

New Life: *Living with Great Expectations*

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Introduction

As we reflect and celebrate what Christ has done for us on the Cross - how should we respond to this sacrificial love? What changes should there be in the way we live our life? We should live with renewed convictions, renewed hope and a renewed heart to reveal God's love those that God has placed in our life. We should live with great expectations in what God can do in and through our lives. Let's dig into scripture on what this means in our daily life.

1 Peter 1:3-5, 13-16, 18-22

³ All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is by his great mercy that we have been born again, because God raised Jesus Christ from the dead. **Now we live with great expectation,** ⁴ and we have a priceless inheritance—an inheritance that is kept in heaven for you, pure and undefiled, beyond the reach of change and decay. ⁵ And through your faith, God is protecting you by his power until you receive this salvation, which is ready to be revealed on the last day for all to see.

¹³ **So prepare your minds for action and exercise self-control.** Put all your hope in the gracious salvation that will come to you when Jesus Christ is revealed to the world. ¹⁴ **So you must live as God's obedient children. Don't slip back into your old ways of living to satisfy your own desires.** You didn't know any better then. ¹⁵ But now you must be holy in everything you do, just as God who chose you is holy. ¹⁶ For the Scriptures say, "You must be holy because I am holy." [c]

¹⁸ For you know that God paid a ransom to save you from the empty life you inherited from your ancestors. And it was not paid with mere gold or silver, which lose their value. ¹⁹ It was the precious blood of Christ, the sinless, spotless Lamb of God. ²⁰ God chose him as your ransom long before the world began, but now in these last days he has been revealed for your sake.

²¹ Through Christ you have come to trust in God. And you have placed your faith and hope in God because he raised Christ from the dead and gave him great glory.

²² **You were cleansed from your sins when you obeyed the truth, so now you must show sincere love to each other as brothers and sisters. Love each other deeply with all your heart.**

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Read Peter 1:3-5, 14-15. What are some changes that need to/should happen in our lives (heart/mind) once we experience God's love and salvation?
2. Changing our (old) ways and dying on a daily basis to fleshly behaviors (to reflect who Christ is in our life) can often be a tough and painful process.
 - A. Why do you think we have a tendency to "slip back into old ways of living"? (v.14)
 - B. What does it mean to "prepare our minds for action and exercise self-control"? (v.13)
3. What does it mean to be "holy" in everything that you do? (v.14-16)
4. Verse 22 states that as we truly grasp what Christ has done for us on the cross, "*so now you must show sincere love to each other as brothers and sisters... Love each other deeply with all your heart*". What does it mean to love each other deeply - what does this look like practically in your connect group and church community?
5. What are some things that prevent us from loving people well? Why do you think it is important to understand that we do not love out of our own capacity?

We live with great hope because of what God has done on the Cross. ***So, in this new life with Christ, live with great expectations and know that God wants to use you to reveal His love to those in your sphere of influence.*** However, do note that it is not possible to show *sincere love* when we are insecure with ourselves (and our identity). Jesus is telling us not to "slip back to our old ways" of selfishness and to thinking about ourselves and our needs. When we focus on ourselves (*life is all about me* attitude) we have no capacity to love others. When we look up (to Jesus) and grow in our awareness of God's vast love for the world; we move from a place of self-reliance, into a place where God sustains and gives us the capacity to love others with full hearts that are others-centered and sincere.