

Christ Reformation Church

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Living as Exiles in a Hostile World – The Epistle of 1 Peter

(Part 08 – Set Your Hope on Glory)

August 28, 2016

Sermon Text: 1 Peter 1:10-13

Scripture Reading: Acts 8:26-40

1Pe 1:10-13 Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, (11) inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. (12) It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look. (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.

These few verses contain such a wealth of truth that it is difficult to know where to start. Let's break them down into two points:

1. The Unity of Scripture - How to Read and Understand the Bible
2. The Proper Mentality/Mindset of the Christian

The two points are directly related, the second flowing out of the first, as Peter's "therefore" in verse 13 indicates.

Recently Verla and I watched a documentary on commercial fishing for pollock in the Bering Sea. The ship featured takes in millions and millions of them in a half mile long net. Longer than a football field, it has 100 people working 15 hour shifts down below completely processing all of them into

frozen fillets, most of which are sold to MacDonaldis for your fillet of fish sandwich.

In one interview, a fellow working his 4-month long stretch said that the job is physically challenging, but by far the hardest part is the mental strain. Being away from home, the long shifts, the monotony, all take their toll and not everyone can handle it. So he said you have to have the right mindset and attitude.

Peter is telling us that the Christian must do something rather similar. In this present life and world, we must *prepare our minds for action and set our hope on the right thing*. We are living in the last days. Things that used to be far off have drawn much, much nearer. God's plan for this world is getting clearer and clearer like land that is far off but now shows its details as the ship gets closer to it. The Christian who sees and knows these things has a much easier time running the race when things get tough.

So let's listen to Peter again:

1Pe 1:10-13 Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, (11) inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. (12)

It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look.

The Bible cannot be understood if it is seen as a disjoint library of books bound together. Nor can it be understood if the reader has been taught that the Lord has more than one plan of salvation. Notice Peter's language here. He speaks of *this salvation* and has already said:

1Pe 1:5 who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Now notice carefully what Peter says:

- a. The Old Testament prophets prophesied THIS grace in Christ, THIS gospel, THIS salvation we possess.
- b. The Old Testament prophets were inspired by the Spirit of Christ and their prophecies concerned Christ, His sufferings, and His glories (victory, resurrection, ascension, return).
- c. The Old Testament prophets knew, by divine revelation to them, that the things of Christ they announced were not going to come about in their time, but

in ours – the Last Days.

- d. The Old Testament prophets were not writing about multiple plans of salvation, one for the Jew and one for the Gentiles, but this gospel that has been announced to us in the New Testament era which is for all, Jew and Gentile. One salvation.

Therefore any theological system that claims there is one way of salvation for the Jew and another for the Gentile is necessarily going to lead to not only a mis-understanding of Scripture but in fact will make a clear understanding of it impossible.

Peter tells us then that when the gospel of Jesus Christ began to be preached by Christ, by His apostles, and then by His disciples *was the same message the Old Testament announces, but in much more clarity and detail.* This is why Philip could help the Ethiopian Eunuch understand Isaiah 53. It is why Peter could say to the crowds on Pentecost –

Act 2:15-16 For these people are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. (16) But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel:

And Jesus Himself handled the OT Scriptures the very same way –

Luk 24:44-47 Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." (45) Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, (46) and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, (47) and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.

God has one way, one plan of salvation. The Bible is the history of His redemption being worked out from the beginning to the end of time. And this means then that when you study Scripture you must necessarily consider the whole as well as the parts and be certain that your understanding is consistent with the rest of Scripture. Because the same Spirit of Christ, the Holy Spirit, inspired and directed ALL the authors of Scripture to write on the same ultimate subject – God's redemption of His people in His Son, Jesus Christ and the restoration of the creation to its intended glory.

You see this stated by the Apostle Paul –

1Co 10:11 Now these things [the OT account of the Israelites in the time of

the Exodus] happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come.

And again –

Rom 15:3-4 For Christ did not please himself, but as it is written, "The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me." (4) For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

Due to widespread theological error in handling the Scriptures [ironically largely initiated in a book entitled "Rightly Dividing the Word"], many Christians have been taught that large portions of Scripture are not for them, but only for the Jews. Peter's words here absolutely forbid such an idea.

This, incidentally, is one of the fundamental differences between Reformed theology and the typical evangelical church today. Reformed theology does not interpret Scripture to teach that God has a separate plan of salvation or future program for the Jew (Israel) from that for the Gentiles. That is to say, Reformed doctrine teaches that the Bible is a unity in which the Israel of God and the Church are one and the same. Anyone, for example, who grows up on the teachings of John

MacArthur Jr and others in that same school of theology, is never going to be able to fully grasp the beauty of God's redemption in Christ.

Col 3:11 Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all.

It is impossible to understand this, let me say again, if we fail to understand the unity of the Scriptures from Genesis to Revelation, the unity of God's single plan of redemption. This error is responsible for probably far more error, both doctrinal and moral, in churches today than we realize.

Listen again -

Eph 2:11-22 Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called "the uncircumcision" by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands— (12) remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the **commonwealth of Israel** and strangers to **the covenants of promise**, having no hope and without God in the world.

(13) But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. (14) For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in

his flesh the dividing wall of hostility (15) by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself **one new man in place of the two**, so making peace, (16) **and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross**, thereby killing the hostility. (17) And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. (18) **For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.** (19) So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, (20) **built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone**, (21) in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. (22) In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

Let's now turn to the "therefore" in Peter's words here.

The Proper Mentality/Mindset of the Christian

1:13 **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.

Do you see the urgency of Peter's words to us here? Because of this –

"in the things that have now been announced to you"

- we know that we are living in the last days. It's going down! God's plan of redemption all down through history has reached its culmination in Christ. There is nothing left to be done except for the rest of His elect to hear the gospel and be saved, and then Christ will come.

As this world grows darker and darker and more evil and violent, we are to "set our hope fully" on what Christ has given to us already and what He is going to give us when He returns.

Paul describes the same thing -

Col 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. (2) Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. (3) For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. (4) When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Set your hope fully on the grace.... The resurrection. YOUR resurrection. The reunion – YOUR reunion with all those who died in Christ before. The

new heavens and new earth. Seeing Christ in all His glory. Eternal life. That and more is the grace that will be brought to us and THAT is what we are to “fully set our hope” upon. *Set your minds on the things that are above, not on things that are on earth.*” That is how Paul puts it.

Soldiers are told to “prepare for action” when some great thing is about to come down. Veterans are often asked “did you see any action” in the war? Meaning, “were you in the fighting?”

Well, every Christian sees “action.” And we can expect the intensity of that action to increase as we draw closer and closer to the end. So Peter says that we must *prepare our minds for action. How? Think on these things. Think from an eternal perspective. Understand these truths. Focus your mind on what lies ahead for you in Christ. Be serious about this. Make it your chief business.*

Our “default” setting, you might say – at least that of our flesh – is to be “earthly-minded.” What am I going to wear today? What am I going to eat? Where am I going to go? What am I going to do? How is my bank account doing? What is the state of the political scene? What is in the news today? How is my car running? What is the state of my health?

Yes, these are things we necessarily give some thought to, but Peter says *be sure to think about the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. IN FACT, set your hope on this FULLY.* Otherwise, your mind simply will not be prepared for action and you will not do well.

Think it through once more. The things that God promised and announced through His prophets so very long ago, *has now come about! It was written for YOU* and though many, many righteous people have gone before us, WE are privileged to live in these times when in the twinkling of an eye that last trumpet is going to sound and every evil thing we have ever known or experienced will be gone forever, replaced by a new and eternal Eden.

Think on these things. Set your mind on these things. Prepare your mind for action.

What do you tell people who are in the midst of suffering? Especially the kind of suffering that really no human being can do much about –

- Cancer, especially the terminal kind
- Death of a child or other close loved one
- Rank cruelty and injustice
- Poverty – some loss of a job or catastrophic property loss

People try to come up with all kinds of overly-simplistic comments designed to try to help such sufferers feel better. But for the most part they are empty. The fact is, for so many of these things *there is simply NO human, earthly solution*. So that for the person whose mind is set on earthly things, for the person who has not been serious-minded and prepared their mind for action, when this sort of thing comes down, they are in trouble.

1Pe 1:13 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.

1Pe 1:3-7 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, (4) to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, (5) who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. (6) In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, (7) so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to

result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

These are the truths that carry us through. This is true hope, set fully on the inheritance that is ours and that is most surely coming.

And we are *close*. *Very, very, close* -

1Co 7:29a This is what I mean, brothers: the appointed time has grown very short.

Php 4:4-5 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. (5) Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand;

Heb 10:24-25 And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, (25) not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

1Jn 2:18 Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore we know that it is the last hour.

Prepare for action. It's coming. Think on these things. Put your full hope in Christ and His promises. Just think what is going to be yours when He comes.

