

Don't loose your focus

1 Peter 1:13-16 (KJV)

¹³ Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

¹⁴ As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance:

¹⁵ But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;

¹⁶ Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

1 Peter 1:13 (ESV)

¹³ Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Background

The believers were suffering terrible persecution. They had lost their homes, property, money, possessions, and friends. They had been forced to flee for their lives, perhaps carrying only what they could by hand. They were being persecuted because of Christ. They were living for Christ and proclaiming the salvation and hope of eternal life in Him. People were willing to hear about salvation, hope, and eternal life in Christ; but they did not want to hear about repentance, that they had to repent in order to be saved and to receive eternal life.

Therefore, the people turned against the believers. The believers had fled into other countries trying to escape the fury of the persecution. They were naturally disappointed and experiencing the dread of fear. They needed to be encouraged and strengthened to continue on for Christ. But what was the best way for Peter to do this? What could be said to encourage a people who had lost everything and were having to flee for their lives?

There was only one message that could encourage and strengthen them: the glorious message of the gospel of salvation. They needed to keep their eyes upon the grace and salvation of God. This is what Peter had preached. Up until now he had proclaimed the wonder and greatness of salvation. Now something else was needed. When we are facing the trials and temptations of life, it is not enough to

keep our eyes upon salvation. We must also act; we must do some things. When we undergo the trials of life, whether persecution and suffering or temptation and sin, we must act. We must dedicate our lives to God, and we must get our minds ready. We must concentrate upon some things. We must focus and zero in on three things in particular.

Grace is the favor of God upon us. We do not deserve His favor. Think about it even now after we have believed in him, We have disobeyed, transgressed, cursed, neglected, ignored, and rebelled against God. Nevertheless God has favored us. He loves us; so He has provided a way for us to be saved. He came into the world to take all of our transgressions upon Himself and to bear the judgment for sin for us. *Jesus Christ died for us.* He bore our judgment and punishment for us. This is God's grace to us, the great favor and blessing which He has bestowed upon us. We can now be saved from sin and from death; we can now live with God eternally.

But note a critical fact: ***we are not in heaven with God yet.*** We are not saved from the presence of sin and death yet. We are still living in this world and in the presence of evil and corruption. We shall be delivered some day; we shall be perfected and never know sin and death. But we are not there yet. However ***the day is coming,*** that glorious day is coming, the day when Jesus Christ shall burst open the heavens above and return to earth to save and perfect us eternally. Therefore **pursue** that day; pursue the grace, the glorious salvation of God. Go after God's grace—diligently go after it. Make sure, absolutely sure, that you do not miss God's grace. Pursue God's grace and salvation by doing three things.

1. Gird up the loins of your mind. This means to gather up all loose thoughts; to gird up your mind and thoughts; to concentrate and focus your attention upon your coming salvation. During Peter's day men wore robes, and they wore a belt around their waist. When they were set on some strenuous action, they gathered up their robe and tightened it under the belt so that the robe would not flop around and hinder their work. The believer is to gather up the loins of his mind, gather up all the loose thoughts and focus and concentrate upon the grace and salvation of God. He is to strain to control every thought, to focus upon...

- "whatsoever things are *true*

- "whatsoever things are *honest*
- "whatsoever things are *just*
- "whatsoever things are *pure*
- "whatsoever things are *lovely*
- "whatsoever things are *of good report*
- "if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (Phil. 4:8).

we are not to allow our thoughts to roam about and harbor thoughts of lust and worldliness. We are to focus our thoughts upon things of virtue and of praise. We are not to allow thoughts that tear down our moral and godly fiber. And believe me it's a strain, or fight. Think about yourself, the problems your having is your mind is going everywhere.

Anyone having or had this sort of problem, read the scripture.

"For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. 10:3-5).

Our warfare is spiritual and mental. Therefore, we must...

- cast down imaginations. Remember what got the world destroyed in flood, every imagination was evil.
 - cast down every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God.
 - bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.
- Help me with some thoughts

- o "Where is God now, He said "He would never leave you?"
- o "Didn't He say He would heal you? You've been sick for weeks"!
- o "You've been faithful to give your tithe and offerings, now look at you, your financially struggling."
- o "You had so many friends before, now look at you, all by yourself, nobody in this church cares about you. You were better off in the world and at least you had friends."
- o Get the point! The list is endless. No doubt you could add to the list of the things that run through your mind, things that cloud your

spiritual vision, reasonings that hinder your advancement in the Kingdom of God and tempt you to simply give up and throw in the towel and do your own thing.

every thought is to be captivated for Christ. " gird up the loins of your mind. Gather up *all the thoughts* of your mind and focus upon the grace and salvation of God."

"Sow a thought and you'll reap a action;
Sow an action, and you'll reap a habit;
Sow a habit and you'll reap a destiny.

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Romans 12:1-2).

2. Be "sober" . Sober means two things:

- ↳ Not to become intoxicated with drugs or alcohol of any kind.
- ↳ To be sober in mind and behavior; to be controlled in all things; not to be given over to indulgence, or extravagance. indulging in anything such as eating, drinking, recreation, or whatever. It means to live a sober, solid, and controlled life.

We are to live a well-balanced life. to be sober, controlled, solid, and steady. to keep all things in the proper place. to be sober, focused and concentrated upon the grace and salvation of God.

"But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer" (1 Peter 4:7).

3. Hope to the end for the grace and salvation of God. Our hope must be kept alive. There is a *dead hope* and a *lifeless hope*. A *dead hope* is the hope that so many people have, the hope that they will be acceptable to God when they die.

But they seldom think about the fact; they just let their hope lie dormant in their mind. It is the hope, the feeling that most people have, the feeling that God would never reject them, not in the final analysis. Whatever life there is that follows death—they are not sure what it will be like—they feel they will be okay and acceptable. They are not *perfect*, but they are not unacceptable to God. This is a *dead hope*, an occasional thought that they will be okay in whatever life follows death.

Note the exhortation of Scripture: hope to the end for the grace and salvation of God. Begin to hope now and keep on hoping to the very end. This is a living hope, the hope demanded by Scripture. Pursue, seek, and go after the grace and salvation of God. Hope for it and keep on hoping for it. Hope until the revelation of Jesus Christ. He is going to open the clouds above and return to earth and save us from the sin and death and the evil and corruption of this world. Therefore, hope and keep on hoping, pursue and keep on pursuing, don't loose your focus, for the coming grace and salvation of God.

"For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?" (Romans 8:24).

1 Peter 1:14 (KJV)

¹⁴As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance:

"obedient children" means *children of obedience*. We are to be so obedient to God that obedience becomes the basic trait of our lives. Obedience is who we are, that we can be called *children of obedience*. Now the phrase "fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts." . It pictures us as *children of lusts*. That is, we used to be so given over to our own desires, to doing our own thing, that we could be called *children of lusts*.

This is not a pretty picture, but it is exactly what a person without Jesus is: a *child of desire*, a person who lives just like he wants to live. He does what he wants to do instead of what God says to do. He obeys himself, his own desires, not God and His Word. Therefore, he is a child of desires, *a child of lusts*. What kind of lusts or desires are being talked about? All kinds. There are the lusts and desires for...

- money
- sex
- popularity
- possessions
- food
- recognition

- authority
- property
- position
- housing
- clothing

Man must have the necessities of life. God made him to desire these things. But when we begin to lust and crave these things it becomes wrong. These things become more important than the work of the lord, and we fulfill them, we become a child of lust, following the world not God.

The world and its lusts are no longer to control our lives. The Lord Jesus Christ is to dominate our lives. We are to focus and concentrate upon Him and the glorious grace and salvation.

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 7:21).

1 Peter 1:15-16 (KJV)

¹⁵ But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;

¹⁶ Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

focus upon holiness. Holy means to be righteous, pure, sinless, and godly; to be perfect, complete, and fulfilled in every possible sense; to be separated and entirely different from all other beings and things.

Holiness is something that is really misunderstood. To the average person, holiness means to assume a very streak attitude, to become almost abnormal in everyday life.

the Lord wants you to enjoy life and have fun -- I don't mean the sinful kind of fun, but real delight and enjoyment in the life He has given to you. Holiness is to the spiritual life what health is to the physical life. You like to see a person who is physically fine, robust, and healthy. Well, holiness is to be healthy and robust spiritually.

1. God is holy. He is the very embodiment and perfection of absolute holiness
2. God has called us to be holy in all of life. God's very purpose in saving us is to have a people who will be just like Him and who can live with Him eternally

God does not want us corruptible and dying with the world. God wants us holy; He wants us set apart to be just like Him. God wants us to live with Him eternally. But to live with Him eternally, we must be like Him: we must be holy. Therefore, we must pursue, seek, and go after holiness. We must live holy, pure, righteous, and godly lives. We must seek and go after God; we must seek to be like God while on this earth. If we do, then God gives us the most glorious of hopes: the hope of eternal salvation.

3. Scripture demands holiness. It is written in Scripture: "Be ye holy; for I am holy" (We have no choice: this is the command of Scripture itself. If we wish to be God's people, then we must live like God. We must live lives that are holy.

"Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14).

Keep your eye on the prize, don't lose your focus, the world has, and it will pay for the sin,

Sin demands payment, Jesus has paid the price for those that follow him

Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.