

1 Peter 1:13-25

Four Exhortations

Having encouraged his readers about the wonder and joy of salvation (1:3-12), Peter issues four exhortations that result from having eternal life. These exhortations should be the spontaneous outcome of our salvation. Put differently, what God has done in us should be evident around us.

1. Be Hopeful in the Present (1:13)
The main action ("set your hope") is supported by two images:
 - a. "preparing your minds for action"
 - b. "being self-controlled" or "sober"

How exactly is obedience related to holiness?

Peter implies that how we think is related to how we act. Why is the relationship between our thoughts and our behavior so important (see Pr. 23:7; Rom. 14:14)?

Being "sober" is not only an injunction not to get drunk, but not to be intoxicated by anything that would compromise objectivity and sound judgment.

2. Be Holy in Behavior (1:14-16)
 - a. Just as Paul urged his readers not to be conformed to this world (Rom. 12:2), so Peter urges us not to be conformed to our "former lusts."
 - b. Negatively, holiness is avoiding sin. Positively, holiness is delighting in all those things which please God (cf., Philippians 4:8).
 - c. Two reasons to be holy:
 1. Because as God's children we bear His image (see Jn. 1:12; 2 Pt. 1:3-4; 1 Jn. 2:29)
 2. Because God is holy and relationally we must be as He is.
 - d. Peter mentions our "calling" four times (1:15; 2:9; 2:29; 3:9). Why is it significant to remember our calling as we seek to live holy lives?
 - e. It is the nature of young children to imitate their parents. To imitate God is to glorify God and to glorify God is our greatest delight! Read and meditate on Eph. 5:1; Mt. 5:48; Col. 3:9-10; 1 Jn. 2:6. Can you think of any other activity that would bring you greater delight than magnifying God's character?
3. Be Fearful of God (1:17-21)
 - a. This is likely fear of discipline from the Lord due to lack of holy living, rather than some notion of awe during worship often found in the idea of "reverent" (not in the original).
 - b. Fear is connected with growth toward holy living in the New Testament (cf., 2 Cor. 7:1, "reverence" NIV is the word "fear"; Philip. 2:12).
 - c. Because our redemption was at such a great cost (v. 19), a casual disregard for the ethical implications of our salvation will lead to discipline from God (see Heb. 12:4-11).

4. Be Loving toward Others (1:22-25)
 - a. The purification Peter has in mind is the daily moral cleansing that begins at salvation and continues by obedient living, specifically manifested by our love for God's family.
 - b. As we bear our Father's image and pursue obedient living, we naturally grow in our love for one another. Indeed, John insists that love for our spiritual family is a hallmark of our Christianity (see 1 John 2:7-11; 3:11-18, 23; 4:7-12, 19-21; 5:1-2).
 - c. All four exhortations are possible because of our salvation (vv. 23-25).