

## 1 Peter 1:13-16

**Sacred Commands**

<sup>13</sup> Therefore, preparing your minds for action,<sup>a</sup> and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. <sup>14</sup> As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, <sup>15</sup> but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, <sup>16</sup> since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.”

a. 1 Peter 1:13 Greek *girding up the loins of your mind**Prayer:*

*Our heavenly Father, we thank you that you have brought us today under the authority of this particular passage of scripture which is divine revelation. Teach us your truth today, teach us your will. Work within us your sanctifying grace, help us to grow to have more of the mindset and character of our Lord Jesus, in whose name we pray. Amen.*

It has often been said that when we come across the word “therefore” in the scriptures, we need to ask ourselves what is it there for? In other words, it is saying that because of what has previously been said, we need to do something, we need to take heed what was previously written and apply it to our lives.

May I remind you that all scripture is inspired by God, it has the approval and comes with the authority of God himself, it is not optional for us, we are to take it with the utmost seriousness, it has the same authority as if the Lord Jesus himself were standing in our midst and teaching us about the nature and will of God and how we should respond.

Peter is referring to all that he has said in the first 12 verses of this chapter:

About God’s mercy to us, about our new birth based on Christ’s resurrection from the dead, about how our salvation is guarded in heaven by God’s power, about the necessity of testing to bring out the genuineness of our faith, and about how the prophecies in the OT about the coming Christ were really meant for us, for our benefit, and how the gospel message we have heard came to us in the power of the Holy Spirit so that it was the Word of God himself, not just the mere words of humans.

All that he has said in these first 12 verse is enough for us to get up and shout and dance around the room and go out and shout it from the rooftops. But he wants to give us some specific instruction in light of these great truths. This is typical of the apostolic epistles, the same approach that Paul used – doctrine is laid out first – great theological truths regarding Christ and his salvation – then a practical section follows which explains to us specific ways we need to live and behave in the light of Christ’s great work in our lives. The doctrinal; then the practical. Good theology is important; it leads

to right thinking and good practice in our lives. "Doctrine is delightful because it delivers us from deviant thinking and behavior." Doctrine is delightful because it strengthens us in the good and sets us free from the bad. Let me feed on Christian doctrine so that I might reflect more and more Christ's image!

The Apostle Peter is long since dead, but his letter is just as relevant and needful and instructive for us as it has always been in the history of the Christian church. So let's think about what he has written here.

### **I. Live your life in view of the fact that Christ is returning. v. 13**

Live your life in the present in view of what's going to happen in the future. Many people never think about the future. They just think about today, about right now. The proverbs tells us we should follow the example of the ants – they work diligently all some gathering food in light of the coming winter. They have foresight. They have planning. They are preparing for what's coming. This future event of winter governs their days during the summer.

A. Peter tells us to "set our hope" on Christ's future coming.

Now in the NT, this word "hope" has a special meaning. It doesn't just mean wishful thinking, like "I hope it doesn't rain tomorrow for our picnic" but the word hope carries a certainty, and assurance base on God's promises, that something is going to happen according to God's Word.

We have a great hope that Christ will return – he will wipe out all the evil in this world and bring in his reign of everlasting righteousness. But this is not just wishful thinking – we have confidence that it really will happen because God's Word is full of promises of Christ's return. So we live in a confident hope in Christ's return.

Look at what Peter says about this hope. Something marvelous will happen when Christ returns. He will be accompanied by grace. He will not only return in his physical presence but he is going to pour out even more grace upon his people that he has already done!

What is this grace that's coming? Well, the main thing will be his physical presence, in his glorious, resurrected body – he will appear before us and we will fall at his feet in wondrous amazement and worship. The one who loved us and bore our sins will finally gather us to himself and we will be with our God and he will be with us. The great promise of the scriptures will be fulfilled.

If if that were not enough, he will also clothe us with our resurrection bodies - we will all be changed and be given immortal, incorruptible bodies like Jesus' body. Oh, it is a great day coming – all the suffering and heartache and sin of this world will be gone forever and we will be with Christ and his people in the new heavens and earth. Grace will indeed be poured out on us in new and fresh ways that we have not yet experienced.

Notice verse 12 about this grace. It's not something we work up ourselves, but this grace "will be brought to us." We won't do anything but receive it. It's all from God; not from ourselves, but from God's gracious hand alone. We can't do anything to earn it; we will just receive it. That is the nature of grace, is it not? It is the gift of God, not of our works, so that we boast not in ourselves but in God's great kindness to us, his loving graciousness to us. What a kind and compassionate God is our God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. *Let us serve him all the days of our lives.* And this is really the theme of this section of 1 Peter. We respond to him with the devotion and dedication of our lives because of all his grace and kindness to us.

Notice here the emphasis on the use of our minds. He says in v. 13, "**preparing your minds for action.**" The literal Greek says "girding up the loins of your minds." In the days in which this letter was written men wore robes. So when they had to engage in some activity that required a lot of physical exertion, like working out in the fields, or doing some heavy construction work, or maybe even going into battle, they would pull their robe up about their knees and tie it in place so they could have freedom of movement. Today we might tell someone, "Let's roll up our sleeves and go to work."

So the idea here is to do some serious thinking about what God has called us to do. It's like the builder in the Gospels, the wise building will do a lot of planning and calculating to see if he has the means, the finances to accomplish the project.

So all of us who are Christians have great calling, a great mission ahead of us. We need to get ourselves mentally ready. We have to think about the will of God, specifically what may be God's will for us, and this primarily will be studying the Word of God, to learn the directions God gives us for how we will live out our lives.

The emphasis here is on the use of our minds. We have to engage our minds, our thinking, in the race of the Christian life that we are in. God wants us to exercise our brains, our thinking, our knowledge, our reading, our meditation in discovering his will and working out, by his grace, in our lives. We have to train our minds to think Christianly. Romans 12:2 is the classic text on this point:

***<sup>2</sup> Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.***

Peter also says "being sober-minded." In other words, we should keep clear-headed. Not allow ungodly distractions to cloud our thinking, not be like people who have drunk too much alcohol, and they can't think straight or talk straight – but be like people who have guarded themselves and stayed away from things that will inhibit clear thinking and active, diligent devotion to Christ and his calling and commands over our lives. "be sober minded, not inebriated with thoughts and distractions that interfere with committed determination to use our lives as on offering to Jesus Christ and his glory.

1 Pet. 4:7 - <sup>7</sup><sup>(A)</sup> **The end of all things is at hand; therefore <sup>(B)</sup>be self-controlled and sober-minded <sup>(C)</sup>for the sake of your prayers.**

1 Pet. 5:8 - <sup>8</sup><sup>(A)</sup> **Be sober-minded; <sup>(B)</sup>be watchful. Your <sup>(C)</sup>adversary the devil <sup>(D)</sup>prowls around <sup>(E)</sup>like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.**

1 Thess. 5:6 - <sup>6</sup>**So then <sup>(A)</sup>let us not sleep, as others do, but let us <sup>(B)</sup>keep awake and <sup>(C)</sup>be sober.**

## 1. Live your life in view of the fact that Christ is returning.

## II. Let not the evil passions of your pre-conversion life control you.

### **14 As obedient children**

The idea here is people "whose prevailing spirit is obedience, and who are given up to its habitual practice or expression (contrast with "children of disobedience" in Eph. 2:2. (Stibbs)

Paul calls this the "obedience of faith."

### ***Not conformed the passions of your former ignorance:***

Alan Stibbs' idea (P. 86) – God's calling on our lives involves two basic thrusts or actions: ceasing to think and do what we used to think and do, but beginning and continuing to think differently and act differently, behave differently. All this is inevitable because of the powerful working of the indwelling HS in the life of each believer.

It is just as impossible for a human life not to be radically changed by the entrance of the HS as it is impossible for a glass of water not to turn red if a bottle of red food coloring were poured into it.

This NT pattern of teaching to Christian believers is a mark of instruction that the NT presents clearly. We repent and deny old sinful habits and we adopt new healthy, godly habits.

"Ignorance" here is ignorance of God primarily (Stibbs)

"not conformed" could be translated "not fashioning" that is, not molding, not constructing our lives the way we used to – for our own pleasures and glory and agenda with no thought of God and what pleased him and what is in conformity to his Word.

We don't want to be like those in our world who know not the living Christ. Paul describes them in...

Eph. 4:18 - <sup>18</sup>**They <sup>(A)</sup>are darkened in their understanding, <sup>(B)</sup>alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to <sup>(C)</sup>their hardness of heart.**

Peter in verse 14 calls notes the “passions of your former ignorance.” It used to be that we were just plain ignorant of God and his will and his ways. Even Paul described himself like this:

1 Tim. 1:13 - <sup>13</sup> though formerly I was a blasphemer, persecutor, and insolent opponent. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief...

But what has happened to us who believe in Christ. Mercy has come to us from heaven and our lives have been transformed and changed:

\* **Tit. 2:11-14** - <sup>11</sup> For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, <sup>12</sup> training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, <sup>13</sup> waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, <sup>14</sup> who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

Peter adds to this line of thought:

1 Pet. 4:2 - <sup>2</sup> so as to live for <sup>the rest of the time in the flesh</sup> <sup>no longer for human passions but</sup> <sup>for the will of God.</sup> <sup>3</sup> For the time that is past <sup>suffices</sup> <sup>for doing what the Gentiles want to do, living in sensuality, passions, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and lawless idolatry.</sup>

Again, Paul does not absent himself from the description of the lifestyle of those outside of Christ:

Tit. 3:3 - <sup>3</sup> For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another.

*But something marvelous has happened in human history. The Son of God has been sent from heaven. Paul preached about his to the Greek philosophers on Mars Hill in Athens:*

Acts 17:30 - <sup>30</sup> The times of ignorance <sup>God overlooked, but</sup> <sup>now he</sup> <sup>commands all people everywhere to repent.</sup>

So Peter is saying to these Christian people - a whole new way of living and thinking and relating to others and to God has come to us. We are recipients of something that is greater than ourselves, greater than we could ever have imagined – the living God has

interrupted our lives – oh, blessed interruption! – and brought us into a new realm of living that is totally life-transforming.

**I. Live your life in view of the fact that Christ is returning.**

**II. Let not the evil passions of your pre-conversion life control you.**

**III. Like your God is holy, be like him in all your conduct.**

***God is holy: Definition of Holy***

A separation of a person or thing to divine use, to consecration.

Holiness of God: his separateness from the creation and elevation above it (NBD). Thus the transcendence of God is in mind here. Yahweh stands in contrast to the false gods. Psa. 99:1-3:

***The Lord reigns; let the peoples tremble!***

***He sits enthroned upon the cherubim; let the earth quake!***

**<sup>2</sup> The Lord is great in Zion;**

***he is exalted over all the peoples.***

**<sup>3</sup> Let them praise your great and awesome name!**

***Holy is he!***

Holiness also applies to his ethical and moral excellence.

Hab. 1:13a - ***You who are of purer eyes than to see evil  
and cannot look at wrong,***

Holiness can refer to the outshining of all that God is - like the rays of the sun that come to us.

Each of the 3 persons of the Godhead are named "holy:"

John 17:11 - **<sup>11</sup> And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father...**

Acts 4:30 - **<sup>30</sup> while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.**

The Spirit is everywhere called holy: 1 Pet. 1:12

***through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven***

so this essential and unique attribute of God – he is holy – is equally true of all three persons of the one, eternal God.

Let's look at a few OT texts that I think will help us get a hold of this attribute of holiness that belongs to God, and which we are to imitate in our lives.

After their deliverance from Egypt, God demanded that his people should become holy as he is holy:

**"since it is written,"**

**This shows the authority of the OT revelation.**

Lev. 19:2 - "Speak to all the congregation of the people of **Israel** and say to them, You shall be **holy**, for I the Lord your **God** am **holy**.

Joshua 24:19 - But Joshua said to the people, "You are not able to serve the Lord, for he **is a holy God**. He **is** a jealous **God**; he will not forgive your transgressions or your sins.

1 Sam. 2:2 -

"There **is** none **holy** like the Lord: for there **is** none besides you; there **is** no rock like our **God**.

Holiness involves separation from evil or things defiling and being consecrated to God.

Lev. 20:26 - <sup>26</sup><sup>(a)</sup>You shall be holy to me, <sup>(b)</sup>for I the Lord am holy and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be mine.

Lev. 11:44 - <sup>44</sup>For I am the Lord your God. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and <sup>(a)</sup>be holy, for I am holy. <sup>(b)</sup>You shall not defile yourselves with any swarming thing that crawls on the ground.

Psa. 71:22 - I will also praise you with the harp for your faithfulness, O my **God**; I will sing praises to you with the lyre, O **Holy** One of **Israel**.

Isa. 5:16 -

But the LORD of hosts **is** exalted in justice, and the **Holy God** shows himself **holy** in righteousness.

Isa. 43:3 -For I am the Lord your **God**, the **Holy** One of **Israel**, your Savior. I give Egypt as your ransom, Cush and Seba in exchange for you

Isa. 48:14 - Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, the **Holy** One of **Israel**: "I am the Lord your **God**, who teaches you to profit, who leads you in the way you should go.

Ezek. 36:22 - Therefore say to the house of **Israel**, Thus says the Lord **God**: It **is** not for your sake, O house of **Israel**, that I am about to act, but for the sake of my **holy** name, which you have profaned among the nations to which you came.

Rev. 4:8 - And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and within, and day and night they never cease to say, "**Holy, holy, holy, is** the Lord **God** Almighty, who was and **is** and **is** to come!" [eternity]

*Examples of God's holiness:*

Exo. 19:3-6

<sup>3</sup> while Moses went up to God. The Lord called to him out of the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the people of Israel: <sup>4</sup> 'You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. <sup>5</sup> **Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine;** <sup>6</sup> **and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.**' These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel."

Lev. 11:41-45 - <sup>41</sup> "Every swarming thing that swarms on the ground is detestable; it shall not be eaten. <sup>42</sup> Whatever goes on its belly, and whatever goes on all fours, or whatever has many feet, any swarming thing that swarms on the ground, you shall not eat, for they are detestable. <sup>43</sup> You shall not make yourselves detestable with any swarming thing that swarms, and you shall not defile yourselves with them, and become unclean through them. <sup>44</sup> **For I am the Lord your God. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am holy. You shall not defile yourselves with any swarming thing that crawls on the ground.** <sup>45</sup> For I am the Lord who brought you up out of the land of Egypt to be your God. You shall therefore be holy, for I am holy."

Lev. 19:1-4 - And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>2</sup> "Speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel and say to them, **You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy.** <sup>3</sup> **Every one of you shall revere his mother and his father, and you shall keep my Sabbaths: I am the Lord your God.** <sup>4</sup> **Do not turn to idols or make for yourselves any gods of cast metal: I am the Lord your God.**

Lev. 20:1-10

The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>2</sup> "Say to the people of Israel, Any one of the people of Israel or of the strangers who sojourn in Israel who gives any of his children to Molech shall surely be put to death. The people of the land shall stone him with stones. <sup>3</sup> I myself will set my face against that man and will cut him off from among his people, because he has given one of his children to Molech, to make my sanctuary unclean and to profane my holy name. <sup>4</sup> And if the people of the land do at all close their eyes to that man when he gives one of his children to Molech, and do not put him to death, <sup>5</sup> then I will set my face against that man and against his clan and will cut them off from among their people, him and all who follow him in whoring after Molech.

<sup>6</sup> "If a person turns to mediums and necromancers, whoring after them, I will set my face against that person and will cut him off from among his people. <sup>7</sup> Consecrate yourselves, therefore, and be holy, for I am the Lord your God. <sup>8</sup> Keep my statutes and do them; I am the Lord who sanctifies you. <sup>9</sup> For anyone who curses his father or his mother shall surely be put to death; he has cursed his father or his mother; his blood is upon him.

<sup>10</sup> "If a man commits adultery with the wife of[a] his neighbor, both the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.

Lev. 20:22-23 - <sup>22</sup> "You shall therefore keep all my statutes and all my rules and do them, that the land where I am bringing you to live may not vomit you out. <sup>23</sup> And you shall not walk in the customs of the nation that I am driving out before you, for they did all these things, and therefore I detested them.

Lev. 20:26 - <sup>26</sup> You shall be holy to me, for I the Lord am holy and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be mine.

**You shall be holy - be like him in all your conduct. V. 15**

**We are to be imitators of our God.**

**Matt. 5:48** - <sup>48</sup> You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

**Rom. 12:1** - appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of **God**, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, **holy** and acceptable to **God**, which **is** your spiritual worship.

**1 Cor. 6:19-20** - <sup>19</sup> Or <sup>a</sup>do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? <sup>b</sup>You are not your own, <sup>20</sup> <sup>c</sup>for you were bought with a price. <sup>d</sup>So glorify God in your body.

1 Thess. 4:7 - For <sup>the</sup> God has **not** called us for <sup>the</sup> impurity, but in holiness.

Heb. 12:10 -

<sup>10</sup> *For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness.*

1 Thes. 4:1-8 - Finally, then, brothers,<sup>1a</sup> we ask and urge you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God, just as you are doing, that you do so more and more. <sup>2</sup> For you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus. <sup>3</sup> For this is the will of God, your sanctification:<sup>3b</sup> that you abstain from sexual immorality; ... <sup>7</sup> For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness. <sup>8</sup> Therefore whoever disregards this, disregards not man but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you.

### **Gal. 5:6ff**

<sup>6</sup> But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. <sup>17</sup> For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. <sup>18</sup> But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. <sup>19</sup> Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality,<sup>20</sup> idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, <sup>21</sup> envy,<sup>21a</sup> drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do<sup>21b</sup> such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. <sup>22</sup> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.<sup>24</sup> And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

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**II. Let not the evil passions of your pre-conversion life control you.**

**II. Like your God is holy, be like him in all your conduct.**

Closing prayer:

*Lord, help us to do all these things. Forgive us when we, as Christians, have failed you. Strengthen us to know and do your will – for your glory and our good. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.*