

Full Hope in Future Grace

1 Peter 1:13

Series: *True Grace - 1 Peter*

Introduction: Take your Bible and join me in 1 Peter 1, 1 Peter chapter 1. On May 19th, 1588 the Spanish Armada set sail for England with the intent of overwhelmingly defeating the British Navy and bringing Elizabeth I and her Protestant nation back under the wing of the Roman Church's control. The fleet of 130 ships carried 2,500 guns, 8,000 seamen, and almost 20,000 soldiers. The Spaniards knew that their ships were slower and less well armed than the English ships, but they believed that God was on their side, and they *hoped* that He would give them the victory. They *hoped* that the English Navy would engage ship to ship and therefore hand-to-hand fighting, which they knew they would win. But the long-range canons of the English Navy, and the superior planning and defensive strategy won the battle. The Armada was sent limping back to Spain after several months of fighting with half of its ships lost and some 15,000 men dead. Their hope for victory soon turned into the despair of utter defeat!¹

Hope is a strange thing isn't it? It like air to the bird and fuel for the engine and sugar to the small child and energizer batteries for the silly drumming bunny rabbit – everybody needs it and everybody has hope in something. It keeps us trudging along when life feels like a marshy swamp, and it helps us fly a little higher when life feels like we are soaring on eagle's wings. But hope placed in vain realities is a most disappointing and destructive experience. Like the Spanish Armada we can live based on a hope today that proves to be our tragedy tomorrow. And this is so much of what fuels life in this world – truly baseless hopes which are as short-sighted as a bat looking for its next bug to swallow. So for the businessman, his hopes are set on winning the next big deal which will supposedly secure his financial future. For the grandparent it is the hope of seeing their grandchild succeed at something important to them in life. For the sports fan it is the hope of their team winning it all this year. For the young mother it is the hope of the next full night of sleep without interruption. For the farmer it is the hope of the next bumper crop. For the student it is the hope of academic success, obtaining the scholarship, getting more education and launching into the career of your dreams. For the teacher it is the hope that at least some of the students are hearing and learning and are forever impacted. For the sick person it is the hope that the next treatment will actually work. For the single man or lady it is the hope of being married one day, and for the married man or woman it is the hope of a better marriage experience which matches up to their previous dreams. For the childless it is the hope of one day having a child of their own, and for the parent it is the hope that something their

¹ <http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/spanish-armada-defeated>

kids see and hear in their life will impact them for good. For the church member it is the hope of being part of a church that finally feels like family, and for the pastor it is the hope that his ministry is having some kind of positive effect upon the church he serves. You see – we all have temporary, short-sighted hopes which fill our lives and inform our actions. We even have some big hopes in things that might span past our lifetimes, but even these are too shortsighted. Our present hopes are unsteady foundations upon which to build the framework of our lives. Is there something more? Is there a better hope – a more sure foundation?

In the text before us this morning, the Apostle Peter calls us to put our hope fully in future grace – the grace that will be brought to us at the revelation of Jesus Christ. This is a sure foundation upon which we can build the present realities of our lives – the future grace which only Christ can bring. So, Peter says this in verse 13 of chapter 1 . . .

This verse is the doorway between the doxology of verses 3-12 and the duty to follow in the rest of the letter. And so, we are going to park on this verse this week and consider its deep truths so that we are rightly rooted in worship as we get busy in the work of following Christ.

Peter is writing to Christians who are suffering. They are suffering from the attacks of their own flesh, and from the struggles of following Christ in a Christ-less world, and from the pressures of those who are wondering why their lives are so different now that they are walking by faith in Jesus, and by a government that is getting more and more suspicious of these who will say Jesus is Lord and will not say Caesar is Lord. How are they supposed to face each day with this mounting antagonism to their faith – both from within and from without? How are they to be faithful to Christ? How are they to find a path forward in making any impact on those around them? Well, in a word – they are to hope – hope! Their faithfulness of duty must be built upon the right foundation of a settled hope in future grace.

I. Fullness of Hope is Found Only in Future Grace – 13c

- a. That is the main verb of this verse – “set your hope fully.” It is a decisive call to action – like a military commander calling out the next order. It is a command based upon the reality of verses 3-12, which we will look at in a minute, but it is also a command to look beyond the past or the present and to place our hope in God’s future work of grace. The whole point of verse 13 is to let you know that fullness of hope is found only in future grace. There are lots of lesser hopes, and these lesser hopes are found in secular and spiritual things, but these lesser hopes ultimately fall short of being all that we need them to be in order to be a full hope.
- b. So, for instance, many people have great hope placed in physical health. They hope that if they eat right and exercise enough and take care of themselves that they will live long and enjoy life. Or others have high hopes in their dream job with their dream pay and their dream house and their dream 2.2 kids and 1.3 pets. Or others have their hopes set upon a political party finally addressing the ills of

our society and setting them all straight. But these hopes are too short-sighted to actually bring us the fullness of hope. Every one of those things end at some point and fail to produce the lasting results we had originally hoped they would – wasn't that the point of the book of Ecclesiastes as we went through it?

- c. But we are too spiritually refined to have those materialistic hopes – or at least we are too refined let others know that this is where our hopes are set. Rather, we fill these hopes with spiritual terminology and God-talk so that it sounds better, but the end result is about the same. So, in our illness we put our hope in God providing a cure, or healing us miraculously. Or, as we look to the future we are hoping in God bringing some great opportunity along which will solve all of our current struggles. So, we take our hard things and we look for hope in them by looking to God to change them according to our plans so that we can extol Him for His great work of grace in our lives. But is their fullness of hope in this? If you live to be 93 and you find yourself sitting all by yourself in a room in a Nursing Home reflecting on life – what will be your hope then? All that is good that life could have possibly brought to you has come and gone by then. Do you have a hope that goes beyond now, and goes beyond this life? Do you have a fullness of hope in something?
- d. Well, if you have been born again according to the great mercy of God, then you have been given a living hope – a hope that never dies – it is a hope that is always full of hope. It is a hope that lives even if every other hope in life dies. It is a living hope. Peter is commanding us in verse 13 to set our hope fully in that living hope. This hope is a hope in future grace. He tells us to set our hope fully in that grace – or to be totally absorbed with this hope in what is yet coming. This does not mean that there is not present grace which helps us today. God is so full of grace that he lavishes his unmerited favor upon us in a plethora of divinely designed blessings. His grace falls on us in protecting us from harm, and in helping us fight sin, and in compelling us in righteousness, and in giving us so many good gifts in this life, and in healing us from physical illness, and in bringing that great friend into our life, and the list goes on and on. But these are all lesser graces when they are compared with the grace that is being brought to us at the revelation of Jesus Christ. These are the smaller graces of God which serve the greater grace of God – the grace that is to be revealed to us at the end. So, let's just take one of these lesser graces – let's consider God's work of blessing in your life and unmerited favor to keep you from that massive car accident on the way into church this morning. You may, or may not have even been aware of it, but let's say that God graciously intervened and spared your life. While we rejoice in that work of grace, we must realize that this is not an end in itself. God's work to preserve you by present grace is intended to deliver you to the fullness of joy in future grace. His current grace will be completely meaningless without the promise of future grace. This is why we are told in Colossians 3 to set our minds on things above,

not on things on this earth. We have died with Christ by faith, and we have been raised with Christ and we are seated with Christ in His Heavenly glory, and our life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life – the text says in Colossians 3 – when He appears, we will also appear with him in glory. All of these current expressions and experiences of grace in this life are meant to push us forward and deliver us completely to the future grace which awaits us in Christ.

- e. And what is that future grace which will be brought to us at the revelation of Jesus Christ? Well, in short – the full salvation of our souls. We will be completely and totally redeemed. But this is a short explanation of an infinitely expansive reality. So, upon Christ's return there will be the full conquering of all evil to the extent that there will be no more death and no more sorrow and no more pain because evil will be completely vanquished. We will be raised to a glorified body which will be absent of sin. We will constantly dwell with God and He with us – in full peace – absolute Shalom and blessing. We will know the fullness of joy in His presence and there we will find pleasures forevermore. We will reign with Christ and we will know an unfading crown of glory. We will be like Christ as He is because we will finally see Him as He is. And we will be fully conformed to the Son. God will re-create the universe without sin's effect, and we will enter into the joy and the rest of our Master.
- f. This is the fullness of our hope in future grace. God will win over evil and God will complete our redemption and fulfill all the promises of our salvation which have been secured for us in Christ. So, as Peter makes known to us, we have a choice here. We can set our hope on temporal and fleeting things – even things which have significance in the plans and purpose of God. But if our hope finds its conclusion in this life only, then we are of all people most miserable. We need a fuller hope – an eternal and unchanging hope. So, in the midst of this pilgrim journey in life, when we encounter the cancer diagnosis or the miscarriage or the wayward child or the broken friendship or the besetting sin – we need more hope than just a hope to get us through the day or the week or the month or the year. We need the hope that only future grace can provide – the greater grace which is yet coming. The future grace that all of our current experiences of grace are wetting our appetites for.
- g. Notice that the hope remains no matter what we choose here. If we set our hope fully on this future grace or not – the living hope continues to live. This future grace is not sustained by our putting our hope into it – as though it is some kind of spiritual balloon that fills up with the more hope filled air we breathe into it. The emphasis Peter is making is not “on the subjective *feeling* of hope, nor on the *intensity* of our hope, but on the *object* and *direction* of our hope.”² This future grace

² Daniel Doriani, *1 Peter*, Reformed Expository Commentary, pg. 38. *Emphasis original.*

is a settled and sure reality whether or not we set our hope fully on it. And so, we see that the fullness of hope is only found in future grace.

II. Hope in Future Grace Rests Upon Sure Salvation – 13a

- a. And this future grace is a settled and sure reality because it rests upon a sure salvation. This verse begins with the strong inferential conjunction – therefore, or wherefore. The idea of this one word is to base the statements following the word on the statements which preceded it. So, a good translation would be “for this reason, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.” For what reason? For the reason of the sure salvation which has been explained in verses 3-12. This is the hinge between the doxology of verses 3-12 and the duty of verses 14 and on into chapter 2. And the first line of duty given is to set your hope fully on the grace to come. And this future grace rests upon the sure salvation of verses 3-12. That salvation has come to us by the great mercy of God which has caused us to be born again to a living hope and to a sure inheritance. This inheritance is unfading and undefiled and imperishable and kept in heaven for us – as we are also being guarded by faith for that final day of full salvation.
- b. So, we can set our hope fully in future grace because of the sure salvation which is ours in the finished work of Christ. We are told in verse 3 that our living hope is through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. This is a past work of God. The Father sent the Son to take away the sins of the world through His holy life and substitutionary death, burial, and resurrection. He paid the full price for sin on the Cross for those who would believe in Him, and He rose from the grave as proof that His work for redemption was complete. His resurrection was soon followed by His Ascension back into the glory of Heaven where He assumed His Session at the right hand of God the Father as the all-authoritative Judge and Lord. This path which Christ walked from the humiliation of the Cross to the depths of the grave to the new life of the resurrection to the glory of the ascension and the sitting down at the right hand of the Father – this path matters because He has carried us with Him. We are seated with Christ on High, and the path He took to get there will be the path we also follow. We too must die to sin, be buried with Christ, and be raised with Him – all of grace and all by faith in the Son of God! And this new life we now have been born again into, is awaiting its full and final consummation of glory at the soon return of the Son. As sure as we are about the sufferings of Christ and the salvation which was won for us by Christ, so sure can we be of the coming day of complete victory in Christ. And so, we can set our hope fully on Christ’s return because at this return He will bring to us the fullness of our salvation – namely our glorification in Him – and this is all of grace.
- c. So, because something has happened to you, you should now do something. Because you have been born again to a living hope, you should set your hope fully

in the future grace of Christ. Do you see how the imperative is rooted in the indicative? The commands of Christianity always come after the “therefore” never before it. This was what was at stake in the Protestant Reformation of the 16th Century. The Church of Rome put the duty before the therefore instead of after it. So, you must do these things and therefore, you will one day be justified. But the Scripture does the exact opposite. Because you are justified by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, therefore live in this way. The commands of God are always rooted in the saving grace of God. And this gives us the foundation of our hope. We can hope fully in future grace because we are recipients of such a sure salvation won for us by Christ in past obedience and sacrifice. So, we must hope fully in future grace because our salvation is secure in Christ.

III. Hope in Future Grace Persists by Present Practice – 13b

- a. And, the third truth about hope that we learn from this verse is that hope in future grace persists by present practice. There are two participial phrases in the verse which modify the main verb of setting our hope fully on this future grace. So, we set our hope fully on future grace by preparing our minds for action and by being sober-minded. In other words, if we are to have our hope fully set on future grace it will require prepared minds and sober minds, and this is an ever present practice we must pursue. We must always be prepared and sober in our thinking so that we are setting our hope fully on future grace.
- b. Prepared Minds
 - i. The first phrase can literally be translated as “girding up the loins of your mind.” This phrase draws our attention to the people of Israel in Exodus 12. They were in bondage to the Egyptians under severe conditions. The Lord had brought 9 plagues upon the people and the land of Egypt, but Pharaoh had hardened his heart all the more to the authority of God, and he refused to release the Israelites. But God was about to bring his final and most severe plague of all – the death of the firstborn in every house and in every stall. This final plague would catapult the people of Israel out of the land as the Egyptians would beg them to leave so that death would not fall on them again.
 - ii. And so, you’ll remember, that God required the children of Israel to kill a Passover lamb and with a bunch of hyssop they were to spread its blood on the lintel and the two doorposts of their homes. This was a sign of their obedient faith in the Lord, and the death angel would pass over their home and not slay the firstborn. And you’ll also remember that they were to eat the meal – not in the usual relaxed and casual manner, but rather, they were to eat it with their sandals on and with their clothes bound up tightly around their waste so that they could leave in a moment’s notice. They were gird up to their loins their long flowing robes so that their legs would not be restricted in fleeing quickly from the land of Egypt. And by

the way – this is exactly what happened. After the death angel passed over the land at midnight and killed the firstborn, then Pharaoh expelled them from the land effective immediately. All the Egyptians rose up and cried out to the Israelites to leave their land immediately. And so, they were commanded before this all happened to be ready for the moment of their release from captivity.

- iii. Do you see the parallel here? They were to live and act that night with a sense of urgency about their soon to be coming release. They were given the details by God – that indeed this plague would be the one that would secure their release. And so, they were to take it by faith that God would do what He said he was going to do, and they were to live now in light of what he was going to do then – which meant they were to be ready at all times to leave immediately.
- iv. Peter likens our situation to theirs and tells us that we should be mentally gird up. We need to have our mental sandals on and our mental belts tightly fastened. This is not the day of mental rest and leisure where we get to mindlessly saunter through life. No, now is the day of serious and sober preparation. Now is the time to have full hope in God's keeping His promises at the soon coming of Jesus Christ.

c. Sober Minds

- i. This is coupled with the command to have a sober mind. Only Peter and Paul use this Greek word in the NT, and they use it to call us to be situationally aware and mentally alert. We are to be serious about our standing in this world and our future hope in Christ. We are to be sober-minded for the sake of praying – Peter will say in chapter 4. And he will tell us in chapter 5 to be sober-minded about the enemy who is prowling about looking for some unsuspecting soul to devour. This is a call to a calm and steady and dispassionate worldview. One that is not easily tossed to and fro by the happenings of this world because it is settled on that which is coming at the return of Christ. This sober-mind does not get overly unsettled by news of North Korea increasing its nuclear bomb capabilities. This sober mind does not allow itself to be intoxicated with the needless fluff of entertainment and mindless pursuits. This sober mind is not easily shaken by a diagnosis of a long-term illness. This sober mind is not willing to let besetting sins control thoughts and behavior. This sober mind is not lax about its responsibilities before God and men. This sober mind is not constantly preoccupied with things that don't ultimately matter. This sober mind doesn't worry long over financial stresses or job losses or poor harvests. Instead of being intoxicated with the fleeting realities of life in this broken world, the sober mind is constantly setting its hope on something greater that is yet to come. That

doesn't mean that the here and now stuff don't matter, but rather it means that the here and now stuff actually and really matter as I bring the full reality of hope in future grace to bear upon the current situation. In all of these here and now struggles or pleasures or temptations, the sober minded believer in future grace is thinking about how should I think and live here in light of the soon return of Jesus?

- ii. You will never live with your hope fully set upon the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ if you are not sober minded and if you are not girding up the loins of your mind. But how would you know if you are doing that? How would it be obvious in your life if you were living with your hope fully set upon this future grace as you sought to be prepared and sober in your thinking?
- iii. Well, I have told you a few times already that this verse is the hinge which allows the door to swing from doxology to duty. And it is a hinge in this way. If you are full of confident and faith-filled worship like what is delineated in verses 3-12 then you will be setting your hope fully on this future grace which Christ is bringing. And this will show itself in your life as you obey the commands given over the next many verses. So, in verse 15 we are called to be holy like God is holy. In verse 17 we are commanded to conduct our lives in fear before God as we walk through this spiritual exile. And in verse 22 we are to love one another with a sincere brotherly love, and in chapter 2 verse 2 we are to long for the pure spiritual milk of the Word so that we grow up into salvation. The frame of mind that is necessary for the pursuit of this kind of life – one that his holy, walking in the fear of the Lord, loving others, and longing for the Word – these will only happen if we are prepared for action and sober minded so that we are setting our hope fully on the grace to come. Those four marks are completely counter-cultural even in a normal Churchianity context. Most people are not consumed with a pursuit of holiness and a godly fear and a sincere love for others and an insatiable hunger for the pure spiritual milk of the Word. And this is true because most of us are not presently pursuing to set our hope fully on future grace.

Conclusion: As we close, consider a few examples of this full hope in the grace which will be brought. Peter writes this letter with the ever-looming possibility of his own martyrdom. The tide is turning in the Empire's capital against those who follow Christ. The time for the fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy in John 21 is about to arrive. And this brings all things into laser-sharp focus. He daily prepares his mind and is sober about who he is, where he is, what is happening around him, and what is soon coming in the fullness of salvation in Christ. And every time he soberly assesses all of these things he cannot help but to conclude that his hope belongs fully on the grace that is coming. He leans hard upon the preserving and protecting and sustaining grace of today with absolute confidence in the grace of tomorrow.

And then, consider Jesus. His obedience, his holiness, his faithfulness to the mission, his fight against sin, his sacrificial love for others which ultimately took him to the cross, his earnest prayers, his compassionate interactions with others, his simple lifestyle, his enduring suffering and shame – all of these were sustained by His confidence in the future grace He was winning for us. Jesus earned our grace with His merit. He merited our unmerited favor. And so, we by faith are joined with Him in his obedience and in his suffering and in his death and in his burial and in his resurrection and in his ascension and in his current session and in his coming return. This changes everything. If we are serious and sober minded about this – we have a hope that extends far beyond any hurt or pain in this life. We have a hope that exceeds any trial we face or any suffering we must endure. We have a hope that will make all of the greatest wrongs right. We have a hope that will overcome our greatest of sins. We have a hope that far exceeds any other hope we could imagine. This hope has a name – and His name is Jesus. Beloved – set your hope fully in the grace that He is bringing to you when He returns. Let's pray!