

## 1 Peter 1:13-25 (Week 3)

*“Peter transitions from what God has done for believers in their salvation, to what believers should live like now that they are chosen pilgrims. God's commands are always grounded in His grace (that which God commands, grace provides). Another way of saying this is, “the indicative (what God has done for us in Christ) is always the basis of the imperative (how we should live our lives)” (Schreiner, p. 77).*

**vs. 13-16: The RESPONSIBILITY and privilege of our salvation** (response to ourselves).

This verse contains one verb in the imperative mood here (*elpisate, set your hope*), and it serves as the basis for the other implied imperatives (participles) – 'prepare your minds,' and 'being sober-minded.' The thought is, “Set your hope . . . by preparing your minds and being sober-minded.”

**Set your hope fully** – Hope for Peter is nearly synonymous with faith for Paul. Hope is “our trust in God for the future” (faith is trusting God for the present). In light of what Peter has just said about our salvation (a future inheritance reserved and guarded in heaven for us), the 'rational' response for the believer is to trust God for the future. If God's present promises have been fulfilled, should we not expect His future promises also to be carried out (**Philippians 1:6**)?

Notice the object of our hope here - “*on the grace that will be brought to you*” - The event is the second Coming of Jesus, but the essence of that again flows out of God's grace. Just as our initial entrance into salvation was all by grace, so too the consummation of our salvation is also due to grace!

Two effects of this hope:

**1.** It brings glory to God when we trust Him (**Romans 4:13-21**).

**2.** It will bring joy, perseverance, and obedience in a hostile world (**Psalms 31:23-24, 71:4-6, 1 Timothy 4:10, 6:17**).

**Preparing your minds for action (gird up)** - The image here is of a first century person who tucked the folds of their long, flowing garments under their belt so that they would not be hindered as they walked. Let nothing distract your mind from our future hope – do not get tied down to the things of this world (**Psalms 26, Philippians 4:8, Colossians 3:1-4**). In thinking about Israel as they prepared to leave Egypt (**Exodus 12:11**), it would mean we are ready to leave this world in any instant (can we say with all our heart, with the Apostle John, “*Lord Jesus, come quickly.*” – **Revelation 22:20**).

**Sober in spirit** (self-controlled) – Literally, not drunk, but in context, it means to abstain from the excesses of the world. We must not become so enthralled with the world that we become dull to our spiritual inheritance (**1 Thessalonians 5:4-8**). Having minds fixed upon the future grace to be revealed in Christ's return will lead to a life of holiness (**1 John 3:3**).

**Be holy** (clean, righteous, separate from defilement, pure)- As believers, we are to pursue holiness (**Leviticus 11:44-45, Matthew 5:48, 2 Corinthians 7:1, Hebrews 12:14**). We were chosen/elected for holiness (**Ephesians 1:4**) and good works (**Ephesians 2:10**). We are to reflect the character of our Father!

How do we pursue/obtain this holiness?

**1. As obedient children** – literally, “children of obedience.” As believers, reborn as children of God, our 'normal' lifestyle is one of obedience – that is our new nature (contrast with the “sons of disobedience” – **Ephesians 2:2, 5:6**). We do not obtain any sense of holiness in our own strength, but through faith, as we are led by the Holy Spirit in our new nature to live like new people, desiring to be obedient to Jesus Christ (**Ephesians 5:5-11**). This is the distinction between the believer and the unbeliever – one is obedient by nature, the other disobedient (**Romans 2:6-8, 6:17, Titus 3:1-3**).

**2. Do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance** – The old, evil passions were pursued by the readers before they became Christians (**Ephesians 4:18**). Though we are by nature obedient, Peter recognizes that we must still actively refuse and reject the draw of sin. We are to make a clean break from the world (**Romans 12:2, Ephesians 4:20-24**).

**3. Imitate our Father** – God's very essence is holiness (**Isaiah 6:3, Revelation 4:8**) and He is the model of holiness – we are to imitate Him. This means we love what He loves, hate what He hates.

*“People do not drift toward Holiness. Apart from grace-driven effort, people do not gravitate toward godliness, prayer, obedience to Scripture, faith, and delight in the Lord. We drift toward compromise and call it tolerance; we drift toward disobedience and call it freedom; we drift toward superstition and call it faith. We cherish the indiscipline of lost self-control and call it relaxation; we slouch toward prayerlessness and delude ourselves into thinking we have escaped legalism; we slide toward godlessness and convince ourselves we have been liberated.” D. A. Carson*

**vs. 17-21: The REMINDER of our salvation** (response to God) .

**Conduct yourselves with fear (reverence, awe)** – This is the main thought of these next verses. This fear for the believer is mostly referring to reverence and awe, but we cannot remove the notion of true fear (**Psalms 130:3-4, Jeremiah 32:38-40, Revelation 15:3-4**). Contrast this with the lack of fear on behalf of non-believers (**Psalms 36:1, Romans 3:18**).

*“Thus this godly fear puts the soul upon its watch lest, from the heart within, from the devil without, from the world or some other temptation, something should surprise and overtake the child of God to defile him or cause him to defile the ways of God, and so*

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*offend the saints, open the mouths of men, and cause the enemy to speak reproachfully of religion.” John Bunyan, The Fear of God, p. 86.*

Why are we to live in fear?

**1.** Just as earthly fathers can bring fear in a disobedient son, so also the believer recognizes our Father in heaven is also the Judge of all. We know that God is impartial, and gives to each according to their deeds, so we recognize He will not ignore sin – disobedience is serious (**Romans 2:11, Ephesians 6:9, 2 Timothy 4:1**).

**2.** We have been ransomed from our former futile life of vanity and godlessness (**Colossians 1:13-14, Titus 2:14**).

**3.** We were not redeemed by things of this world (silver or gold), but with the precious blood of Jesus Christ. The comparison to a lamb without spot or blemish could refer to the Passover lamb (**Exodus 12:3-6, 21-23**), or the general sacrifice offering (**Leviticus 1:3, 10, 3:1, 6, 9, 4:3, 14, 23, 28, 32**) sin sacrifice, or the suffering servant who was led like a lamb to slaughter (**Isaiah 53:7**). The main point is our redemption is from an eternal source (*raised from the dead*) and will last past this present age.

**4.** Our salvation was not an afterthought for God – He had decreed this from the beginning (*Christ was foreknown before the foundation of the world* – **Revelation 13:8**).

**5.** God's purpose in raising Jesus from the dead was to give faith and hope to believers – not just initial salvation, but our obedient life. Our hope is centered on Jesus rising from the dead – He is our pioneer in the faith (**Hebrews 12:2**).

**vs. 22-25:** *The REACH of our salvation* (response to fellow believers).

*Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth* - This points back to our being born-again (**vs. 23**). This regeneration caused us to be obedient to the truth (i.e., the gospel). It is interesting to note that the term 'faith' does not appear in these verses, yet Peter is describing the process of being saved. Peter has been focused on the connection between salvation and obedience, and he continues that thought here. Obedience to the truth is synonymous with belief (**John 3:36**). It is important to note the verb for purified is in the perfect tense, pointing to a past action that leads to ongoing results. Having been purified (washed) through regeneration, we become obedient to the gospel. Faith and cleansing are also linked (**Acts 15:9, Romans 6:16-18**).

Having been made pure through salvation, we are now empowered to love with a *sincere brotherly love* (**Romans 5:5, 1 Thessalonians 4:9**). Love for the brethren is the (supernatural) normal result of salvation (**1 John 2:9-11, 3:14, 4:7, 20, 5:1**). We love sincerely – without hypocrisy (**Romans 12:9**), genuinely.

*Love one another earnestly from a pure heart* – This is the main focus of these verses.

*Earnestly* (*ektenos* – literally, out to stretch) – The picture is of straining and stretching your muscles to their maximum limit. Peter is telling us that our love should go as far as we can reach – it might actually be painful for us (same word is used in **Luke 22:44** where Jesus prayed 'earnestly'). This is not a weak, self-serving love, but one of ultimate sacrifice.

[Ektenos] “*expresses the manifested character of a genuine love. It is steady and unremitting. The birth from above is the only consistent and rational justification of such a love, and the ever-flowing stream of life from above from the living and abiding God at once demands this character in love and renders it possible. It is the life of God in man which raises the love of man for man to its highest power.*” **Hort**

This type of love is first directed to one another – other believers (just as we have a new birth, we now have a new family to love, and the example of how to love - **John 15:13**). How does this love practically play itself out? We meet the needs of others if we can somehow stretch far enough (**Luke 10:25-37, Philippians 2:3-4**). *This means physical, emotional, psychological or spiritual needs – we serve and minister as we have means and opportunity* (**Romans 12:9-16, 1 John 3:16-18**).

“*Christians, you also are to love one another, not because of the gain which you get from one another, but rather because of the good you can do to one another.*” **Spurgeon, Christ's New Commandments**

Why are we to love like this? Because we *have been born again* – this is who we are now. As believers, we are living a new, changed, radically different life, one that is characterized by love for the brethren. And this new life is lasting, permanent, because we have been born again, “*not of perishable seed, but of imperishable.*” Our first birth brought us death and slavery to sin, our second birth brings eternal, spiritual life, with freedom to obey Jesus Christ.

What is this imperishable seed? It is the word of God that brings us to salvation (**James 1:18**). Contrast this with the best of the flesh – the wisest, healthiest, richest, most beautiful, most articulate, most talented, most honored – they are like the flower of the grass that eventually dies. At death, kings and beggars are reduced to the same fate – there is no permanence in the flesh. But not so with those born according to the word, in Christ – we have an imperishable life. We will never fade, we have a living hope!