# 1 Peter - Commentaries by W. R.

Christian Truth: Volume 28, Five Words of Exhortation

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"Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind."

This is a beautiful word for the Christian pilgrim. Diligence, devotedness, and unworldliness are all implied in the girded loin. The loose flowing robes of the East would obstruct a man in labor, impede him in walking, and certainly contract injury or defilement over rough or dirty ground. Hence the necessity for a girdle, essential to secure the robe when any great work was in hand or an arduous journey taken, and more especially when the path was rugged, thorny, or defiling. How fitting then in its moral application is the exhortation to use the girdle which, be it said, is ever in Scripture expressed as righteousness, faithfulness, or truth. How could we allow our robes to flow in such a scene as this, wet, as we may say, with the blood of Christ crying from the ground? 0 for girded loins! Is it not a time for diligence, seeing that on the one hand the fields are white unto harvest, and on the other the sheep have but little pasture? Is it not a time for devotedness when "all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's"? and Paul's doctrine and manner of life are equally an offense? Is it not a time for unworldliness when more and more palpably the world exerts its every effort to be happy without Christ, so that what is not unmitigated evil is religious worldliness, worldly religiousness, or Christless Christianity?

"Be sober," or self-restrained.

What a truly needed word is this! How many there are who know deliverance from their sins, and deliverance from this scene, but who know not practical deliverance from dominant self. Self allowance is closely akin to self-assertion. On the other hand, self-judgment is the parent and the power of self-restraint. Every germ of self-allowing or self-asserting is in principle disloyalty to Christ. The true heart loves to confess there is no word more true and few more comforting than this, that we are not our own, but bought with a price.

3) "Hope to the end."

Hope on, perfectly or steadfastly. Diligence and sobriety are here followed with confidence. Hope unto the end signifies fully, perfectly, the full assurance of hope (Heb. 6:11)—hope which makes not ashamed. Be it remarked that the New Testament sense of hope is never uncertainty, but immature or deferred certainty. Confidence, therefore characterizes it as much as expectation, and thus, instead of being in doubt and uncertainty, in quietness and in confidence is our strength. The world has its hopes, but they are so steeped in uncertainty that the word hope has become almost synonymous with doubt; whereas, the believer is so confident as to that which constitutes his hope that he can say, "If we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." Rom. 8:25. "The grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" we surely see not. With patience then we wait for it, because our hope is steadfast and blessed. He will surely come; He will not tarry; and oh, what tides of blessing will His presence usher in! "The grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

"He who, with hands uplifted,Went from this earth below,Shall come again all gifted, -His blessing to bestow."

"As obedient children."

The fourth thing is obedience—"as obedient children." Not the obedience of a servant or a slave, but the obedience of a child; or, to put it more forcibly and more accurately, "as children of obedience," the opposite of "children [or sons] of disobedience," which we were in our sins. (See Eph. 2:2 and 5:6.) Such obedience is never irksome when the heart is right with God and the will broken before Him. Could we conceive the will of the Father to have been ever irksome to Christ? Did He chafe under it? "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work." If then we ever find His will irksome, let us get into His presence in confession, being convinced that there is something radically wrong which only self-judgment can correct. "Children of obedience" is a lovely term for God's saints, implying as it does that that which is characteristic of us, and which we should sedulously cultivate, is spontaneous filial obedience. Who among us has not viewed with admiration the obedience of a loving and devoted child, unhesitating, unquestioning, uncalculating, and with the ready grace that stamps it as a service of love? "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous." 1 John 5:3.

"Be ye holy in all manner of conversation."

Finally we have holiness. That which marked us in our unconverted state was lusts and ignorance; and that which is to mark us now is divine holiness. "God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness." 1 Thess. 4:7. And He who has called us, being Himself holy, says, "So be ye holy in all manner of conversation," or in every bit of your deportment; for if it savor of any contravention of holiness, this is a libel upon our calling, and upon Him who has called us. That which should characterize us as saints is, on the contrary, that having got manumitted from sin and become bondsmen unto God, we have our fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

The Lord grant us to have girded loins in this day of general indifference and worldliness, and give us sobriety in place of laxity, confidence instead of the doubtful mind, obedience in place of self-will, and the scrupulous observance as saints of that holiness which becomes Himself and His house forever.