

Gospel-Driven Holiness

1 Peter 1:13-21

Some young Police Cadets had an exam, with just one question.

- You're in your uniform. You notice smoke coming from a house. You go over to check it out. You gather there's a family inside.
- The smoke is so intense that it travels to the highway and causes a massive pile up.
- One car veers off to avoid collision, but actually flips his car in the process, and rolls down a hill into a river.
- And then suddenly one of *the most wanted criminals in the country*, jumps out of another car and starts running away.
- Question: What do you do?

The shortest answer from one student was this: "I would remove my uniform and mingle unobtrusively with the crowd."

We have that kind of temptation as a Christian; to remove our uniform, and the badge that we belong to Jesus, and mingle with the crowd.

Peter says, be different; be holy. We must be who we are.

- Verse 14 "Don't conform..."

Holiness is about living out our Christian identity in a corrupt and hostile world.

To live out our calling, "Be holy I am holy" we need to be driven by the gospel.

Peter weaves gospel reminders in and out of this passage as he calls God's people to holiness. It's gospel-driven holiness.

Clarifications on Holiness

- Positional Holiness and Practical Holiness.
 - Chosen to be holy and blameless in him (Eph 1:4)
 - "Having purified your souls" - that's happened
- Practical holiness is not isolationism:
 - Picture Jesus, not a monk living on the side of a cliff
 - He's not talking about Wacko Texas - 2:22; **Jn 17**
- Practical holiness is not about external appearances:
lampshade; 1600's powdered wig; priestly collar; Jedi Knight
Pharisee – "you look like Pitbull"
- Practical holiness is not boring.
 - "happy are the holy" (Matt 5)
 - You can have holiness without stuffiness.
- Practical holiness is not minor.
"Other things are more important" (1 Thess. 4:3-8).
What is more important than the will of God?

Holiness is not just necessary for faithful to God and longevity, but also for effectiveness...

**“It is not great talents that God so much blesses, as it is great likeness to Jesus.
M’Cheyne**

#1: Live in the Power and Hope of Your New Identity (1:13)

“Therefore” is important. See what it’s therefore.

- All of the exhortations to come depend on the grace that he just expounded in 3-12.
- The call to holiness is rooted in the realities of grace.
- There imperative is based on the indicative.
- We must never reverse the order; not works righteousness.

By grace, we have a **new identity!**

- “children” (14)
- “called” (15, 2:9)
- call God “Father” (17)
- “ransomed” (18)
- “purified your souls” (22)
- “born again” (23)
- “new born infants” (2:2)
- “living stones” “spiritual house” and “holy priesthood” (2:5)
- “chosen race, royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people of his own possession” (2:9)
- “but now you are God’s people” “recipients of mercy” (2:10)
- “sojourners” (2:11)

All of these phrases indicate a fundamental change that has taken place in their lives!
Praise God this is true about you, Christian!

Who am I?

- Many never feel good about themselves; or and constantly seek approval from others.
- You will always have insecurity issues as long as you fail to believe what God says about you.
- Our identity is not based on performance or worldly standards: pride or despair.
- Our identity is in Jesus.
- If you try to find your identity in anything else, it will shrink the life out of you.

This new identity means you have power to pursue practical holiness.

- New birth, resurrection, living hope, inheritance; the Holy Spirit indwelling us, the new covenant people of God (1:2).
- 2:24; 2 Pet 1:3

This new identity fills us with hope.

- This passage is **bookended** by hope – 1:13; 1:21
 - 1 John 3:2-3 - hope/purity
- **“Grace** to revealed to you” – That’s how he sums up Christ’s return: grace.

● Did 10:6, the final prayer for the Lord's Supper: "Let grace come and let this world pass away. Maranatha, Amen."

- "revealed" – what's hidden will be revealed.
- By his grace, you entered the journey (1:10), you continue the journey, his grace is coming in the future.

#2: Realize That You're in a War (1:13-14)

The coming of Christ doesn't mean we live with an idle wishfulness, but with a mental resolve to avoid the allurements of the enemy, until we see our Christ.

Now, we're in a battle with the flesh, the world, and the devil.

Notice this mental, and internal war in verses 13-14.

- 1917 - intense... your alert, vigilant... encounter traps, enemy, aircraft...
- 2:11, "abstain from the passions ... flesh, which wage war"
- Village Movie. Sin, not out there, but in here!
- (4:2-4); Matt 5:27-30

Positive (v. 13-14a)

Prepare your minds for action– "gird up loins of your mind" (**Intramurals**) (Elijah, 1 King 18:46)

That's not where I think of my loins!

Roll up your sleeves; strap it on.

Be sober-minded, avoid being mentally intoxicated; addictions, habits.

- Be alert; disciplined. Live with the awareness of Christ's coming and with the devil's hostility.
- **Sober-mindedness facilitates prayer; and is need to live with an awareness of the devil.**
(4:7; 5:8)

Negative (v. 14)

do not be conformed to the **passions** of your former **ignorance**. (Rom 12:1-2)

Don't let the world squeeze you into its mode.

- **Golden Coral – enemy**
- **Gal. 5:16**; Walk by the Spirit and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh

#3: Embrace Your Holy Calling (1:14-16)

1. Every Christian has this calling (1:14-16)

- "**As obedient children**. Like father like son. We bear the father's resemblance.
- "**Be holy**" (15-16) Theologians call this attribute a communicable attribute: it's an attribute God shares with us and demands of us. No text says, "be omnipotent" as I am omnipotent" (or omnipresent - they're not shared with us.
- **More than morality, "it's not morality, morality, morality" or "separate"**
- **It speaks of what it means to be God.**
- **But it's not that the calling is for us to be God; but for us to be so bound up with God that our lives are lived to his glory. It's about being fully devoted to God.**
- **Like those OT utensils, we say use us God for your service.**

2. **This calling requires a high view of God.** – “For I am Holy” (1:15-16)
• He quotes from Leviticus. ([Oxford Library](#)), recover a high view of God

3. **It's fueled by gratitude to God (2:9)**

4. **It is walked out in all of life.** “[All your conduct](#)” (1:15, 17)

- “**Conduct**” is used 8 of 13 times in NT in 1 & 2 Peter.
- 2:12 (society); 3:1-2 (marriage); 3:16 (witness)
- This involves relational sins: **2:1**.
- Holiness involves not just separation *from* evil, but also a dedication *for* righteous living. **2:24**

5. **It's involves “honoring Christ the Lord as holy in your heart” (3:15)**

6. **Holiness involves believing that Jesus is better than sin (2:3-4)**

We will go somewhere for satisfaction; but it's not found in sin; it's in Jesus.

- Don't go after a rice crake when you can have a ribeye! Jesus is better.
- Have you ever went grocery shopping when starving? You'll buy anything, like **rice cakes!**
- “I've always wants to try those.” No you didn't. You're starving. And you will do Consume anything when hungry.”

Application: This is what we are called to as believers.

- This isn't for the select few; or few clergy.
- If you've been called to salvation, you've been called to holiness.

#4: Live Before the Eyes of the Father (1:17)

Verses 17-21 form one sentence in Gk, but it's worth breaking it down in two points.

- He puts together God as Father and as Judge.
 - Part of the reason reverence for God is strange is reverence in the family unit is all but obliterated.
 - There's a lack of reverence for mom, dad, coach, teacher, etc.
- We need a revival of honor and reverence.
- It's a privilege to call him Father.
- But we must live in awe of him, (**Ps 103:13**, “as the Father has compassion... fear him).
An analogy of this (albeit imperfect) is a healthy relationship with a father and a son.
 - **A Father get down on the ground to play with his son. He runs to him and he rolls around protecting him with his arm... laughter fills the room. And then little Johnny smacks his dad across the face. No more giggles. He takes him by the hand and says Johnny we don't smack daddy.**
 - There's intimacy and authority.
 - There's delight and discipline.
- As judge, we must beware of our accountability before God the Father.
- Accountability is not the only motivation for holiness, but it's one of them.
- He knows and sees all.
- And he's an impartial judge.
1988 Olympics Ben Johnson (Canada) beat Carl Lewis, but it was found out that Johnson used an illegal substance. His medal was taken away.

God is the final judge; and we will reward the faithful.

Not terror but awareness and awe.

- Exile: Joseph – "I will not sin against God..." The Lord was w Joseph.
- Psalm 51. "Against you and you only have I sinned."
- James, "Maybe, a little bit no."
- Ezekiel 8:12

C.E.B. Cranfield:

It is of God's infinite condescension that you are allowed to call him "Father." You are not to presume on his goodness, but rather let it make you reverent and humble. He has not ceased to be the impartial judge of all men. The more truly, the more intimately, we know him, the more of awe and reverence we should feel.

#5: Preach the Gospel to Yourself Everyday (1:18-25)

This reverence is not just based on the recognition of judgment, but with deep gratitude and wonder at what God has done for us in Christ!

"Set faith at work on Christ for the killing of your sin. His blood is the great sovereign remedy for sin-sick souls. Live in this, and you will die a conqueror; yes, you will, through the good providence of God, live to see your lust dead at your feet." — John Owen

Peter helps us "live in this" as he provides us with a rich Christology, and says so many glorious truths about the crucified and risen Christ:

1. His death (and subsequent glories) was fulfillment of prophecy (1:11)
2. Here, he is the ultimate Passover Lamb, who has brought the ultimate Exodus (1:18-19)
3. Here, his death is a planned death (1:20)
4. His death is also an example (2:21, 23)
5. The significance of his death is brought out in 2:24, 3:18.

"**knowing**" this; he is **reminding** them.

- Don't remove your uniform and your badge and move among the crowd.
- You belong to Jesus!
- Don't forget who you are, and whose you are!
- 1 Cor 6:18 — you were bought with a price, glorify God with your body.

A. You've been ransomed (redeemed, rescued, saved) from futility (18a).

- Two images: one from Gk society: slaves or prisoners could be freed through payment; the other from Jewish society: Exodus.
- **See Deut 7:6ff.**
- His emphasis is not on guilt and sin but futility!
- **Jesus saves us not only from wrath, from stupid.**
- **Gallaga – Game Over**

B. The price of your redemption (18b-19): *the blood of Christ*

- By the blood of Christ are sins are forgiven and we are brought to God (1 Pet 3:8)
- our consciences are cleansed (Heb. 9:14),
- we gain bold access to God in worship and prayer (Heb. 10:19),
- are progressively cleansed from more and more sin (1 John 1:7; cf. Rev. 1:5b),
- are able to conquer the accuser of the brethren (Rev. 12:11)

C. The person of Christ: (19)

- Sinless: “spotless” – lived the life, died the death
- Passover lamb spared Israel from the *wrath* of God.
- We have been saved by the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.
- The *one who was perfectly holy was crucified to make the unholy, holy.*

D. The plan of redemption: foreknown before the foundation of the world! (V. 20)

- This corresponds to 1:2.
- The whole work of redemption was planned in advanced.
- He was manifested in the last times - during this phase of redemptive history (Gal 4:4)
- Jesus wasn't a pathetic victim, but victorious Savior who fulfilled his mission.
- He laid his life down; it wasn't taken; at just the right time.

E. Implications

- Through him, you are *believers in God ...*
He has brought us to God!
- Through him, we have faith and *hope in God.*
- *The sacrifice of Jesus in the past gives us ongoing hope in the future. (Rom 8:32)*

Why is this section on the person and work of Christ so important?

- It's because there's no holiness without a Christ-adoring heart.
- That's the engine that fuels holiness: love for Christ.
- Holiness is not just saying no to sin; it's about saying yes to Christ.
- Fill your affections with Christ, and there will be no room for sin

It's fun to watch a young man fall in love. It can be even more fun when the romance is long distance.

You can predict what will happen. There'll be hours of late-night, heart-pounding phone conversations. The postal service will be overrun with love notes crossing each other in the mail. Pillows will be soaked with tears.

But the most telling symptom is the glazed faraway look in Romeo's eyes. I'm sure you've seen it. You ask the man a question and you get a blank stare. He's not at home. He's elsewhere. He's in another land. He's with his sweetheart.

You might say his heart is set on things afar, where Juliet is seated right by the telephone. (Briscoe, 1988)

That's being focused on another person.

Let me encourage you to do this daily with the Lord Jesus, as set your hope fully on the grace that will be revealed to you.

Set aside time daily where your eyes glaze over, as you focus on his beauty and goodness, and the glory to come.

“Though you have not seen him, you love him...”