

Be All That You Can Be

I Peter 1:13-16

INTRODUCTION:

All Stand and Read Scripture

1 Peter 1:13-16 (NASB)

¹³Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober *in spirit*, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. ¹⁴As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts *which were yours* in your ignorance, ¹⁵but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all *your* behavior; ¹⁶because it is written, "YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY."

Prayer

Notice our scripture reading starts with the word "**Therefore**".

In the first 12 verses, Peter has laid a foundation that reminds us that we have been sovereignly called by God into a privileged position of being born into the family of God with the guaranteed future of:

- **A living hope**, associated with the resurrection of Jesus Christ -- Death is not our Destiny --we have been called to life.
- **A protected eternal inheritance** -- better than any inheritance this world could ever offer. As I told at my dad's funeral, "**God's vacation plan is out of this world!**"
- **A complete salvation** -- not some partial deal where we still have the warts and blemishes of sin but the gift of pure righteousness before God.

Starting with verse 13 through the end of the book, Peter starts describing our duty as a Christian. These duties are not **conditions** of our salvation rather they are **consequences** of it.

We will face troubling trials and intense suffering in our Christian life. When we keep our actions holy through these trials, our faith is being refined and focused more and more on the person of Christ. He is the object of our love and devotion and the source of our joy and rejoicing.

As John told us in 1 John 4:19 "**We love Him, because He first loved us**". We love as a natural response for what Christ has done for us!

ILLUSTRATION:

From 1980 until 2001 "**Be All That You Can Be**" was the slogan used by the army in its recruiting. Once an individual enlists in the Army they are sent to "Basic Training" aka "Boot Camp" in order to be prepared to "Be All That They Can Be". Basic training is

designed to prepare recruits physically, mentally, and emotionally for their service to the USA. They are taught things such as Discipline, time management, teamwork, perseverance, and leadership. Basic Training is a very intense experience. But this training is not intended to “break” recruits. In fact, the combination of physical training, field exercises and classroom time is designed to make individuals strong and capable.

The American soldier who goes through combat training is tested and pushed to the limit. But this is necessary because he must be ready for the battle that he will face! The same is true for us, we are trained and prepared so that we will be ready to fight the battle that is to come in the Christian life!

Once we become Christians we face certain situations that will develop us...

- Mentally
- Physically
- Emotionally
- and most importantly Spiritually.

Though we may not enjoy some of the difficulties that we face in life, God uses them to train us, prepare us, and to make us into what He would have us to be. This is what Paul meant when he said...

2 Corinthians 4:16-18 (NASB)

¹⁶ Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, ¹⁸ while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

As we arrive to verses 13-17 there is a shift in Peter's focus. Everything he had said up to this point has been stating wonderful facts concerning salvation and life in Christ. Now he begins to give commands to the Christians. To continue with our military theme, it is as if Peter was a commanding officer giving orders to his men. And the commands that were given to these first century Christians apply to us today. I would like to look at this portion of scripture and consider this thought "Be All That You Can Be!"

So what must you do to "Be All That You Can Be?" You must Be Prepared, Be Focused, Be Obedient, and the end result will be that you will Be Holy.

BODY:

I. Be Prepared!

1 Peter 1:13a (NASB)

¹³ Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober *in spirit*, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

The KJV uses the phrase "*gird up the loins of your mind*" instead of "*prepare your mind*". In ancient times people wore long flowing tunics. Around the tunic in the midsection they

wore a girdle (or belt). These long garments would get in the way when fighting or working. When the Hebrews went to battle with the Philistines, the men would lift the hem of their tunic up and tuck it into their girdle. This provided more freedom of movement. And the garment would no longer be a hindrance in the midst of hard labor or battle. When Peter says "gird up the loins of your mind" he is saying to "prepare for battle".

Christians must be prepared mentally. We must remove anything from our minds that would hinder our duty! We must be focused on the task at hand.

Remember what Paul said in...

Colossians 3:2 (NASB)

² Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.

We must prepare or train our mind to focus our thoughts on those things that allow us to obey God and serve God with complete, unhindered devotion.

Peter goes on to say that we are to "**keep sober in spirit**" Although this is not specifically relating to alcoholism, it does carry the idea of having mental control and avoiding things that intoxicate the mind.

- Do you worry about past, current, and perceived future events?
- Are you carrying anger on someone who mistreated you in the past?
- Are you bitter over some event that has occurred to you?
- Are you jealous of what someone else has?
- Do you have resentment toward someone?

We are asked to discipline our minds so that OUR EARTHLY WORRIES are turned over to God and put behind us. When we dwell on these type things (and many others) it clouds our mind and interferes with our judgment. If you try to fight a battle when your mind is focused on something else you will be overtaken by the enemy! We are to remove those things from our mind that will distract us from the task at hand.

This theme is echoed in...

Titus 2:11-12 (NASB)

¹¹ For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, ¹² instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age,

ILLUSTRATION:

There was a man who went out one night and got drunk. When he came home his face was covered with bumps and scratches because he had gotten into a fight. He knew that if he went to bed like that he would certainly get in trouble with his wife. So he sneaks into the bathroom, staggers around for a while, finds the bandages and fixes himself up. He went to bed smiling at the thought that he'd pulled one over on his wife. When morning came, he opens his eyes to find his wife standing over him. "You were drunk last night weren't

you?" "No honey. No way. I wasn't" "Well," she replied, "If you weren't, then who put band-aids all over the bathroom mirror?"

Just as his wife wasn't fooled our enemy is not fooled when we are not "sober and vigilant". When he sees our minds clouded with the distractions of this world he will attack! This is why Peter will tell us later in this epistle to...

1 Peter 5:8 (NASB)

⁸ Be of sober *spirit*, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

If you are going to "Be All That You Can Be" you must BE SOBER!!! Continuing on in verse 13 we see that:

II. Be Focused!

1 Peter 1:13b (NASB)

¹³ ...fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

ILLUSTRATION:

I have spent a little time investing in the stock market. One important principle when planning your portfolio is to "Diversify, Diversify, Diversify"; The financial experts warn you, "Don't put all of your eggs in one basket"! Better advise right now **might** be to **stay out!**

Just like making investments in the stock market, we all are making important investment decisions concerning our life every hour of every day - We are deciding how to spend our time and how are we going to live our lives!

Peter gives us some important counsel concerning the investments we make in our daily life. It is not what we would expect to hear from the financial experts. He tells us: "Put all your eggs in one basket and LIVE FOR ETERNITY"! "fix your hope **completely** on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

Peter says that we should look forward to the gracious salvation that we will receive when Jesus Christ is revealed to the world. This is our great hope as Christians. In fact Titus continues in verse 13 of chapter 2...

Titus 2:13 (NASB)

¹³ looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus,

Again I remind you that the people this epistle was addressed to were enduring great sufferings. This hope was an incentive for them to endure the great trials they were facing. That is also our incentive to press on today! We are living in the here and now but we do so anticipating the future. We are to be "**looking**" forward to the day of our salvation at the Second Coming of Christ! **It is a promise from God and God ALWAYS keeps His promises!**

If you are going to "**Be All That You Can Be**" you must **BE FOCUSED!** Moving into verse 14 we will see that we are to **BE OBEDIENT.**

III. Be Obedient!

1 Peter 1:14a (NASB)

¹⁴ As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts *which were yours* in your ignorance,

As Christians, we are CHILDREN OF GOD! We are to live as obedient children...

- Obeying God's commands.
- Looking to Him for guidance and direction.
- Submitting to His will.
- and Putting Our Trust in Him at all times.

Jesus tells us that child like obedience begins with faith "like a child".

Mark 10:15 (NASB)

¹⁵ Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it *at all.*"

Many times we seem to be surprised when lost people do wicked things? We look at the sickness of the society that we live in and we see Homosexuality, Idolatry, Drunkenness, Drug abuse, Adultery, Child molestation, Deceitfulness, Stealing, Violence, and Murder. We are amazed at how wicked things are!

The world is spiritually dead. We should not be surprised that "**dead men stink!**"

You must understand. the lost man is not going to strive to be holy. **And he isn't required to!!!** But as Children of God...**WE ARE!!!** We see this in verse 16 "**Be ye holy; for I am holy**". And by His grace and through His spirit it is possible for the child of God to do just that. But before we can be Holy, we must **be obedient** children of God.

This means do not return to your old ways. Do not go back to a life that is spent satisfying your fleshly desires. Peter calls it our "**former lusts**". This does not just refer to sexual lust, but any natural desire that pulls us away from holiness (which is the theme of this portion of scripture). These "**former lusts**" are the evil desires and behavior that once marked our lives. Notice the phrase "**in your ignorance**". There was a time when we did not know any better. But now we are the children of God. We have been taught and trained. Now we know better. We know the ways of the Lord!!! Our Father leads and guides us into His perfect will for our lives.

- If you do not "gird up the lions of our mind".
- If you are not living "soberly".
- If you are not live focusing on the return of our Savior.
- If you are not acting as an "obedient child".

Then you can rest assured you will return to your "**former lusts**".

2 Peter 2:21-22 (NASB)

²¹ For it would be better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn away from the holy commandment handed on to them. ²² It has happened to them according to the true proverb, "A DOG RETURNS TO ITS OWN VOMIT," and, "A sow, after washing, returns to wallowing in the mire."

Your flesh still wants what it has always wanted. And if you do not "**prepare your mind**" to guard against the flesh you will do like the pig and revert right back to where you were!!!

In order to "Be All That You Can Be" you must be prepared, focused, and obedient. The result of this lifestyle is that you will **Be Holy!**

IV. Be Holy!

1 Peter 1:15-16 (NASB)

¹⁵ but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all *your* behavior;
¹⁶ because it is written, "YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY."

We are "**children of God**". Because of this relationship we should bear the characteristics of our Father. And Peter says that "God our Father is holy, so we should be holy in all of our conduct."

ILLUSTRATION:

A college freshman was on a first date with a senior class member. The young woman was raised in a Christian home where she was raised with strict morals. Her date was not. Throughout the evening, the young man kept hounding her to do things she knew were wrong and contrary to her Christian upbringing.

Frustrated, the young man lamented, "What is wrong with you? No one will see you. Who is it going to hurt?"

His date responded, "I am thinking of my father".

The boy asked, "Are you afraid he will hurt you"?

"No", responded the young woman, "I am afraid I will hurt him".

We are to live with fear and reverence concerning our Heavenly Father. Holiness means we have such a fellowship with your Father that your concern is not what HE is going to do to **me**...rather what are **you** doing to him?

Holiness is not an unattainable goal. We know this because God told us to "**be holy**". He would never command us to do something if it were impossible. This "Holiness" will never be achieved through human effort, good works, or moral character. If we are to become Holy it will be produced by the Spirit that lives within us.

CONCLUSION:

God wants you to "**Be All That You Can Be**" and what you should be is **Holy!!** We can reach this goal by **Being Prepared, Being Focused, and Being Obedient.**

- Are you "sober" and watching?
- Have you "girded up the loins of your mind"?
- Are you living in the here and now while anticipating the return of Christ?
- Could your life be described as one that is living as "**an obedient child of God**"?
- Or would you have to say that you have "**returned to your former lusts**"?

Maybe you have turned back to the old life. I want you to know that there is hope for you! God can turn things around in your life. And He is calling you to return unto Him today! If you are His child then His command still stands "**Be ye Holy, for I am holy**"!

Maybe you are here and you are not a child of God. That could change today as well. There is an opportunity for you to be adopted into the family of God...RIGHT HERE, RIGHT NOW!!!

John 3:3 (NASB)

³ Jesus answered and said to him (Nicodemus), "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

That opportunity is available for you today. You can be born again.

Romans 6:3-4 (NASB)

³ Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? ⁴ Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in **newness of life.**

Everyone who is "**born again**" has the opportunity and the responsibility to "**Be All That You Can Be**"!

You cannot offer yourself to the Father as a perfect sinless person, therefore, you accept the sacrifice that Jesus Christ made on your behalf." When you do, God washes away your sins with the blood of Jesus Christ and makes you righteous before God.

God Be with You till We Meet Again

God be with you till we meet again, By His counsels guide uphold you,
With His sheep securely fold you, God be with you till we meet again.
Till we meet...Till we meet, Till we meet at Jesus' feet;
Till we meet...Till we meet, God be with you till we meet again.