

Studies in I Peter (17)

The Responsibility of Salvation

Introduction

- A. The Christian has an unusual perspective in regard to time and life. We are told that this life is but a prelude for eternity and that we live here as strangers and sojourners.
- B. Such a truth enables the Christian to evaluate life correctly. We are kept from putting our roots down too deeply and we can learn to be patient in times of trial. How we live becomes far more important than what happens to us.

I. The Grace of God in the Believer's Salvation, I Peter 1:3-2:10.

- A. The description of salvation, Vs 3-5 (Lesson # 11)
- B. The joy of salvation, Vs 6-9 (Lesson # 12)
- C. The greatness of salvation, Vs 10-12 (Lesson # 13)
- D. The responsibility of salvation, Vs 1:13-2:3
 - 1. The responsibility of dedication, V 13 (Lesson # 14)
 - 2. The responsibility of holiness, Vs 14,15 (Lesson # 15)
 - 3. The Biblical reasons for obeying God, Vs 16-21
 - a. Because of divine revelation, V 16 (Lesson # 16)
 - b. Because of personal accountability, V 17.

And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons, judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear.

1) The basis of our accountability: "And if ye call on the Father"

a) The Christian is one who can and does call God "Father."

- (1) The truth indicates a reversal of relationships: we once could only call God "Judge" (Heb. 12:23), and Satan was our Father, (John 8:44). That is the condition of all non-believers.
- (2) The foundation of this relationship is in His loving choice, V 2.
- (3) The provision for this relationship is His redemptive grace, V 3.

b) The Christian is one who can and does pray.

One of the evidences of divine sonship is found in prayer. The true believer has no difficulty coming to the Creator of all things, to the one Who is all-powerful -- and presenting humble requests.

c) The Christian is one who has a relationship with God extending to all of life.

Our Father is in sovereign control of all areas of life and has made a provision that covers all of those areas for us. He is our Father, not only in church, but in every facet of our life. The believer is never the victim of circumstances.

Because God is our Father, and He loves us, we are accountable to Him for how we live. We are glad to accept our obligation because our Father has given us every good. Because we love Him and are grateful to Him being responsible to Him is one way we can say "Thank You."

- 2) The character of our accountability: "... who without respect of persons."

Because God is holy He is perfectly just and righteous. This means that when we will stand before Him - we will be evaluated on the basis of truth.

Because he (God) hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness Acts 17:31

In our present world life appears to be unjust. The ungodly prosper. Too often the criminal is protected - and truth when it cries out -- is not heard. We have all suffered in situations of unfairness, inequality, favoritism, and prejudice.

The Bible reminds us that this situation is temporary. There is a day coming in which the truth will be known and wrongs will be made right. God will judge the world in righteousness. As believers we look forward to that time -- although we know it will be a time of searching for each of us.

- 3) The standard of our accountability: " ... judgeth according to every man's work."

Every person, believer as well as unbeliever, will give an account to God on the basis of how life has been lived. By judging according to works -- the true belief and character of an individual will be known. As believers this does not mean we gain or lose Heaven by our works. Peter is here talking about our reward -- or loss.

For we (believers) shall all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. II Corinthians 5:20

And, behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. Revelation 22:12

- 4) The exhortation related to our accountability: "... pass the time of your sojourning here in fear."

The word "fear" can be translated "reverence." To "fear God" is more than a feeling. It is rooted in a Biblical understanding of Who God is with particular recognition of His wisdom, power, truth, love, and holiness. Such reverence or fear is a holy dread of displeasing God. It is a respect for truth and righteousness.

The source of "the fear of the Lord" is intimately related to love. When you love a person you are careful not to offend them. It is not a matter of being "afraid" of them -- but it is a desire to please them -- and to live in harmony with them.

Far too many of us make daily decisions -- solely on the basis of our selfish interests -- without caring about God. We may not live this way.

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