

Title: GOOD NEWS FOR A NEW GENERATION, 1 PETER 1:10-25.  
(Chatham, NJ; 04/06/08, AM) [Pc – Praxis, from Elliott, *Creative Styles*, p. 61]

Theme: Because we always look to the future hope of our own salvation, we also carry that vision for the next generation like the prophets of old.

Purpose: To help set our vision to the future of our church and to suggest some reasons for maintaining a positive outlook despite our small numbers.

**Movement 1: focus the congregation upon the specific subject.**

1. Peter mentions the prophets who served the next generation (verses 10-12, esp. 12).
2. Like the people in Hebrews 11, they did not obtain what was promised but carried on in faith despite this.
3. One such prophet was Amos: about two generations before Israel was taken by the Assyrians, not raised as a prophet, sent from Judah to Samaria to prophesy.
4. He condemned injustice and hypocrisy.
5. He also predicted the restoration of Israel. Amos 9:11-15 is picked up in Acts 15 and interpreted as being fulfilled in the first century church.
6. He likely had no idea about this when he made the prediction.
7. Yet he looked forward for the sake of God and Israel and those who were yet to come.

**Movement 2: reread the topic for today.**

1. Future hope still lives despite the fulfillment of those early prophecies.
2. Peter gets the importance of this from day one; in Acts 2:39 he raises the issue of the next generation and “those who are far off.”
3. In the Old Testament there has always been a notion of drawing the past into the present; for example, when Israel was to celebrate the Passover they were to tell their children that we were slaves in Egypt.
4. It was important for future generations to grasp the significance of that.
5. Furthermore, as noted above, Israel hoped for future salvation and restoration.
6. By definition this involved looking ahead.
7. Where do we want to be two, five, ten, or even twenty years from now? As individuals and as a group?
8. We must keep our eyes on where we are going if we want to get there. (I think Yogi Berra said it something like this, “If you don’t know where you’re going, you’ll probably get there.”)

**Movement 3: evaluate and read in terms of today’s Christian vision.**

1. What does it take to develop a positive outlook and hopeful vision of the future?
2. On the road to Emmaus two disciples had their hopes renewed; Luke 24:25-32 demonstrates that their hearts were set to burning when Christ affirmed that the message of Scripture was one of hope and good news.
3. Peter’s words illustrate a person who is hopeful because of the good news of Christ.
4. Listen to some of his words:
  - The first section of the letter ending with verse 9 gives a sense of future hope: the outcome of our struggling faith is salvation.
  - He also tells us to set our hope on grace (13), clearly a reference to the mercy of God so often touted in the OT (Ps. 116:1 & 5).

- Furthermore we have been ransomed (18). We are no longer hopelessly chained as slaves.
  - We have been born of imperishable seed (23). He has already spoken of the imperishable, undefiled, and unfading inheritance that we have.
  - Finally Peter reminds us that God's word abides forever and that word in the message of the Gospel (25).
  - These are hopeful teachings: we have a future that is filled with the mercy and goodness of God.
5. By looking to Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith (Hebrews 12:2) we are a lot more likely to stay renewed and hopeful.

**Movement 4: our course of action and thinking.**

1. What we do in the present must reflect what goal we want to attain in the future.
2. In this case the future is the salvation of our souls.
3. Peter expresses our course of action in terms of readiness (13) but more importantly in terms of holiness (16). We must reflect the holiness of God.
4. More specifically we reflect the holiness of God most by loving one another sincerely (22) from the heart.
5. Love is the one characteristic that reflects the presence of Christ, John 13:35.
6. 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 defines it in terms of patience, kindness, etc. (Read the rest.)
7. Think about how God showed his love for us: "...while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8).
8. Love plays a role in what we do today as well as what affect it has on the future.

**Conclusion:**

1. Do we have a good fix on where we are going?
2. What we do in the present has to be consistent with what it takes to get us there.
3. Do we have a hopeful future?
4. With the message of the Gospel, don't we always?
5. Are we serving ourselves only?
6. No, we always have in mind those who will cross the bridge after us.
7. Let's be hopeful for the future because of the Gospel, and let's follow the prophets of old by serving not just ourselves but those who will come after us.