

Clear Headed Hope. 1 Peter 1:10-21

Hope

In life we are directed by what we hope for.

We hope for a good job, and so we pursue study

We hope to own a home, and so we save

We hope, say, to play AFL, and so follow a routine of strenuous exercise and training

We get to a certain age and start to hope for health, and so we make changes to our diet and routines to incorporate exercise

There can be lots of things we hope for – travel, a job, a career, a relationship

And sometimes our hopes can compete with each other – pursuing a relationship may mean not accepting that interstate transfer, wanting a home may mean forgoing that international travel

And sometimes our hopes can fail – we get that career ending injury, we lose our job and then our home, the person we thought we would grow old with leaves us

We know that, that we can hope and be disappointed and

So we can get anxious if someone, our friend, or our child, seems to be pinning all their hopes on just one thing – entry into that particular course, getting that dream job, that person liking them

At the heart of our passage today is a command to hope, a command to have all our hope in just the one thing

*1 Peter 1:¹³ Therefore, with your minds ready for action, be sober-minded and **set your hope completely, fully, on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.***

That is the big idea, the command God wants each of us to grapple with in this passage this morning. It comes with back up, surrounded by verses that show us what a life of hope looks like and tells us why we can have confidence do what is commanded, what might at first seem unwise

Putting all our hope in one thing

So this morning – four questions

what does it mean to set your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ? What is actually being commanded?

What does that look like - how does that express itself concretely in our lives?

And why? Why do what our experience of a world full of change and chance suggests is unwise, risky. If you are you might want to listen up there and think about whether the Christian God is the God you can put all your hope in, who is worthy of putting all your hope in.

And then a final question for believers, a time to reflect and ask am I setting my hope fully on the grace to be brought to me at the revelation of Jesus Christ, and does my life show that?

1 Peter 1:¹³ Therefore, with your minds ready for action, be sober-minded and set your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

The Hope Commanded v. 13

So what is Peter asking you to do when he commands you to set your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ

For a start what are we hoping for?

It is the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ, that comes to us with the Lord Jesus being revealed in glory at the last day.

By this grace Peter is speaking of the full experience of God's kindness to us in Christ, enjoyed without dilution or difficulty.

This grace brings with it all that God has promised believers in Jesus

What Peter has already talked about in verses 1-10

1 Peter 1:³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Because of his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead⁴ and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you.

The inheritance we have been promised – imperishable, undefiled, unfading; already prepared, and kept securely for us in heaven

Salvation – rising with Christ to the new heaven and earth in bodies that will never die, living with God without pain or mourning or tears

The praise, glory and honour of being included then in Jesus' people by faith.

Being able to enjoy what Paul calls the immeasurable riches of God's grace in His kindness to us in Jesus for age upon age

There is nothing like this on this earth – where all is marred by sin and death

Where our bodies are dying from the day we are born

Where what we love we lose

Where our selfishness and sin can defile our purest joys

Where our best pleasures fade

Peter has already talked of this grace, of this wonderful hope

So what is new here is the call to set our hope completely, fully, altogether on this grace coming to us at the revelation of Christ

He is telling us to put All our eggs in the one basket

To Live our lives without a plan B

No other hope is to guide our path through life

Peter is calling us to Set off on a journey to the fulness of what God has promised with no thought of turning back or turning aside

A bit Like someone who is Fed up with lockdowns and is determined to move to Qld, whose sold everything here and have loaded it all in the car and told the boss what they think of their job before they go

Or Like Moses and the Israelites leaving Egypt for the promised land

Where there is to be no looking over the shoulder at what you have left behind

It's Realise the hope, or perish in the desert

And this is a hope which by definition can't be realised on this earth, for it is realised only when Jesus returns

So this hope Directs our whole life, throughout our lives, right to the end of our lives, for it can only be realised at the end

He is calling believers to embrace the ultimate in deferred gratification

So you would need to be sure, wouldn't you – sure of the destination to keep travelling guided by this hope.

For not only can it not be realized to the end – our commitment to that hope will be challenged,

set your hope completely, fully, on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

That the big idea, what is commanded believers in Jesus

And you might be thinking - I get it

All my hope – is in what God has promised us

But is setting your hope fully on the grace to come something that just happens in my head, an attitude?

Or does it have a more concrete expression?

What does it look like for us to set our hope fully on the grace coming to us at the revelation of Jesus?

Peter tells us

It means living different lives.

*1 Peter 1: ¹⁴As obedient children, do not be conformed to the desires of your former ignorance. ¹⁵But as the one who called you is holy, you also are to be holy in all your conduct; ¹⁶for it is written, **Be holy, because I am holy.** ¹⁷If you appeal to the Father who judges impartially according to each one's work, you are to conduct yourselves in reverence during your time living as strangers. ¹⁸For you know that you were redeemed from your empty way of life inherited from your ancestors, not with perishable things like silver or gold,*

What that looks like – the good life of hope vv. 14-18

Living with our hope fully on what is to come means a life where we have said goodbye to the old ways of living, and hello to living each day conscious that you call the living holy God your Father and you live in His presence. Peter speaks of that change in two ways

Firstly – it is having your life no longer directed by, shaped by, conformed to, *the desires of your former ignorance.* ¹⁵

Just a phrase, but Peter has nailed what directs most modern people

Feelings, desires

Thinking about the changes that are taking place in our understanding of sexuality and gender Carl Trueman observes that there has been a key change in the way we think of ourselves.

Modern people look within, they now prioritize ‘feelings’ and ‘intuitions’ “for our sense of who we are and what the purpose of our lives is.” P. 23

If it feels right – do it;

if it feels right – be it.

We are directed by our desires at the core of our being

Whether that desire is for power, or pleasure, or to be who we think we are – it is desire that leads us, and we are increasingly taught that is a good thing, the authentic life – even if it leaves our lives in chaos and disrupts our relationships.

But these desires and the sway they hold over our lives believers now realise are expressions of our ignorance – our ignorance of the living God, the ignorance that comes from putting our trust in things that are not God

Whether that is our reason, or our intuitions, or power, or other created gods

Whatever we were trusting, and however intelligent and qualified – we were ignorant of the true God

Of His being, of His rule, of His goodness

Of the fact that He is the source of meaning, not ourselves

But now we are believers, have become children of God through faith in Jesus

We are instead to be shaped by the truth of our God, the true and living God

¹⁵ *But as the one who called you is holy, you also are to be holy in all your conduct;* ¹⁶ *for it is written, **Be holy, because I am holy.***

Peter quotes from Leviticus 19:2.

Where God said that if He were to live amongst His OT people, they had to become holy for He is the holy God.

Peter quotes Leviticus because like Israel, believers in Jesus live in the presence of our God through His Spirit, and are journeying towards a fuller presence

So we are to conform our lives to His reality, the reality of His holiness

God is holy – that is, God declares that He is separate from all created beings, separate from their finitude, frailty and fallenness

We are mortal – He has life in Himself

We are limited in power and space and time – He is almighty, omnipresent, eternal

We are ensnared in sin, in our love of self, missing the mark in righteousness and justice, in doing what is right by others, time and again. But our God is separate from all sin and imperfection, perfectly just and righteous, never failing to do what is just, right and good in all His dealings

To be holy as He is holy is not a call for us to transcend the limits of our finite creaturely bodies – to think we can become almighty.

But it is a call to separate ourselves from all sin and to become like Him in ways we can be like Him

And to see how good that is, think of God's love, His righteousness, His faithfulness – and how it is different.

God loves even His enemies – sending them the rain and sun that sustains life on this planet

In His love He is patient and merciful with people who have provoked Him over and over again.

He even gives His Son for the world.

God always does what is right – there is no hypocrisy with Him, no partiality

And in His righteousness He is absolutely faithful. What He says He does. He never lies.

To be holy is to be like Him in love, and righteousness, and faithfulness

You can see God's holiness reflected in what He commands His people in Leviticus 19

One example

Leviticus 19: ¹³ "Do not oppress your neighbour or rob him. The wages due a hired worker must not remain with you until morning. ¹⁴ Do not curse the deaf or put a stumbling block in front of the blind, but you are to fear your God; I am the Lord

Being holy as the Lord is holy is Being honest and fair in business

Not taking advantage of other's disabilities

You can see God's holiness in what the Lord Jesus commands His people in the sermon on the Mount

Faithfulness in our hearts in marriage, absolute integrity in what we commit ourselves to, turning away from anger and pursuing reconciliation, being generous, loving our enemies

To set our hope fully on the grace that is being brought to us when Christ appears is to live these holy lives in the world, guided no longer by our desires but by who our God is, and so

Doing good to all in love

Committed to righteousness even if it brings us persecution

Keeping our word even if it costs us.

Rather than make us so heavenly minded we are of no earthly use, our hope makes us helpful to others

Secondly, to set your hope fully on the grace to come is seen in living a life no longer held captive to the way of life we receive from culture. We have been ransomed

from your empty way of life inherited from your ancestors,

Speaking to people saved from non-Christian backgrounds who passed on a culture that in whatever form has its origins in Adam our common ancestor's sin, has rebellion against God at its heart

Where collectively we have decided for ourselves what is right and wrong and shaped our families and societies on our judgments, not God's

And where we have devised religions that support us living the way we want to.

Think what those who are not believers might inherit from our culture

Materialism – thinking matter is all there is, and there is no overall purpose to life

Hedonism – so I should make my own goal getting as much pleasure for myself as possible

Secularism – a belief God is uninvolved, and we are accountable to ourselves

But what we inherit is described as 'empty' – futile, useless, powerless, lacking truth

Empty and futile because it can never please God and only end in death

But now, says Peter, those who have set their hope fully on the grace coming to us when Christ appears live as children of God, those constantly calling on Him as our Father, knowing He is the one who judges all impartially

¹⁷ If you appeal to the Father who judges impartially according to each one's work, you are to conduct yourselves in reverence during your time living as strangers.

God saves us because He is righteous and just, not because He has abandoned His righteousness and justice

That means as His children we, *are to conduct yourselves in reverence during your time living as strangers.*

Our whole way of life, the whole time we are on this earth journeying towards our heavenly country

Is to lived in the fear of God

In reverence is 'In fear'.

Peter is again tapping into a great Old Testament theme, the fear of the LORD that is the beginning of wisdom – Prov. 9:10

*Prov. 9: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom,
and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding*

That fear is the trusting awe of God that recognises He is the Almighty Creator and active judge, who has established and maintains a moral order in the universe – so that the wise life, the life of human flourishing, is found in conforming our lives to His commands

This is a different life that turns away from the folly that lives heedless of God, the mocking that defies God, the pride that thinks it is self-sufficient,

But it is the good life

As Proverbs 3 says

*Proverbs 3: ¹³ Happy is a man who finds wisdom and who acquires understanding,
¹⁴ for she is more profitable than silver, and her revenue is better than gold. ¹⁵ She is more precious than jewels; nothing you desire can equal her. ¹⁶ Long life is in her right hand;
in her left, riches and honor.
¹⁷ Her ways are pleasant,
and all her paths, peaceful.
¹⁸ She is a tree of life to those who embrace her, and those who hold on to her are happy.*

That is what the life of someone who has set their hope fully on the grace coming to them at the revelation of our Lord Jesus looks like

A holy life, a life lived in the fear of the living God

A good life that does good

But a different life

A Life no longer governed by our desires or the accepted norms of society that has turned its back on God

And so a life Exposed to the curiosity and suspicion of others

A life that will Sometimes encounter hostility

A life knowing the unease of the temporary resident, the unease of never belonging, never being able to fully settle – even while we seek the welfare of the society in which we live

It makes you ask again – Why set our hope fully on the grace to come?

Why do what seems unwise – put all the eggs in the one basket, live with no plan B, live a life that will only be vindicated in its values and choices at the appearance of Jesus

A life that can leave us uneasy in the world, exposes us to the hostility of those who do not welcome the criticism of their way of life as ignorant and empty

You would need to be sure that grace was coming, wouldn't you?

Confident of Jesus' appearing and the goodness He brings

So Peter Surrounds the command with encouragement

Gives three reasons why we can be confident of this hope, so confident that we live without plan B

Good reasons for hope

1 Peter 1: ¹⁰ Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who prophesied about the grace that would come to you, searched and carefully investigated. ¹¹ They inquired into what time or what circumstances the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating when he testified in advance to the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. ¹² It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you. These things have now been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—angels long to catch a glimpse of these things.

The Privilege of having this hope vv. 10-13

Firstly Peter says the grace given to us is the climax of God's revealed plan and purposes, something revealed to the prophets of old over hundreds of years and now declared to us through those who preached the gospel to us.

This brings home both the goodness of what we have received, the extraordinary privilege of knowing this grace, and also the certainty of what is declared in the gospel

The Goodness of this grace is emphasised by their longing to know it for themselves as they spoke of both the what is achieved, the salvation coming to believers in the grace we receive in Jesus, and of the way it is achieved - *the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow*

And they really wanted to know more – they searched diligently and carefully and these words describe

Not a quick glance in the drawer , but turning the house upside down when you've lost the car keys

That wonder as what God is doing is, that longing to know, is not confined to the prophets

These are things – 'angels long to catch a glimpse of these things'

That God could bring such a great salvation in such a way – engages even the angels, those witnesses to all God's dealings in creation.

What we hear in the gospels of the suffering of Christ, and his exaltation as Saviour of the world moves even the angels to want to know more,

To look into the heart of the revelation of God's glory in His suffering Son

To see and praise the depth of His love, of wisdom, of might revealed in this salvation

But we are told the curiosity of the prophets as to the time and circumstances was not satisfied, for they were serving believers in Christ in speaking their Spirit given word

Think of that

Isaiah

Jeremiah in his suffering

Ezekiel in his grief

David

In their conflict and courage

As they spoke the word of God – serving us,

Serving us by helping us through their ‘testifying in advance’ to understand and recognise the greatness of salvation through the crucified and exalted Jesus.

More to recognise it as the work of God

For only the God who rules history can speak beforehand

Through Isaiah in the 8th century BC of the suffering servant [Is. 53] and bring it to pass 800 years later,

Only God can move David by the Spirit to speak of the Christ’s resurrection in Psalm 16 200 years before Isaiah, and bring it to pass

And these are just some of the hundreds of prophecies concerning Christ and his salvation.

The prophets were serving us in showing the gospel to be the word of the same God, the God who can speak and bring what He says to pass, the living God who rules all things, determines the end from the beginning

And in doing that the fulfilment of prophecy in the work of Christ reinforces the certainty of the fulfilment of the promises made by Christ in the gospel, the gospel brought to us v. 13 by the same Spirit

The Spirit sent from heaven as Jesus promised to empower the witness of the apostles [John 14:26, 15:26, 16:5-15].

[That unity of Old Testament and gospel is why Peter can refer to the Old Testament with confidence throughout this letter. The Spirit who gave the Scriptures is the Spirit who shows their fulfilment in Christ]

Why should we have confidence in the grace coming to us at the revelation of Christ on the last day?

Here is the first reason. That salvation, that grace is the fulfilment of God’s wondrous, revealed beforehand plan, in which HE has revealed and to which He has tied His glory in His whole creation, spiritual and physical, heaven and earth.

The promises that give us that hope are the word of God, brought by the Spirit of God, the word that never fails, that has been demonstrated to be truthful, fulfilled across the centuries.

1 Peter 1: ¹⁸ For you know that you were redeemed from your empty way of life inherited from your ancestors, not with perishable things like silver or gold, ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of an unblemished and spotless lamb. ²⁰ He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was revealed in these last times for you.

The Price of providing this hope vv. 18 – 20 [Mark 10:45; Ex. 12:5, 1 Cor. 5:7; Ex. 6:6, 15:13, Deut. 7:8]

The second reason we can be confident in the hope coming to us

Is seeing how committed God is to it, how committed He is to rescuing His people, by seeing the price He paid to effect that rescue

Believers have been set free to live this life of hope, to travel in hope to God's appointed goal

Because we have been Redeemed By the blood, the death, of Christ

Jesus in His death is likened to the unblemished Passover lamb.

It was by the blood of that lamb that the Israelites were spared the last plague and were freed from slavery in Egypt to travel in hope to the land of promise.

By Jesus death we have been ransomed from our slavery. His death is the price paid to free us from the judgment on our sin, to free us from the hold of death – so that we can travel in confident hope to the fulfilment of God's promises to us in Christ in the new heaven and earth.

Think of that.

God gave His Son to secure for us that inheritance, the grace coming to us when the Lord Jesus returns.

He is committed to saving His people

In fact Christ's death tells us this is something God has been determined to do from before Creation, for Christ is the lamb foreknown before the foundation of the world.

We can be confident in God's determination to save fully

And understanding the effectiveness of Jesus' death to save also increases our confidence. In His death He has freed us from judgment and death, from the hold of sin, once and for all.

He has offered Himself in our place, bearing our sins in His body on the tree.

God has already executed His just judgement on us in His Son. We have died with Him, and there is no judgment outstanding against us, no further ransom that needs be paid.

And in Him, united with Him by faith, we are reckoned righteous

His death has secured an eternal freedom from sin and its punishment

We can be confident in the salvation, the hope achieved by the death of God's Son.

1 Peter 1:²¹ Through him you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

The One in whom we hope v. 21

And the third reason for a confident hope is that in trusting Jesus, believing the gospel, our faith and hope are in God, for raising and exalting Jesus is the work of God, a work only God can do.

In trusting Jesus our hope is in the God – who made all things

The God whose power is so great He can raise the dead to life

Think of God's power revealed in the gospel

You may have seen a corpse – cold, pallid, lifeless. Think of Jesus' corpse taken down from that cross,

And God has not only given it deathless life, He has made the risen Jesus the source of life to all who believe.

And think of Jesus – shamed, humiliated, naked and mocked on the cross, held fast there

And God has 'given Him glory', exalted Him to reign over all, to share His glory in heaven where all God's angels worship Him

This is a God for whom nothing is too hard

Who will never fail of His promise, and in believing the gospel our faith and hope are in this God

1 Peter 1: ¹³ Therefore, with your minds ready for action, be sober-minded and set your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Embrace Hope Completely

We can have confidence in the grace being brought to us in the revelation of Christ

Confidence to set our hope wholly, altogether on this grace

Because

This is the promise of the God who has a plan to save, who knows what HE is doing, knows the end from the beginning, and who has made it known beforehand through His prophets and then brought it to pass in the ministry of Jesus

Whose word has been proved true in the ministry of Jesus

Because this is the promise of the God who loves us so much He has given His Son to secure that grace for us

The God who is so powerful He can raise the dead

setting your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Is the action of a mind made ready, prepared to act, by the gospel

It is the sober minded, clear thinking response to the truth of the gospel, to the conviction that the promises made in the gospel are the promises of the living God

It is the reasonable response of those whose minds are not clouded, intoxicated by their desires, confused by the empty ways of their culture

Being sober minded, clear thinkers, writes Peter,

set your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

If you are not yet a believer

Think – where else will you find a hope so good, of life without death, grief, or the failure of sin

A hope so good and so certain

The promise of a God who has shown in history he keeps His word

Who has demonstrated His power to overcome death

Who speaks His promise from a gracious love that even gives the Son in death to free us from death, the death we deserved for our ignoring and disobeying God

He will give this hope to you if you will turn back to Him and believe the gospel

What holds you back?

What stops you from seeing clearly the goodness and certainty of this hope?

Now is the day to call out to God

Or at least find out more

But if you are a believer

Hear the word completely, fully – and turn away from lesser hopes

Hold the good things of this world - like work, or marriage, or family, or health - more lightly – enjoy them with thanks, but don't let them become the object of your longing. Let them always be things you can give up for something you know is incomparably better, that grace, that salvation, you desire more strongly

And Bear the trials of this world more lightly – those trials may grieve us but whatever they cost us, wealth, health, those we love, even life itself – they cannot dispossess us of what we hope for. IT is just not in their power for what we hope for is kept by the power of God, to be revealed at the coming of our Lord Jesus

Believer, God gives you this command to *set your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ* for your good

Obedying it will free you to live as the chosen sojourners believers are called to be, people who know their home is the new heaven and earth, and they are only temporary residents here

Setting our hope fully on the grace to come will Protect us from the seduction of the pleasures and cares of this world, from the seduction of money and power and popularity, that would turn us back to the empty ways we have left behind, turn us aside from journeying to our goal

And Setting our hope fully on the grace to come will insulate us from the disappointments and losses we experience here – whether in our careers, or in our relationships – disappointments and losses that can overwhelm us and turn our gaze from our goal

So do what is says

Examine your life and see if there is anything there that you so long for, desire, love, that you would be reluctant to give it up for obedience to Jesus

And repent. Confess that longing to Jesus and leave it with Him so that you can

Be a person who is

All in, who lives with no plan B, whose life will be a waste if Jesus does not return in glory

And let that show in lives of holiness lived in the fear of the Lord

That is always the sober minded, clear headed response to the gospel of God

To the word of the God whose word has been proved true

The love of the God who has given His Son to save us, and to save us effectively

To the power of the God who has raised the crucified Jesus and exalted Him to glory.

1 Peter 1:¹³ Therefore, with your minds ready for action, be sober-minded and set your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.