

1 Peter 1:13 - 25

Outline

- I. Christ motivates us to holy living (13 -16)
- II. Christ has redeemed us (17 -21)
- III. Our lives have been changed by God's Word (22 - 25)

I. Christ motivates us to holy living (13 - 16)

Discussion Questions

- What is the “therefore” there for?
- What is the motivation for the behavior verses 13-16 encourage us to have?
- How does Christ 's sacrifice motivate you?
- What does it mean to “prepare your minds for action?” Where is the battle for holiness in the life of a Christian won or lost? Are your minds prepared? How to ensure that we are winning battle in our minds?
- What does it mean to keep sober in spirit? How can you keep sober in spirit ?
- Where are you fixing your hope? Let's imagine that an unbiased third party examined your life to see where you fix your hope; where might they look?
- How can we take the way of escape when we encounter temptations? Why does it say that these were in ignorance?
- What is our motivation supposed to be for being holy? Define holiness.

Cross-References

Philippians 4:8 - Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy — think about such things.

Philippine 2:5 - In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus.

Proverbs 17:22 - A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.

Matthew 15:11 - What goes into someone's mouth does not defile them, but what comes out of their mouth, that is what defiles them.”

2 Corinthians 4:16 - Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.

Verses on Holiness

2 Corinthians 7:1 - Therefore, since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.

1 Peter 2:9 - But you are a chosen people a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light.

1 Thessalonians 4:7 - For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life.

Hebrew 12:14 - Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.

Leviticus 20:26 - you are to be holy to Me because I, the Lord, Am holy, and I have set you apart from the nations to be My own.

Teaching Points

1. The previous verses tell us of the importance of the coming of the Messiah. For thousands of years the Old Testament prophets studied the scriptures in depth to try to find out more about the time and details of His coming. The angels also wanted to know more about it, and still desire to know more about His second coming. We are in an extremely privileged position because much of what the Old Testament prophets wanted to learn, we already know. We have the benefit of seeing a much larger section of God's plan than they did.

We can learn from the life of Christ and understand in depth God's plan for redemption . Simply put, we know much more than they did.

Yet how does this knowledge change us? What good does this knowledge do us? What should we do because of this knowledge? This is what this section of Scripture is about. Most of the rest of this chapter focuses on practical application for believers.

2. First, we are to prepare our minds for action. This shows us two areas of the Christians life, the mind, and our behavior. Which one comes first? Obviously, the mind. Our brain first decides what it wants to do. Then, it sends signals to our body. After that, our muscles respond by carrying out the wishes of the brain.

This mirrors a very important Scriptural truth, which is that the battle is fought in the mind. Jesus alluded to this when He pointed out that we are guilty for our sinful thoughts (such

as lust and hate) before God, even if we didn't do any wrong action. Yet most of the time, a person's thoughts will dictate his actions. Can you give any biblical example?

The Pharisees' jealousy led them to kill Jesus. Eve saw that the fruit was attractive and so ate it. Joseph's brothers were jealous of him and sold him as a slave. The list goes on and on. Every willful sin first comes from an evil desire in the mind.

James 1:13 -15 - Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and He Himself tempts no one. But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

The battle is in our mind (sometimes referred to as the heart, the center of thoughts). If you lose the battle there, eventually your evil desires will be carried out. How can we win the battle? How do we prevent ourselves from thinking evil thoughts? Can we control it? If we win the battle in our minds and actively focus on the things of God, we will naturally follow His will.

What can we do to ensure we win this battle?

A. Realize that what goes in is what will come out. If we fill our minds with junk (bad music, movies, trash books, silly romantic forums, vanity, and gossip) then this will influence our behavior. If we fill our minds with the things God (Bible, Christian books, Christian fellowship, verse memory) then this too, will show itself in our actions.

B. Be proactive. Do not allow your thoughts to run wild anywhere they please. You have to take control of your thoughts. How?

Evaluate whether the thoughts that pop into your mind are edifying or not. If they are lustful or tempting in any way, then stop it! Never think that you can control it, that you will just enjoy fantasizing about the temptation, but not do it. Don't even start going down that road.

C. Don't be idle. As you have probably heard many times. "An idle mind is the devil's playground."

Keep yourself and your mind busy doing good things. Don't just sit around lazily, or you will be more likely to fall into temptation .

3. The second part of that phrase says, "for every action". We prepare our minds by feeding ourselves the Word of God.

But it doesn't stop there. We need to take action on what we know is right. It is not enough to say, "I should help the poor." We must take action to do it. It is not enough to say "I should share the gospel with my family." We must set meetings or purposefully bring up the gospel in conversations with them. It is not enough to say "I should read the Bible everyday" or "I should have times of prayers and quiet times with person X." We must do it. A plan without a strategy is doomed to fail, and a strategy that is never put into motion is useless.

4. Keep sober in spirit, John MacArthur says that being sober in spirit includes “steadfastness, self-control, clarity of mind, and moral decisiveness.” We need to understand the importance of living our lives for God. We need to understand the stakes of God’s battle with Satan and Satan’s desperation to attack believers. We need to understand that the world is scrutinizing everything we do looking for a reason to reject the message that we preach. We need to understand that sin is serious, no laughing matter. We need to take our responsibilities to our family, our brothers and sisters, Christ, our neighbors, and our society seriously.

Perhaps the opposite of having a sober spirit is following the carefree lifestyle of:

“Eat, drink, and be merry.” Life is much more than this. Don’t waste your life.

5. Fix your Hope. The first part of this chapter was mostly about the living hope that believers have. This living hope defines everything we do. Sometimes in this polluted world with a myriad of new problems every day, it is easy to lose sight of this hope and get bogged down in the hustle and bustle around us. This is why Peter tells us to fix our hope completely on God’s grace.

Hebrew 12:2 - Looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

To be successful, an athlete must fix his eyes on the finish line and the prize that comes with finishing first. For us to be successful, we must fix our eyes on Christ and never let anything take His Place.

6. God’s grace has changed our lives and hold us to new higher standards. We must go back to our previous way of life .

While an unbeliever, we may have excuses for our sins. In some cases, we might have actually thought that doing something wrong was acceptable since everyone was doing it. Whether or not we had this excuse before, now we do not. We know God’s commands . We know His standards. We are no longer ignorant .

So how can we fight lust? How can we better ensure that we don’t go back to our former lifestyle?

7. Verses 15-16 list the key character quality Christians should strive for and why. That is holiness. We are able to be holy because God is holy. God is perfect, the Creator of the universe. He is our ultimate example. If there is no God, ultimately there can be no standard for determining right and wrong. There would be no reason for being moral beyond the fact that it might make you feel good.

But, because God is true, He defines the standards for all of creation. Since He is perfect, we should strive to be like Him. In the Old Testament you can see that

worshippers of false gods become like them. The worshipers of Baal that Elijah was challenging cut themselves up when appealing to their god. Many times, they worshiped their god by committing gross sexual sins at the very temple of their god.

A weak sinful god breeds weak sinful followers since a sinful god would never judge them doing the same sins it does. A righteous, just, holy, and loving God, inspires His followers to ever greater heights. If you find that you are struggling with holiness (and will all are), study and meditate on God's character. Never be satisfied or content with sin. Notice that all this verse says we should be holy in All we do. Not just some, 50% or 80% or even 90%. All. This is our goal. It is attainable. On our own it is not. But with God's grace each time we face temptation, we can be victorious. Sin is not necessary. There is never a case where we "have" to sin.