

# Be Holy

## 1 Peter 1:13-21

**Introduction** – We have been called, elected, foreordained. And we are being kept by the power of God. Called to what? We have been called to holiness. And having been called to a place of consecration, we are called to live like it inside and out.

**The Doctrines of Grace, Rightly Understood, Are to Have a Deep Impact Upon Your Thoughts, Affections, and Actions** (vv 13-14)

**A Mind at War** – The work at hand is first a work of the inner-man, his thoughts and affections. It is not enough that you have firmly believed in the Truths of Grace. You must discipline your mind to take these truths to heart. Our tendency is still towards the sinful things and the banal things (Psalm 119:36-37). We are a culture that prefers to amuse ourselves to death, rather than consider the deep things of God.

**“Be Sober”** – Peter is not simply saying ‘don’t get drunk’. Our ‘joy’ is not to be irreverent giddiness. Our carnal passions are to be mortified, and our lawful affections are to be kept from ever controlling our loyalty and obedience to God. Make sure there are no loose affections ‘hanging about’ to trip over.

**“Rest Your Hope”** – We are not to be disciplined and sour-faced. We are to be disciplined to a perseverance of faith (“fully” could be translated “to the end”) that results in rest and assurance. “*It is finished*”, Jesus said.

**“Obedient Children”** – We are to grow in our understanding, but just as we say to our children, obedience often precedes understanding (Heb 5:14). We are to obey, not simply because we see that His commands are right and good, but because we are *His children*.

**Ignorant, Former Lusts** – This is no excuse to anyone before they were converted. It is simply a matter of fact that before regeneration, no one can obey God because they do not know God. Sin never enlightens. It always darkens, always muddles, always hardens, always deceives.

**Our Standard** (vv 15-16) – We are not to evaluate our conduct based on the mean average of all other Christians, and then feel good about ourselves.

**“In All Your Conduct”** – Holiness is to describe your business dealings, your heart towards your spouse and the harlot on the web, your handling of your wallet and your remote control, your words to your parents and teachers. Jesus said, “...be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect” (Matt 5:48, see also Deut 18:43).

**“Be holy, for I am holy”** – Holiness is defined by our keeping the Law of God from the heart. It is also defined in making wise distinctions (see the context in Lev 11:44). But notice that holiness is not directed to a list, but to a Person. We are to imitate God, for we have been born again in His image, and we are being renewed in His image. The Law is not an abstract proposition that God signed on to keep. The Law is a reflection of His character, and “*Christ is the end of the law*” (Rom 10:4).

**The Evangelical Answer** (vv17-21) – If you respond “that is impossible”, then you are beginning to understand the gospel. There is only ‘good news’ for those who know the hopeless, desperate state of their souls, left to themselves. If the Father has called you, remember, He is also your impartial Judge.

**A Salvation That Produces Fear** (v17) – If you fear Him as Your Judge, it will endear you to Him as Father. This Judge does not play favorites. He can’t be bought. He doesn’t care about your ultimate priorities (praise God) and He doesn’t consider you more worthy than someone else. He seeks your best, your salvation, for reasons that rest in Himself, not in you. The result of your salvation is the exaltation of Jesus Christ and the glory of God the Father (Phil 2:9-11), because God’s greatest concern is His own glory. That you have been saved by such a God should cause you to “*serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling*” (Psalm 2:11).

**A Salvation That You Cannot Afford** (v18) – No amount of the most valuable created things could ever purchase your salvation. No silver, no gold, no works of your hands. “*Nothing in my hands I bring, simply to thy cross I cling.*” The infinite worth of Christ’s blood was the price of your redemption.

**A Salvation That is Precious** (v19-21) – A Lamb without blemish was not offered up for whoever wanted forgiveness, but for a particular sinner or sinners. The precious truth of particular redemption is here.

*He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world*, and so your election was without condition, and this is precious. The solution for sin was predestined before the existence of sin. God was not surprised by the fall of Adam, nor is He surprised by your sin.

*‘who through Him believe in God’* – Even your faith is a gift of God.

**Conclusion** – Being ‘called’ to Christ is not simply an invitation to ‘accept Jesus into your heart’ if you want to. It is the culmination of the plans of Almighty God before the world began. God had plans to deal with your specific sins long before you ever thought of them. And so, Christian, in your striving against sin, are you remembering to strive against a ‘forgiven’ sin? And in your pursuit of holiness, which you must pursue, are you following a religion based on commands, or commands based on the character of a personal God?

Dave Hatcher – November 18,