

## ReConnect – IN the World

1 Peter 1:1-25

**MPS** God calls Christians to live as a faithful witness in the world, knowing that our reward of glory is worth it!

**OBJ** God calls Christian to faithfully engage IN the world by three recognitions.

**INTRO** Christin came home recently and said; “The longer I live, the less I find I have in common with this place.” She was responding to some things recently encountered on a shopping trip into town. I often concur, finding myself increasingly confounded by the ways of the world. I am not advocating for, nor is it right, a Christian to hold an antagonistic posture toward the world. But the reality is that the more you follow Christ and become like Him, the more you find yourself at odds with, and often counter to, the ways and patterns, rationales, and conclusions of the world. It doesn’t mean I love people less; it does require me to lean on Christ more to know how to love them faithfully. And the reverse of this is true as well; the more you indulge in the world, the greater the struggle to believe, trust, and obey Jesus’ commands and teachings.

As we approach the third sermon in this ReConnect series, I want to point out an essential progression that must remain intact for Christians. Each sermon’s subtitle provides an essential path for the Christian to follow to remain faithful; TO God, WITH the Church, and IN the world. Jesus says there is a tension between Christians and the world because He calls people OUT OF the world in salvation; “*If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.*” **John 15:19** What Jesus means when he says this is that Christians do not find their source of life in the world, which includes our identity, hope, strength, nor pattern of thinking about, virtues and values, and so forth for all of life. Beyond our origin in creation, nothing about the Christian life is sourced or sustained from the world.

But though we are not OF the world, sourced and sustained by, Jesus did leave us IN it for His purpose and glory. He prays, “*I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one.*” <sup>16</sup>*They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.* <sup>17</sup>*Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.* <sup>18</sup>*As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world.* **John 17:15-18**

Christians are not IN this world by accident, but by divine commission from our Lord Jesus. The source of the Christian life is the same as Jesus’ source. And that source flows through the truth of the Word of God, which works its sanctifying power in us as we believe and obey. The way a Christian lives should demonstrate that we are IN the world as a faithful witness to Jesus, but we are not OF it. It is toward this faithful witness to which we aim today; **How do Christians live IN the world as a faithful witness to the Lordship of Jesus Christ?**

**God calls Christians to live as a faithful witness in the world, knowing that our reward of glory is worth it!**

**TRANS** There is a letter written for this exact purpose, First Peter. Today I want to identify...

**OBJ** Three Recognitions for a Christian to faithfully engage IN the world.

### 1. Christians must recognize that our identity determines our true home. 1:1-2

Peter writes to Christians and calls them “*elect exiles*”. Consider how the different translations express this verse.

“*To those who are elect exiles...*” (ESV)

“*To God’s elect, strangers in the world, scattered throughout*” (NIV84)

“*to the elect who are sojourners of the Dispersion*” (ASV 1901)

“*To those who reside as exiles, scattered throughout...who are chosen*” (LSB)

I want you to understand three critical aspects of a Christian’s new identity in Jesus.

1. “*elect / chosen*” - Salvation in Jesus rests on God and nothing else; it is not determined by persecution nor location and cannot be undone by the same.
2. “*sojourner / exiles*” - You are always God’s and Christ is your true, eternal home no matter where you are. So anywhere you go and for whatever reason you may go there, you will never feel completely at home.



3. “scattered” - Finally, you are God’s, chosen and purposed for His glory. Therefore, His glory always your highest purpose for life wherever you are and whatever you are doing.

**Christians must remember our ‘place in the world’ more than we are prone to think ‘the world is our place’.** This doesn’t mean Christians cannot or should not enjoy this world; not at all! Christians should enjoy our Father’s creation most of all. But the way we enjoy, the reasons we enjoy, and the way we understand and interpret our time here on earth is always with eternity in mind and in view because of whose we are and WHY He leaves us in the world. [Christians have a hope that is ‘not of this world’ that empowers us to have hope at any time, place or situation in this world.](#)

When we say that this world is not our home, we mean the ways of the world that are sin-stained; tainted, perverted, skewed and broken by sin in every way, manner and to every extent. And sin always produces one, singular wrong: pseudo-glory that steals worship from God. Christians hold our relationship to and our perspective of the world in accordance with this tension, that we live here to enjoy life and all of God’s creation as an act of worship and glory unto Him, but we are not OF this world and therefore do not blindly nor ignorantly accept the ways, patterns, loves, nor false idols as wrongly valued, but only as is in accordance with the Will, way and Word of God. [Christians are called to live fully in this world while remembering that we are not ultimately confined to this world.](#)

[Christians must recognize our true identity in Jesus determines our eternal home; the everlasting God who has always been the dwelling place for all who believe in Him.](#) Psalm90:1

## **2. Christians must recognize what we have been given; a living hope. 1:3-12**

Peter begins with a blessing to the Lord for what He has provided in our salvation; “*born again to a living hope*”.<sup>3</sup> In Christ we are given a life-sourcing power that does not fade nor diminish. Without Jesus we must work and strive, claw and pull every ounce out of life that we can muster. But when our strength is gone, or the power from whatever we try to draw life, it is over. But Christ is life, our source without end, and all His power produces more life that overcomes death, sin, hell and the grave. [The biggest unknown and un-controllable of all of life is answered by overcoming in Jesus, and He guards this for our eternity.](#)

**Peter explains that this eternal life in Jesus is the source from which we draw for daily life.** Yes, we experience difficulty and trial in this life, but all they can do is refine our faith by testing, not remove it. And our hope is anchored in our inheritance, not our daily experience, so it cannot be consumed by any daily allowance or momentary downturn.<sup>6</sup> This is the living hope we have in Christ. And though we do not see Christ as we see others or other things in this world, we love Him because by every testing and trial He proves Himself more real to us than any reality of this physical world. [In Christ, we are invited and commanded to “borrow against our inheritance” to meet the demand of our daily need for the ‘here and now’ because it cannot make it any less glorious.](#)

**Our reality in receiving from Jesus’ resurrection power now was also present in those who looked toward His power.** The prophets of old, who wrote so we would know of His coming, knew the same power in anticipating and foretelling it as we know in believing in its forthtelling of what has already occurred. **Why is this?** Because our living hope is not “time-stamped”. There is no “Best Used By” date because it is eternal, as the One who secured it and gives it is eternal. So, draw regularly, Christian, draw singularly, abundantly and deeply from Jesus, for you will never find any unwillingness in His power supply, no weariness in providing His power, no end in His supply nor insufficiency of His power’s supply for daily life. [The living hope that we are given from Jesus Christ by our new birth through faith in Him is eternal, just as he is eternal.](#)

## **3. Christians must recognize our calling, to live holy lives by the power of the gospel. 1:13-25**

Christ has not given us His power to live any way we choose; the power of Jesus’ resurrection always completes His redemptive purpose. In salvation our new birth makes us like Jesus, holy. Peter says to prepare our minds for action: [Jesus’ resurrection power working in us is not to accomplish our goals or solve our problems, but to make us perfectly and completely His; “holy, as He is holy.”](#)



**What actions are we to prepare for?** Every one our Lord commands for us to trust Him and obey. Nothing clouds the mind like the storm of the heart. When the heart is heavy the mind gets dark, and often drunk, in its thinking. But in Jesus Christ, *“the light of the knowledge of the glory of God”* has shone in our hearts.<sup>2Cor4:6</sup> **Jesus makes our hearts pure so our minds can think clear and sober by His truth for all things.**

**APPL** We need help thinking clearly today to stay spiritually healthy. My doctor recommended that I take additional Vitamin D to keep my immune system strong in these days. I replied, “Doc, I’ve been popping pills since this all started.” We need to keep our spiritual immune (aka discernment) system strong too! We’ve reached a point where the daily horoscope is more reliable than the daily news, but neither should be taken at face value. You get cleaner water from the hog wash than the amount of reliable information from either of those sources. **What do you put into your mind every day that can make your heart clean and pure so you are confident your mind is clear and sharp?** Only God’s Word can do this.

**Christians live out our calling to holiness by no longer being conformed by the passions nor to the patterns of the world.** We immerse our heart in God’s love to consume our every adoration and shape our every affection for Him. We hear the call of God through Christ Jesus by Holy Spirit to live holy, as we say “Yes” because of our love for Him. We know our lives are accountable to the One who will judge the living and the dead, and this shapes our decisions and our actions. The useless stuff we used to fill our lives with, both heart and mind, we recognize as sin-stained and antagonistic toward God. This no longer satisfies us because we know it offends God. We no longer build our lives by the thing we once used because we know that they are incapable of providing what they promise, only to ultimately spoil, fade, and perish. But Christ never does, not one bit! **The reason life collapses and is consumed by the heat of tests and trials is because we’ve built it out of “wood, hay, straw” instead of what is precious and can only be refined by the heat of tests and trials.**<sup>1Cor3:12f</sup>

**And love for Christ produces love for others.** And our lives are given to blessing and serving others because our Master set this example as the model for us, and gave the command of His Word. The more we live out the love of God that is in us, the more powerful the Word of God works in us to produce that which is according to His nature, eternal and imperishable. And all of this because it is His gospel working in us. **God’s Word is not going anywhere, and when your heart and mind are full of it, your life is anchored to it!**

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**CLOSE** **Story of the road to glory; it was Worth It!** [video clip :47 (NO Sound) – last road to the lake]

My brother and I flyfished on some high mountain lakes this summer. This is a video of our ride to get there. There are a couple of things that I want to point out about this video for you. First, this stretch of “road” was much rougher than the video conveys. It took about 35 minutes to go ~4 miles. Second, it was uncomfortable the whole way, and painful at a few spots, to endure the ride. It just felt like the jeep was going to fall apart, and the seat was only attached on one corner. Third, (and most important) — If you could hear the video, immediately upon turning onto this road, a dog begins to pant very loudly. That dog is named Trevor, an 80-pound black lab. [pic of Trevor] Trevor was laid out asleep in the back floorboard for the first forty minutes of the drive, such that one might wonder if he was even alive. As soon as we started traveling on this road, he woke up, jumped up into the back seat, paced back and forth, slapping his happy-tail all over my brother, and panting and slobbering uncontrollably. **Do you know why?** Trevor knew where this road led; he knew where we were going and what we were about to experience, and he loved to fish so much that he could not contain his excitement. **When we got to the end of the road, we would be at the fishing hole; and Trevor was right! It was worth it!**

**ILLUS** Pics that capture the “Worth it”

- **Lake pic 1** – The lake was set about 11,800’ in elevation on the Continental Divide trail.
- **Lake pic 2** - Elevation aside, the scenery took your breath away.
- **Lane of catching a fish** [video - 1:10] And Trevor was right, we caught the most beautiful Colorado greenback cutthroat trout. And every one, that near dead dog in the back seat would run over any distance to make sure he got there to stick his nose on the fish and lick it. He LOVED it!



- **Lake pic 3** – Over those three days of fishing I became increasingly convinced; the pain and discomfort of the journey will be worth it when we get there!

***“the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed” Rom 8:18***

Christian, this is true of our life in Christ! Jesus is worth it; no matter what He commands, by faith you can trust and obey His Word, and His power will prove sufficient for your life. And in the end you will discover; He is worth it!

Christian, today I exhort each one of us to recognize who you are, what God has given to you, and His call to faithfulness; “Be a Trevor”; live by the anchored conviction that the momentary sufferings of this present time will NOT compare with the glory that is to be revealed of our eternal home with Jesus.

