

Everyday Living in View of Our Salvation and Position in Christ

1 Peter 1:13-25

1 Peter 1:13-16: “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.”

Background Notes

Do you think that God relaxes His standards for godly living when we’re facing the pressures of persecution? Does He lower His standards of Christian conduct when we’re undergoing trials? No way!

Of course God doesn’t operate that way. Just as we wouldn’t expect a good earthly father to fluctuate in his standards for his children, neither does our Heavenly Father fluctuate or change His moral requirements for us.

The early Christians that Peter addressed in this letter were facing persecution and trials - and yet God still expected them to be obedient and to live holy lives, and the same is true today. God doesn’t lower His moral standards and moral obligations for us when we’re facing trials or having difficulties. We’re expected to be obedient children in the family of God, regardless of our situations. We’re expected to live holy lives, based on our great salvation and position in Christ, even in difficult circumstances.

Notice the “*Therefore*” in verse 13. In view of our salvation and our blessed position in Christ, we are - “therefore” - to live our lives in line with our blessed status. We are to **be who we are** in Christ - even when we’re facing problems or persecution.

Doctrinal Points

1. Believers should strive for purity of life.

Our use of the word “strive” does not mean that we can achieve purity of life in our own strength – if we just “strive” or work hard enough. No! We need the power of the Holy Spirit at work in our lives. The exhortation to “strive” means that holiness and purity of life won’t happen automatically. We have to **work** at being holy. We have to work at letting the Holy Spirit control our lives.

Verses 13-16 list five quick exhortations about purity of life:

a. Gird up the loins of your mind.

“Gird up the loins of your mind” means to *be disciplined in your thinking*. Just as people in the 1st century would gather up and fasten their loose robes so that they could move quickly or work without interference, so a believer must “gird up” his loose thoughts. We must not have a lot of loose, undisciplined thoughts flitting around in our minds – thoughts that would interfere with holy living.

Do you have a disciplined mind? If other believers could read your mind, what would they see? 2 Corinthians 10:5 says that we should “*take every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.*” **Every** thought! We must **strive to be disciplined in our thinking**.

b. Be sober, or self-controlled.

Are you self-controlled at work? Are you self-controlled at home? Husbands - should I ask your wives that question? Teens – are you self-controlled? It’s obvious that we all need to work at this exhortation. We must **strive to be self-controlled**.

c. Rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Financial advisors always advise investors to think “long-term” in their investments. The Lord advises believers to rest all our future hopes on our true long-term investment – our eternal future and our eternal benefits! These investments will be fully realized when the Lord returns.

d. Don’t be conformed to past evil desires.

The fact that the phrase “*in your ignorance*” is added (v14) is a good indication that Peter was writing to Gentile believers as well as the scattered Jewish believers (mentioned in chapter 1). Jewish believers, you see, would not have been ignorant of God’s Law – but Gentiles would not have known God’s Law.

This exhortation, that we should not be conformed to past evil desires, is good for all of us. But how do we stop conforming to our prior evil desires? We **strive to practice the positive**. We should stay in God’s Word. We should continue in prayer. We should get involved in Christian service. We should meet frequently with other believers with whom we are accountable. Strive not to be conformed to past evil desires!

e. Be holy.

You might say, “Be holy? That’s too much! We can’t be holy in this life.” Yes, that’s true - but we can **strive to be holy**. Verse 15, “*Be holy, for I am holy,*” is a quotation from Leviticus 11:44. We wouldn’t expect God to say to believers, “Now that you’re saved, be 90% holy.” No! He wants us to “*Be holy.*”

And guess what – although we will never be perfect in this life, we are born again, and we do have the Holy Spirit to empower us to live more holy lives. In this life we will never be *sinless* - but as believers we should *sin less*.

Verses 17-21 give three motivating reasons to strive for purity of life:

a. Discipline in God's family.

Verse 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."*

We are not playing games as believers. We are in God's family and we should show proper respect and reverence to our Heavenly Father. "Reverence" is the idea in the word "fear."

In God's family, God must discipline His children when we sin. And God does not play favorites. God's discipline should certainly motivate us to strive for more holy living. And the knowledge that we will give account for how we lived our lives at the Judgment Seat of Christ should motivate us to live more holy lives.

b. The cost of our salvation.

Verses 18-19: *"Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."*

How much did our salvation cost? For us, it cost nothing. Salvation is a free gift. But think of the cost involved on God's side. All the silver and gold and precious jewels in this world couldn't buy our redemption. The eternal Son of God had to become Man. He had to live a sinless life and shed His precious blood in order to save us. That tremendous cost should motivate us to strive for more holy living.

c. God's eternal plans for us.

Verses 20-21: *"He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God."*

Everything about the coming of Christ was preplanned – His incarnation, His death, His resurrection, His ascension and glorification. It was all foreordained, as we see in these verses. But notice the end of verse 20, *"for you."* It was all for us. ***We were in God's eternal plans before the foundation of the world!*** Isn't that amazing? This should certainly motivate us to strive for more holy living.

Believers should strive for purity of life.

2. Believers should strive for perfection of love.

Verses 22-25: *“Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart, ²³ having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever, ²⁴ because “All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, and its flower falls away, ²⁵ but the word of the Lord endures forever.”*
Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you.”

Believers should “*love one another fervently with a pure heart*” (v22). Is this possible? Yes, it is! It’s possible because we are born again, and we have new life. Physical life comes through corruptible seed - it dies. All that is associated with our physical life and flesh will wither and die as grass as we see here. But the new spiritual and eternal life that we have in Christ comes about through the incorruptible seed, the Word of God - that will live forever!

The Holy Spirit enables and empowers the divine life that we now have in Christ. Therefore, because of His power strengthening us, we can love one another fervently with a pure heart. We will be enabled to love even those brothers and sisters who have wronged us. We can receive the strength to love even those who have slandered us, and said terrible things about us. Believers should strive for perfection of love.

Practical Application

Remember, you never have to sin.

1 John 1 makes it very clear that we will never reach a state of complete perfection in this life. In fact, said the apostle John, if anyone claims to be sinless, he’s a liar! (See 1 John 1:8 & 10.)

But at the same time, we can never say that we were ***forced*** to sin. We will sin, because we still have the flesh, or the sinful nature. We will have the sinful nature until we have our new bodies in Heaven.

But because we now have new life in Christ that is empowered by the Holy Spirit, we don’t ***have*** to commit sin - any sin.

Remember, you never ***have*** to sin.