



1 Peter 1:13-21 Think of all you have in Christ

Summary: Think of all you have in Christ, then be hopeful and holy.

According to press releases by YouTube, users currently upload over 500 hours of new content every minute. You heard that right, over 500 hours of new content - every minute. So, if you feel like you're overloaded by information and options and have a hard time keeping up with what's happening in the world, it's probably true - you are. And, you will never catch up or keep up.

A light blue rectangular graphic with white text. The main text reads "500+ hours of content uploaded every minute". Below it, in smaller text, it says "More than 500 hours of content are uploaded to YouTube every minute." At the bottom, there is a small URL: "https://tiny.cc/youtubegraph".

**500+ hours of content
uploaded every minute**

But, I have good news: there are things that you *can*, and *should* know, and if you think about them correctly, they will change your life. Specifically: if you think of all you have in Christ, it will lead you to hopefulness and holiness. And those are places you want go.

Peter is writing to remind Christians of their living hope in a hostile world. They're living through difficult times and Peter's response, is to point them back to things that are always true, in all places, at all times, under all circumstances and to encourage Christians to *think* on these things.

He begins his letter by telling them they have been chosen by the Father, sanctified by the Spirit, and redeemed by the blood of Christ. He tells them God is merciful - He has given them a living hope, an incorruptible, and undefiled inheritance...that does not fade away. And God is keeping them, guarding them, watching over them, *even as* they go through various trials, that grieve them, for a little while. And, he tells them, the suffering they experience is only like the refining process of putting gold into a furnace to purify it.

So *think* with me about this - Christians were going through difficult times. And Peter's response was not just to pray for them, though he certainly did that. Nor did He tell them to pray for themselves. He didn't tell them to organize and protest, though there may be a time for that. No, first and foremost, he *reminded them of what was true*, so that the truth would shape their outlook and actions.

Read with me now and look at what Peter says

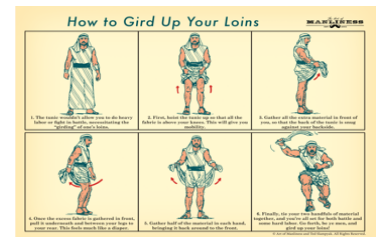
1 Peter 1:13 Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest *your* hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; 14 as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, *as in* your ignorance; 15 but as He who called you *is* holy, you also be holy in *all your* conduct, 16 because it is written, "*Be holy, for I am holy.*"

Peter is calling them, and us, to action. To change. But it's all based on what has already been done for us. And it all begins by remembering what is true. **Therefore** – in light of all the things that God has done for you – the things we've talked about for the past two weeks in the opening verse - work on your thought life and look forward to grace.

So, let's talk for a minute about our theological thought life. The problem is, most of us have grown pretty flabby in our minds. We've been trained by an unending stream of digital distractions to bounce from one dopamine hit to the next, always looking for the next exciting thing. We rarely take the time to stop and focus, to think deep, complex thoughts. We spend most of the day in reaction mode, skimming the surface of life worried that we might miss something happening over there or bored of what's happening over here because it's not as exciting as that other thing I want to do. Or, trying to keep up with the constant flood of inputs, alerts, and notifications demanding our attention.

But there are still important things that require disciplined thoughts and attention, and eternal matters fall into that category. In fact, Peter says, if you want to respond well to the hard things you're facing on earth, you need to be thinking *vigorously* about what is eternally true. He says you should **gird up the loins of your mind**.

Now, that doesn't make much sense to us today, because we dress differently than they did then back then. But the basic idea is that you would take the long bottom of your tunic and hike it up so that you had greater mobility and could work or fight without tripping on your robe. Today we would say something more like, "roll up your sleeves, and get to work."



The whole point behind the illustration is: get your mind ready for action. Think clearly. Be fully alert and present. Put down your phone and pay attention – how many times has that thing been a distraction to you, even in church? Put it down and listen. Think about these things and think deeply, not just uh-huh, yeah, I hear you. Think. Process. And let your thinking lead you to make connections and gain insight. Be rigorous in your analysis. Think until you come to conclusions and then take action, or rest, in what you know.

This is Peter's prescription for facing difficulties in life. But how do you typically respond when a trial or challenge comes your way? Do you blow up in anger or frustration? Do you pull back into your shell? Do you sit and stew? How many of us can say, we think? How many of us can say, when difficulties come, I remind myself of what is true, even in this? Jay Adams, one of the founders of the Biblical counseling movement once said, "Counseling can only begin when people stop whimpering and start thinking."

Peter says facts matter. He says there was a time when you were **ignorant** and you lived according to your **lusts**. Now, pay attention to that connection – he's saying when your thinking was wrong, your desires and actions were wrong too. Beliefs shape behaviors. Actions reveal affections. There is a connection between what you think and what you do. So, if you want to change what you do, change what you think.

Which is why Peter calls us to change, based on *what we know God has done for us*.

Therefore (again, in light of all the benefits he laid out in the opening verses, therefore) **gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ**

Take special notice of this word **rest**. As you live through difficult times, as you face challenges and trials, even trials that grieve you – as we discussed last week – you still have hope, and your hope rests **fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you**. You may feel like your whole world is falling apart, you may be completely stressed out or fearful, you may feel things crashing down around you or you may feel stuck or exposed, vulnerable to what could happen next, but Scripture tells you – rest your hope fully on grace.

God wants you to know what He *has* done, what He *is* doing, and what He *will do* for you. And He wants your knowledge of these things to change you. So, learn them, be reminded of them, think energetically and clearly about Scripture and doctrine and the character of God because biblical thinking fuels passionate hoping and gives you rest.

You're encouraged to think about these things, know what is eternally true, even in light of your temporary circumstances, and come to the conclusion that you will rest your hope in grace. And you will rest your hope **fully** on grace. Nowhere else and on nothing else.

But that's hard, isn't it? It's hard to rest your hope fully on God. Instead, we want to put our hope kind of on God and His grace, but then also in this other thing too. I trust in God and my savings. I trust in God and my planning. I trust in God and legislation.

That's not what Scripture says. It says, think about what you *know* is true **and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ**.

Let's talk about what that might look like. Relationships provide us a great example. If you are lonely, if you want someone in your life, someone to share with, that can be good. But one of the most important things you need to learn is how to be single *and content* because you have a fully formed relationship with God.

Now, God made couples. God made marriage. God probably gave you that desire to be with someone else. But if you look to the other person to be your savior, if you look to them to complete you, if you look to the other person to give you something to do when you're bored, or take care of you when you have desires, or be there for you whenever you have a need – that can get tiring. You're asking the other person to carry all of your baggage and meet all your needs.

Meanwhile, Jesus says, if you have needs and baggage bring them to Me. Let Me deal with them. And once you're free and full in Me, then go enjoy that other person. And when you start to feel empty or burdened again, don't take it to the other person, bring it all right

back to Me. Rest your hope fully on Me. Don't ask other people to carry weights they were never meant to hold.

Well, that principle plays out in countless other ways. For example, professionally, you should work hard, be diligent, but don't rest your hope in your company or your boss, or your plan, [rest your hope fully on God](#). And when it comes to your money, manage your finances well, but also be generous, because you're not placing your hope fully on the market, you're [resting your hope fully on God and His grace](#).

If you start with God as your foundation, you can move out in many directions from there, but you if you ask other things or other people to provide a foundation for you to rest your hope on, sooner or later you will be disappointed.

So, when you feel anxious, or angry, or needy about the things that are happening in your life, *remember* all that you have, personally, directly, through your relationship with God. Think! [be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ](#) and you'll notice that your conscious, clear, thinking and your persistent choice to hope in God, will begin to produce change and holiness in your life. Look with me at

[1 Peter 1:15](#) but as He who called you *is* holy, you also be holy in all *your* conduct, [16](#) because it is written, "*Be holy, for I am holy.*"

In other words, in light of all you've been given in Christ, learn to repattern your life. Begin to live differently because of what you've been brought into.

Imagine you applied to a good school or challenging program and you learn you've been accepted. How do you spend the time waiting for your first class to start? Do you blow off all your studies and just have as much fun as you can? You might. But you're going to feel pretty anxious walking into the first day of classes. Or, you could try to get some additional study in before classes start so you've got a running start.

Or imagine you've made a good team, but the season doesn't start for a few weeks or months. Do you go on a binge and eat whatever you want, take some time off from the gym since you know you're going to be hitting it hard pretty soon in practice anyway? Well, again, you might. But not if you're really concerned about playing well.

In both cases you've been accepted – into the program or onto the team, but in both cases, the wisest thing to do is start acting now in light of what will be happening soon. Keep studying, keep learning until your classes begin. Keep an eye on your nutrition, your strength, your skills, until practices begin. Live your life now in light of what you know lies ahead.

Image a couple that has gotten engaged. They're not married yet, but what lies ahead has a huge influence on how they're living now – they talk about it, plan for it, they buy things for

it, even though it's weeks or months off - the promise of what's to come shapes the way they live today.

Well, Scripture says there is a coming marriage between Christ and His church. And we should be living right now in light of what we know will happen then.

The student accepted into a school or program sees herself in light of her acceptance, maybe she even puts a bumper sticker on her car – she hasn't been to a single class, but she sees herself differently. The guy who made the team starts wearing a shirt or hoodie with the team logo. He hasn't been to a single practice yet, but he still sees himself differently. The bride-to-be begins asking herself new questions, and acting in new ways, even though she doesn't have a dress.

So too, Christians should begin acting differently here and now *in light of what God has done for us*. We should **be holy because He is holy**.

But I wonder, do you take this command seriously? Or, do you find ways to fudge it? To round the sharp edges off a bit? To generalize and explain away? Do you feel the full force of the God's command to *"Be holy, for I am holy."*

Because here's what I know: I know you feel the pressure to conform to the things of the world. I know you feel the pressure to be like, look like, act and talk like, the people in your neighborhood, or in your class or on your team. I know you feel the pressure to think like this world. To value the things this world values. I know you feel the pressure to conform and not stick out.

But God is calling you to be different. He's calling you to **be holy**. He's calling you to re-pattern your life. And that's going to lead to some awkward moments. That's going to mean there are things you won't be a part of, things you'll excuse yourself from. Things you'll miss out on because you look at life differently now. You think differently.

Once you were ignorant and so you followed your lusts, your desires, but now you live by the doctrines you have learned. You're driven by what God requires instead of what your flesh desires. Truth is producing hope and hope is leading you to godliness.

Peter continues to press on this idea as we read further – notice the connection he makes between what God has done, how we should think, and how we should live. Notice how thinking of all we have been given leads us to hopefulness and holiness:

17 And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay *here* in fear; **18** **knowing** that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, *like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers,* **19** but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. **20** He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in

these last times for you 21 who through Him **believe** in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

Do you see the connection? **If you call on the Father**, if you believe these things, then trust in Him, put your faith and hope in Him, and let that change you.

And, understand, there will be a judgment for everyone who is not changed. This is something good for us to be reminded of occasionally because the truth is: we spend a lot more time thinking about the thoughts, actions, and attitudes of other people than we do about God and eternity. But God says very clearly, there will be a judgment for every person that has ever lived, and at that judgment we will be evaluated on everything we've ever done, said, or thought.

It is a strict judgment. It is a severe judgment. It is an entirely just judgment. And you don't want to face it. Because we've all done, said, or thought things worthy of condemnation.

In fact, this judgment is so thorough, rigorous, and exact, that you can't pay your way out of it. When God wanted to redeem you from it, the only option was to send His own Son to offer up His perfection in your place.

Think about that. If God's plan of salvation included the death of Christ on the cross – what does that say about the depth of our sin? Jesus even prayed, if there is any other way, let's go with that. But there wasn't. So, again, if the only way for you and I to be forgiven and saved is for Jesus to suffer for us, what does that say about the weight of our sin?

Now, I'll tell you your first reaction – you probably respond by saying, "It didn't have to be like that." You probably react by trying to think of a way out of it, or around it, some other course that God could have taken, or by playing down your sin like it's not that bad, it's not that big a deal. But God says it is. Scripture says

18... you were not redeemed with corruptible things, *like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers,* 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

Your sin really is that bad. But flip this over and realize what it also means about the depth of God's love: this was the only way, *and He chose it*. He took it. Willfully. Joyfully.

The book of Hebrews tells us:

Hebrews 12:2 Jesus, [is] the author and finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

If you *think* about what God has done, if you *think* about what your redemption cost, you will begin to appreciate both the depth of your sin and the depth of God's love. He was willing to go that far for you, because He had to go that far for you.

But again, your first impulse is probably to resist that. You can't stand for that to be true, you don't think you're that bad, or you don't think it's right, you don't think it's fair – and yet there it is in Scripture. Tim Keller famously summarized it like this: "The gospel says you are more sinful and flawed than you ever dared to believe, but simultaneously more accepted and loved than you ever dared to hope."

So, you have to decide – who or what is going to govern your thoughts? Are you going to [gird up the loins of your mind](#), are you going to be [sober](#), or are you going to drift along on your own desires and the things that feel good and make sense to you? Remember, these things were written to Christians, to the church.

Scripture says this is who God is, this is what He has done for you. This is God's prescription for how to survive difficult times in your life, by thinking of all He has done for you.

And, this is God's prescription for change, for hope leading to holiness, which means change is possible. You're not stuck! Because if you have been redeemed [with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot](#). If that is true, what exactly is it that you think is holding you back? What exactly do you think God can't or won't fix, heal, or forgive?

Now look, it might not be easy, it might not be quick, but if you will THINK about these things you realize it must be true – there is nothing good that He can not or will not do for, with, and through you as you come closer and closer to Him – as you seek to honor the command to [be holy because He is holy](#). Your weakness, stains, and shame cannot be stronger than his precious, holy blood and infinite perfect love. Think about it.

And let it change you.

We started with the encouragement to [gird up the loins of your mind](#) and we end with a reference to Christ as the lamb that was sacrificed for us.

There's a connection there to the very first Passover and it's worth considering as we prepare ourselves to receive communion.

Many, many, years ago the people of Israel were held as slaves in Egypt. God raised up Moses to lead them into freedom. But pharaoh, the ruler of Egypt, was not willing to let them go. He knew what God said, but he insisted on his own way. God first responded by sending Moses to perform a few miraculous signs. Pharaoh wasn't impressed. So, God began to send plagues that grew progressively worse. Pharaoh continued to resist. And so, finally, God announced the tenth the plague – the first born of every human family and every animal in the land of Egypt would die in one night. Unless.

Unless, you took a lamb, killed it, and wiped the blood over the doorposts of your house. When God sent His angel to execute the judgment, he would pass over any house already

marked with blood. Inside the house, families should gather and eat a meal, including the lamb they had slain. God told Moses to tell the people:

Exodus 12:11 'Now you shall eat it in this manner: *with your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it in haste—it is the LORD'S Passover.*

You shall eat the lamb, whose blood was shed for you as the LORD's Passover, with your loins girded, ready to go. Because God knew, this was going to be the thing that led Pharaoh to finally set the people free.

So today, we **gird up the loins of our mind**, we think clearly and distinctly about the way Jesus is our Passover lamb, we are saved by His body and blood.

The blood of the Passover lamb in Egypt ran down the wooden door posts and people were saved. The blood of the Passover lamb on Calvary ran down the wooden post of the cross and we were saved.

They were to eat the Passover and be ready to get moving. We should receive these symbols of the perfected Passover and be ready to get moving.

What does God want to do in your life in light of the things you've learned today? How does He want to clarify your thinking and reactions? What does He want to reframe, or repattern? How does He want to reorient you as you think about what all of this means?

Here's what I believe – I believe God is pressing in on your soul. I believe He has made some things stand out clearly to you this morning, there are some things you need to think about, chew on, and act on. You need to *think* of all that is offered to you in Christ, think about everything that is true, and let that lead you to **rest your hope fully in God**, and towards increasing holiness. I've been praying all week that would happen, and I have confidence in Christ, that it is right now. Because He says it is. His Word and His Spirit are shaping you, piercing you, speaking to you, giving you things to think about.

So let's pray and then take some time to respond and when you're ready, come forward and receive physical reminders of the body and the precious blood of Jesus Christ that redeem you. Come up here and act out, physically, the greatest transaction of all time – you give God, your weakness, your addiction, your shame, your anxiety, whatever your flavor of brokenness is, and receive His promise and perfection in exchange.

When you've thought about, when you're clear on it, you come up and make your declaration, this is true, and it's the foundation of your life. And then, just like the original Passover, we'll share this miniature, but miraculous, meal together.

Let's pray.

And now, let's go. If the Son has set you free, you are free indeed. The first Passover led the Israelites out of captivity. God is setting you free this morning too. What will you do with your freedom, where will you go? Think about it, rest your hope in Him, and grow in holiness.