

The Jesus Movement

1 Peter 1:13-16

I. Scripture reading: 1 Peter 1

II. Therefore... The truth about who we are called to be has been unpacked beautifully thus far by the apostle Peter. We are chosen, we are strangers in the world, we are recipients of new birth, living hope, an eternal inheritance, divine protection, and we are expectant of a coming salvation. And, as we saw last week, we are recipients of the revelation about Jesus the Messiah. With these truths as the backdrop, Peter declared, "Therefore..." After the pattern of many of the epistles, truths are followed by commands to obey. The Word always merits a response.

III. Gird up the loins of your minds... This command, translated "prepare your minds for action" or "grip your minds" or "be like men stripped for action", has to do with readiness to move and act without unnecessary hindrances. When people of the ancient time needed to work or move vigorously or quickly, they took the extra cloth hanging between their legs and pulled it up to tuck into their belts (like a big diaper!). We need to be ready to move and act as well. Jesus, our Master is on the move and God's kingdom is on the move. We need to be ready to move with it! (Hebrews 12:1)

IV. Control Yourself... [references – 1 Thessalonians 5:5-8] If we are going to be ready to move with Christ and his kingdom, then we must be self-controlled. This Greek word carries the idea of being sober – not under the control of something else, but in control over one's own faculties. The control of self comes from being under the control of the Holy Spirit. It is one of those fruit of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5:22-23. As the Spirit makes the desires and expectations of God known to us, we choose to be under His control when we obey. Control in this case is not that of a puppet master who pulls the strings of a limp and soul-less piece of material. No, we are human beings, made in the image of God and wielding a will of our own. We are most under our own control when we've submitted to the Spirit's control. The key idea here is obedience to the word of the Master and Chief Shepherd. (Remember, we were chosen for obedience Jesus Christ – 1:2).

V. Where's Your Hope?

Unless our hope is set fully on the grace coming to us with our King, we will become distracted and unfocused. If we are to strip ourselves of all hindrances to action and movement, then we must set our eyes on nothing but the finish line. When we set our hopes on anything of earth – retirement accounts, the next promotion, an inheritance, the lottery, etc – we set ourselves up for disappointment and pain. What's more, when we do that, we become slaves of worldly things. When things of earth tie us down, we are no longer free to move fluidly the kingdom of God and the Master Himself. In what are you placing your hope every day? In what do you find your joy when the trials come to test your trust and faith? Let it be Jesus.

VI. Conclusion: New Hope, we are called to action and movement, but each part must be ready if we are to fulfill our calling as a people. Each part must train itself and be trained by others to have true and consistent self-control. We must constantly remind ourselves and each other what the true source of our joy and hope is. It is the reliable promise of Jesus and our Father, soon to be fulfilled. Hallelujah! Amen.