

Resting In Him

1 Peter 1:13-14

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. (1 Peter 1:13-14 (NKJV))

Our worship text for today begins with the word “therefore” and as we know from all the many other times we have read this word, it is intended to point our attention back to some words that were given in preceding verses; in this case, the words that tell us that from the beginning of creation the plan of God for man has been that the salvation of our souls would come to us “by grace through faith” in the shed blood of God’s dear Son, the Lord Jesus.

And again, although obedience to the Holy laws of God is essential to our relationship with Him, our salvation cannot come through that obedience, but it must come instead through the surrender of our souls to His Son and through our dependence upon His obedience to be our obedience. And yes, I realize that those truths are mystical and difficult to comprehend. But though we can’t fully understand them, by faith through grace, God’s Holy Spirit can and will make those truths effectual for the salvation of our souls.

And again, as we were reminded in these preceding verses, it has always been through “grace” that our salvation comes to us. And it has always been through Jesus that grace comes. As we read in verses 10 and 11,

10 Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours (and ours) searched and inquired carefully, 11 inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. (1 Peter 1:10-11)

Again, may I give these words the strong emphasis they deserve? Here, we are told plainly that before the Lord Jesus came to be born on this earth, He was, as our forever-existing God, visiting within the hearts and minds of men, giving them direction and instructions, here spoken of as indwelling the mind of His appointed prophets, Moses, David, Isaiah and all the many others, putting words into their minds to write down for the purpose of giving them to all those who would put their trust in Him.

Nothing in this precious Book of the Bible is from the minds of men, but from the very Spirit of Christ Himself! And here, through the mind and the pen of the Apostle Peter it is the same; we read these instructions given from the Spirit of Christ in him,

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. (1 Peter 1:13-16 (NKJV))

These words folks are an urgent call battle. Recall from the words we studied recently in the Book of Ephesians, you and I, and all who put their faith and trust in Christ are not only sons and daughters of God, we are also “soldiers of the cross” marching forward with the truths of God, living them out in our own lives and then giving them out to anyone and everyone else who will listen and hear.

And because we have been so privileged to be chosen of God to hear and to know these special truths about Christ and about His designs for the salvation of men’s souls, we must quickly get about passing them along to others.

Listen to how the bible scholar, Matthew Henry describes this “call to battle”. He tells us,

"Wherefore, since you are so honored and distinguished, (to know these special truths from God) Gird up the loins of your mind. You have a journey to go on, a race to run, a warfare to accomplish, and a great work to do; as the traveler, the racer, the warrior, and the laborer, gather in, and gird up, their long and loose garments, that they may be more ready, prompt, and expeditious in their business, so do you by your minds, your inner man, and affections seated there: gird them, gather them in, let them not hang loose and neglected about you; restrain their extravagances, and let the loins, the strength and vigor of your minds be exerted in your duty; disengage yourselves from all that would hinder you, and go on resolutely in your obedience.

And these words again in verse 13,

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. (1 Peter 1:13)

God is so gracious to give us imagery to help our callused minds to understand His message. Here, the Spirit of Christ in the Apostle Peter relates the encumbrances that take place within our minds to the dysfunctional clothing that we garb ourselves with each day. All we have to do is look around us at the corrupt fascination we have with

our clothing. It is no longer functional! It is fashion and it is dysfunctional! And so too are the encumbrances that that we allow to beset our minds, so much so that we cannot “be about our Father’s business”.

Here, we are told to put aside all those encumbrances, to gird up the loins of our mind, and as the writer to the Hebrews worded it,

1 . . . let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. (Hebrews 12:1-2 (ESV))

Folks, a good soldier must be well disciplined. His life and the life of his fellow soldiers depend upon the manner that he disciplines himself. In this “call to battle”, we must get very serious about the duties that lie in front of us.

And here, we are being told that it is our “mind” that is in most need of discipline. Yes, we have other elements within our being that we must be concerned about, the heart, the soul, the spirit. Some word it, “the mind, the will, and the emotion”. But here, we are told to begin with the discipline of our mind.

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In Romans 12, concerning the mind, we read,

1 Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. (Romans 12:1-2 (NASB))

For all those many years before we received Christ and were saved, we were ignorantly filling our minds with all the false beliefs and cares of this world. The world and its ways were all that we knew, and for the most part, we really did love it, so much so that here in verse 14 we are told that our desires for those things of the world were “lusts”. And we conformed ourselves to our “lusts” for them and for their ways and their beliefs.

Here, and also in the words of Romans 12, God is telling you and me to “get the thoughts and the intents of our mind” under control, to reach down and pick up those

flowing robes of thoughts and beliefs of our former lusts, to tuck them into our waistband and begin to press forward with the battle.

Catch the intent of this imagery, please! All those many, many thoughts and cares and beliefs of our former lusts dangle all around us, encumbering us, causing us to trip and to stumble. We must get them under the control of the Holy Spirit within us, tuck them into the waistband of our faith and hope and put our minds on the business that is at hand.

And here, God gives emphasis with the word “sober”. This word “sober” has many implications, meanings, and possibilities. As Matthew Henry, words it,

Be sober, be vigilant against all your spiritual dangers and enemies, and be temperate and modest in eating, drinking, apparel, recreation, business, and in the whole of your behavior.

May I warn us that everything that we put into our mind does have some influence upon it! As these last few words of Matthew Henry exhort,

Be sober-minded in opinion, as well as in practice, and humble in your judgment of yourselves."

Whether we are listening to the commentators on a secular news program or we are listening to a preacher preach a sermon, we must be careful in our handling of their words and careful in the opinions that we develop from hearing them. All those things people say develop and form our “worldview”. And it is out of our worldview that flow our behaviors and conduct. And it is there that we most need to “gird up the loins of our mind”, to tuck those beliefs and opinions under the waistband, the “belt of truth” of the wisdom of God. We are not to let them dangle and get in the way as we get about the battle before us.

But notice the next word that God gives to us here in this passage, “rest”.

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;
(1 Peter 1:13 (NKJV))

Yes, this is a clearly given call to battle, a pressing forward, but then God suddenly inserts the word “rest”. Some might say that this instruction from the Lord is simply to “rest our hope fully upon the grace of God”. And that would be exactly right. But the word “rest” also has its own implication and intent.

Here, we have just “girded up the loins of our mind” with a focused intent upon battle and then God says to us, “before you go out there to fight the battle that you must fight, first come to me, sit down in front of me and rest. Rest! Yes, you must be sober minded, with your thought and behaviors focused upon the battle in front of you, but listen! The battle is mine! I am ever and always the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end of all that takes place on the earth. The battle will involve you, but it is mine. I have it completely in hand.

Folks, as we grab up our weapons of “spiritual warfare” to go rushing into the battle, we must be ever so careful that we first stop and rest our hope in the grace that is given to us in Christ. It is in Him and Him alone that we must rest. We must not fear! He is our shield, our strength and our protector. Listen to these words from Isaiah 43,

1 . . . thus says the LORD . . . "Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are Mine! 2 "When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; And through the rivers, they will not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be scorched, Nor will the flame burn you. 3 "For I am the LORD your God, The Holy One of Israel, your Savior; (Isaiah 43:1-3 (NASB)

When I read words such as these, my mind goes to the many battles that King David fought. Folks, David personally fought against and killed many hundreds and hundreds, even thousands of men, without a record of even one serious wound. How can that happen? How can a man stand firm in a pitched battle, wielding his sword, striking down one enemy after another, but himself not being struck down. It is an impossible feat, but it is a truth. And it is only the hidden protections of God that could have kept him from harm.

God is assuring us that we too can have that same hope and assurance if we will rest our hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to us at the revelation of Jesus Christ, a revelation that is not intended to be just at the end of days when Christ will burst through the clouds and carry us away into paradise, but a revelation that can be ours within the ordinary conduct of the daily affairs of life; because that is where your and my battle is fought, in all the many ordinary affairs of daily life.

Again, this is very purposeful imagery! We have just girded up the loins of our mind, we have just put on the full armor of God and we are ready to go out and to do battle in all those ordinary affairs of daily life, but God says to us, “Wait just a moment! First, sit here at my feet and rest in me before you go out there.” Matthew 11,

28 "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. 29 "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart,

and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. 30 "For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." (Matthew 11:28-30 (NASB))

One last thought before we close . . . the sisters Mary and Martha, sisters of Lazarus whom Jesus raised from the dead, were contrasted there in Luke chapter 10, in the manner in which they went about the matters of their daily life. Martha was a "busy" person, getting about the needful things of the day, cooking and such. Mary on the other hand, sat at the feet of Jesus learning of Him and loving Him. Listen to that account!

38 Now as they were traveling along, He entered a village; and a woman named Martha welcomed Him into her home. 39 She had a sister called Mary, who was seated at the Lord's feet, listening to His word. 40 But Martha was distracted with all her preparations; and she came up to Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to do all the serving alone? Then tell her to help me." 41 But the Lord answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things; 42 but only one thing is necessary, for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her."
(Luke 10:38-42 (NASB))

This is God's intent for you and me as we get about the battle that is in front of us each day. Yes, we are to ready ourselves by putting on the full armor of God, and by girding up the loins of our mind. But then before we go out into the fray, we must stop and sit at Jesus' feet and learn of Him and rest in the hope that He will reveal to us. Praise the Lord!

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