

1 Peter

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1 Peter 1:13-25

Vs. 13

- Peter has been pointing them to the eternal truths of the gospel, but he wants to here to remind them that though our eyes are always fixed on Heaven the battle is here. Too many church people have been so heavenly minded they are no earthly good. The battle is here. "Therefore, gird the loins of your minds...". What he's saying is "Get ready for a fight. Take off your coat and roll up your sleeves". If, as Paul says, our sword is the Word of God, then we need to sharpen our sword, work with it, practice wielding it. The battle will require an examined faith, a ready word from the Lord, and an absolutely certainty of its power.
- "keep sober in spirit": Be steady. Be focused. Don't be intoxicated with the battle itself. Don't be carried away by the newest fad. Set aside the fluff. Ignore potential distractions. As William Barclay puts it, "Peter is appealing to them to maintain the essential steadiness of the man who knows what he believes."
- The hope and grace found in Jesus Christ: Paul reminded the Corinthians (1 Cor. 15:19) that our hope in Christ is not in this life only. We *KNOW* our Redeemer lives (Job 19:25). Therefore, we can face any trial, any crisis, *knowing* that our hope is in the resurrected Christ, beyond this life to the one He has waiting for us with Him. When do not need to ever be afraid?

Vss. 14-21

- A Christ-less life: a) ignorance is the common quality of all who live a Christ-less life; they cast about here and there looking for meaning, but can't find what they are looking for because they don't know what they're looking for; they see the hand of God move around them but do not recognize Him;

they discover power and wealth, but never everlasting love b) the fuel for the Christ-less life is lust and desire; such people are always looking for that next thing or person to make them feel better – food, drink, drugs, sex, money, prestige – all may taste good but none ever last (think Howard Hughes); people never change, the same issues we have today are the same ones common in Peter's time and even more so; there was no concept of sexual immorality, everything was acceptable; there are records of people being married over 20 times; this was a world where even the murder of the head of state (Julius Caesar) could be seen as a good and patriotic thing. c) the Christ-less life is a life of futility; you have a few good years and then you get old and die; there is a nihilistic nothingness to the future; there is no heaven, no hell; you have a moments of happiness and then you die like a dog, and if you're going to die like a dog why not live like one?

- A Christ-filled life: a) is a life of holiness and obedience; we are to be Holy just as the One who called us is Holy (Matt. 5:48) and to live Holy is to live in obedience to Him; to be Holy means to be set apart; the bowls and pitchers in the Temple we said to be Holy because they were set apart for that specific purpose; so too are we set apart by God for a specific purpose which is to follow Jesus, and by obedience to Him, fulfill our role and responsibilities in the Body of Christ b) is a life of reverence; reverence is the attitude we must have when in the presence of God and the risen Christ has promised us that He is with us always; we are reverent because life is but a short journey toward our permanent home in the City of God; we are reverent because not only is God our Father, He is also our judge and He judges impartially according to each one's work; we are reverent because the price of the life we live was so costly; bought not with silver or gold which are perishable and can be devalued, but bought with the precious blood of Christ, which is eternal and never loses its value.
- Jesus is our Redeemer and Lord: a) Jesus is our rescuer, our emancipator – here Peter seems to have two things in mind: 1) that Jesus is the Paschal Lamb who is sacrificed for us; His spilt blood is the price require to free us of our sin and give us life, just as the lamb's blood was painted above the

doors of the homes of the Hebrews in Egypt on the night the Death Angel came 2) that Jesus is who the Holy Spirit showed to Isaiah as the Prophet wrote his 53rd chapter (Is. 53:1-12).

- Jesus is the instrument of God's eternal purpose: vs. 20 "For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world"; John 1:1-4,14; Peter had come to this understanding early, touching on it in his first big sermon in Acts 2:23; Paul affirms this in Eph. 1:4; Those who knew Christ best understood that when the Word became flesh it was not due to surprise and panic in Heaven, but the purposeful plan of God.
- Jesus is both the sacrifice who was slain and the living Savior: Jesus is He who was resurrected and victorious and gave God glory; Christ's followers cannot mentally separate the cross from the resurrection; it was not just pain suffered and endured that saved us but the defeat of death itself that makes our salvation possible

Vss.22-25

- Christian love, like Christian joy, is not an emotion. Christian love is a by-product of Holiness, of obedience to Christ. Obedience is the scrub brush of the soul. Spiritual disciple combined with surrender to the Holy Spirit makes divine obedience possible in human beings. As we study the Word, as the Holy Spirit works within us, teaching us, we take what we learn from Him and work to put it into practice. Therefore, we are *intentional* about how we love. We refuse to let race or class or all the other of the world's barriers keep us from loving our brother and sister. We refuse to accept the world's live-and-let-live attitude toward life keep us from loving the lost so much that we will not stand by and watch them go over the cliff to destruction, but will intervene with love to show them the Savior. Christian joy is a by-product of living *in Christ* (Phil. 3:1). Christian love is a by-product of obedience through Holiness. Neither are just cheap emotion.
- If Peter had not read what we know as 1 Cor. 15, then surely the metaphor of the Christian life being like a seed was a common idea in early teachings of the church (1 Cor. 15:35-44). Here then Peter matches a new Christian

idea with a jewel of the Old Testament (Is. 40:6-8). James too picks up on the same theme (1:9-11).

- Finally, Peter reminds his readers that he is saying nothing new. “What I have been writing to you is the same gospel that from the beginning was preached as good news to you!” Yes, this is nothing they hadn’t heard before, but who doesn’t need to be reminded? Who doesn’t need that moment when things you knew, but that you didn’t know you knew, suddenly hit you in the face? And when has repetition not been a good teacher? Again, like a ship’s crew practicing on how to lower the lifeboats and abandon ship, repetitive practice and teaching can make you ready for the coming crisis...and the crisis was already upon Peter’s churches.