

1st Peter 1:17-21 *ESV* And if you call on Him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile, ¹⁸ knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. ²⁰ He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for your sake, ²¹ who through him are believers in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

Possible Prayer of Church ✧ Jubilaté = 4th Sunday in Easter ✧ April 4th, 2026

Let us pray to God, our Heavenly Father who Raised our LORD Jesus from the dead.

Gracious God, Your mercies are new every morning. Continually provide us with all we need to support this body and life, and grant that we receive Your gifts with thanksgiving. *LORD, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.*

Heavenly Father, grant us the gift of true teachers and servants of the Word who truly fulfill Your command and preach nothing contrary to Your Holy Word. Send forth laborers into Your harvest. *LORD, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.*

LORD, bless our homes. Preserve all married couples in love and faithfulness; strengthen parents for their task as teachers of the faith; uphold the unmarried honorable and unashamed in their station; and with good deeds in every home, let the ignorance of foolish people be put to silence by Your divine institution. *LORD, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.*

O LORD of lords, You sustain every rule, authority and power as You see fit until this world's powers pass away. Bless all whom You place in civil authority, that they would not provoke Your wrath but maintain order and justice for the peace of Your people. *LORD, in Your mercy, hear our ...*

Father, on the day when this little while ends, we will ask nothing. Now, in every need, we are bold to ask everything in the name of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our mediator. Hear our supplications and intercessions for every need [*especially Our Savior & Faith Prayers*] and all those we each name and keep in our prayers. *LORD, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.*

O LORD, You have shown us a generous heart and taught us it is more blessed to give than to receive. Accept our gratitude for Your mercies and tender care in time of need. Receive now the gifts of our hands with our voices raised in thanksgiving and praise. *LORD, in Your mercy, hear our ...*

Give joy in the midst of sorrow here at the Sacrament of the Altar. Grant us repentance, a firm faith and a united confession, that we may have honest fellowship in the blessings of Christ's testament. With consciences thus cleansed from evil and renewed in You, enable us to stand undaunted until the day of visitation. *LORD, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.*

Finally, dear Father, remember all the people of **Our Savior Lutheran of Grants Pass & Faith Lutheran of Medford** congregations this week. Help us, in the face of every sorrow, to be mindful of the victory over sin and death our Savior has won for us, even Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

EASTER.4A 1 Peter 1:17-21 RESURRECTION BRINGS US NEW LIFE 4.26.26 F.OS

WHAT'S THE POINT(?) What is the point of a nation's jail and prison system? You'll find a lot of different opinions on that question. Some might say it's to separate vulnerable people from dangerous people. Some might say it's to inflict punishment on the wrongdoer. Some might say it's to keep people in check - to keep people from doing bad things because they don't want to endure the difficulty of time in jail. Still others will say that it should be about rehabilitation - a system set up to take someone who has gone down a wrong path to learn how to move forward in a different way.

REHAB That rehabilitation idea is where I'd like to center our thoughts today, not really on our criminal justice system, but on our faith. What is the point of Jesus' Resurrection? What is the point of God's forgiveness? It's rescue and rehabilitation. It's a new life.

B4 THE FOUNDATIONS... In this Epistle, Peter does a bit of that educating, even rehabilitating too. Writing decades after Jesus' death, Resurrection, and Ascension, Peter has clarity about these things that he did not have in those first days and weeks after Jesus rose from the dead. From this vantage point, Peter can see and explain what the plan was: **[Jesus] was chosen before the foundation of the world but revealed in these last times for your sake.** God was not "winging it" when it came to the salvation of mankind. He had a plan in place from the beginning of time of how he would save mankind from their sin, just as Jesus said to the Emmaus disciples: **"Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and to enter his glory?" [Luke 24:26].** Jesus' suffering and death was not a case of things spiraling out of control for him; everything from the Garden of Gethsemane to Pilate's courtyard, to the Cross, to the tomb was all as God had planned. He **had to** go through these things, this plan was put in place **before the foundation of the world.**

WHAT'S THE ENDGAME? But, **To what end?** Peter explains: **You were redeemed from your empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, not with things that pass away, such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like a lamb without blemish or spot ... Through him you are believers in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.** This plan, Jesus' death and Resurrection, means forgiveness for you. Every sin is gone. You have been purchased for God, **redeemed**, with the priceless blood of the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. By God's grace, you have trust in him as your Savior. Your faith is in God; your confident hope is in God. You fully lean on Him.

REVERENT FEAR vs. PARALYZING TERROR And that means that you do not fear death – [because] your grave will end up empty just like Jesus'! You do not fear punishment - Jesus took your punishment on Himself! You do not fear God - He has shown you the full extent of His love as your dear Heavenly Father and will bring you to Himself in Heaven! This "fear" is not the dread of a slave but the "child-like fear" of a son or daughter who respects their father's holiness and discipline. It is a response to the infinite value of what was sacrificed for us.

JUDGE *SHOULD* REHAB U So, what about *rehabilitation*? Peter began our reading this way: **If you call on the Father who judges impartially, according to the work of each person, conduct yourselves during the time of your pilgrimage in reverence, because you know that you were redeemed from your empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers** ... Peter says that God's work for you in Jesus should change your life, should rehabilitate you.

EMPTY INHERITED LIFE We received an **empty way of life** from our parents and their parents because from them we **inherited a sinful nature**. We inherited a nature that rebels against God, hates God, and fights against Him. Peter's word "**empty**" almost seems like an understatement, doesn't it? It's not just empty; it's **disastrous**. It's eternally condemning. That empty way of sin leads, ultimately, **to hell**.

WE S.B. REHABBED So, Peter says, once we have come to know that we have been **redeemed** - bought back from the very jaws of eternal damnation with **the precious blood of Christ** - that should *change* us. It should rehabilitate us. It should lead us to live a life **not** governed by the sinful nature but governed by thanksgiving and joy to God. Peter describes that life as **conducting yourselves during the time of your pilgrimage in reverence**.

TURN OF PHRASE That phrase "**the time of your pilgrimage**" is fascinating. Peter is referring to our lives here on earth. Some translations talk about **sojourning**, some as a time of **exile**. Regardless of the English words we use, the point is clear. It's a recognition that this life is not *home*. This life is not the ultimate that we have waiting for us. This life is what we have to *get through* for us to enjoy what God has really won for us, given to us, by Jesus' death in our place.

[BUT] *DO WE DO IT?* But do we treat this life like that? Do we reject that **empty way of life** we inherited from our parents, or do we still find ourselves embracing it? Do we live differently than the unbelievers around us, or do we seek to blend in with them? Could someone identify you as a Christian not by your jewelry or license plate border **but by your words, your actions, your tone, your attitudes**? Do you stand out like a sore thumb **in a good way**! in this world corrupted by sin, or do your words and actions blend right in with everyone and everything else?

ARE WE REHABBED? How has your life been in the three weeks since we got to celebrate the highest of high festivals in the Christian church - the resurrection of our Savior? Did our Easter celebrations change you? Did the message of Jesus' Resurrection empower you to live a very different life, or has it looked kind of the same as it was before? How present has sin been in your attitudes toward your fellow parishioners, your friends, your family, or your coworkers? Would someone objectively looking at the past three weeks say, "*Wow, that person has been rehabilitated!*" Or would they cringe if they could see our words, actions, and thoughts of the heart laid out before them?

[HEARTS] LAID BARE I really, really don't want **my heart laid bare before you all** because of the great shame my sinful nature brings to me. I'm sure none of us would want a detailed listing of our attitudes and actions projected on a screen for the whole congregation to review. But this, my dear brothers, is where we have **commonality**. We may not have the *same* sins, but **we all sin**. We do not all have the *same* struggles, but **we all struggle**.

BUT, WE FAIL So, we have *not conducted ourselves during the time of our pilgrimage in reverence*. Instead, we have often treated this life as if it's the best and only thing we have coming, that this life is truly *home*. We have *not* behaved as if we **were redeemed from our empty way of life handed down to us from our forefathers**. Instead, we have often held up that way of life as delightful, fun, tantalizing, and full of value.

LOST HOPE? *MEIENETO!* So, what now? Have we **lost the hope** God gave to us? Have we abandoned our redemption? *Μεγενετο!* Hardly! It was for this very reason that Jesus **redeemed** us with His blood. It was for this very reason that Jesus proved that Redemption through His Resurrection. You and I will not go through this life without sin - that is impossible. But we can make it a goal to not *love* sin and have it dominate our lives. We can make it our task to bring those sins to Jesus each and every day and say, "**LORD, have mercy on me, a sinner.**"

JESUS' RSVP And what is Jesus' response? "*My dear child, I have had mercy on you. I have paid for your sins and they are gone. You will be safe with me in eternal life.*" That does not change. For as many sins as we commit, those were the sins that Jesus paid for and redeemed us from. And if you want proof that it is so, we only need to hear the angels' words again: "**He is not here! He is risen!**"

SANCTIFICATION That Redemption proved by His Resurrection then leads us to a new life. Our lives will not be perfect, but we will hold on to that as a goal. We will wrestle with that inherited **empty way of life** until we are brought to our Savior's side in eternity. But we will let a new life shine. We will let the words and comforts we've been reminded of here today impact our relationships and work ethic, our attitudes and our motivations. We will seek to live a life that doesn't embrace sin but seeks to thank God for his forgiveness.

LIMITED T.o.G, TIME of THX We know our time of thanksgiving here is limited - we are but pilgrims, exiles, strangers in this life; Heaven is our home. We will let our joy in that forgiveness and eternal life permeate our hearts and minds, every aspect of our lives.

CONDUCT YOURSELVES My friends, **conduct yourselves during the time of your pilgrimage in reverence, because you know that you were redeemed from your empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, not with things that pass away, such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like a Lamb without blemish or spot**. Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia! *I/J'N, Amen. SDG*