

Living in Holiness  
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1 Peter 1:13-19

Opening Question: Christians are called to live a HOLY LIFESTYLE. What's the difference between living a HOLY life and being HOLIER THAN THOU?

Before we read our text, let's start with a summary from last week:

- Last week we learned in the first 12 verses of this letter that Peter was writing to a group of believers who were scattered geographically and alienated by those around them because of their faith.
- Peter encouraged these SUFFERING SAINTS to focus on the LIVING HOPE we have in Christ to help them persevere through the trials of life...in their case the trial of persecution.
- Short version: Though we WILL go through trials in life, we can still have JOY because of the HOPE of eternal life through Christ.
- Now, beginning in verse 13 Peter shifts from telling them how believers should persevere to how we should LIVE.

1 Peter 1:13–17 (NIV)

13 Therefore, with minds that are alert and fully sober, set your hope on the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at his coming. 14 As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. 15 But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; 16 for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy."

17 Since you call on a Father who judges each person's work impartially, live out your time as foreigners here in reverent fear.

- Verse 13 - The first word is "Therefore." Basic Bible study saying, when we see "THEREFORE" we ask...what is it THERE FOR? What is the context? What does the word therefore mean in this context?
- In light of everything God has done for us (related in the first 12 verses) we are to "Prepare your minds for action"
- In the KJV the imagery is helpful: "...gird up the loins of your mind"
- Anyone know what "girding the loins" meant?
- We have a modern saying like it. If we're about to take on a tough job we say we're going to "roll up...our sleeves" and get to it.
- Clear any distractions or hinderances from your mind.
- Put another way "have a disciplined mind".
- Peter says be ALERT and FULLY SOBER.
- What does it mean when we say something is "sobering"?
- We're told the word "sober" here "means "to be calm, steady, controlled; to weigh matters." Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). The Bible exposition commentary (1 Pe 1:13).

- Later in this letter Peter points out a couple of COMPELLING reasons we should be "sober minded":

1 Peter 4:7 (NIV)

7 The end of all things is near. Therefore be alert and of sober mind so that you may pray.

1 Peter 5:8 (NIV)

8 Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

Warren Wiersbe writes:

*"The fact that Christ is coming should encourage us to be calm and collected (1 Peter 4:7). The fact that Satan is on the prowl is another reason to be sober-minded (1 Peter 5:8). Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). The Bible exposition commentary (1 Pe 1:13). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.*

- Look at the last sentence of verse 13. Once our minds are PREPARED and ALERT, what does Peter tell us to DO? Set or fix, our hope on the GRACE that we will receive when Christ comes back.
- What does that mean? What kind of outlook should BELIEVERS have?
- Not only do we need to have our minds DISCIPLINED, we need to be ALERT, and SOBER, but we also need to be OPTIMISTIC because Christ is coming back for us.
- Verse 14 - Peter uses a metaphor we can all understand: "As obedient children..." do not "conform" (in other words: don't go back to) the "evil desires" you had "when you lived in ignorance."
- Can you think of another verse of scripture that uses that same phrase, "do not conform?" Romans 12:2 Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind...
- "As obedient children..." don't go back to your old ways when you were ignorant.
- Parents: When our kids do something STUPID we often respond by saying "You know....(what?)" Better than that!
- When we, who God has SAVED, start to SLIDE back to our old EVIL ways, we should hear the voice of God saying "You know better than that! There was a time when you were ignorant, but I've taught you better than that!"
- Generally after a parent says, "You know better than that." What do we follow up with? (Some version of "straighten up and fly right") Look at verses 15 and 16.

1 Peter 1:15-16

15 But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; 16 for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy." The New International Version. 2011. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Quoting Wiersbe again:

*"The argument here is logical and simple. Children inherit the nature of their parents. God is holy; therefore, as His children, we should live holy lives. We are "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4) and ought to reveal that nature in godly living."*

Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). The Bible exposition commentary (1 Pe 1:14). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

- Verse 14 says be “obedient children” and 15 and 16 says, “be Holy as God is Holy”
  - In other words, the child should RESEMBLE the parent.
  - Put another way, the FRUIT should match the TREE.
  - Verse 16 quotes God in the Old Testament saying "Be holy, because I am holy." Before we get too intimidated, it doesn't mean we can be as HOLY as GOD is.
  - It's just that as His children, we should RESEMBLE Him.
- Let's talk about BEING HOLY.
  - What does the word HOLY mean?
  - The New Testament word hagios means set apart, separate. It follows that for believers (saints or "holy ones") the call to be holy is a call to be separated from common use and set apart, or reserved, for special use.
  - Question: How many in class this morning are NATURALLY HOLY?
  - Okay, then HOW can we BE holy? Though we are SAVED by Christ, we are still sinful by nature, so HOW can we be HOLY?
- First, we can only be holy because Christ lives in us through the Holy Spirit.

Jerry Bridges in *The Pursuit of Holiness* writes:

*“...the pursuit of holiness is a joint venture between God and the Christian. No one can attain any degree of holiness without God working in his life, but just as surely no one will attain it without effort on his own part. God has made it possible for us to walk in holiness. But He has given to us the responsibility of doing the walking; He does not do that for us...holiness is a process, something we never completely attain in this life. Rather, as we begin to conform to the will of God in one area of life, He reveals to us our need in another area. That is why we will always be pursuing - as opposed to attaining - holiness in this life...”*

Spurgeon said:

"Holiness is not the way to Christ; Christ is the way to holiness." (Emphasis mine)

- We can PURSUE a holy life because the Holy Spirit lives in us thanks to salvation through Christ.
- But, as Jerry Bridges said, we have to do our part. What does that look like?

J.C. Ryle a theologian from the 1800's attempted to describe “practical holiness.” He wrote:

*“It is a hard question to answer...my explanation will be nothing but a poor imperfect outline at the best.*

- *Holiness is the habit of agreeing with the mind [of] God...as we find His mind described in Scripture.*
- *A holy person will endeavor to turn away from every known sin, and to keep every known commandment.*
- *A holy person will strive to be like our Lord Jesus Christ.*

- *A holy person will pursue meekness, endurance, gentleness, patience, kindness, and control of their tongue. They will put up with a lot, tolerate a great deal, overlook a lot, and be slow to talk of demanding their rights.*
- *A holy person will pursue self-control and self-denial.*
- *A holy person will pursue love and brotherly kindness. They will endeavor to observe the golden rule of doing to others as they would have others do to them, and speaking as they would want others to speak to them.*
- *A holy person will pursue a spirit of mercy and benevolence towards others.*
- *A holy person will pursue purity of heart. They will dread all filthiness and uncleanness of spirit, and seek to avoid everything that might draw them into it. They know their own heart is like tinder, and will diligently keep clear of the sparks of temptation.*
- *A holy person will pursue the fear of God....the fear of a child, who wishes to live and move, as if they were always in their father's sight, because he loves them.*
- *A holy man will pursue humility. They will desire, in humility, to consider others better than themselves.*
- *A holy man will pursue faithfulness in all the duties and relationships in life.*
- *They will try, not merely to fulfill their duties and responsibilities, as well as others who have no care or concern for their souls, but even better, because they have higher motives, they will try to be of more help than the others.*
- *Last, but not least, a holy person will pursue spiritual mindedness.*
- *They will endeavor to set their affections entirely on things above, and to hold very loosely the things of earth."*

[http://preceptaustin.org/new\\_page\\_42.htm](http://preceptaustin.org/new_page_42.htm)

- Verse 17 - What does verse 17 tell us is another MOTIVATION to BE HOLY? "reverent fear".
- Back to the metaphor of the parent and the child...I think we would all agree that children shouldn't have to live a FEARFUL life at the hands of their parents.
- However, what happens when a child has "no fear"?
- We might say a child needs a "healthy fear" of their parent.
- So, describe for me what a "healthy fear" looks like?
- Verse 17 reminds us that God is not only a LOVING GOD of provision and salvation... He's also a God of JUDGEMENT.
- At the end of time there will be TWO JUDGEMENTS, one for UNBELIEVERS and one for BELIEVERS.
- What will God judge UNBELIEVERS for?
- What will God judge BELIEVERS for?
- Our SALVATION doesn't hang on our works, but we BELIEVERS in Christ WILL be held accountable for our actions.

In verses 18-19, Peter reminds us that the SACRIFICE of Jesus for our REDEMPTION is the "highest motive for holy living."

1 Peter 1:18–19 (NIV)

18 For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.

Chuck Swindoll writes:

*"All those who don't know Christ are merchandise in the slave market of sin....they are in bondage to desires, impulses, and ignorance --- alienated from God. Spiritually blind and shackled in sin, they get jostled by the uncontrollable flesh, the alluring world, and seducing demons. They continue to dwell in that futile, frustrating lifestyle passed down to them from previous generations. Their only hope is help from the outside. Christ provided that help at the cross."*

Charles Wesley summed it up:

*"My chains fell off, my heart was free,  
I rose, went forth, and followed Thee.  
Amazing love! how can it be  
That Thou my God, shouldst die for me!"*

Why should BELIEVERS IN CHRIST strive to live a holy life? Because of the SACRIFICE Jesus made for our ETERNAL FREEDOM.

So, What's The TAKEAWAY?

- Peter tells us, BECAUSE of what Christ has done for us, there's a way we are to LIVE for Him.
- First, we need to PREPARE OUR MINDS for our daily battle with Satan and SIN
- We need to be ALERT and FULLY SOBER about that battle, yet...
- We need to be OPTIMISTIC because of the HOPE we have through Christ
- We need to STRIVE to serve God as "obedient children" who want to please Him
- That means not SLIDING BACK to the evil desires we had before
- INSTEAD, we are to STRIVE to LIVE HOLY LIVES because we serve a HOLY GOD
- And, one more thing...
- We're to STRIVE to be holy because God told us to be holy. But, there is another benefit for the kingdom of God that comes from STRIVING to live a HOLY life:

D.L. Moody said:

*"A holy life will make the deepest impression. Lighthouses blow no horns, they just shine."*

- The question for us is: "How will you and I STRIVE to live a HOLY LIFE in the power of Holy Spirit this week?"