

**I Peter 1:15-16**  
**February 5, 2017**

**Open with Prayer**

**HOOK:**

Last week we acknowledged that in spite of having the great gift of salvation, we're still imperfect. We can tag areas of our life where we feel stuck, or wish we have made more improvements by now, or wonder "why can't I be more (fill in the blank)?" But we should never lose hope. We cling to the fact that upon our salvation, we became a "new creation" in Christ Jesus. The "old is gone, the new has come." We have the Holy Spirit sealed within us to guide us and direct us. We have His power within us to accomplish His Will.

**Transition:** You will recall that Peter is encouraging the scattered Christians in northern Asia Minor on how they can build on this great salvation they have received, which will be a good word for us. This salvation was a gift and was the foundation of their faith relationship to God, as it is for us.

We will pick up where we left off last week by reading I Peter 1:15-16 to hear him out on how significant this salvation is. I still want us to consider that **all of us can successfully work out our salvation BY fulfilling the RESPONSIBILITIES God expects of us.** Let's find the responsibilities that come with salvation, and then wrestle with HOW to actually fulfill these responsibilities. That will be our challenge. Let's begin.

**BOOK (NIV 1984):**

V.15:

- But just as he who called you is holy, so **be holy in all you do;**

V.16:

- for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy."

**Process Observations/Questions:**

Q v.15-16: What is the fifth responsibility you see? [Be holy in all that you do]

Q: This is one responsibility that sounds so "over-the-top," yet, that is expected. We are made in His image. How do we fulfill that responsibility? How do we "be holy?" Here are some ideas:

- I Peter 1:2 suggest that obedience is the key.
- I Peter 1:22 suggest that obeying the truth is how we "purify" ourselves. There's a sense of holiness in purity.

**Observation:** Any holiness that we have in character and conduct must be derived from Him. As I Peter 1:2 says, "We are being *sanctified by the Spirit*, which means *to be set apart for God's exclusive use and pleasure.*" Though absolute holiness can never be achieved in this life, all areas of our life should be in the process of becoming completely conformed to God's perfect and holy will. (See Rom 12:2)

## **LOOK:**

God's holiness is an essential part of His nature. "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5). Any holiness that we have in character and conduct must be derived from Him. Basically, to be *sanctified* means to be "set apart for God's exclusive use and pleasure." It involves separation from that which is unclean and complete devotion to God (2 Cor. 6:14–7:1). We are to be holy "in all manner of conversation [behavior]," so that everything we do reflects the holiness of God. If something cannot be done to the glory of God, then we can be sure it must be out of the will of God.

## **Close in Prayer**

### **Commentaries for Today's Lesson:**

**Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *The Bible Exposition Commentary* (Vol. 2, pp. 396-397). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.**

#### 1. THE PREPARATION (1:15-16)

We would still be in that sad sinful plight were it not for the grace of God. He called us! One day, Jesus called to Peter and his friends and said, "Come, follow Me ... and I will make you fishers of men" (Mark 1:17). They responded by faith to His call, and this completely changed their lives.

Perhaps this explains why Peter used the word "called" so often in this letter. We are called to be holy (1 Peter 1:15). We are called "out of darkness into His marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9). We are called to suffer and follow Christ's example of meekness (1 Peter 2:21). In the midst of persecution, we are called "to inherit a blessing" (1 Peter 3:9). Best of all, we are called to "His eternal glory" (1 Peter 5:10). God called us before we called on Him for salvation. It is all wholly of grace.

But God's gracious election of sinners to become saints always involves responsibility, and not just privilege. He has chosen us in Christ "that we should be holy and without blame before Him" (Eph. 1:4). God has called us to Himself, and He is holy; therefore, we should be holy. Peter quoted from the Old Testament Law to back up his admonition (Lev. 11:44-45; 19:2; 20:7, 26).

God's holiness is an essential part of His nature. "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5). Any holiness that we have in character and conduct must be derived from Him. Basically, to be *sanctified* means to be "set apart for God's exclusive use and pleasure." It involves separation from that which is unclean and complete devotion to God (2 Cor. 6:14-7:1). We are to be holy "in all manner of conversation [behavior]," so that everything we do reflects the holiness of God.

To a dedicated believer, there is no such thing as "secular" and "sacred." All of life is holy as we live to glorify God. Even such ordinary activities as eating and drinking can be done to the glory of God (1 Cor. 10:31). If something cannot be done to the glory of God, then we can be sure it must be out of the will of God.

#### **The Word of God (1 Peter 1:16)**

"It is written!" is a statement that carries great authority for the believer. Our Lord used the Word of God to defeat Satan, and so may we (Matt. 4:1-11; see Eph. 6:17). But the Word of God is not only a sword for battle; it is also a light to guide us in this dark world (Ps. 119:105; 2 Peter 1:19), food that strengthens us (Matt. 4:4; 1 Peter 2:2), and water that washes us (Eph. 5:25-27).

The Word of God has a sanctifying ministry in the lives of dedicated believers (John 17:17). Those who delight in God's Word, meditate on it, and seek to obey it will experience God's direction and blessing in their lives (Ps. 1:1-3). The Word reveals God's mind, so we should *learn* it; God's heart, so we should *love* it; God's will, so we should *live* it. Our whole being—mind, will, and heart—should be controlled by the Word of God.

Peter quoted from the Book of Leviticus, "Ye shall be holy; for I am holy" (Lev. 11:44). Does this mean that the Old Testament Law is authoritative today for New Testament Christians? Keep in mind that the early Christians did not even have the New Testament. The only Word of

God they possessed was the Old Testament, and God used that Word to direct and nurture them. Believers today are not under the ceremonial laws given to Israel; however, even in these laws we see moral and spiritual principles revealed. Nine of the Ten Commandments are repeated in the Epistles, so we must obey them. (The Sabbath commandment was given especially to Israel and does not apply to us today. See Rom. 14:1–9.) As we read and study the Old Testament, we will learn much about God’s character and working, and we will see truths pictured in types and symbols.

The first step toward keeping clean in a filthy world is to ask, “What does the Bible say?” In the Scriptures, we will find precepts, principles, promises, and persons to guide us in today’s decisions. If we are really willing to obey God, He will show us His truth (John 7:17). While God’s methods of working may change from age to age, His character remains the same and His spiritual principles never vary. We do not study the Bible just to get to know the Bible. We study the Bible that we might get to know God better. Too many earnest Bible students are content with outlines and explanations, and do not really get to know God. It is good to know the Word of God, but this should help us better know the God of the Word.

**Pentecost, J. D. (1985). Daniel. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures (Vol. 2, pp. 843-844). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.**

1:15–16. Rather **as obedient children** (lit., “children of obedience”) they were to mold their characters to (e) “be holy” **in all** they did (1 Peter 1:15). Their lifestyle was to reflect not their former **ignorance** (*agnoia*), but the **holy** (*hagioi*) nature of their heavenly Father who gave them new birth and called them (cf. “called” in 2 Peter 1:3) to be His own. First Peter 1:15–16 do not speak of legal requirements but are a reminder of a Christian’s responsibility in his inner life and outer walk. Though absolute holiness can never be achieved in this life, all areas of life should be in the process of becoming completely conformed to God’s perfect and holy will. The quotation in verse 16 was familiar to all who knew the Old Testament (Lev. 11:44–45; 19:2; 20:7).