

1 Peter 1:9-21 – Part CC

1Pe 1:8 (NKJV) whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see *Him*, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, ⁹receiving the end of your faith--the salvation of *your* souls.

Obviously, the ultimate outcome that we obtain is the final “**salvation of our souls**”. The Greek word for “**salvation**” is “*soteria*” and is obviously a very important New Testament word. Everything that is meaningful to believers is anchored in this word “**salvation**”. At the most crucial level it is a word that refers, not merely to the sanctifying process that we addressed earlier, but specifically to the spiritual and eternal deliverance that we are given immediately upon responding to the gospel in faith and repentance in the Lord Jesus Christ. Salvation is only in Christ. [Acts 4:12](#) boldly declares,

Ac 4:12 (NKJV) Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

If there was no final and ultimate “**salvation**” that ushers the believer into the presence of God, there would be no Christianity. No one would want to live a certain way if in reality it had no eternal value for their life. We all want to live for something meaningful. So, the very simple message that Peter is expounding is this – what we may have to endure in the present is to always be seen in light of the glorious future and salvation that God has provided to us through Christ. We are progressively receiving the blessings of our salvation and we will eventually receive the final end – the complete redemption of our souls. Both aspects, both the present results and the future results, are critical to embrace if we are ever going to genuinely be victorious in the Christian life. We have to appreciate that because of Christ that God the Father and the Holy Spirit are always giving to us exactly what we need, but we are called upon to appropriate it in our lives. We have to appropriate into our life what God says is true. The believer must act on the truth that God teaches him. Until the believer actually acts on what the Word of God says, that truth will have no practical value for their life. Think of it this way. An individual might know that they need to take a life preserver with them in a boat, but if they do not act on that and leave it at home, what they know to be true will have no value for them whatsoever. We may know what God really wants us to do, but if we do not act on, what we know spiritually will have no meaningful value for our life.

All of this has been mentioned simply because the word “**receiving**” or “**obtaining**” is a present participle, an ongoing activity in a person’s life. Now, I know that someone is thinking to themselves that all of this seems a little over stated, but it is not. The reality of actually living out our faith is very critical to the reality of whether or not we are even saved. The individual that just “**says**” that they are saved, but there is no visible reality of that in their life is a liar and the truth is not in them. We studied this very carefully in [1 John 1:6](#) which says,

1Jn 1:6 (NKJV) If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.

In fact, a great portion of the epistle of [1 John](#) was devoted to someone saying one thing, but doing another. Just saying, but not doing, was evidence that they were not actually saved. So, a believer must draw the deduction, must conclude, must make the connection, must understand, and must realize that

there is something incredible that has taken place in their life because they are in Christ. **It is the obligation of every believer to maintain the conviction of their position in Christ.** When the believer reckons or considers something to be true in their life, they are not merely claiming a promise, but they are **ACTING** on a spiritual fact and **ACTING** on something that is rooted and grounded in the immutability of God.¹ It is the believer yielding their life to Christ, a surrendering of their life in a conscious and active submission of their members to God as “**instruments of righteousness**”. The instruments that sin once dominated have now become the very instruments that God uses for His glory.²

So, what if none of this is actually visible in a person’s life, what if the reality of this is never manifested? What does it mean? Well, what would be the alternative – that everyone who is not living as a believer, not surrendering their life to Christ, not obedient to His Word, and not faithful to Christ or His church is a Christian? I doubt it! If it looks like a duck, walks like a duck, and quacks like a duck, there is a good chance that it is a duck! Why are we not able to be honest with people? Why do we pretend for all of this to just be spiritual make-believe when it is the most serious reality and certainty in the universe?

Without going into any depth in **1 Peter 1:10-12**, suffice it to say that it simply speaks about this great salvation that God has given to us from four different perspectives. In v10 it speaks of the prophets who spoke about it and inquired about it, in v11 it speaks of the Holy Spirit who was responsible for it, in v12 it speaks of the apostles who proclaimed it, and in v12 it speaks of the angels who desire to look into it. It should be obvious that for many of the prophets and all of the apostles, that the message of God’s salvation literally consumed them. Obviously, the prophets never saw the salvation that was provided in Christ like the apostles did. The apostles saw, touched, handled. They were an actual part of all that was transpiring. They saw the life of Christ, they witnessed His death, and then they were able to see the resurrected Lord and watched Him actually ascend into heaven. In all of the redemptive drama that was transpiring, the Holy Spirit was the One who was orchestrating all of the events, so He revealed to the prophets all that was to take place regarding Christ. Even the angels are curious as to how great our salvation truly is, so it must be really confusing to this great cloud of witnesses when we as believers treat the salvation that God has given to us in such a casual and nonchalant manner.

Okay. That now brings us to the new section beginning in **1 Peter 1:13-25**. The way that we know that this is a new section is that v13 begins with the word “**therefore**”. Peter has provided some great doctrinal truth for his readers, and now he reinforces how some of those truths should be lived out in their life. I.e., because of what he has just said, they should live like this. When we are reading a passage, it is always important to recognize when we transition into a new section simply because the author is sort of “changing gears” a little. To go from doctrine to exhortation is very important to recognize because it calls on us to think differently. For instance, in the NKJV, v22 begins with the word “**Since**” and so we would most likely think that is also a kind of new section.

1Pe 1:22 (NKJV) Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart,

However, what is not apparent in the NKJV translation is that the word “**since**” is not actually in the Greek text. The ESV probably translates the actual Greek text the best when it says,

1Pe 1:22 (ESV) Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart,

In the Greek text, the phrase “**having purified**” is a verbal participle. That is why the word “**having**” ends in “**ing**”. So, why is all of this somewhat important? It is because it helps the reader to recognize that Peter is not changing his subject matter. He is still in a very exhortative passage.

So, where does the next major break begin? The next major break begins in [1 Peter 2:1](#) which begins with the word “**therefore**” again. What we will find when we come to that next major passage is that Peter goes back to primarily teaching doctrine. He has exhortation in it like “**laying aside**” and “**desire**” in [1 Peter 2:1-2](#), but his primary emphasis will be doctrine. Now, I am not trying to bore you with detail, but if we are going to be able to discern what the author is saying, then we must recognize where the breaks occur in a passage. If we were writing an essay, we would generally make shifts in our content by creating a new paragraph. However, since the Bible is often presented in verses, we have to be a little more discerning as to how to read it.

Now, look for just a moment at all of the different exhortations that Peter provides in this particular passage: “**gird up, be sober, rest**” (v13), “**not conforming**” (v14), “**be holy**” (v15 and 16), “**conduct yourselves**” (v17), and “**love one another**” (v22). There are six specific exhortations in the first five verses of this passage with the ultimate exhortation to “**be holy**” in how we live. This is probably the verse that somewhat governs the entire passage.

Now, before actually exegeting the passage, I want to look at what Peter’s encouragements actually are in a very general way. This will simply be getting up at a high level and just observing the obvious without exploring the detail. I want us to see how much actual encouragement will be given in this passage. If we truly have as great of a salvation as Peter has taught thus far, then what that means is that we also have great responsibilities, great accountabilities, and great obligations to live in the way that God wants us to live. None of us can escape that spiritual reality, and the more that we ignore these spiritual responsibilities, the greater will be what we have to lose and what our children have to lose.

In v13 he encourages us to “**gird up the loins of our mind**”. He is actually warning his readers that because of the suffering and fiery trials that he mentioned in v6-7 that believers need to think strong, to have a strong biblical mindset. If believers are ever going to be able to endure some of the things that they need to endure, then how they think is critical. As we study that phrase, we will see that the term “**gird up**” is a picture of how the soldiers or workers pulled up their robe and wrapped it around their waste so that it would not hinder them in a battle or in their work. It is a word that pictures someone being in an actual battle. [1 Peter 4:1](#) will address this later when it says,

1Pe 4:1 (NKJV) Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,

Secondly, Peter says that we are to “**be sober**”. Every believer must learn how to be spiritually alert, learn how to not be deluded by false and frivolous teaching, and how to exercise self-control in their life. Next, Peter says that we have to learn how to rest, fix, and set our “**hope**” on the grace that God will give to us. We cannot be successful without God’s grace strengthening our life. We cannot live out the Christian life in the power of our own personal resolve and determination. If that is the manner of how we approach the Christian life, we will always fail to accomplish God’s will for our life. We must constantly be availing ourselves of God’s grace in order to be spiritually successful. We must learn to be at rest and at peace with God’s sovereignty and God’s providential care over our life. We are weak

and unwise, but He is strong and wise. [1 Peter 5:8](#) gives us another reason why we need to be sober when Peter says,

1Pe 5:8 (NKJV) Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

ENDNOTES

¹ Wiersbe, 76.

² MacArthur, *Conscience*, 220.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

MacArthur, John. *The Vanishing Conscience*. Nelson Books, 1994.

Wiersbe, Warren. *Be Right - New Testament Commentary Series: Romans*. Colorado Springs, Colorado: David C. Cook, 1977.