

(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. As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as He who called you is holy you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, “You shall be holy as I am holy.”

(17) And if you call on Him as Father who judges impartially according to each one’s deeds, conduct yourself with fear throughout the time of your exile, knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

(20) He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you 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.

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

(24) For, “All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, but the Word of the Lord remains forever.” And this word is the good news that was preached to you.

Think on these things:

- 1) The Greek for “sober minded” (v. 13) literally means “not drunk or intoxicated.” It carries the meaning of being alert, watchful, and vigilant (think of a sentry). See also 1 Thessalonians 5:6, where sleep, alertness and this Greek word are used again. Add to this the first phrase, “prepare your minds for action,” and you have guidance on how saving faith should impact living today. What are we commanded to focus on with Jesus’ return, i.e., the revelation of Jesus Christ? Is this to be passive or active waiting?

We are commanded to set our hope firmly on the “grace” which God will show us upon Jesus’ return. Confidence in His willingness to forgive and accept us sustains us through these tough days! It’s not a passive waiting. We are to prepare our “minds” for action, much like sentries serving guard duty. Be alert! Be prepared to act! Know what to say or do, when --- and do it!

- 2) V. 16 seems to be an impossible command: be holy like God is holy!
 - a. V. 14 says holiness begins with...? **Obedience to God**
 - b. V. 14 also says to NOT conform to what? **Our pre-saved ways of thinking and choices**
 - c. What “past” (your former ignorance) ungodly “passions” have you escaped from by becoming a Christian? Consider 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 and Galatians 5:18-24.

This is an honesty, confessional question which folks may not be willing to disclose. 1 Corinthians is about behaviors, while Galatians is mostly about drives and motives. The key is that salvation must bring changes to all of us, and these things of our pasts must be dealt with and put into the past for good. We must be “born again” to NEW lives.

- d. Explain what holiness means to you? **Look for Christlikeness, purity, and obedience among the responses. These will be personal applications. Also, we can't be perfect, but we can have proper (pure) motives to act and think correctly.**
 - e. Is holiness only a church life matter (v. 15)? **No, be holy in ALL your behaviors (in life).**
- 3) God our Heavenly Father judges everyone impartially (no favoritism). How should Christians live their lives here on earth until they get to go to heaven (v. 17b)?

We are to live in this world influenced by our reverential fear (awe) of God, living as "exiles" (pilgrims) in the cultures. Our true citizenship is in heaven! (Philippians 3:20)

- 4) Ephesians 2:8-10 says that God prepared "good works" for each of His children to do after being saved. Christians will not face the Great White Throne Judgment of Revelation 20 because they will have been saved by their faith already (the Rapture). But Christians will still be called into a judgment of speech and works (Matthew 12:36-37 and 1 Corinthians 3:10-15). What is "at risk" for a disobedient Christian lacking self-control?

"How" our speech and good works as Christians on earth build on the saving foundation of Jesus Christ will be judged by God and result in heavenly "rewards" --- or the loss of rewards! We can also "barely" be saved, being redeemed and going to heaven, but with our life's work worth no eternal rewards after God's scrutiny (1 Corinthians 3:15).

- 5) How are Christians "ransomed" from the futile ways of our sinful world and lives (v. 19)? Why do you think God believes this to be more expensive than money (silver and gold)? What does being ransomed mean to you?

We have been redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus, dying upon the cross for mankind's sin as a Lamb without blemish. It was a high cost to God the Father to sacrifice His own Son, but He did it for us out of love. God has paid the price I could not to "buy me back" from sin.

- 6) What does "foreknown before the foundation of the world" mean as applied to Jesus? When we believe that Jesus rose from the dead, who are putting our faith and hope in (v. 21)? **God**

Before the earth was created, the fall of mankind was foreknown to God. Jesus was chosen for the restoring act of redemption, doing what men and women could not do for themselves.

- 7) What are we commanded to do "since we have been born again" (v. 22-23)? Do you have any suggestions for how we can do this?

We are commanded to love one another in the church from a pure heart and in a family way (brotherly love)! We can ask ourselves, "Would I say or do this to help my brother, sister or parents?" --- and, if yes, then assist or help people in our church who really need the support.

- 8) How reliable and lasting is the Word of God?

The Word of the Lord remains forever! It is the compass for a Christian's life (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

People and situations I want to pray for this week: