

1. What do people today have their “hope” in? What is the evidence?
2. **Read 1 Peter 1:13.** Peter begins to apply vv1-12 with 5 imperatives in what follows. The first is to “set your hope fully...”. If we have already been given “new birth into a living hope” (v.3), why do we need to “set our hope fully” on what is yet to come?
NB “prepare your minds” and “be self controlled” are not commands – literally Peter writes, “Therefore, preparing your minds, being self controlled, set you hope...” – these are the context in which we set our hope fully. This is one of many examples in the NT where Christians are first told what they are, then commanded to be what they are. The problem is that too often we can live lives that are inconsistent with what we are in Christ. What we set our hope on is one are this can happen. So read 1 Tim 6:17 for one eg.
3. **Read 1 Peter 1:14-16.** “evil desires” is literally “desires”. Why do you think the NIV adds the word “evil”? is this how you would describe the desires of unbelievers? What does this verse tell us about life outside of Christ?
Without new birth in Christ our lives are oriented away from God, and every desire will be for something other than God's glory (eg our own glory!). We are ignorant of the Lord and so incapable of pleasing him (see Heb 11:6).
4. Here is another example where we to *be what we already are*. We've been made holy (v.2), so now be holy. What will it mean, in practical terms, to “be holy in all you do” (lit “in all of your way of life”).
It has to do with obedience, bearing the family likeness rather than living like those who are ignorant of God (v14). God is in himself Holy. Whatever is unholy cannot enter his presence. So we have been made fit for his presence by being given of his character – holiness. It is not a mystical, religious thing, but a spiritual reality that is to be worked out in real, practical ways. How I speak, how I treat others, how I spend my money, my attitude towards those in authority, etc etc. We need God's word to reveal more of God's character so we can ‘grow up in our salvation’ – 2:2.
5. **Read 1 Peter 1:17-21.** We are to literally “live our lives here in fear”. What else in this passage shows that this does not mean we're to live in terror or uncertainty about how God will treat us? How would you describe this ‘fear’ to someone?
God is our Father (v17), he has redeemed us at infinite and precious cost(vv18-19). This is to have a “healthy fear” – like an electrician has a ‘healthy fear’ of electricity – he knows it could kill him, but it is an amazingly useful and powerful thing. But even more so, the One we fear, though an impartial Judge, loves us dearly and has acted to remove our guilt. So we respect his holiness and righteous anger at sin, but we confidently always call on him and trust him as our heavenly Father.
6. Before we were saved we were “ignorant” of God. What do we now know? List the things Peter describes in these few verses?
God is both Father and Judge v.17. Jesus was sacrificed to redeem us from the empty lives we lived when we rejected his rule; Jesus was perfect, and so could be substitute for sinful humans; God's plan predates creation – as does Christ!; Jesus was raised and is now glorified. This is like a mini-gospel outline.
7. **Read 1 Peter 1:22-25.** Another “be what you are”. If we already have love, why does Peter command us to love one another?
This is a fundamental part of following Jesus, see John 13:34. The Christian life is not ‘rocket science’, it is straightforward (revealed in Scripture) but living it needs constant reminders because in our fallen bodies we will keep sliding back into old ways (conforming to the evil desires..”, and other-person-centred love is one of the key things we need regular prompting to pursue. Our new nature is born for this v.23.
8. **Read 1 Peter 2:1-3.** V.1 leads into v.2; literally “Therefore, ridding yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy and slander of every kind, like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk...”. What is the connection between these two verses – and the two ideas they address?
The five vices listed are all anti-love, but are all typical of the “empty way of life” that we are saved out of. To live according to the hope we now have, we need to be constantly enlightened as to God's way of life, and only his word, the Bible, our “pure spiritual milk” can do that.
9. Is it possible that we might think that we don't need to ‘grow up in our salvation’ any more? How can we keep this from ever happening?
The five command in this passage are a good start! Set your hope fully on the grace to come, be holy in all you do, live in reverent fear, love one another deeply from the heart, crave God's word. And spur each other on in each of these things!