

2007 SERIES A HOLY LIFE
I Peter 1:13-2:3

Continuing our series on I Peter
 Today we look at God's call to **Holiness**.

A young mother took her little three-month-old son to the park.
 Along the way he fell asleep in the stroller. A little four year old boy came
 up and asked, "Is that your baby?" "Yes," She answered. "What's his
 name?" "Erick," She said. "Can he walk?" "No, he's much too young."
 "Can he crawl?" "No, not yet." The boy looked confused.
 "Then why did you bring him to the park?"

Good question.
 That mother brought him to the park not for what he was,
 But for what he will be.
 She foresaw the day when her boy
 Was old enough to swing on the swing.
 Slide down the slide,
 And climb the jungle bars.

God looks at your life not only for what you are
 But for what you can be.

**14As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when
 you lived in ignorance. 15But just as he who called you is holy, so be
 holy in all you do; 16for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy." I
 Peter 1:14-16**

So what does it mean to be HOLY?

I. WHAT IS HOLINESS?

Peter does not use the Greek word *hagios*- which means *saint*,
 but the Hebrew word *qādes*- state of being *holy*, one who is godly, devout:
a holy life set apart for the worship or service of God.

In other words God is asking us is to have the character of God
Be holy, because I am holy. (1:15-16; Leviticus 11:44-45; 19:2; 20:26)
 All thought the O.T. the opposite of Holy or sacred,
 is that which is profane or common,

Moses seeing the burning bush, hears God say:

"Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground" (Exodus 3:5).

Not like ordinary ground.

Wherever God is- is HOLY GROUND

All through Exodus we see the majesty of God's holiness (15:11),

his holy dwelling (15:13),

a holy Sabbath (16:23; 20:8-11),

a holy nation (19:6),

a holy mountain where God dwells, off-limits to mere mortals (19:23),

and a Most Holy Place in the tabernacle (26:33-34; 28:29, 35).

Holiness goes with everything.

I like white shirts.

Part of the reason is that they go with everything.

No matter what color of pants you are wearing,

no matter what color tie, no matter what color shoes

It goes with white.

If Donna's gone, if I'm in doubt as to what to wear, wear white.

But you know what I don't like?

Stains on my white shirts.

spaghetti sauce.

Or pizza,

Or gravy.

Or spit up from my grandchildren.

Getting that stuff on my white shirt

Makes the white shirt un-wearable.

So when I eat I wear a napkin over my shirt.

If we are made holy in Christ

Then the only way we can stay holy is to

Put on the robe of His righteousness.

so that we do no soil our spirits.

God is not just separated from sinners,

He is also morally pure, righteous, and inherently different than sinners.

I John 1:5 This is the message that we heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.

Light is inherently different from darkness.

You and I cannot make ourselves holy

We are made holy through the precious blood of Christ.

18For 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 forefathers, 19but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. I Peter 1:18-19

It is the sacrificial offering of Christ that makes us holy.

When our sins are forgiven, the focus shifts

From our ungodly character to become like God's character.

As we move toward holiness, or discipleship.

Peter urges his readers to live out their lives with holiness.

II. HOW DO WE PRACTICE HOLINESS?

Peter gives us some specific building block to do that.

13Therefore, prepare your minds for action;

1. First he calls on them to "prepare your minds for action"

The literal expression is : "gird up the loins of your mind" (KJV).

People in the first century wore long outer garments,

but when it was time to work or walk,

they would tie the ends of their garments around the waist

so as to keep them from getting in the way.

Peter is saying, "Now give your full attention to this."

~ A lot of people want to serve God, but only in an advisory capacity.

Notice God didn't say prepare your feelings for action.

Because Christian come to know God through his word.

Many religions of the world teach that the way to God

Is through mystical visions, crystals, rituals, incantations, or emotional trances or experiences, doing good words, or sacrificing self.

Judaic Christianity alone insist on the primacy of language.

Our relationship with God depends on communication.

He walks with me,

He talks with me,

He tells me I am his own.

Just like we can't know people intimately by merely being in their presence.
Or going through an emotional experience with them.
We must talk with one another and communicate.

That is the heart cry I hear from those trying to reestablish their marriage.
He or she won't talk to me.
Our God is a God of conversation.

**We address Him in the language of Prayer and
he addresses us in the language of Scripture.**

The Greek word for repentance- *Metanoia* means a **change of mind**.

So now you understand the magnitude of a Christian denomination's
decision when they throw out the authority of God's word,
They also throw out the authority of God's presence in our lives.

The Reformation put God's word in the hands of the common people
The printing press brought about a revival,
common people could read God's word.
If you're not using your mind.
And reading God's words daily,
How will you know the way God wants you to live and how can you
PREPARE YOUR MIND.

Vs 13b be self-controlled;

2. The next directive is to be self-controlled (NIV),

Greek *nēphō*, "be well-balanced,

The Greeks were familiar with how people acted when they were drunk.

They didn't have good balance.

The test that our police department uses for determining a DUI is balance.

Can he walk straight, can he stand straight, can she talk straight.

Peter says self-control is to be free from every form of
mental and spiritual 'drunkenness,'
Anything from excess, passion, rashness, confusion, etc.
That causes imbalance.
KJV renders it "be sober."

If you're going to live a sober life from alcohol.
You must discipline yourself.

You can't have a casual attitude towards alcohol and survive.
 You can't have a casual attitude toward food and exercise and loose weight.
 Neither can you have a casual attitude about self-control
 and live a Christian life?

Peter calls you to clear thinking.

To a specific living.

To self control.

That comes from obedience.

I Peter 1:22 Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart.

One parent said I decided to stop worrying about my teenage son's driving and take advantage of it. I got one of those bumper stickers that says "How's my driving?" and put a 900 number on it and stuck it to my sons bumper. At 50 cents a call, I've been making \$38 a week.

Maybe we need a sticker stuck on our backside that says:
 How is my living? Put a 900 number on it for the church
 and at 50 cents a call we could pay for our new building.

1 Peter 2:1-2

Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. 2Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, 3now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.

SELF CONTROL

3. "set your hope" on the coming of Christ

Vs. 13c set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed.

The Greek verb *elpizō* means "to look forward to something, to hope for,
 We are to focus on the time "when Jesus Christ is revealed,"
 and on the grace will accompany it.

When my brother and I were home on the farm.

Mom and Dad would decide to go to town and

Leave us home to keep working.

Dad would give us the chore assignments we needed to do

When they drove out of the farm yard
 We experienced freedom.
 We could do what we wanted. We did.
 We would play tag with our tractors down in the bottomland and
 swim in the river, play softball and hunt
 But there was always dad voice in the back saying.
“You have this done before I get home.”
 The closer it got to when he would return,
 the more anxious we were if the work wasn't done.

The hope of Christ's return
 should not create anxiety or a sloppy life.
 but an inspired determination to live our lives in holiness.
 to be a motivated to be ready to meet him.

Peter exhorts us:

"As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance" (1:14).

"Conform" is the Greek word *suschēmatizō*,

"to form according to a pattern or mold, model after something."

It is the same word is used in **Romans 12:2: "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind...."**

What my brother and I discovered on the farm was that
 If we did the work first that was required.
 Then we had an anxiety free day to ourselves.

Do you want to live a holy life.
 Then ask yourself who are you trying to conform to?
 The world?
 Your teenage friends?
 Your business associates?
 Or God?

Peter uses four words to describe a life without God in vs 14 and verse 19:
Former old life (Greek *proteros*), all those things that had a hold on us
before our new birth. Are you still controlled by the old life?
Ignorance (Greek *agnoia*), not knowing better. Are you still living like you
 don't know any better in this world? Or are you studying to show
 yourselves approved of God?

Evil desires (Greek noun *epithumia*, "a lust or great desire for something forbidden. Are you being pulled or swayed by the lust of this world? For money, sex, possession, power?)

Empty (Greek adjective *mataios* means vain, fruitless, powerless, lacking truth.) **That should be** the description of our former lives found in verse 19.

When we except Christ into our lives.

You and I accept the responsibility to live the Character of God.

That character is holiness.

We have been purchased and purified by the blood of Christ.

And our lives should emulate it in love of one another.

"Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart." (1:22)

Chuck Colson tells that the Novel "Gone with the Wind" was based on real people.

There was a Rhett Butler his real name was Rhett Turnipseed.

There was a Scarlett O'Hara whose name was Emelyn Louise Hannon

Rhett really did walk out on Scarlett and join the Confederate army.

The rest of the true story is told by South Carolina Turnipseed family and reported by Wesley Pruden in the Washington Time.

After the Civil War, Rhett Turnipseed became a drifter and gambler,

On Easter morning in Nashville in 1871

Rhett attended a **Methodist revival meeting.**

And he was moved and converted by the Holy Spirit to the Christian faith.

He attended divinity classes at Vanderbilt University and

Became a Methodist Circuit Riding preacher in rural Kentucky.

Did Rhett and Scarlett paths ever cross again.

The Turnipseed family tells the story that Rev. Rhett was worried about a young woman in his flock who had run away and was working in a house of prostitution in St. Louis.

So Rev. Rhett rode off to look for her.

He found the young woman, but the Madame of the house had no intention of letting her go.

Rhett discovered that the Madame was none other than his former love, Scarlett. Or Emelyn Louise Hannon.

Rev. Rhett challenged Scarlet to a game of cards.

IF he won, the young girl would be free to leave.

He did win with a royal straight flush

Ace, king, queen, jack, and ten of spades.
 The girl left with him.
 The story ends well with the young woman betting married.
And Scarlett or Emelyn left prostitution
 was converted and joined the Methodist church.
 Eventually opened an orphanage for Cherokee children.
 She died in 1903, and her grave is marked to this day.

The true story is even more astonishing than fiction.
 It is a story of God moving in the lives and hearts of
 a man who was a drifter and gambler
 and a woman who lived off the proceeds of prostitution.
 But whose lives were changed and became holy.
 By the power of the risen Christ.
 If God can save the likes of these,
 Surely he can work to save people like you and me in our world today.
 That is the result and power of Holiness.

PRAYER:

Lord, we know too well about the struggle with sin. I pray for my brothers and sisters -- and me -- that you will help us to make a commitment to personal holiness in our living and thinking and speaking. Help us to leave behind the corrupting desires of the world around us and fill our hearts with your desires instead. Lord, we rely upon your strength. Help us, we pray, in Jesus' name. Amen.