

Therefore, Be...

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2/22/2015

INTRODUCTION

Let us consider various “Therefore be...” admonitions found in Sacred Scripture. In such statements, the adverb “therefore” primarily means “for this reason; consequently,” and the verb “be” introduces or expresses an imperative obligation. In other words, based upon what has been previously said, we should act in the prescribed manner.

BE CAREFUL & OBEDIENT

Having delivered God’s commandments, statutes and ordinances to Israel, Moses said, “You shall therefore be careful to do them with all your heart and with all your soul” (Deut. 26:16-19, esp. vs. 16).

*Deuteronomy 26:16-19 (NASB95) — 16 “This day the Lord your God commands you to do these statutes and ordinances. **You shall therefore be careful to do them with all your heart and with all your soul.** 17 “You have today declared the Lord to be your God, and that you would walk in His ways and keep His statutes, His commandments and His ordinances, and listen to His voice. 18 “The Lord has today declared you to be His people, a treasured possession, as He promised you, and that you should keep all His commandments; 19 and that He will set you high above all nations which He has made, for praise, fame, and honor; and that you shall be a consecrated people to the Lord your God, as He has spoken.”*

BE WHOLLY DEVOTED

In dedicating the temple, Solomon echoed the words of Moses: “Let your heart therefore be wholly devoted to the Lord our God, to walk in His statutes and to keep His commandments, as at this day” (1 Kings 8:54-61, esp. vs. 61).

1 Kings 8:54-61 (NASB95) — 54 When Solomon had finished praying this entire prayer and supplication to the Lord, he arose from before the altar of the Lord, from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread toward heaven. 55 And he stood and blessed all the assembly of Israel with a loud voice, saying: 56 “Blessed be the Lord, who has given rest to His people Israel, according to all that He promised; not one word has failed of all His good promise, which He promised through Moses His servant. 57 “May the Lord our God

*be with us, as He was with our fathers; may He not leave us or forsake us, 58 that He may incline our hearts to Himself, to walk in all His ways and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His ordinances, which He commanded our fathers. 59 “And may these words of mine, with which I have made supplication before the Lord, be near to the Lord our God day and night, that He may maintain the cause of His servant and the cause of His people Israel, as each day requires, 60 so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the Lord is God; there is no one else. 61 **“Let your heart therefore be wholly devoted to the Lord our God, to walk in His statutes and to keep His commandments, as at this day.”***

BE ON THE ALERT

Foreshadowing His promised return, Jesus said, “Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming” (Matt. 24:42-51, esp. vs. 42; cf. Mark 13:33-37, esp. vs. 36).

*Matthew 24:42-51 (NASB95) — 42 **“Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming.** 43 “But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. 44 “For this reason you also must be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think He will. 45 “Who then is the faithful and sensible slave whom his master put in charge of his household to give them their food at the proper time? 46 “Blessed is that slave whom his master finds so doing when he comes. 47 “Truly I say to you that he will put him in charge of all his possessions. 48 “But if that evil slave says in his heart, ‘My master is not coming for a long time,’ 49 and begins to beat his fellow slaves and eat and drink with drunkards; 50 the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour which he does not know, 51 and will cut him in pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

*Mark 13:33-37 (NASB95) — 33 “Take heed, keep on the alert; for you do not know when the appointed time will come. 34 “It is like a man away on a journey, who upon leaving his house and putting his slaves in charge, assigning to each one his task, also commanded the doorkeeper to stay on the alert. 35 **“Therefore, be on the alert—**for you do not know when the master of the house is coming, whether in the evening, at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or in the morning— 36 in case he should come suddenly and find you asleep. 37 “What I say to you I say to all, ‘Be on the alert!’ ”*

Warning the Ephesian elders of spiritual dangers, Paul said, “Therefore be on the alert...” (Acts 20:28-32, esp. vs. 31).

Acts 20:28-32 (NASB95) — 28 “Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. 29 “I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; 30 and from among your own selves men will

arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. 31 **“Therefore be on the alert,** remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears. 32 “And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

BE STEADFAST

Based upon our hope of the resurrection, Paul said, “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord” (1 Cor. 15:50-58, esp. vs. 58).

*1 Corinthians 15:50-58 (NASB95) — 50 Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. 51 Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. 53 For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, “Death is swallowed up in victory. 55 “O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?” 56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; 57 but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 58 **Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord.***

BE LIKE ABRAHAM

Contrasting humble faith in God with prideful faith in self, Paul said, “Even so Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness. Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham” (Gal. 3:6-9, esp. vs. 7; cf. Gen. 15:5-6; Rom. 4:1-8; 16-24, James 2:21-24).

*Galatians 3:6-9 (NASB95) — 6 Even so Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness. 7 **Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham.** 8 The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, “All the nations will be blessed in you.” 9 So then those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham, the believer.*

Genesis 15:5-6 (NASB95) — 5 And He took him outside and said, “Now look toward the heavens, and count the stars, if you are able to count them.” And He said to him, “So shall your descendants be.” 6 Then he believed in the Lord; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.

Romans 4:1-8 (NASB95) — 1 What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh, has found? 2 For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. 3 For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.” 4 Now to the one who works, his wage is not credited as a favor, but as what is due. 5 But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness, 6 just as David also speaks of the blessing on the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works: 7 “Blessed are those whose lawless deeds have been forgiven, And whose sins have been covered. 8 “Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will not take into account.”

Romans 4:16-24 (NASB95) — 16 For this reason it is by faith, in order that it may be in accordance with grace, so that the promise will be guaranteed to all the descendants, not only to those who are of the Law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, 17 (as it is written, “A father of many nations have I made you”) in the presence of Him whom he believed, even God, who gives life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist. 18 In hope against hope he believed, so that he might become a father of many nations according to that which had been spoken, “So shall your descendants be.” 19 Without becoming weak in faith he contemplated his own body, now as good as dead since he was about a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah’s womb; 20 yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God, 21 and being fully assured that what God had promised, He was able also to perform. 22 Therefore it was also credited to him as righteousness. 23 Now not for his sake only was it written that it was credited to him, 24 but for our sake also, to whom it will be credited, as those who believe in Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead,

James 2:21-24 (NASB95) — 21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar? 22 You see that faith was working with his works, and as a result of the works, faith was perfected; 23 and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, “And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness,” and he was called the friend of God. 24 You see that a man is justified by works and not by faith alone.

BE IMITATORS OF GOD

Writing to the Ephesians, Paul said, “Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children...” (Eph. 5:1-5, esp. vs. 1).

*Ephesians 5:1-5 (NASB95) — 1 **Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children;** 2 and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma. 3 But immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints; 4 and there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of*

thanks. 5 For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

A few verses later, he added, “Therefore be careful how you walk...” (Eph. 5:15-21, esp. vs. 15).

*Ephesians 5:15-21 (NASB95) — 15 **Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise,** 16 making the most of your time, because the days are evil. 17 So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. 18 And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, 19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; 20 always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; 21 and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.*

BE PATIENT

Similarly, James says, “Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord” (James 5:7-11, esp. vs. 7).

*James 5:7-11 (NASB95) — 7 **Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord.** The farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil, being patient about it, until it gets the early and late rains. 8 You too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. 9 Do not complain, brethren, against one another, so that you yourselves may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing right at the door. 10 As an example, brethren, of suffering and patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. 11 We count those blessed who endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome of the Lord’s dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful.*

BE OF SOUND JUDGMENT

Offering an assortment of admonitions, Peter said, “The end of all things is near; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer” (1 Pet. 4:7-11, esp. vs. 7).

*1 Peter 4:7-11 (NASB95) — 7 **The end of all things is near; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer.** 8 Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins. 9 Be hospitable to one another without complaint. 10 As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. 11 Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.*

BE ZEALOUS AND REPENT

Sternly rebuking the church at Laodicea, the Lord said, “Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent” (Rev. 3:19-22, esp. vs. 19).

Revelation 3:19-22 (NASB95) — 19 ‘Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent. 20 ‘Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me. 21 ‘He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. 22 ‘He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.’ ”

CONCLUSION

The people of God enjoy great privileges and also have great responsibilities (2 Cor. 7:1).

2 Corinthians 7:1 (NASB95) — 1 Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Are we showing due diligence (Heb. 6:11-12)?

Hebrews 6:11-12 (NASB95) — 11 And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end, 12 so that you will not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.