



## DEVOTIONAL MESSAGE

*Keeping our Focus on the Things Above ... By Billy-*

**READ: 1 PETER 1: 1-16**

- Those who are truly born again by the Spirit of God have a deep sense that they are 'resident aliens' in this world. (v.1)
- The values and the joys of this present culture hold little or no appeal because we belong to another country and wait for a salvation that is yet to be revealed.
- We can see from verse two that the three persons of the Trinity are the architects of this wonderful salvation.
  - Chosen according to the foreknowledge of the Father
  - Sanctified by the Holy Spirit to obey Jesus Christ
  - Washed/sprinkled by the blood of the Lamb of God.
- We are not born again to hope for a transformation of society in which Christians can happily co-exist with the world.
- Nor is our hope confined to the experience of God's goodness in this life only. (1 Cor.15:19)
- We are born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. (v.3)
- We hope for an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, which is reserved in heaven. (v.4)
- Many will be frantically reserving seats in restaurants in the coming weeks, understandably considering the long weeks of lock down.
- It is not for us though to book a place in Heaven. It is God Himself who reserves the place on our behalf. (John 14:2)
- <sup>a</sup> In the meantime, in the here and now we are daily protected by the power of God as we hear and believe His word. (v.5)
- Our reason to be glad and rejoice is constant despite various trials.
- This constant, everlasting and unfading hope ought to fill us with a deep sense of joy. (v.6)

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Week 48

- It is these very trials that prove that faith is genuine. (v.7)
- This joy is inexpressible and full of glory because even though we cannot physically see Jesus, we are persuaded of His love for us.
- Now let us turn to *verse 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.*”
- There is herein a threefold exhortation. Firstly, prepare your minds for action.
- Gird up the loins of your mind (KJV). The picture is of a man having to gather up his long garment in order to run or to work unhindered.
- Don't you find that you trip up over your thoughts? In other words, they become distracting and discouraging causing a real hindrance.
- During the past week of being unwell I experienced this sense of spiritual concentration.
- We are often made to realize how much the battle is for the mind.
- Focus on the eternal realities will protect our minds from wandering worries. (*Eph.6:14*) having girded your loins with truth.
- Keep sober (in spirit) In order to be prepared for action (prayer, witness, praise, service) we have to keep a sober attitude.
- Becoming drunk on the pleasures of this world will leave us floored when it comes to the day of battle.
- Being intoxicated with the values of this culture will lull into a deep spiritual sleep. (*1 Thess.5:6, 1 Pet.4:7, 1 Pet.5:8*)
- Fix your hope Spiritual focus needs constant readjustment.
- Hope for an outcome in provision, in ministry, in relationships may be dashed and disappointed.
- It is so easy for the saint who is struggling with grief or disillusionment to lose sight of the bigger picture.
- The grace of God comes to us with the dawning of each new day.
- But what grace will be revealed at the return of our Lord and Saviour? Who can begin to imagine?