

## Does Christian Mean Something?

### 1Peter 1:13-17 ESV

The greatest gift you or I could ever receive is the Gift of Salvation. How great is the salvation we have in Christ? It's beyond our ability to describe. The Hebrew writer says, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation..." Hebrews 2:3 Paul writes in 2Cor. 9:15 Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift. It is indescribable.

Peter speaks on the greatness of our salvation by telling us, it was given by God the Father who elected us according to his foreknowledge; It was according to His abundant mercy; It's a salvation that has an inheritance that's incorruptible, undefiled, and fadeth not away. It's a great salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. This wonderful salvation is Jesus Christ our Lord "whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

So precious is our salvation the prophets of old have inquired and searched carefully as to Who the Savior would be; and what time He might appear, and it is so precious that angels long to look into it.

We are saved by grace. We are given the gift of eternal life. We are forgiven of all our sins through the blood of Christ. We have a reserved place in heaven. WE will share in the glories of Christ. So much to say about our salvation. Regardless of what trials come our way, we can rejoice because the trial of our faith is more precious than gold that perishes and it will be result in praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

With such a great gift of salvation comes great responsibilities. It's like the Scriptures tells us "With whom much is given, much is required." All who have received the Lord Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior have received much! The magnitude of such a gift demands a life of loyalty and service. Being a Christian is not just wearing the name. It is not like putting wearing a jacket on Sunday, and then throughout the week it's hung in the closet. Being a Christian is not accepting the gospel message with nothing to show. True Salvation produces real transformation.

Being a Christian Means Something and that's the focus Peter wants us to consider in our text this morning.

We begin in v.13 "Therefore" or "Wherefore". This is a transition word. When we take in all that's been said "concerning this salvation" in the previous verses, it means we are to act accordingly. It means we are to live out what's been placed in us. Now, it's an outstanding and wonderful thought to know Heaven is for all the 'Redeemed', but there's a life to live for the glory of God before we get to Heaven.

**What does Peter say we are to do since we have been born again to a living hope?**

**In other words - Does being a Christian really mean anything at all?**

I want to pull three (3) main points from our text showing what every Christian must do:

1. Set Your Hope - v.13
2. Be Holy - vv.15-16
3. Conduct Yourselves with fear – v.17

**I. Set Your Hope v. 13** or Fix your Hope

We are always “setting” something. We set our watches, our clocks. Some of you might set an alarm to wake up. You set a timer on your oven to bake something. You get out your calendar and set dates for your appointments, you set your schedule. To accomplish things in life you must “set some goals”. To raise kids you must “set some priorities” “set some rules” “set boundaries” To manage your personal budget, you have to “set limits on spending” Here at church we leave for the day and we set the alarm. In most everything we are always “setting” and “resetting”.

Peter says, “**Set your hope**”. If we haven’t done that for a while, let’s RESET our HOPE.

Hope is like Faith. We believe God. We have faith in what He has said. We live by faith, walk by faith, and not by sight. Faith is our trust in God in the present. We have come to believe in His promises. He has proven to be trustworthy, and we have faith in God. Hope is having faith in the future. There are future matters that are beyond our control. We come to place them in the hands of a sovereign God.

**Skip to v.21** “.....so that your faith and hope are in God.”

Our hope is in God. We’ve already saw back in v.3 “*caused us to be born again to a living hope*”

Our “Hope in God” is not a *dying useless* hope. We have hope in a God who raises the dead. Our resurrection is a guarantee because Jesus Christ was raised from the dead. Because He lives, we will live also. That’s our hope.

**Notice v.13** The Apostle Peter tells us exactly what we are to “*set our hope*” on.

[ set your hope **fully on the grace** that will be **brought to you** at the revelation of Jesus Christ ]

- Set your hope fully on the grace..... Fully means COMPLETELY (don’t hold back anything) Put hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you....
- What kind of grace? It’s the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. The Second Coming of Christ is called the Revelation of Jesus Christ. Those are the words at the beginning of the Book of Revelation. The Revelation of Jesus Christ. It’s GRACE that will be brought to you. At the Second Coming of Christ we will receive a glorified body; a reunion with Saints who have gone on before us; we’ll be with the Lord forever, we’ll have an eternal abode in heaven, a place the Lord has prepared for us.....so much more....but there’s only **one word PETER uses**....

**The GRACE** that will be brought to you. All the provisions we have in our eternal state are only possible because of the GRACE of God. We are saved by grace. We did NOTHING TO DESERVE the salvation given to us. It’s a gift from a loving merciful God. And the coming of the Lord to take us to heaven is also a GIFT of God’s grace. We do not deserve to have a place in Heaven. We do not a brand new glorified body. We do not deserve eternal life.

- SET YOUR HOPE....not so much on the EVENT itself; not so much on what you will receive and experience in Heaven, but
- SET YOUR HOPE **on the FUTURE Grace** that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Another similar way of saying this:

**Colossians 3:1-4** If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. <sup>2</sup> Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. <sup>3</sup> For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. <sup>4</sup> When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

### **SETTING YOUR HOPE IS NOT EASY.**

To Set your hope is not easy. We deal with our remaining flesh. There is still this sinful nature that wars against God. The pleasure of sin appeals to our fleshly appetites. The seduction of this fallen world beckons us to enjoy what God has forbidden. And if we are not caught up in sinful things, we get caught up in permissible things yet fail to remember our main priority. It's good to be working and doing good things, but so often we find ourselves overwhelmed. We are busy raising a family, making a living, paying the bills; trying to stay healthy. Nothing wrong with all of that, but we become anxious about our lives as to what we shall eat, drink, and the clothes that we wear. We worry so much about so many things, and our Lord said to us,

But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. (Matthew 6:33)

"Setting our hope fully on the grace that will be brought to us" so easily falls off our radar, and

What becomes more dominant in our thinking is not so much "setting our hope fully on the grace that will be brought to us", but rather "setting our focus on the bad news that might be brought to us; Some bill in the mail that might be brought to us; Our focus gets caught up on the ever rising cost of groceries; taxes, gas prices, and then there are family matters, and health concerns...and seemingly a thousand other things.

Question: HOW CAN WE "SET OUR HOPE FULLY ON THE GRACE....."

Answer: 2 things we must do

#### **(1) v.13 "preparing your minds for action**

The word "preparing" means to "gird up" . the KJV "gird up the loins of your mind" We don't use that word today, but think about in Bible times people wore robes. To avoid getting tripped up in your robe when running, or engaging in some physical work, a man would take the corners of his robe and pull it up under his belt, or sash.

"gird up the loins" means tightening your belt, pull in all the loose ends.

To “**gird up the loins of your mind**” means to pull in all the loose thoughts of your mind. Be disciplined in your thinking. PREPARE YOUR MINDS FOR ACTION.

Same thought is given in **Ephesians 6:14...**

Stand firm therefore, HAVING FASTENED ON THE BELT OF TRUTH, OR GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, (Legacy)

The battle begins with our minds. What are we thinking about? What are we allowing to occupy our minds? The devil loves to play with the mind. He did this with Eve in the Garden. “Did God say you should not eat of every tree? Think about it.

### **Genesis 3:4-5**

<sup>4</sup>Ye shall not surely die:.... <sup>5</sup>For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

The Devil gave Eve something else to think about. You think on this....

SHE DID...

### **Genesis 3:6**

<sup>6</sup>And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

If we are to SET OUR HOPE FULLY ON THE GRACE THAT IS TO BE BROUGHT AT THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST....WE MUST **prepare our minds for action.**

If we are to ACT in a godly way, in a biblical way...it won't be by accident. We must choose to discipline our minds. Get the good information from God's Word into our thinking. Number one – prepare your mind for action.

**Romans 12:2** 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.

### **(2)** v. 13 “being sober-minded”

The opposite of being sober is being drunk. The mind can become intoxicated with worldly thinking. The brain is like a sponge absorbing messages of all kinds. All of us maybe can identify with getting a certain tune to a song in our heads. It's amazing how we pick up so much information

**Being sober minded** requires us to be disciplined in our thinking. We are not to be under the control of worldly and sinful ways of thinking. When we become intoxicated with ungodly ways, we lose our focus on Christ. The devil plays with the mind and says, “you can do this, or that and still be a Christian. There's nothing wrong with doing this.” There's nothing wrong with that song on the radio. There's nothing wrong with that movie. There's nothing wrong in saying that joke. There's nothing wrong with stealing. There's nothing wrong with telling a lie. Do what you want. Forget what God says. Enjoy your life. Do your own thing.

**Being sober minded** requires us to acknowledge that there is something called SIN. You call out SIN in your own life. You take personal responsibility to deal with your sin. You stop making excuses and call it what it is.

We do like David in Psalm 32

**Psalm 32:5**

I acknowledged my sin to you,  
and I did not cover my iniquity;  
I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,"  
and you forgave the iniquity of my sin.

**Being sober minded** requires us to stay focused on What God has commanded in the Scriptures.

**Psalm 119:11** Thy word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against you.

We need a FILTER in our mind to discard thoughts, and worldly ways of thinking. God's Word in our hearts will help us in this.

**Being sober minded** will help us to stay focused in PRAYER.

**1Peter 4:7** The end of all things is at hand; therefore be self-controlled and **sober-minded** for the sake of your prayers.

Peter says "the end of all things is at hand".....how much more can we say that today. We are definitely in the END TIMES. If ever we need to be CLEAR in our thinking...it's now. Also, the devil is seeking to put us out of business.

**1Peter 5:8** Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

As a Christian we are MOVING toward that day when Christ will come. Either the Lord will come for us at our passing away, or He will split the Heavens coming personally for His saints in the Rapture. SET YOUR HOPE fully..... this takes care of the FUTURE....

<b>SET YOUR HOPE</b> <sup>13</sup> Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, <u>set your hope</u> fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.
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This is the first step to live out the Christian life. SET Your HOPE. Your future is SET.

What about the PRESENT.... As a Christian you must BE HOLY.

**II. Be Holy v.14-16**

**Be holy... how?**

**1) Don't act like you use to be...that is, In your unregenerate condition**

**v.14** *As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance,*

Don't be like you were before coming to Christ. Don't be the way you were as "children of disobedience".

### **1Thess 4:3-5**

<sup>3</sup> For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; <sup>4</sup> that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, <sup>5</sup> not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God;

## **2) Do act like the God who called you.**

v.15 but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, (KJV in all manner of conversation)

**He who called you** - This is the "call" to salvation. It's the effectual call of God whereby we are brought to saving faith in the Lord Jesus. Our salvation is based on that "saving call". It's based on the efficacious grace of God. No one can say they are saved by their own merit, or personal goodness. It's a call of grace....from a holy God....who calls us to BE HOLY.

Holiness -- This is the standard for every Christian. **Be holy in all your conduct.** ALL your conduct... not just when everyone is watching, but even when no one is watching you. Know this, God always sees us. The All-Seeing God sees us. IN ALL YOUR CONDUCT BE HOLY.

How can we be holy? First of all, we can never be holy like God. **1Samuel 2:2** "there is none holy like the LORD" But we can imitate Christlikeness. We can imitate the ways of the Lord even though we are not absolutely perfect and holy like God.

Perfection will come one day. Until then, get on the track and start walking the walk of holiness. Start moving in that direction.

Jesus said - **Matthew 5:48** You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect. That's a high standard, but we SET OUR HOPE on the GRACE that will be brought to us.... Until that day comes, let's determine to BE HOLY. That's the likeness of God.... Be like our Lord. BE imitators of God.

**Ephesians 5:1** Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children

Here's one way to be imitators of God... it's a desperate need in our families...in our church....it will bring healing and blessings of God.... Kindness and Forgiveness... the cause of Christ is hindered when we are UNFORGIVING TOWARD ONE ANOTHER.....

**Ephesians 4:32** Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

Peter is saying something that is written in the Scriptures.....

**v.16** **Since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."**

## Leviticus 11:44-45

<sup>44</sup> For I am the LORD your God. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am holy. You shall not defile yourselves with any swarming thing that crawls on the ground. <sup>45</sup> For I am the LORD who brought you up out of the land of Egypt to be your God. You shall therefore be holy, for I am holy.”

**Don't be discouraged.** We are not “perfectly holy” like God. But we can be on the pathway moving in the direction of holiness.

Going back to vv. 15-16... I want to read you a more literal translation:

**15**but according as He who called you [is] holy, you also, **become holy** in all behavior, **16**because it has been written: “**Become holy**, because I am holy”; (Literal Standard Version)

“**BE**” **holy** may give the impression of arriving at a total 100% holiness, when we know there's remaining sin, and shortcomings, bad attitudes, disrespectful behavior, and evil thoughts...

GET on the pathway....make progress... move toward perfection.... Move toward holiness.

God says, “I am holy” More we get to know God, the more we learn how He is holy. He hates sin, and we see it grieves the Holy Spirit. It offends our Holy Father. We want to do as 1John 3:3..

**1John 3:3** And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.

**2Cor 7:1** Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, **bringing holiness to completion** in the fear of God.

As a Christian you must...

#1 - Set Your Hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you.....

#2 - Be Holy in all your conduct....

Number 3...

### III. Conduct Yourselves with Fear

**v.17** And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with **fear** throughout the time of your exile,

I thought of coming up with another word than “fear”. But this is a good one. It's in the Bible so much.

**Proverbs 1:7** The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge;  
fools despise wisdom and instruction.

**Proverbs 9:10** The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom,

**Psalms 111:10** The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom;  
all those who practice it have a good understanding.

FEAR: means Reverence, respect, honor

Respect God, or respect Christ, Honor Christ, give Reverence to God, ---Father, Son, Holy Spirit

### **A) Respect God, Your Heavenly Father**

We give respect, reverence and honor to our Heavenly Father. That's the meaning of "fear". It's not being scared, afraid to the point you tremble every time you think of God our Father. It is a healthy kind of fear that moves us to be in "awe" of His person. To be highly respectful and have a reverential fear.

We are to pray and seek to know Him more intimately.

Jesus said to His disciples... when you pray, say, Our Father who art in Heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. Say - "Our Father..."

#### **Matthew 6:6-8**

<sup>6</sup> But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to **your Father** who is in secret. And **your Father** who sees in secret will reward you.

<sup>7</sup> "And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words. <sup>8</sup> Do not be like them, for **your Father** knows what you need before you ask him.

**Galatians 4:6** And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" "ABBA" intimate... papa, or daddy.....

There's a caution flag that needs to be raised..... We come to know our Heavenly Father and be close to Him....

- God, our Father is NOT a indulgent, or permissive Father.... ONE Who will let you do anything, have anything, let things slide....
- As a Father he disciplines his children...

**Hebrews 12: 5-6** "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reprov'd by him.

<sup>6</sup> For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives.

### **B) Respect God, Your Impartial Judge**

.....Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds,

Does it matter how we live as a Christian? We will give an account for our life as a Believer.

We will stand before judgment seat of Christ. Listen to 2Cor. 5:9-10:

#### **2Corinthians 5:9-10**



<sup>9</sup> So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. <sup>10</sup> For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.

This judgment seat is not a determination as to where we spend eternity. We are saved by faith in Christ alone, not by works. That's why Peter says, "set your hope fully on the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." Getting into Heaven is not by your works, but by the grace of God.

The purpose of the Judgment seat of Christ is for Christians to individually give an account of their service to the Lord. Our works will be examined, our character, and motives will be examined. All that we have done as a Christian whether it's good or bad will be on display at this time of judgment.

KNOWING this... it should motivate us to do what? "conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile."

**Exile** - describes your time on earth as a pilgrim. Heaven is our true home.

But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, **Ephesians 3:20**

Here on earth, we are in EXILE.

Conduct yourselves with fear throughout **the time of your stay here on earth.**

The LORD our God, the Lord Jesus Christ is COMING SOON...

AS a Christian you must SET YOUR HOPE Fully on the Grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ...it won't be easy... It requires a disciplined mind, a clear mind that is full of God's Word...

And you must "be holy", or more literally "become holy" knowing we are not "holy" completely as God is.

And finally, Have the Deepest RESPECT and REVERENCE for God your Heavenly Father until the Lord Jesus comes to take you HOME.