

FRIDAY, MARCH 16

1 PETER 1:17, 22

Salvation has meaning. Peter describes the blood of Jesus as a ransom paid to set us free. What was once destined for death is now destined for life. The perishable has become imperishable, all because of Christ, in whom we place our hope, find our purpose for today, and discover our destiny for eternity.

As people now defined by an imperishable and eternal life, our attitudes and actions take on new significance. The days of “it doesn’t matter what I do or say” are gone. We are not unimportant, weak, and insignificant. We are set free by the very blood and sacrifice of Jesus Christ. We need to learn reverence of God to gain a grip on how to live this new life. Reverence or the “fear of God” is the constant awareness of God’s presence. Our lives are not to be thrown away or wasted. The Lord is paying attention. He knows not only our actions but also the heart behind them. Within reverence of God, we find significance. Our lives have tremendous importance because God is present with us. We have the capacity to act in ways that the Holy Spirit uses to set others free, to redefine relationships, and to redeem literally anything.

God’s presence is always couched in love. It was love that sent Christ to us. It was love that sent Christ to the cross. Salvation cannot be understood apart from our loving God. Reverence for God in the awareness of his presence causes us to be tuned to his love. Therefore, we are to love each other genuinely and truthfully. The gift of holiness is a gift of love. As we experience God’s love in God’s presence, we see the love of God for others and join in.

There is struggle here. Love gets defined in all sorts of ways. The motive of love can sometimes be perverted into selfish manipulation of others. Churches are not always known for their love. Christians do not always act in a manner consistent with love. So what do we do? Perhaps the answer is not a well-developed argument or even a verbal profession. The best answer to give an unloving world is a love-centered heart and mind. Who needs the love of God? How can we live out his love today?