstrated and it ought to humble us, because He was patient with us.

In fact, that's the way Peter frames it in verse 9; [The Lord] is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.

Just a quick glance at this verse and one would assume that Peter is saying that God desires that no man, anywhere in the world, would perish, but that His overall passion is for every individual on the face of the earth to be saved.

There's a similar passage in Paul's letter to Timothy.

**1 Timothy 2:1-6** <sup>NAU</sup> First of all, then, I urge that entreaties *and* prayers, petitions *and* thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, <sup>2</sup> for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. <sup>3</sup> This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, <sup>4</sup> who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. <sup>5</sup> For there is one God, *and* one mediator also between God and men, *the* man Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony *given* at the proper time.

What could be clearer? Christ gave Himself as a ransom for *all*.

There's just one problem with all of this and it has to do with the entirety of the word of God that makes it quite clear that God did not give His life as a ransom for every individual on the face of the earth.

When a ransom is paid for an individual, the ransomee, now belongs to the ransomer, as the ransomee is delivered to the ransomer, who paid the price in full. The purchase price, in the case of Christ, necessarily purchases in full and the ransomee now belongs to the purchaser who has paid the price.

And yet, the argument is made that, the price may be paid in full, but the ransomee must first accept the gift of the ransom by faith. But this defies all logic. If a price has been paid and the exchange of blood for sin is finished at the cross, your faith has no effect on the reality that a purchase has been made for an individual whether in the present or in the future, from God's perspective, since a day is like a thousand years or a thousand days is like a day.

The purchase ensures ownership. But the purchase does not exclude the means for obtaining and possessing what has been purchased. The thing purchased does not determine its status as being purchased only if the thing purchased acknowledges and receives its status.

In other words, if Christ paid the ransom in full for all people, then all people necessarily belong to Him. But Jesus makes it clear that only those who have been given to Him by the Father belong to Him, and the purchase price guarantees their possession and ultimate position with Him for eternity as He raises them up on the last day.

Many will argue that a gift is only a gift if I accept the gift and take possession of it. But this puts the gift of salvation on its head,

because the gift of God is a gift not because it is possible to accept it but because God has no intention of losing anyone to whom the gift is extended. This means that salvation is not simply able to save, but actually accomplishes salvation for all who were given to the Son.

**John 6:39** <sup>39</sup> "This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day.

So, how do you explain the call to the world to repent and believe, and then, and only then, will you receive the gift?

The explanation is simple. The call goes out to the world at large, but only those who have been given ears to hear and eyes to see, by God Himself, will respond by the faith which God supplies as Paul makes clear in Eph.2:8-9. This is God's act of regeneration which is the means by which He brings His sheep into the fold as they embrace the gift by faith.

This is also why Jesus told the Jews of His day that the reason they didn't embrace Him is for precisely this reason that they did not hear the truth because of their own desires to please their true father.

**John 8:43-45** <sup>43</sup> "Why do you not understand what I am saying? *It is* because you cannot hear My word. <sup>44</sup> "You are of *your* father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *nature*, for he is a liar and the father of lies. <sup>45</sup> "But because I speak the truth, you do not believe Me.

So, you're telling me that God only opens the eyes and ears of a select group? No, I'm not saying that at all. I'm saying that God says that. God chooses those who will receive this free gift of eternal life. And those chosen will come to Him because He will make sure that none of them will be lost and He will raise them up on the last day.

But that's not fair. How can God choose some and not choose others? Well, this is the exact same issue addressed in the book of Romans.

**Romans 9:10-14** <sup>10</sup> And not only this, but there was Rebekah also, when she had conceived *twins* by one man, our father Isaac; <sup>11</sup> for though *the twins* were not yet born and had not done anything good or bad, so that God's purpose according to *His* choice would stand,

not because of works but because of Him who calls, <sup>12</sup> it was said to her, "THE OLDER WILL SERVE THE YOUNGER." <sup>13</sup> Just as it is written, "JACOB I LOVED, BUT ESAU I HATED." <sup>14</sup> What shall we say then? There is no injustice with God, is there? May it never be!

Is God unjust simply because He chooses to make a choice? We talk about the free will of man all of the time. Why is the sovereign Creator and Lord of all not able to be extended the same courtesy of making a choice with what He does with His own creation?

Is He obligated to extend this mercy to anyone? Can the Sovereign God actually choose a particular group and still remain a loving and merciful God?

Again, Paul sums this whole issue up very well in this same letter to the Romans.

**Romans 9:18-24** <sup>18</sup> So then He has mercy on whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires. <sup>19</sup> You will say to me then, "Why does He still find fault? For who resists His will?" <sup>20</sup> On the contrary, who are you, O man, who answers back to God? The thing molded will not say to the molder, "Why did you make me like this," will it? <sup>21</sup> Or does not the potter have a right over the clay, to make from the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for common use? <sup>22</sup> What if God, although willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction? <sup>23</sup> And *He did so* to make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory, <sup>24</sup> *even* us, whom He also called, not from among Jews only, but also from among Gentiles.

So, with this in mind let us return to our text in 2Peter.

**2 Peter 3:9** <sup>9</sup> The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.

Remember the context here. Peter is addressing the elect, those true believers who have received the gift of eternal life as we saw in the beginning of this letter.

**2 Peter 1:1** <sup>NAU</sup> Simon Peter, a bond-servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours, by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ:

This faith comes by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ. And so, Peter's audience is made up of those believers of the same faith as his.

And where did he get this faith and this understanding that Jesus Christ is Messiah? I'll let Jesus Himself remind us.

**Matthew 16:13-17** <sup>13</sup> Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He was asking His disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" <sup>14</sup> And they said, "Some *say* John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets." <sup>15</sup> He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" <sup>16</sup> Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." <sup>17</sup> And Jesus said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because *flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.*

Peter was not any brighter than the average Jew of his day. But Peter had been chosen by God before the foundations of the world and the Lord was going to make sure that this particular sheep of His pasture was going to be brought to Himself as the Father orchestrates his salvation and all that goes into making that happen.

**Romans 8:29-30** <sup>29</sup> For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to become* conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; <sup>30</sup> and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.

Salvation belongs to the Lord from beginning to end. And so, when Peter is addressing the saints in this letter he is addressing the immediate audience along with all who would come to the Lord in the future. Notice again what he says in verse 9.

**2 Peter 3:9** <sup>9</sup> The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward *you...*

The context has to do with the return of Jesus Christ in the face of the mockers denying it will happen. And so, the time frame has to do with this return and the patience that is being extended to a particular group, not to the world at large.

Who is patience being extended to in our verse? "To you." The "you" are those believers who have the same faith as Peter. The "you" is the group to whom patience is being extended for the sake

of Christ who is coming back, not wishing for any of them to perish but for *all* in this chosen group to come to repentance.

The group that the Lord desires not to perish and to come to repentance, is the same group to whom Christ is extending patience and it is this group that Christ makes a promise to in John's gospel.

**John 10:27-30** <sup>27</sup> "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; <sup>28</sup> and I give eternal life to them, *and they will never perish*; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. <sup>29</sup> "My Father, who has given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch *them* out of the Father's hand. <sup>30</sup> "I and the Father are one."

By the way, this chosen group is chosen from every type of people in the world. It is not limited to the Jew, as Abraham was told that he would be the father of many nations, implying that God will choose from all men from all walks of life to be part of His fold. And this was the point Paul was making to Timothy when he makes the sweeping statement

**1 Timothy 2:1-6** <sup>NAU</sup> First of all, then, I urge that entreaties *and* prayers, petitions *and* thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, <sup>2</sup> for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. <sup>3</sup> This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, <sup>4</sup> who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. <sup>5</sup> For there is one God, *and* one mediator also between God and men, *the* man Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony *given* at the proper time.

The *all men* of verse one includes kings and all in authority. And so, *all men* has a context of different types of people. Dr. James White comments on this passage in his book, *The Potter's Freedom*, as he deals specifically with term "all men" in verse one, as it relates to the prayer habits of the Ephesian believers.

"Paul is not instructing Timothy to initiate never-ending prayer meetings [for all men] where the Ephesian phone book would be opened and every single person listed therein would become the object of prayer. The very next phrase of the sentence explains Paul's meaning: "for kings and all who are in authority."

Again, the idea is clear, you can pray for all while not praying for the entirety of humanity. And Peter also understands this as he

instructs us in verse 9 that God is patient toward “you”, those believers of the same faith as Peter to whom he is addressing, as he adds that just as God is patient toward you He does not wish for any of you, (that is the elect), to perish but for all to come to repentance.

The “you” is the group from which God wishes none would perish. In other words, all those chosen before the foundations of the world, who were given to Christ by the Father.

One of the best books on this subject is written by Dr. James White, entitled *The Potter’s Freedom*, as mentioned above, and he clearly lays out the premise for God choosing a people for Himself among all men in the world and it is of these that He desires that none would perish.

I know there are those who think this to be provocative theology, but there is nothing provocative about God choosing a people for Himself as we see this from Genesis to Revelation. Ask Adam if he was given the opportunity to be chosen or not.

To know that the Potter is sovereign and we, the clay, are vessels molded in His image is a humbling thing. But when we realize the deadness of men’s hearts it only makes sense that God would have to choose a group out of the larger group, who hates Him by nature, to place His redemptive love upon them.

We who are in Christ are the sheep of His pasture and as was clearly revealed to Peter this revelation is from the Father and not from flesh and blood as though we could desire such things on our own.

We’ll pick up here next week. Let me end with this.

**Ephesians 1:3-6** <sup>3</sup> Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ, <sup>4</sup> just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love <sup>5</sup> He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, <sup>6</sup> to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.