

Notes for the Ones Called-Out to Meet

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What Are You Dedicated To?

by Dan Trygg

"Consequently, girding up the loins of your perception, being self-controlled, *completely hope* upon the grace being brought to you in revelation of Jesus [the] Anointed-King. As children of obedience (hearing-under), not conforming (yourselves) to the former (i.e., in the ignorance of y'all) lusts, rather according to the Holy One calling y'all, also *come to be* yourselves holy ones in all your habitual conduct, because it has been written, 'Be set-apart ones, because I am set-apart.' And, if y'all call upon *as* Father the One judging without partiality the work of each person, in fearful-awe *habitually-live* the time of your temporary-stay, ...seeing that not with perishable things, such as silver or gold, were you set-free-by-a-price out from the profitless habit-patterns-of-life given-to-you-from-previous-generations, but with precious blood of [the] Anointed-King..." I Peter 1:13-19a

The highlighted words in the text above identify the main verbs of these sentences. There are three main actions that Peter charges us with. The basis for making any "demands" upon any of us is that he assumes we agree with the big picture, namely that, "according to His great mercy, [God] has caused us to be born again to a living hope, an inheritance... reserved in heaven for you". We have a hope that is different from other people. We live here as aliens, ...ones chosen according to God's foreknowledge, by the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, in order that we might obey Jesus the Anointed-King (vs. 2). If we buy into *those parameters for our purpose in life, then what Peter says makes sense, and is, in fact, in line with our own deepest desires and intent.* We need to be specifically directed by an imperative because there are so many confusing messages that swim around us, ...that pull on us and distract us. We need to have, at times, a clear voice rising above the confusion to simply tell us what to do. We have seen that one of the truths of the Kingdom is that if we attempt to follow the path of short-term self-pleasure, or self-management, we inevitably ruin the potential we have. If, on the other hand, we put aside our own limited vision and give ourselves to follow the directions and training of our Creator, He will lead us in ways that will deepen, strengthen, and mature us, so that we can accomplish a greater purpose, as well as fill out our own potential (Jn. 12:25). Let us take a closer look at these three verbs which are meant to keep us on target.

(1.) **Completely hope** -- As you look at the surrounding clauses, it becomes quite apparent that this is not an easy thing to do. (a.) **Being alert and responsive.** "Girding up the loins" meant to "be ready to act and act quickly". **What is to be in a state of readiness is our faculty of perception.** Peter is telling us this because, apparently, we will miss something if we are *not* in this state of ready awareness. It could be that something may creep up on us unawares and begin to influence us, dragging us away from what is to be our focus. It is interesting, however, that Peter did not use a word picture like "be on your guard". That would invoke fear. This is not so much a fear-oriented emphasis, though the word picture *does emphasize speed in response*, and *being unhampered* in order to effectively deal with the situation. Again, loins were girded when a situation called for fighting, for heavy work, or for running. Our perception receptors and evaluators need to be ready to roll. Possibly there will be some sign from the Lord that we must be ready to respond to quickly, in order to step into an opportunity from Him. (b.) **Being self-controlled.** This word is also translated as "being sober, circumspect, aware, dispassionate.", **means to be emotionally calm and collected.** This does not imply that there is not to *be* emotion or passion in our walk with Jesus, rather it emphasizes the need to *not be carried away by emotion* so that it affects our judgment. There are times for discipline and restraint for emotions, especially since high or heavy emotion can manipulate one's thinking. Emotions can be valuable information sensors for gathering information that should be listened to. They also can provide motivation for action, which are a vital part of what makes humans tick. Emotion needs to be evaluated, however, because we *react too strongly* to things, and make poor decisions. The word picture here is to collect your emotions into a calm focus so that you are free of every mental, emotional, and spiritual excess or confusion. (c.) **Not being conformed to our former lusts.** There is a danger of just *going along with* the familiar *strong emotional or physical desires that came out of our past experiences and training.* We must be on the alert and emotionally centered, if we are to discern these old emotional attractions when they would begin to lure us. It is the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit to help us with this, but we are *partners* with Him in this work. (d.) **Totally-hope.** The word translated "completely" means "fully, to the end, to the uttermost". *It is an adverb describing the intensity of the "hoping action".* Yes, "hope" is a verb, ...a voluntary choice, ...a conscious decision to set one's expectation and focus on the grace being brought to us in the revelation of Jesus. There is both a present and future aspect to this. In some ways, the grace is already currently being carried unto us. Yet, in other ways, *this* is not the land of promise. What is not our possession *here* is kept in heaven for us (vs. 4). *We are not to live as though our hope and treasure were here, alone. Rather, we are to live as though our true hope, treasure, and deliverance will be manifested in the future Kingdom.*

(2.) **Come to be** -- The verb is "be", "come to be" or "become". The kind of action is a point-of-time, at-that-moment-of-time act. **What are we to "come to be"? – Holy ones.** We have a difficult time talking about "holiness" without thinking of "righteous behavior". When we do so, we miss the thrust of the word. ***Something is "holy" when it is "set it apart from common use, and dedicated to some special purpose."*** To "make holy" refers to the act and process of consecration or dedication in this special manner. The resulting special usage or treatment of those dedicated objects is the outworking of that decision. **We are to become a dedicated people, ...a people called to something uncommon and different than the rest of human society.** Therefore, we can't get our cues from the world around us. We have a measuring stick, or standard, for what this holiness, this separateness or "other-ness", is to be related to. We are to be holy "...according to the Holy One calling us..." In other words, **we are to be different like God is different.** This is made most evident in our habitual behavior, ...but *the behavior does not "make us" holy.* **Any behavior change is to be the outworking of our commitment to be dedicated to God.** We tend to turn things around. We think that if we get our consistent behaviors to be "good enough", then we would "come to be holy". No. What is really being described is exactly *the opposite.* **We are to come to see ourselves as dedicated to God, and His will for our lives. Period.** Any changes will follow. **This is a decision, ...a realization or awareness followed by a choice.** This choice is described as an in-the-moment, for-the-moment act. *We can only live in the present moments, ...so that is what He makes us responsible to do.* **In each moment, I am to see myself as someone consecrated to God, and affirm that commitment by choosing to orient myself and my decisions from that perspective as my starting point.** If I am consecrated to God, what does that mean for my choices in this situation? *If I am dedicated to God, what is it that He would like me to do, in this situation?*

(3.) **Habitually-live** -- This is the second of three times in this little paragraph that Peter uses a form of this word. The other two instances are both noun-forms (vss. 15,18). This is a verbal form. The primitive root means, literally, "to turn again", and implies a repeated course of life, a habit or pattern of life, turning again and again down the same pathways of life. Interestingly, Peter again chooses a verbal form that indicates a one-time, point of time action. He combines the in-the-moment, for-the-moment type of choice with a word that, by its definition, implies ongoing action. How am I to understand *this*? **Peter is saying that we are setting a new habitual course to our lives by our every-moment decisions.** Peter commands us to set our course in the "now-moment" we currently have. We make a "now-decision" to establish an "ongoing, habitual pattern of life". We do not have to shoulder the responsibility of the entire remainder of our lives at *this* moment. Rather, we set a course *in the moment*, for the moment, *with the moment we presently have* to live our lives for God. In the next moment, we will face the same decision. The journey of a thousand miles *begins* with a single step, *is maintained* by each step, and *is accomplished* through a *series* of accumulated single steps, going in the same direction.

There are certain qualifying or descriptive word pictures that Peter uses to clarify how we are to do this: (a.) **Recognizing that God is the Judge of all the earth.** The One whom we have come to call upon as Father is none other than the One judging impartially every person, each one according to his or her work. ***This should invoke fearful-awe,*** knowing on the one hand that we deserve His judgment, yet being in awe that He has chosen and claimed us for His own children. (b.) **Recognizing the incredible price God paid to set you free and to make you His child.** He did not ransom us by mere earthly riches. Nor did He buy our freedom by offering up sacrifices of flesh and blood of many animals. No. **The price He paid was infinitely greater than anything else He could have done.** He bought our freedom, ransomed us out of bondage, by shedding the precious blood of His own sinless Son. ***That should invoke love, gratitude, and amazement!*** (c.) **Recognizing that God wants to free us from unhealthy ways of living.** Note that while Peter could have written that Christ's death was to ransom us from the power of sin and the devil, or to satisfy the wrath of God, he does not focus on either of these issues. Instead, he points out that **the sacrifice of Jesus' lifeblood was the ransom necessary to redeem us from bondage to futile, profitless ways of living inherited from our forebears.** To *not* press on in our growth to pursue liberation from the sins and unprofitable ways of living which were in our families is to *disregard* and *cheapen* this incredibly costly sacrifice that God made for us. **We are to habitually live with the ongoing recognition that Jesus made this sacrifice to break off old patterns and enable us to live differently, to develop new life patterns in cooperation with the Holy Spirit.** This is a serious business. There is no place here for a cavalier attitude, if we truly grasp the high cost Jesus paid for our freedom. ***This should invoke an attitude of serious commitment to put aside old unhealthy patterns and discover healthy, effective ways of living out our faith.***

Finally, Peter repeatedly uses the word picture that we are aliens, strangers in a strange land. This life is like a pilgrimage. We are only passing through. **This world is not our home, so how we habitually live ought to also reflect that reality, as well.** **We are to live as if we do not belong here.** If we truly let that sink in, it will affect our choices, and our "holiness" will become apparent. **What is your life all about? What are YOU dedicated to?**