

## **A Call to Live Like a True Believer: Verses 13-25**

In this next portion of Scripture Peter will challenge his readers and us about our Christian conduct because real Christian **faith** shows up in Christian conduct.

### **Verse 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.*

Prepare our minds for action- in the original language it says “gird up your loins”. Back in Peter’s day, the men wore long robes and a large belt. When it was time for action they would tuck their robes into their belt so they would be ready for action (1 Kings 18:46; Jeremiah 1:17). In our day, it might be said “**roll up your sleeves**”, get ready to do God’s will for your life.

Sober-minded- this is not referring to just coming to church and sitting like a stone. What this is talking about is not having your spiritual eyes blurred by **sin, worry, fear**- these things distort our spiritual vision.

Our hope is in Christ- we can put our hope in many things- government, money, stuff- but we are to put our hope in Christ.

- When things go **sideways** we place our hope in Christ, He will come through.
- A believer’s hope is not a hazy desire that we wish something would come true but rather a **confident expectation** of what God has promised.

Grace that will be brought to you- this is referring to Christ’s second coming. Believers are to **look forward** to Christ’s second coming and all that it brings. The words *revelation of Jesus Christ* are the same words that are used in the opening of the book of Revelation.

### **Verse 14**

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

Three things to remember:

- 1) All believers are God’s children.
- 2) We are to be obedient. The word **obedient** describes one who not only hears but obeys.
- 3) Peter, like Paul (Romans 12:2), tells us that the old way of life will want to mold us into the way of the world but we have been called to be holy, but we cannot do that when we are **conformed** to the way we used to live.

### **Verse 15**

*but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct,*

The word *called* means that Peter’s readers are believers and our holy **conduct** is to correspond to God’s holy character.

## Verse 16

*since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."*

This is a quote from Leviticus 19:2 and 20:7. When God says this He is talking to his people that he had taken out of slavery in Egypt and is instructing them how to live holy lives and how God today is asking the **same** from His **people** today.

## Verse 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,*

Peter, in this verse, is telling us that while we live on this earth we cannot live any way **we want** to, we are to live for him because he sees the way we live and judges based on what he sees.

When we see the word *fear* we don't understand what it is saying. What it means is we want to have a **right relationship** with Him and that relationship is all about obedience.

The next two verses tell us why we should live an obedient life.

## Verses 18-19

*knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, 19but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.*

God did a great work at creation but he did a greater work when he **redeemed** us. In other words, it cost God more to **redeem** us than to **create us**.

Redeemed- is the keyword in these verses. To the Greeks, the word meant "to purchase a release by paying a ransom, or deliver by the payment of a price". It sometimes referred to buying back a prisoner of war. And the word indeed does **mean** that.

But Peter was writing to a mostly Jewish audience, with some Gentiles too. So Peter is probably referring back to the Old Testament and the first Passover when the Israelites were in bondage and in order to spare the life of the **firstborn** a lamb had to be sacrificed.

- It was a picture of an innocent substitute sacrificed to redeem those in bondage (Exodus 15:13; Deuteronomy 7:8; 2 Samuel 7:23).
- Again, that was a great redemption but the redemption Peter was talking about way **surpasses** the redemption of Israel.

Silver and gold- no amount of money can change anyone's spiritual condition. It had to be done **God's way**; not with money but by the precious blood of Christ.

### **Verse 20**

*He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you*

The verse is talking about Christ's work on the **cross** was planned before the creation of the world. It was not planned after the fall but before the creation of the world.

### **Verse 21**

*who through him are believers in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.*

Knowing God the Father only **comes** through Jesus Christ (John 5:23; 1 John 2:23) there is no other way of **salvation** except through faith in Christ.

There are two benefits:

**Faith**- makes believers able to trust God when they go through life's struggles.

**Hope**- makes believers hope (absolute confidence) of heaven a future with Christ.

### **Verses 22-25: Brotherly Love**

*Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart, 23since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; 24for*

*"All flesh is like grass*

*and all its glory like the flower of grass.*

*The grass withers,*

*and the flower falls,*

*25but the word of the Lord remains forever."*

*And this word is the good news that was preached to you.*

What Peter is talking about is at salvation we received the ability to love our **brothers** in a supernatural way (Romans 5:5).

Purified (verse 22)- we don't see this in English but the tense of this word describes a **past event** with continuing results. In other words, only believers can love others with a pure heart.

## Chapter 2 Verse 1

*So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander.*

The word **so or therefore** goes back to what Peter taught in the last chapter. Which was our salvation. How God chose us long before we chose Him and this salvation was not based on what we have done but based on who **God is**. This means that God chose us knowing our sin and how we would disappoint him. But he still loved us and called us to salvation. This is the application of that truth.

**Put away**- this word describes stripping off one's clothes because they are **filthy**.

**Malice**- is a word for wickedness or evil; describing a malevolent **attitude** toward each other.

**Deceit**- this word describes those people who are trying to **deceive** others in order to get what they want.

**Hypocrisy**- this refers to spiritual **insincerity**. In other words, people who profess allegiance to Christianity for their own profit and not for the service and glory of Christ.

**Envy**- refers to someone who **resents** others.

**Slander**- it is almost always the fruit of envy of the **heart** and usually takes place when the victim is not there.

## Verse 2

*Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation—*

In verse 1 Peter tells them to take off those negative things and in verse 2 Peter wants us to **"put on"** the following: **desiring God's Word**. Peter uses the illustration of a little baby who has come out of the womb and how that baby cries for their mother's milk.

In other words, Christians must have a **strong desire** with their whole heart for the nourishment that comes from the Word of God.

Sin in our life **destroys** the appetite for the Word of God. A healthy Christian **isn't necessarily** a person who has been a Christian for **50 years** or one who serves- those things are great. A healthy Christian is one who **longs** for the Word of God.

## Verse 3

*if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.*

Peter then alludes to Psalm 32:8. See God's kindness toward us should be the greatest **incentive** to live for him and live a pleasing life for Him.

#### Verse 4

*As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious,*

Peter changes metaphors and uses the image found in the Old Testament in Psalm 118:22 to describe Christ as well as our relationship with **Christ**.

Come to- can mean salvation but is probably referring to **constantly** coming into Christ's presence. In the Old Testament, only the **priests** could go into the presence of God. **But now** we can go into Christ's presence 24/7- 365 **for anything**. This is not a burden, no, he wants us to talk to him.

The world rejects Jesus as useless but believers agree with God that He is not **useless** but precious.

#### Verse 5

*you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*

Peter, still describing our relationship with Christ calls us:

- 1) **Living stones**- when someone believes in Christ they become a living stone united with Christ in this spiritual building but also united with other believers. Sometimes we forget that solitary Christianity is an impossibility. A brick lying by itself is useless. It only becomes of use when it is used to build a building.
  - a) When Solomon dedicated the first temple he asked God to dwell with his people, Israel. Now God **dwells within** his people, the church.
- 2) **Holy priesthood**- not only does Peter call us living stones he calls us a holy priesthood and that would mean a couple of important things we need to remember.
  - a) The priest back in the day was the only one who had **direct access** to God. We take for granted. We as believers have direct access to God, we don't need anyone to do it for us. That is a privilege we have as believers.
  - b) We have the **duty** and **privilege** to bring others to Christ. In Latin, *priest* means "bridge-builder" and that's what we are to do.
  - c) Priests are to bring sacrifices to our God like the priests would do in their temples but our sacrifices are not animals but our **hearts**, our **service**, and our **lives**- that is our sacrifice (Romans 12:1).

## Verse 6

*For it stands in Scripture:*

*“Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone,  
a cornerstone chosen and precious,  
and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”*

This is a quote from Isaiah 28:16- the **cornerstone**, which is the first stone laid in a building, makes the foundation stable and everything in that building comes off that cornerstone. It also means a new building is being built. Peter is telling that this cornerstone is **Jesus**. And anyone who places their faith in Jesus Christ will not be put to shame.

## Verses 7-8

*So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe,  
“The stone that the builders rejected  
has become the cornerstone,”*

*and*

*“A stone of stumbling,  
and a rock of offense.”*

*They stumble because they disobey the word, they were destined to do.*

Israel, for the most part, **stumbled** over their Messiah- they rejected God’s Word.

## Verse 9

*But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession,  
that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous  
light.*

What Peter does is **contrast** unbelieving Israel with his readers who have accepted Christ as their savior.

Believers are **accepted** by God. Most of us spend our lives trying to be accepted, we want to be accepted by our parents, friends, spouse, people we respect- this drive is deep within us and it will cause us to do all sorts of things. So, the first thing Peter tells us is that you have been **accepted** by God.

Peter is not saying that Israel has been **abandoned** by God. What Peter is doing is emphasizing the church’s distinction from the nations of the world as people belonging to God.

Peter is also telling us that the purpose of us being **chosen** is that we would proclaim his praises to other people. Peter goes on to tell us that the motivation for us telling others about Jesus is the fact that God has taken us out of **darkness** with no hope, no future, and brought us into God’s light with a future and great hope.

### **Verse 10**

*Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.*

Peter in verse 10 tells us of our changed **status** before God. First, he tells us that we were once **separated** from God- but now we are the people of God. Second, Peter tells us that we had not received mercy but now we have received God's mercy.

This may be an allusion to Hosea 1:10 where God is telling Israel that they have been changed from being rejected to being sons.

Something Peter is **not** saying is that the church has **replaced** Israel. What Peter is saying is the church has a special place in God's plan, but the promises God made to Israel God will see through.

One more point from this verse- Not only do we **belong** to God, but we also **belong** to each other.