

1 Pet. 1:13-21

IMPERATIVES BASED ON BLESSINGS!!

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Simon Peter, the apostle of Christ, wrote to Christians who were undergoing a severe trial of persecution. He addressed them as "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father," and he made reference to their sanctification in the Spirit, "for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." Though they were going through hard times of suffering for righteousness' sake, they were still "elect according to the foreknowledge of God," See 1 Pet. 1:1,2.

Early in his epistle, he emphasized the blessings they had; the reality of pain and suffering does not diminish what we have, if we are God's people. By the abundant mercy of God they had been received into His family, when they obeyed the gospel. They had a "living hope," by the resurrection of Christ from the dead. Also, they were anticipating an incorruptible inheritance, and they were under God's protection; kept by the power of God, through their faith, unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time. See 1 Pet. 1:3-5.

While they were being grieved by various trials, this was only "for a little while," and it is good for faith to be tested. Further, this salvation they were suffering for, the prophets had "inquired and searched diligently" into; and these blessings were things angels desired to look into. 1 Pet. 1:6-12

These are some of the highlights of First Peter, from chapter one, verses three through twelve. They were suffering, but Peter wanted them to continue faithfully, embracing these blessings and holding firm to the "living hope" which involves things so tremendous, the angels desire to observe them.

Therefore!

The first word in verse 13 is one of those significant, key Bible words: "THEREFORE!" When you come to a "therefore" in the Bible, you should check to see what it is THERE FOR! You see, the word tells us that what's about to be presented is based on what's already been said. The idea is, in view of the facts just given, here is a statement of conclusion that follows.

In 1 Pet. 1:3-12, the theme is -- "you are suffering, but IT IS WORTH IT!" Peter

enumerates some of the blessings Christians have, and he points out the exceeding greatness of the salvation we have by showing how the prophets took great interest in it, and these are things which angels desire to look into.

THE BASIS FOR THE IMPERATIVES BEGINNING IN VERSE 13 IS THE GREATNESS OF THE SALVATION WE HAVE. Think of it this way -- Because of all the blessings Peter has been writing about (from verse three through twelve); in view of this great salvation we have through the gospel, there are certain things we must do; there is a kind of character we should be anxious to nurture. "Therefore, gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." Notice the imperatives ...

Gird Up The Loins Of Your Mind

GIRD UP simply means to get ready for action. This word "gird" is the term from which we get our word "girdle." In Palestine and Asia Minor back then, most men wore a very wide belt around their waist. In preparation to engage in some activity, they would gather their long flowing garments up under that belt see Exodus 12, and Luke 12:35-40. To GIRD UP simply means TO GET READY FOR ACTION.

Since this says, "gird up the loins of your mind," we're talking about GETTING READY MENTALLY! It is not physical exertion that Peter has in mind here, but mental. And if the purpose of girding up the clothing was to put out of the way that which would impede the physical progress - the girding up of the loins of the mind would be the putting out of the mind all that would impede the free action of the mind in connection with being a faithful child of God!

This is about BEING MENTALLY READY; gathering up and controlling those thoughts that might hinder us.

Be Sober

When we come to this expression in the Bible there is the temptation to think of this word in too limited a sense. We might want to say, "sober means NOT DRUNK," so this imperative simply means NOT TO GET DRUNK. Well, we ought not to get drunk; and I think that's a part of this imperative.

But, the Bible word "sober" covers far more territory than just abstaining from intoxicating beverages. The Greek word means: "to be calm and collected in spirit, to be temperate, dispassionate, circumspect," (Wuest, p.#35). The basic idea is MENTAL CONTROL.

Here is a good way to look at this: THERE ARE A LOT THINGS WHICH INTOXICATE THE MIND, AND INTERFER WITH GOOD JUDGMENT: Excessive worry...continued anger...jealousy...resentment... and also things like alcohol and drug abuse. To be SOBER - in the full meaning

of the word - WE MUST AVOID THOSE THINGS THAT WOULD DISTORT OUR THINKING AND JUDGMENT. The idea is a calm, collected, controlled mental state.

Because of this great salvation we have, THEREFORE:

* Gird up the loins of your mind.

* Be sober.

Hope

"HOPE to the end for the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

Hope with reference to the future is something we have, as a consequence of our obedient faith. But, you have to put forth effort to concentrate on that hope. To cherish it, rely on it and develop it. Especially in a time of trial - we must see hope as an imperative; something we must concentrate on and depend upon and use to survive.

Be Obedient Children

"As obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance."

In the second verse of this epistle, Peter had addressed the Christians in Asia Minor as "elect according to the foreknowledge of God," and this word "elect" means BEING THE PEOPLE OF GOD; GOD'S CHOSEN PEOPLE. If, as Christians, we are the people of God or CHILDREN OF GOD, we ought to live in keeping with that relationship "AS OBEDIENT CHILDREN!"

As we live as obedient children, we refrain from; we do not conform to our former lusts (see Col. 3:5-17).

Be Holy

"But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy." (1 Peter 1:15,16, NIV).

The basic meaning of the Greek word "holy" is different or separated. If we live as obedient children of God, NOT CONFORMING TO OUR FORMER LUSTS -- we will be different. Our conduct will separate us from the world. And this is appropriate; this is in keeping with the very nature of our father, WHO IS HOLY.

These are imperatives, based on what was previously taught. Heaven is worth suffering for; the salvation we have is great -- things "which angels desire to look into..."

THEREFORE:

- Gird up the loins of your mind.
- Be sober.
- Set your hope fully upon the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.
- Be obedient children.
- Don't conform to your former lusts.
- And, be holy; Also

Conduct Yourselves In Fear

"And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your sojourning in fear."

There is the assumption that you are a child of God; the first phrase here says, "if you call on the Father." If you regard God as your Father.... If you claim to be in this family relationship --- CONDUCT YOURSELF IN FEAR!

In this verse, there is a fact stated about this Divine Father we call upon: WITHOUT PARTIALITY, HE JUDGES ACCORDING TO EACH ONE'S WORK. God is a perfectly objective and impartial Judge and, He judges according to each one's work See also Acts 10:34,35; Rom. 2:5,6; 2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 20:12. This is a truth about God that we must be aware of; something of His nature that should cause us to pass the time of our sojourning in fear, or reverence....

He is a perfectly objective, impartial judge; and He judges according to each one's work. If we regard this impartial judge as our Father, WHAT SHOULD WE DO? "...conduct yourselves throughout the time of your sojourning here in fear." This is not the cowardly kind of fear, that amounts to a spirit of timidity (2 Tim. 1:7). This is the kind of fear sometimes called GODLY FEAR, or a reverential awe and trust in God; A fear involving commitment, respect and obedience --- but also, a healthy dread of displeasing Him.

The imperatives in this passage are calls to act and nurture godly traits of character, based on the blessings made available through the gospel, and enjoyed by Christians. Read again the text from the New International Version.

"Therefore, prepare your minds for action; be self-controlled; set your hope fully on the

grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed. As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: 'Be holy, because I am holy.' Since you call on a Father who judges each man's work impartially, live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear." (1 Peter 1:13-17, NIV).

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