

PETER #12: A Living Hope

1 Peter 1:3-9, 13, 21

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.” (1 Peter 1:3-9)

“Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ... You who through him are believers in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.” (1 Peter 1:13, 21)

Notes: (1:3) Peter may be connecting “born again” to *through the resurrection of Jesus Christ*, meaning that the new birth was made possible because God thought of those who believe in Christ as being united to him in his resurrection. Or he may be linking the resurrection to the *living hope* of believers, since that hope immediately follows the resurrection. In the latter case, the Christians’ hope is their future resurrection. Believers have an unshakable hope...Christ’s resurrection is a pledge of their own future resurrection. ESV

1 Pet. 1:4 The “hope” of 1:3 is described as an *inheritance*, which in the OT typically describes the Promised Land & Israel’s place in it. But the OT inheritance points ahead to an even greater inheritance, reserved *in heaven* for the people of the new covenant. *imperishable*. Nothing can tarnish or extinguish that secure inheritance. ESV

1 Pet. 1:13-21 The inheritance promised to Christ’s followers motivates them to set their hope entirely on their future reward & live in fear of God who redeemed them at the cost of his own Son (1:17-21). *Set your hope fully* (1:13): the fullness of *grace* & its complete work comes only when Jesus returns; believers long for that day. They do so by thinking rightly about reality & by living *sober-minded* & sensible lives in this present evil age. ESV

1 Pet. 1:20-21 God planned from eternity past when he would send Christ, & he chose to reveal him at the time in history when these believers lived (*for the sake of you*) so they’d enjoy the inexpressible privilege of living in the days of fulfillment. They should be full of *hope* (hope functions as an *inclusio*—a literary envelope—beginning & ending this section; vv. 13, 21), for Christ’s being *raised* reminds them of their future reward. ESV

I The Blessings of God toward us (1:3-9)

- A The work of the Triune God (1:2)
 - 1 The Father's foreknowledge
 - 2 The Spirit's sanctification
 - 3 The Son's sprinkling with His blood.
- B Causing us to be born again (or *regenerated*, 1:3)
 - 1 To a living hope (1:3) "*Living hope*"—"Life is the quality or characteristic of the hope here...a living hope is one that cannot be extinguished by circumstances." (Reinecker)
 - 2 To an inheritance – imperishable, undefiled, and unfading (1:4)
 - Imperishable—not corruptible, not liable to pass away, untouched by death (Reinecker)
 - Undefiled—unstained by evil (Reinecker)
 - Unfading—a supernatural beauty which time does not impair—unimpaired by time (Reinecker)
- C We are being guarded by the power of God (1:5)
 - 1 For a salvation to be revealed in the last time
- II The Christian life is a life of hope
 - A Believing in what God has done and is doing
 - B Hope in what God has promised He will do in the future (1:13)
 - C Because of this we love Him and believe in Him (1:8)
 - D Rejoicing in inexpressible joy ... receiving (in the future) the outcome of our faith, the (complete) salvation of our souls (1:9)
- III What do you hope for—things that are:
 - A Perishable or imperishable?
 - B Defiled (stained by evil) or undefiled?
 - C Fading or unfading?
- IV Our response to God's blessings--"*Therefore...*" (1:13)--Peter passes from statement to inference

Let us pause to reflect on the significance of this "*therefore*"... This term reminds us that in the New Testament, imperatives always follow instruction. "The imperatives of Christian living always begin with '*therefore*.' Peter does not begin to exhort Christian pilgrims until he has celebrated the wonders of God's salvation in Jesus Christ." In the New Testament, doctrine [belief] & practice [conduct, living] are inseparably intertwined. [Bible.org]

- A Set/fix your hope fully on the grace of God (1:13)

Note: 1 Peter 1:13 says, "...*preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace...*" Although there are 3 commands indicated in [most] English translations of the text, there is but one imperative—"set your hope"-- while there are two participles—"preparing...& being...". The sense of these 3 commands should be understood in this fashion: Fix your hope completely on the grace that's to be brought ... (1) Having girded up the loins of your mind, (2) And having come to a sober spirit. The primary thrust of verse 13 then is a command for Christians to fix their hope completely on the grace to be brought to us at the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ. [Bible.org]

- 1 "*Set your hope fully*"--"Fully" –"perfectly, unreservedly." For the first time in [1 Peter this verb is] an imperative. It's a command: "Hope fully." Or: "Fix your hope completely." The

first command in this letter is an action you do with your mind & your heart. It's a command to hope. Hope is not an action of the body. It's an experience of the soul. Peter is commanding us to experience hope... God's command is first that you hope in what He can perform for you with His strength. The first human counterpart to divine grace is hope. Grace is coming to you; hope in it... The proper response to grace is first hope. It is false to say that grace does not command—that it has no conditions. But what makes it grace is that its first command is, Hope! Hope fully. Let your whole soul be engaged in hope. Don't be partially hoping & partially doubting. Hope fully. Give way entirely to the experience of hope. Be fully carried away with hope... But Peter does not leave the command to hope dangling without any help. He tells us 2 ways to stir up our hope. One is to gird up the loins of our minds & the other is to be sober. These are subordinate participles telling us how to get on with hoping. They are not the main commands. They are secondary commands. They get their imperative status from the main command: Hope fully in grace. (John Piper)

- 2 By preparing your minds for action—“*bind up, gather up, or gird up the loins of your mind*”—“this is a call ...to be alert & ready in one's whole spiritual & mental attitude” (Reinecker) “Girding up one's loins is preparatory action which makes a person ready to take action & move freely without hindrance. To fail to do so is to invite trouble. Peter tells us to gird up the loins of our mind. We are to have our thinking in order with no entangling doubts, fears, or reservations. Our mind should be prepared to act without hesitation. We see this mindset in the fireman who's prepared to respond immediately when a call comes. [Bible.org] “Turn the robes of your mind into running shorts. Pull them up & tuck them into your belt. But what does that mean in real life? We know that girding the mind is a means to hoping fully in grace. "Having girded up the loins of your mind, hope fully..." That's what our minds are running for. But what are they running in? What are they active in? What is the mind to be doing so actively that it produces hope? The answer is TRUTH. Hope happens when our minds are girded up with truth, and active in truth. (John Piper)
 - 3 By being sober-minded—this denotes self-control (Reinecker) Keeping sober is the mental condition which enables one to act prudently and with a clear head. [Bible.org] “It implies alertness, & evaluating things correctly, because you see clearly, & your mind isn't numb with intoxicating influences” (John Piper)
 - 4 “*on the grace that will be brought*” (1:13, ESV) “Although a present participle can have a future force—“will be brought” (ESV) it is used here in keeping with the writer's conviction that the object of their hope is already virtually within his readers' grasp” So it “pictures the process ‘*the grace that **is being** brought*’ [which has a present sense].” (Reinecker)
- B Why are we devastated by circumstances and trials? (1:6)
- C Trials should refine us so that we put our hope in the imperishable, and unfading things (1:6-7)
- D Our faith and hope are in God (1:21)—“*so that your faith & hope may be in God*” or “*so that your faith may **also be** your hope in God*” (Reinecker). “Since [1 Peter] deals with the pilgrim's life on earth & persecution with emphasis on faith &...hope, it is felt that this clause is a sort of climax to the whole passage” (Reinecker)