

Outrageous Hope Extravagant Joy

In Pursuit of Holiness

Week 2 – 1 Peter 1:13-25

Peter is an unlikely candidate to be one of the hand-chosen disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. A crusty fisherman by trade, Peter was uncouth, unlearned, and unsophisticated. Yet, the Lord Jesus looked beyond Peter's limitations and saw his potential. Not only did Peter need the Lord for salvation, he also was in desperate need of a spiritual makeover. Peter's passion and tempestuous nature needed to be mastered and brought under the control of the Holy Spirit. God had big plans for Peter. God's ability to capture Peter's heart and use his innate fiery passion and boisterous personality for the furtherance of the gospel gives us hope!

I. Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus-1 Peter 1:13

Peter was writing to people who were suffering persecution that was about to escalate. Tests and trials come in all forms and fashions and are universal to us all. Some are minor, and some are major. Some are due to difficult circumstances and some are due to difficult people. Whatever the level of difficulty and whatever the source, we are destined to be troubled as long as we live in this sin-cursed world. The question that begs to be answered is, "How shall we live?" In the midst of difficult days and troublesome trials, how are we to respond? How are we to live? What is the appropriate response for a child of God?

The answer is quite simple in theory, but rather difficult to enact. We need to focus. In light of our "living hope" in Jesus Christ, we are to gird our minds for action, keep sober in spirit, and fix our hope on the Lord Jesus Christ. We are to aggressively pursue the things of God. In fact, the pursuit of personal holiness and practical righteousness is to be the lifelong ambition of every child of God.

Peter uses a common expression to paint an apt word picture in the mind of his readers. "Gird up your minds," Peter wrote (1 Peter 1:13). This is a figure of speech that referred to the fastening up of the long flowing garments generally worn in Bible times into a heavy belt in order to be geared up for work or for warfare. The idea conveyed is that we are to be prepared, actively engaged, and ready for service at a moment's notice. Referring to the armor of God, Paul wrote, "Therefore, take up the full armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything to stand firm. Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth and having put on the breastplate of righteousness" (Ephesians 6:13-14). A good soldier is alert to the need to be ready to spring into action should his commander-in-chief call upon him. Likewise, a wise woman understands the need to set her mind on the Lord Jesus and fill her thoughts with His Word in order to keep those millions of swirling thoughts and endless details that dance around her brain over the course of any given day.

Peter goes on to write, “Keep sober in spirit” (1 Peter 1:13). Keep your mind free from anything that would befuddle the mind and take away the ability to make sharp, prompt, and rational decisions based upon the Word of God.

The world, the flesh and the devil continuously assault us through the avenue of our mind, our eye-gate, and our five senses. We must diligently protect our mind and keep our thought-life pure in order to combat the noxious assaults of our enemies.

Peter’s final admonition to us in this verse is to “fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.” While we are currently experiencing many precious benefits derived from knowing the Lord Jesus personally as we trudge through the daily grind of this life, Peter continually points his readers to our inheritance which is being *held in escrow* for us until the Second Coming. Far greater blessings are in store and the very thought of seeing Jesus face-to-face should be a marvelous incentive that sparks a sense of anticipation and urges us on to faithfulness in light of the sure return of Jesus.

II. Holy, Holy, Holy-1 Peter 1:14-16

We must gird up our minds for action, keep sober in spirit, and fix our hope on Jesus Christ our Lord. Peter goes on to say we must be obedient children. Our *practice* must match our *position* in Jesus Christ; our *behavior* must reflect our *beliefs*. We are to be *wholly holy!*

In 1 Peter 1:14-15 he writes, “As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourself.” The logic Peter uses for the need of obedience is quite simple. God has written an immutable truth into the laws governing all His creation; plants and animals “bring forth after their kind” (Gen. 1:11). God has designed His creation in such a way that offspring inherit the nature of their parents. God is holy. Therefore, as His children we should be holy. Genuine conversion brings genuine change. While transformation is a slow process, evidence of a changed heart should readily be validated by a changed life.

“Transformation into Christlikeness begins when the Word of God and the Spirit of God enter our hearts through our minds.” (*Outrageous Hope Extravagant Joy* p. 41).

God demands that as His children we are to be holy, not only by virtue of His imputed righteousness, but also in our belief and behavior. God requires obedience; we should demonstrate obedience. As children of God, a definite family resemblance should be quite obvious to all who carefully observe and examine our lives, beginning with our husbands and our children and increasing throughout our sphere of influence. God saves us for the purpose of using us to influence and impact others with the gospel of Jesus Christ. He intends to reproduce the likeness of Christ in us. He is holy, and He expects for us to live holy lives in order not to impede the spread of the gospel message.

III. Redeemed, How I Love to Proclaim It-1 Peter 1:17-25

We have not been “redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold” (1 Peter 1:18). Peter’s reference to these very expensive materials in connection to salvation serves to point out the futility of man’s most extravagant effort to redeem himself. The very best that sinful man has to offer is not enough to give as the payment for his sin debt. A king’s ransom in gold and silver is insufficient to pay the market value of the sin debt of Adam’s race. We have not been “redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from (our) futile way of life inherited from (our) forefathers” (1 Peter 1:18) because *we cannot be redeemed* with such.

Salvation requires more than silver or gold; salvation from the judgment of sin requires the shed blood of a sinless Sacrifice. Any attempt on man’s part to buy his way to heaven with gold and silver or work his way into God’s favor with good works is woefully inadequate. Blood is required. Hebrews 9:22 says, “Without shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness.” Blood is required, but not just any blood. Hebrews 10:4 says, “For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sin.” Sinless blood is required for the remission of sin. We are saved by the sacrificial and substitutionary death of the Lord Jesus Christ. We have been redeemed “with precious blood, as a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ” (1 Peter 1:19).

Peter continues the theme of redemption, but changes his metaphor from precious metals to seed. He writes, “For you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and abiding word of God” (1 Peter 1:23). Redemption is a work which was accomplished by Jesus Christ on Calvary’s cross. We have no part in it except that our sin debt made it necessary. Redemption was done for us; the new birth is done in us. It is a work done in us by the Word of God and the Spirit of God. The Word of God reveals the truth of God’s divine revelation. The Spirit of God convicts us “concerning sin and righteousness and judgment” (John 16:8) and indwells our human spirit at the moment of conversion. This begins the process of transformation known as sanctification.

The supernatural work of God in us results in a new nature characterized by the fruit of the Spirit of God and His *Outrageous Hope and Extravagant Joy!*