

KSW47 to Nov 23

November 17 Su Reading 321 — 1 Peter 3:13-17 — Suffer for Doing Good

¹³ *Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good?* ¹⁴ *But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled,* ¹⁵ *but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect,* ¹⁶ *having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame.* ¹⁷ *For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil.*

Sanctify Christ as Holy — This paragraph is about how to conduct ourselves in the atmosphere of opposition from unbelievers. Many of them want “to harm you” (v. 13) as you “suffer for righteousness' sake” (v. 14a), and you should have “no fear of them ... when you are slandered” (v. 14b, 16) as you “suffer for doing good” (v. 17). In the middle of these expressions of hostility is this anchor: In our hearts, we are to “honor Christ the Lord as holy” (v. 15). This statement is a command. The NASB more literally shows the connection to holiness: “sanctify Christ as Lord.” To “sanctify” is to “set apart as holy.” We are commanded to be thinking of the holiness of Christ when we are being challenged by others — not on our opponent, not on our response, but on our holy Lord. Yes, He is an intimate friend, but He is also perfect, infinite, eternal, and divine. He is our awesome partner in this walk of faith. It is with this mindset that we are to face and challenge those who oppose us as Christians. It should be our minute-by-minute, God-empowered attitude. Think Holy!

[Holy Forever - YouTube](#)

Hear Your people sing, “Holy,”
To the King of kings, “Holy”;
You will always be holy, holy forever.

Your name is the highest,
Your name is the greatest,
Your name stands above them all.
All thrones and dominions,
All powers and positions,
Your name stands above them all.

— Chris Tomlin, et al. (2022)

November 18 M Reading 322 — 2 Peter 1:16-21 — Eyewitnesses of His Majesty

¹⁶ *For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.* ¹⁷ *For when he received honor and glory from God the Father, and the voice was borne to him by the Majestic Glory, "This is my beloved Son,^[fn] with whom I am well pleased,"* ¹⁸ *we ourselves heard this very voice borne from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain.* ¹⁹ *And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts,* ²⁰ *knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation.* ²¹ *For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*

ESV Footnotes

(1:17) Or my Son, my (or the) Beloved

Carried by the Spirit — At the beginning of this paragraph, Peter declared that his message was not human but divine. He “*did not follow cleverly devised myths*” (v. 16), but he and other disciples were eyewitnesses on “*the holy mountain*” of Jesus’ transfiguration and “*earwitnesses*” of the Father’s message from heaven. At the end of this reading, Peter broadened the scope of the divine source of communication to mankind by including all of Scripture: “*...no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone’s own interpretation ... [or from] the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit*” (vv. 20-21). The Greek word for “*carried along*” is the same word used in describing the “*rushing*” wind that came at the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:2) and the wind that caused Paul’s ship to be “*driven*” most of the length of the Mediterranean Sea (Acts 27:15). The Holy Spirit was that kind of powerful force, causing chosen prophets to bring us the message of salvation.

[Come, Holy Ghost, Our Hearts Inspire - YouTube](#)

Come, Holy Ghost, for, moved by Thee,
Thy prophets wrote and spoke;
Unlock the truth, Thyself the key,
Unseal the sacred book.

— Charles Wesley (1740)

November 19 Tu Reading 323 — Hebrews 2:1-4 — Witnesses to the Message

¹ *Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it.* ² *For since the message declared by angels proved to be reliable, and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution,* ³ *how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard,* ⁴ *while God also bore witness by signs and wonders and various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.*

Distributed Gifts — The message of salvation “*was declared at first by the Lord*” (v. 3). His message was primarily an invitation to “*come to me*” (Matt. 11:28, and 8 other places in the NT). That message was incomplete, however, because Jesus had not yet been sacrificed for sins. The fuller message came at the Day of Pentecost when the promised Holy Spirit came to indwell those who accepted the invitation and sacrifice of Jesus. The writer of Hebrews heard that message later when “*it was attested to [or confirmed by] us by those who heard*” (Heb. 2:3). There was also a supernatural confirmation given when “*God also bore witness by signs and wonders and various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will*” (v. 3b). These “*gifts ... distributed*” is one word in Greek, with the emphasis on distribution, probably referring mostly to the gifts of the Spirit. We are all given at least one spiritual gift to use in ministry. We should notice, however, that the purpose of our gift in this passage serves also as a witness to the message of salvation. The Holy Spirit is using us supernaturally to confirm that the gospel message is true and powerful.

[O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing - YouTube](#)

My gracious Master and my God,
assist me to proclaim,
To spread through all the earth abroad
the honors of your name.

— Charles Wesley (1739)

⁷ *Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says,*

*"Today, if you hear his voice,
⁸ do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion,
on the day of testing in the wilderness,
⁹ where your fathers put me to the test
and saw my works for forty years.
¹⁰ Therefore I was provoked with that generation,
and said, 'They always go astray in their heart;
they have not known my ways.'
¹¹ As I swore in my wrath,
'They shall not enter my rest.'"*

The Holy Spirit Warns — This is one of several places in the NT where a psalm is said to have been given directly by the Holy Spirit (see Mark 12:36; Acts 1:16, 4:25). Although the Spirit did not dwell in the hearts of OT believers, His influence was active. So, today's reading is His message for us today as well. The warning is about hardening our hearts (v. 8) like the Israelite wanderers did. This happened, although God said that they "*saw my works for forty years*" (v. 9). Just think about what they had seen before that. They saw God apply many plagues to the Egyptians while He protected His chosen people. They saw Him provide a dry pathway through the Red Sea for them to cross, and they looked back to see the pursuing Egyptian army drowned. God miraculously provided fresh water, manna, and quail during their wanderings. Their hearts were hardened because they failed to recognize and remember God's great goodness to them. Aren't we sometimes like that? We might be afflicted with arthritis in our knees and hips but fail to remember the 70 previous pain-free years that God provided for us. Instead, we should praise Him for what He gave us in the past and what He still provides for us in the present. Hardened hearts are not grateful hearts.

[Great God, We Sing That Mighty Hand - YouTube](#)

With grateful hearts the past we own;
the future, all to us unknown,
We to Your guardian care commit,
and peaceful leave before Your feet.

— Philip Doddridge (b. 1702)

¹ *Therefore let us leave the elementary doctrine of Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, ² and of instruction about washings,^[fn] the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. ³ And this we will do if God permits. ⁴ For it is impossible, in the case of those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy Spirit, ⁵ and have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come, ⁶ and then have fallen away, to restore them again to repentance, since they are crucifying once again the Son of God to their own harm and holding him up to contempt. ⁷ For land that has drunk the rain that often falls on it, and produces a crop useful to those for whose sake it is cultivated, receives a blessing from God. ⁸ But if it bears thorns and thistles, it is worthless and near to being cursed, and its end is to be burned.*

(6:2) Or *baptisms* (that is, cleansing rites)

To Share in the Holy Spirit — This is a very controversial passage regarding whether a true believer can lose his/her salvation. I will comment only on this statement about the Holy Spirit in relation to the people who are the focus of this passage: they “*have shared in the Holy Spirit*” (v. 4). Was theirs a genuine faith? The Greek word translated, “*shared*,” is used only six times in the NT, five of them in Hebrews. In Hebrews 3, it is certainly speaking about genuine believers “*who share in a heavenly calling*” (v. 1) and who “*have come to share in Christ*” (v. 14). That is who we are, born-again, heaven-bound believers. In two other verses, the ESV translates this word as “*partners*” (Luke 5:7) and “*companions*.” (Heb. 1:9), which gives us another picture of our close relationship with the Holy Spirit. He is always with us.

I could not find a video for this little-known song:

Be Thou my friend, my close companion ever;
Earth's paths diverge as comrades onward wend;
Friends may depart, but Thou, O leave me never!
Be Thou my friend, be Thou my friend.

— Emma Doud

November 22 F Reading 326 — Hebrews 9:6-10 — Previously Restricted Access

⁶ *These preparations having thus been made, the priests go regularly into the first section, performing their ritual duties,* ⁷ *but into the second only the high priest goes, and he but once a year, and not without taking blood, which he offers for himself and for the unintentional sins of the people.* ⁸ *By this the Holy Spirit indicates that the way into the holy places is not yet opened as long as the first section is still standing* ⁹ *(which is symbolic for the present age).*^[fn] *According to this arrangement, gifts and sacrifices are offered that cannot perfect the conscience of the worshiper,* ¹⁰ *but deal only with food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until the time of reformation.*

ESV Footnote

(9:9) Or *which is symbolic for the age then present*

The Holy Spirit Predicted Delay — This passage stresses the limitations of the OT sacrificial system. Verse 8 mentions “*the holy places*,” referring to the temple’s Holy Place, where only designated Levitical priests could go for various duties involving worship, and the Most Holy Place, where only the high priest could go once a year to sprinkle blood on the Mercy Seat of the Ark of the Covenant for forgiveness of sins. What “*the Holy Spirit indicates*” (v. 8a) is that access to God’s presence was “*not yet opened as long as the first section is still standing*” (v. 8b). That predicted opening came in a miraculous way when the great curtain that restricted access into the Most Holy Place “*was torn in two, from top to bottom*” (Matt. 27:51) at the death of Jesus. The final dramatic opening came about 40 years later when the whole temple was torn down by the Roman army. Access to God’s presence is now open to us so that we may “*draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need*” (Heb. 4:16).

[Come, You Disconsolate - YouTube](#)

Come, you disconsolate, where'er you languish;
Come to the mercy seat, fervently kneel.
Here bring your wounded hearts, here tell your anguish;
Earth has no sorrow that heaven cannot heal.

— Thomas Moore (1816)

November 23 Sa Reading 327 — 2 Peter 1:3-11 — Partakers of the Divine Nature

³ *His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to^[fn] his own glory and excellence,^[fn]* ⁴ *by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.* ⁵ *For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue,^[fn] and virtue with knowledge,* ⁶ *and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness,* ⁷ *and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love.* ⁸ *For if these qualities^[fn] are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.* ⁹ *For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins.* ¹⁰ *Therefore, brothers,^[fn] be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall.* ¹¹ *For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.*

ESV Footnotes

(1:3) Or *by*

(1:3) Or *virtue*

(1:5) Or *excellence*; twice in this verse

(1:8) Greek *these things*; also verses 9, 10, 12

(1:10) Or *brothers and sisters*. In New Testament usage, depending on the context, the plural Greek word *adelphoi* (translated “brothers”) may refer either to brothers or to brothers and sisters

Granted and Growing Godliness — The concept of godliness is mentioned from two different perspectives in this passage. The first is from God’s point of view in verse 3, which is a good verse to memorize. There it says that “*His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness...*” That leaves us with no excuse about not being strong enough to withstand temptation. God has provided all the power we need for living a godly life, but we must draw upon it. The second time godliness is mentioned is in the context of what is expected of us. Verse 5 commands us to “*make every effort to supplement your faith...*” with various positive character qualities, including godliness (v. 6). Godliness is a gift, but it also takes work. Someone may buy you a meal, but if you don’t eat it, you gain no nutrition from it. We need to pick up our utensils and dig into the plate of godliness God has provided.

[O to be Like Thee - YouTube](#)

Oh! to be like Thee, while I am pleading,
Pour out Thy Spirit, fill with Thy love,
Make me a temple meet for Thy dwelling,
Fit me for life and heaven above.

Oh! to be like Thee, oh! to be like Thee,
Blessed Redeemer, pure as Thou art;
Come in Thy sweetness, come in Thy fullness;
Stamp Thine own image deep on my heart.

— Thomas Chisholm (1897)