

The Christian in a Hostile World The Mindset of Success

Intro: In the first section of this epistle Peter focuses on the Christians identity. In our first lesson we saw that Peter addresses his readers by their identifying characteristics as the people of God, those who are selected by the Father, sanctified by the Spirit, submissive to Christ and sprinkled with His blood. and in the opening paragraph he rehearses the blessings they have as the people of God that should bring great joy to their lives.

They have been born again

They have hope

They have an inheritance

They have trials that perfect

They have the privilege of participating in that in which both prophets and angels took an interest

All of was intended to motivate them to never forget or be ashamed of who they are!

But, the blessings of salvation also bring responsibilities. And so Peter not only tells God's people who we are and what they have, but what that should cause them to be. From 2:13-3:1 Peter strings together a series of exhortations based on these facts.

Peter's first exhortations get to the heart of how we should react to the salvation that God has provided for us. Read verse 13.

Therefore, gird your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. (1 Pet. 1:13)

THEREFORE...

The attitudes found in this verse are the responsibility of those who lay claim to the blessings of being a child of God.

If we indeed experience the joy of salvation, especially the inheritance that God has promised, then there must also be a resultant attitude to live so as to attain the goal.

GIRD UP YOUR MINDS FOR ACTION

Literally the expression is "gird up the loins of your mind." It is an interesting figure of speech.

People in ancient times wore long robes. In order to work or move freely, they had to tie up the robes around their waste (loins) so that their legs could have free movement. To gird up is then is to tie up with a belt.

But here it is not the loins of the body that are girded but the loins of the mind. The figure suggests then the idea of removing any impairment to our spiritual growth or progress!

"Instead of letting their thoughts, purposes, decisions hang loose while they move leisurely along in life as impulse and occasion may move them, the readers are to gird up their minds like people who are energetically set on going somewhere." (Lenski)

The Greek tense of the participle suggests the idea of a once for all action.

Gird up for yourself, once and for all the loins of your mind!

Do you know where you are going? Do you have purpose for your life as a Christian? Do you know what you want to accomplish today? This week? This year? The next few years? Don't allow the wrong attitudes to tangle you up!

Let's take a look at things which may tangle us up!

Timidity or fear

Sometimes we naturally shy away from challenge. To grow or become more useful in the Lord's work involves risk, the potential for making mistakes, embarrassment. It is easier to not try than it is to risk failure!

For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline. (2 Timothy 1:7)

Gird up your minds for action involves courageously attempting what you have not done before, of relying on God's help to do what you think you cannot do!

Prejudice

We may be tied up by refusal to take a fresh and new look at things. Some folks minds are like concrete: Firmly set and all mixed up. Don't let prejudice tie you up. Be willing to learn more.

Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily, to see whether these things were so. (Acts 17:11)

Worldly cares

We may be tangled by preoccupation with problems and worldly cares. These may so dominate our thoughts that we are not able to act constructively for spiritual growth.

"And the seed which fell among the thorns, these are the ones who have heard, and as they go on their way they are choked with worries and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to maturity. (Luke 8:14)

All of these can tie us up and keep us from being the active Christians God wants us to be.

BE SOBER

Peter follows with a second participle which is often translated as an imperative. The present tense form would probably here suggest continuous action.

Soberness is of course freedom from the influence of intoxicants in a physical sense. The purposeful use of drugs, including alcohol, for intoxication is the exact opposite of the soberness God wants of us. They keep us from the careful thinking that Christian living demands. This had been a problem in the Gentile world.

It means to be calm, collected in spirit, temperate, dispassionate, circumspect.

Soberness is awareness of how Satan is seeking inroads into our lives.

Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. (1 Pet. 5:8)

Satan may slip in while we are caught up in light-hearted view of things.

Soberness is a condition of heart that prepares us for consistent prayer.

The end of all things is at hand; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer. (1 Pet. 4:7)

The picture of a sober person as here portrayed is that of a person who is aware of how all things lead to the great day of the Lord and how that we must be a people of prayer.

FIX YOUR HOPE COMPLETELY ON THE GRACE TO COME TO YOU AT THE REVELATION OF CHRIST

The revelation of Christ is the second coming. It is called that because he is made visible or manifest to the whole world.

The grace that is to come is salvation as we saw in v. 10.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, (1 Peter 1:3-4)

Fix your hope completely on it.

The aorist tense of the verb conveys the idea of a once for all action, make up your mind once and for all what you are going to do!

Fix your hope. Here is why I called this sermon “the mindset of success. Our mind is “set” or “fixed”. Make up your mind that you want to go to heaven and live for that without ever turning back.

“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. “But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; (Mt. 6:19-20)

Fix your hope completely. Here then is the idea of spiritual commitment. There are a lot of things that vie for our attention, other goals that are not ultimately important but may distract us from our main goal.

But Jesus said to him, “No one, after putting his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.” (Luke 9:62)

Conclusion: What is clear about 1 Pet 1:13 is that it sets the stage for all that we are as Christians. Salvation means making the commitment to grow, to be active, to get involved, to be serious and not distracted by life from the important things, and to make the commitment to go heaven regardless of the cost.