

In Light of Salvation...

By Patrick Swayne

Before the coming of Christ, God's primary communication with mankind came by men that were called prophets (Hebrews 1:1). The work of these prophets is best understood to be two-fold: they foretold (revealing future events) and forth-told (proclaiming what was already revealed).

When it comes to the former of these two avenues of a prophet's work, the scriptures are plain to point out that some of these prophecies were directly related to individuals in the Christian age (1 Peter 1:10-12). This proves an amazing fact – as long as God has spoken to man, it has been in His mind to bring to man the salvation which is now enjoyed in the Christian age. What ought Christians to do in light of a salvation that God was so diligent in providing? Immediately after discussing the fact that both angels and prophets looked into the things Christians now enjoy, Peter gave three commands that naturally followed that fact, designated by his use of the word, "Wherefore" (v. 13).

The first of these commands involves a **change of mind**, which could be achieved in three steps (v. 13). He tells Christians first of all to "gird up the loins of your mind" - the word picture here being that of someone preparing to run by holding his garment so it did not cause obstruction (the common garment in that day would have been a flowing robe). Many thoughts can obstruct proper action in Christian service, and the Christian is told in essence to hold them back. He is told to replace this excess of thought with sobriety – to have a mind literally free from intoxicants, but practically one that is given to self control. With this foundation laid, a Christian can then fix his mind on a goal: "hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

The second command involves a **change of action** (v. 14). The phrase "obedient children" would be better translated "children of obedience" and better understood as "children marked by obedience." Children are always a reflection of their parents, and as the Christian has been adopted as God's son (Ephesians 1:5) he ought to be like a child that is known for obedience. In order to achieve this end, a Christian must not fashion himself after former lusts – avoiding those things that characterized his life before becoming a Christian.

The third command ties together the former two and involves a **change of lifestyle** (1 Peter 1:15, 16). Truly, one cannot change his life until he changes his mind and ceases his former action, but even then one cannot change his life until he takes steps to become, "as He which hath called you." To become holy in conversation (literally manner of life), one must direct his changed mind and his changed activity in a new direction - towards being like God. Truly, holiness is not something that God provides for an individual; instead it is what man creates in himself for God.

In light of the salvation that was prophesied by prophets and looked into by the angels, a Christian ought to have changes in mind, action, and lifestyle. These changes will prepare him for his heavenly goal and mark him as an obedient child; they are the natural outpouring of a heart grateful for all that God has done. The Christian was not saved to sit, he was saved to serve, and thus was called to be holy (v. 15).