

# The Book of I Peter – Part Five

## January 30, 2011

Adapted from John Herbert's Notes; Presented by Jeanne Alley

### 1). 1 Peter 1:13

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; 14 as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; 15 but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, 16 because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy."

a). We ended last week by pointing out the enormity of that which God has made possible for us through the salvation of the soul.

b). We had seen that this salvation of the soul is the most greatest blessing that an all knowing and all powerful God could bestow upon His creation. It is not possible for there to be anything greater than this.

c). And so great is this salvation that the Holy Spirit through the Apostle Paul tells us –

Romans 8:18

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

2Corinthians 4:17

For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal [age-lasting] weight of glory...

And also -

1Peter 1:6

In this [salvation of the soul] you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials...

f). Peter tells us that so great is this salvation that the prophets inquired and searched carefully through their own writings (the OT scriptures) to discover when and how this would be brought about; however –

1Peter 1:12

To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have

preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven--things which angels desire to look into.

g). So great is this salvation that even the angels have a passionate desire to look into it, even though they are completely separated from it.

h). So great is this salvation that it brings us to this admonition from the Book of Hebrews -

Hebrews 2:2

For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, <sup>3</sup> how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him...

i). So, keeping this 'so great a salvation' at the forefront of our minds we come to the first word of verse 13 in I Peter- 'Therefore'.

2). 'Therefore' - is a word that takes us back to that which has immediately preceded it, and we can understand its use in the sense of, 'in view of the fact that'.

a). And so - 'in view of the fact that' He has -

1 Peter 1:3

...begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, <sup>4</sup> to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,

b). And 'in view of the fact that' we -

1Peter 1:5

.... are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

c). And 'in view of the fact that' this is the greatest blessing that God could bestow...

d). And 'in view of the fact that' the prophets have searched and inquired carefully about this salvation, and angels have a passionate desire to look into this salvation...

e). And 'in view of the fact that' even though -

1Peter 1:6

...now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials,

f). And lastly, 'in view of the fact that' our faith, when brought to its goal, will have this result -

1Peter 1:7

...may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ...

g). Therefore, 'in view of the fact that' all these things are true, Peter tells us that we are to respond to these things by following the exhortation to, 'gird up the loins of our mind' so that we may receive that which is promised.

3). The Holy Spirit through Peter draws on imagery from eastern culture in order to help us visualize what is meant here. The normal style of dress consisted of having on a robe/tunic, under which was worn an undergarment that was called either a loincloth or a girdle. The girdle was often made of leather or cloth and was used to hold the tunic to the waist. It was often used to hold money, tools or weapons. When men needed freedom to work, run or fight, they would tuck the hem of the tunic into the girdle to gain greater freedom and movement. This action was called "girding up the loins" and the phrase became a metaphor for preparedness.

a). A great example of this is Israel on the night of the first Passover who had to be ready to move swiftly at a moment's notice -

Exodus 12:11

And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand...[KJV]

b). And the example here of Israel is a good one for us. At the beginning of 1 Peter we learned that we are resident foreigners upon the earth, being a distinct people separated from those around us, just as Israel was in Egypt, and that we must be prepared to move swiftly (in the sense of separating ourselves from the things of this world/age), as we run the race set before us.

c). Now clearly, "girding up the loins of our minds" has nothing to do with a physical exertion, but rather with a mental exertion.

d). Just as running a physical race can be impeded by an excess of clothing, so can our race of faith be impeded by an excess of mental baggage; baggage that would prevent us from running towards the spiritual maturity to which we aspire.

e). This would be the same thought that we find in -

Hebrews 12:1

Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,

f). That which would impede our progress, the 'every weight' from our Hebrews scripture, would be such things as fear, jealousy, envy, unforgiveness, bitterness, anger, impurity, unbelief, etc. Anything that keeps us tethered to the old man of flesh - the one who is supposed to be dead and buried.

g). Again, to visit a familiar scripture -

Romans 12:2

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

h). Conformity to this world, patterning ourselves according to the image of this age, does not allow for the transformation that is to take place through the renewing of our mind. The renewing of our mind then would be impeded by our choice to conform to this world. As we would choose to put on the appearance of this world, so this will impede our race of faith.

i). This is not to say that there would be no transformation if we did this, although this is or course perfectly possible, but what transformation there is would, because of this impediment, be severely restricted. And we must see the seriousness of such a situation - because Peter points out the seriousness of this - as we realize that this is a hindrance with respect to the end of our faith, salvation of our soul.

j). The word translated, 'gird up' is the Greek word - 'anazonnumi' which is a verb written in the aorist tense, which makes this a past, once for all, act.

k). I think we should see that this is a God-expected obligation on our part - a commitment that we have made in time past that continues in its completed form into the present. And this thought would take us to the first verse of -

Romans 12:1

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

And -

2 Corinthians 10:5

...casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,

l). God provides both the grace and the mercy for this to be a reality in our lives; therefore, "girding up the loins of our mind" is not subject to situational ethics, but to a passionate determination to fulfill that which Peter writes about in his second letter -

2 Peter 3:14

Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless...

m). If any of us have not yet made such a commitment, then let us be wise even now, and from this moment onwards let us determine that the loins of our mind will be girded.

4). Now if we have made this commitment and have this determination then we will be in a place to put into practice the exhortation we find as we continue in verse 13 -

1Peter 1:13

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;

a). Firstly we are to 'be sober' - we are to be serious, calm and collected, and have self-control. And this is all with a view to the salvation to be revealed in the last time.

b). If we look at some other scriptures where the word 'sober' is used they may help us more fully understand the intent of this word -

1 Thessalonians 5:6

Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober.

1 Thessalonians 5:8

But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation.

1Peter 5:8

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

Titus 2:2

...that the older men be sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience;

I hope we would see that there is no place for the casual or the careless in our race of faith. It is perfectly possible for us to become so comfortable with our surroundings that we lose sight of the fact that we are living in a hostile environment within the territory of an enemy who is looking to devour us. Vigilance, watchfulness and faithfulness need to be our consistent practice, and for those of us who may be 'older men' it is exactly this that we are to model for the next generation.

c). And then secondly, we are to rest our hope fully on the grace that is to be brought to us at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

d). As we have seen before, our hope is the 'blessed hope', which is not just the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior the Lord Jesus Christ (because that's not a hope; it's a certainty), but everything that is encompassed in that event -

Romans 8:23

Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. 24 For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? 25 But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance.

e). The hope that we have is not vague or insubstantial in the way that we might 'hope' it won't rain tomorrow. Rather, it is certain with an assured expectation of fulfillment. It remains 'hope' because we do not see it yet apart from the eyes of faith, but there is no doubt as to its realization.

f). However, if our hope is to be realized for us *on an individual level*, that is if we, as individuals, are to be found worthy to receive the salvation of our soul, it will be because we have girded up the loins of our mind... because we are sober. In other words, it will be because we have been faithfully obedient in not conforming ourselves to this world, and have allowed for the transformation through the renewing of our mind.

g). And as Peter points out, also contained within our assured expectation is the absolute guarantee of the grace of God that is given to us in that Day to accomplish that for which we eagerly wait with perseverance. Meaning, we will receive the salvation of our soul by God's grace in response to our faith.

h). In fact, it is my understanding that the way this is presented in the original language it says that the grace that is to be brought to us at the revelation of Jesus Christ is already on its way. It has the idea of it already having been dispatched to us.

i). One way we can picture this is this -- the faithfully obedient Christian and the grace of God (that will result in the salvation of that person's soul) are on a collision course... a collision that will result in a glorious impact at the Judgment Seat.

j). Again, that this WILL happen is a certainty. Though whether each of us individually will participate in this is a HOPE.

5). And as Peter continues in his letter we are told *how* we are to do that which we have been exhorted to do –

1Peter 1:14

...as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; 15 but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, 16 because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy."

a). We are to do it as 'obedient children', literally as 'children of obedience'. Faithful obedience must be the motivating principle for every Kingdom seeking believer, and we are to do this as in a parent/child relationship.

b). And of course our perfect example for this is the Lord Himself –

Hebrews 5:8

...though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered.

c). Within a Father/Son relationship, in total submission to His Father, Jesus put obedience into practice through the things which He suffered. He is our example, and He is the Way that we should follow –

1Peter 2:21

For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps:

d). We are to follow the pattern of Christ, rather than conforming ourselves to the former lusts as in our ignorance.

e). There was a time when we were ignorant of how to conduct our lives according to the scriptures, but that time is now past. And if we are still in ignorance of the

scriptures, then it is because we choose to be, not because we don't know any better. Let me say that again -

There was a time when we were ignorant of how to conduct our lives according to the scriptures, but that time is now past. And if we are still in ignorance of the scriptures, then it is because we choose to be, not because we don't know any better.

f). The word translated 'conforming' in I Peter 1:14 is the same Greek word we find in Romans 12:2 which means, in both places, "to choose to take on the same pattern as." And so this implies that this is an action over which we have control - it is our choice to do this or not.

g). Unfortunately, the word "lust" within our modern understanding has come to mean exclusively an overwhelming passion of an immoral nature, but this is not the way the word is used in scripture. Although it would mean an overwhelming immoral passion, it also means - to set the heart upon, i.e. long for (rightfully or otherwise):--covet, desire, would fain, lust (after).

h). This takes us beyond just the immoral to the area of habit, attitude, mindset, cultural customs and values - those things associated with our first birth that are under the jurisdiction of the god of this age, things that we can easily deceive ourselves into thinking are just neutral because they don't appear to be as important as sexual immorality. The truth is, however, that there is no neutrality in our pursuit of the Kingdom. We are either with God or we are against Him - there is no middle ground.

i). The Apostle James says it this way -

James 4:4

Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

j). So, rather than conforming ourselves to our former lusts, walking according to the flesh, we are instead to be holy in all our conduct, because the One who called us is the Holy One, and He is our model.

k). The word 'holy' in Greek means literally 'to set apart', so we are therefore to be set apart from sin to righteousness. We might more easily understand this as not walking in the flesh, but instead walking in the Spirit -

Galatians 5:16

I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

l). We are to choose to be set apart from the lifestyle, behavior, attitude, values and customs of this age and instead live according to the mandate of scripture.

m). Again the scriptures have said this very same thing to us this way -

2 Corinthians 5:17

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

n). Verse 16 then says why we should do this - 16 because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy." In this verse Peter is quoting from -

Leviticus 11:44

'For I am the LORD your God. You shall therefore consecrate yourselves, and you shall be holy; for I am holy. Neither shall you defile yourselves with any creeping thing that creeps on the earth. 45 'For I am the LORD who brings you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God. You shall therefore be holy, for I am holy.

o). It is interesting to perhaps understand that from the beginning of God's revelation to man this command has been on record... and it is as valid today as the day in which it was written. Therefore, we need to take it seriously.

p). And we are to be holy, to be separated from the world, in all our conduct. Conduct is literally our manner of living and therefore would include every area of our life on a moment by moment basis.

6). Our scripture then continues -

1Peter 1:17

And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear; 18 knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

a). Now as we look at the beginning of verse 17 the word 'if' would usually make this verse conditional, as it does in so many places, but contextually this would not be correct on this occasion.

b). The idea contained in this opening phrase is, 'in view of the fact that you call on as Father' – and this would be easy for us to understand in our own experience. We accept God and relate to God as 'our Father' and we appeal to Him as a child would to its natural father. This is a relationship that we have accepted and therefore remains a constant. It is not a matter of moment by moment choice.

c). Verse 17 continues by drawing attention to the fact that the One we call on as our Father judges each one's work without partiality. There is no favoritism, just absolute righteousness.

d). The word translated, 'without partiality' literally means, 'does not receive face' – God does not receive anybody's face. Outward appearance, wealth, culture, position, family background, education, beauty, intellect – all the things that can influence the opinion of man are of no consequence to God when it comes to how He will deal with us at the Judgment Seat –

1 Samuel 16:7

But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have refused him. For the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."

e). And so, because God will judge our works with complete impartiality we need to order our conduct or behavior throughout the time of our stay here (a time which is brief and transient) *in fear*.

f). Now this is not the crippling, race ruining fear that we spoke of earlier, but the motivating fear that would come from knowing that God does not give us any passes. It is a fear that comes from knowing the depravity of our own heart and our propensity for self-deception. The idea may be best expressed in –

1 Corinthians 10:12

Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.

g). This is a fear that would cause us to stop and think before acting, or opening our mouths, or allowing our mind to have a free reign so as not to do anything that would be offensive or dishonoring to the Lord.

h). This fear of God should also be present because of the self-evident truth that we were not redeemed by corruptible things. The ransom that was paid for us to be set free was not in coins of silver or gold as would have happened with slaves in the market place, but rather with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. It is the blood of God Himself which has paid the price for our freedom.

This is no small thing; this blood is precious, and there is nothing higher in value than this, and there is nothing that is held in higher esteem and honor than this blood; therefore, we should not take it lightly.

i). And did you notice in verse 18 what this precious blood has set us free from?

18 knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers,

j). It is the valueless, profitless way of living that came to us through the channels of heredity, teaching, example and environment. Whether in the home, or at school, in the work place and even in 'church' we have embraced and been shaped by traditions and practices that are inherently evil. Ways of living that are familiar and comfortable, but that have no currency at all with regard to our heavenly bank account. Not only would they have no value of themselves, but they might in themselves, impede us in our race of faith.

k). But the good news is that no matter how deeply into the core of our being these aimless traditions may have sunk, we have been delivered from them, we have been set free. This is not something that is waiting to happen, but is rather a present reality from which no eternally redeemed individual is exempt.

l). We now have the ability through God's grace to choose. We can now choose to organize and conduct our lives in accordance with scripture, allowing scripture and scripture alone to direct every aspect of our life.

m). What we may consider the down side of this is that it is a choice, and this fact alone allows for the possibility that we will make the wrong choice. But I hope and pray that as we continue to search the scriptures we will take what we find and choose to live by it.

7). We will close this morning with a scripture from 2 Peter that is pertinent to this, a scripture that we shall return to in some detail when we get to that Book in later weeks (a Scripture I never tire of hearing or reading) -

2 Peter 1:1-11

Simon Peter, a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ: 2 Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, 3 as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, 4 by which have been given to us exceedingly great and

precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. 5 But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, 6 to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, 7 to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. 8 For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins. 10 Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; 11 for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.