

### **Spiritual Growth Through Understanding Dedication**

**I Peter 1:13**

#### **Introduction**

- A. Peter's emphasis, in the first part of this epistle, is on the meaning of God's grace as seen in the believer's salvation.
- B. He knew an understanding of this theme would not only comfort the persecuted readers, but give them the key as to how to live the Christian life.

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

- A. The description of salvation, Vs 3-5.
- B. The joy of salvation, Vs 6-9.
- C. The greatness of salvation, Vs 10-12.
- D. The responsibility of salvation, Vs 13-2:3.

1. The responsibility of dedication, V13.

*Wherefore, gird up the loins of your mind* (prepare your mind for action), *be sober* (be self-controlled), *and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ* (set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed).

- a. The Biblical basis for dedication -- "Wherefore."

By the use of this word we are reminded by God as to why we should dedicate ourselves to Him to live according to His will.

1. Because of the greatness of God (1:2,3,4,5,7).

We are taught God's greatness through His wisdom and power which are revealed in the mighty acts of love such as of election, redemption, preservation, providence, and sovereignty. We see by this that dedication is an act of worship. It must also be said that the Christian who has not surrendered himself to God to do His will does not understand Who God is.

2. Because of the goodness of God (1:1-12).

Every subject we have studied in this epistle is a testimony to divine goodness. Because of our sinfulness there is no way that we can work for or merit the gifts of God. In His lovingkindness God has made every provision for the repentant and believing sinner in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ as our substitute. Every good, in your life and mine, is due to God's goodness.

b. The Biblical explanation of dedication -- "gird up ..."

1. The illustration: "Gird up the loins of your mind."

By use of this idiom, taken from the way the oriental would bind his robes into his belt as preparation for work, Peter points out some major truths regarding dedication. He tells us that we are "to make up our minds." The emphasis is placed on four areas.

- a. It is a personal act -- every believer must make this surrender to God for himself.
- b. It is a choice -- which extends to every area of life -- priorities, goals, pleasures, etc.
- c. It is an act of obedience -- the only Biblical response a believer can make. Any other option would involve one in disobedience.
- d. It is an expression of faith -- as a choice to obey God in dependence upon Him for enablement.

2. The content: ". . . your mind."

Dedication has to do with the mind because it is the practice of the Bible. We can only know the Word by way of our mind. Too often we respond on the basis of our emotions and therefore fail to honor God -- in that we lack the emotional desire. We must learn not to give in to our emotions or we will never be able to live the Christian life.

We must learn to "take charge" of our mind, body, emotions, and life. We must distinguish between truth and error, reject the false, choose the truth, and live accordingly. Many Christians are victimized by their thought life.

c. The Biblical characteristic of dedication -- "be sober."

The word "sober" means "self-controlled." This is an indication of how the Holy Spirit teaches the believer who has dedicated himself to God (Gal. 5:23). The emphasis is on choosing to live according to truth in spite of the pressure and temptations to sin. Paul spoke of this truth in regard to his body (I Cor. 9:27).

d. The Biblical content of dedication -- "hope . . ."

The word "hope" in the Bible does not refer to that which is doubtful, but that which is certain, although it is yet future. That is why the coming of Jesus Christ is referred to as the "Blessed Hope" in Titus 2:13. By use of this word we are told by God to live now (by faith) in harmony with, and expecting the grace that will be ours when Jesus Christ comes back again. We are to live as the citizens of heaven that we are.

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