

Living with Hope, Walking in Holiness

1 Peter 1:13-16

October 20, 2024 | Mercy Hill Church

Big Idea: We are called to live with hope and to walk in holiness because of the new life we have in Jesus through God's grace!

Background of 1 Peter

- **When?** ~62-63 A.D.
 - 64 A.D. Emperor Nero falsely accused and persecuted Christians for a fire which burned ½ of Rome.
 - Apostles Peter & Paul killed (martyred) in subsequent years
- **Where?** Rome
- **Who?** Christians (mostly Gentile, non-Jewish) dispersed throughout modern day Turkey, regions of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia
- **Why?** To encourage and remind the believers to stand firm (1 Peter 5:12) and persevere
- Sermon Series: 1 Peter – “Persevering as Faithful Exiles”
- 1 Peter 1:1-12 one long sentence in Greek: main thought is “Blessed be the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ...who has given us new birth”
 - What God has done (“the indicative”) leads us to...
- V.13 – a hinge verse – what follows is what God calls His people to do: the imperatives, the commands
 - Himes Quote: First Peter 1:13 makes it clear that Peter does not intend his audience to simply bask in the glow of their privileged position; rather, “all this hope and salvation has been revealed to the audience for a reason: they are called to respond... Thus, Peter is setting up the general theological framework for specific ethics, which will be detailed later, once the nature of the church has been discussed in greater depth.”

1. **Be Hopeful (v.13)**

- **Object of Our Hope: Jesus' Return**
- 1. (cf. 1 Peter 1:3-5 “He has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ...to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled and unfading...ready to be revealed in the last time” (see sermon “Hopeful Reminders”)
 - Set your hope in Jesus – but more specifically the future revelation of Jesus – Jesus’s return, His second coming!
 - Jobes: “...they will receive grace, not wrath when Jesus Christ is revealed...Peter therefore orients his readers to a future eschatology of a grace that is fully present but not fully realized in their lives, a grace that is fully guaranteed by the past event of the redeeming death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Although saving grace is a present reality, the gracious gift of final deliverance awaits a future realization. The inheritance that is currently kept in heaven (1:4) as the full and final salvation (1:9) will be finally and completely theirs when the rule and authority of Jesus Christ that is now hidden becomes universally manifested.”
- **Fully -- Not Divided**
- (cf. 1 Timothy 6:17)

- Hope defined/explained:
 - “Not simply a wish for the future...rather Greek verb *elpizo* is used in the NT involves the idea of assurance that what is hoped for will certainly come to pass”...“Confident expectation”
 - “I’m sure...or I’m confident...” – not “I wish...”
- Not a partial, divided hope (re: “don’t put all your eggs in one basket”), but fully, completely (re: “all in”)
- **How?**
- **1) By Preparing Our Minds for Action**
- (cf. Exodus 12:11, Luke 12:35-36)
 - In Greek, literally, “girding up the loins of your mind” – an idiom
 - Girding up loins || rolling up your sleeves => getting ready to work, to take action
 - Exodus 12:1- Forbes: “The language can in fact be traced back to Exodus 12:11 where the Israelites, about to leave Egypt, are told to eat the Passover, dressed and equipped to start out on the long and tough journey without delay. So too Peter’s readers are to set out on their journey to the “Promised Land” and must be ready for action. To go out as Christians on pilgrimage through the world demands vigor.”
 - This hope, confident assurance, doesn’t just come by just wishful thinking or blind optimism or *laisse fair/ que sera, sera* – but rather mental resolve and preparation
- **2) Being Sober-Minded**
- (cf. 1 Peter 4:7, 5:8; 1 Thess 5:6-8)
 - Opposite of sober = drunk: lack of self-control, under the influence or control of alcohol (vs. having self-control). One’s mind is cloudy, foggy, unable to think clearly, unable to be discerning.
 - Greek verb: Present tense – continual state, regularly – not a one time thing
 - Wayne Grudem calls having “spiritual concentration” vs. spiritual distractions
- Remember the context: Peter was writing and exhorting persecuted Christians, people who lived as a minority,

But in the meantime, as we continue to live life now and until Christ returns, how are we to live?...

2. Be Holy (vv.14-16)

- Holy is very “churchy” word. What does holy mean? What is holiness?
- “Holy” defined:
 - Hon-Lee Kwok: Holiness refers primarily to the quality of God, denoting his transcendent apartness from the rest of creation, his uniqueness, and his total purity. When the term is applied to people, things, or places that have been touched by the presence of God or dedicated to God, it connotes the idea of being set apart for God and thus belonging to the realm of the divine, which is morally and ceremonially pure.
 - Kevin DeYoung: “At its most basic, holiness means separation. It is a spatial term. When someone or something is holy, it is set apart...in a similar way, God is holy because he is transcendent and different from everything he has made. He is separate and distinct, not ordinary or common. He is God, and there is no other. We are called to be holy because God is holy. Our holy God sets us apart to live in a way that reflects, however imperfectly, his holiness.”

- J.C. Ryle: “Holiness is the habit of being of one mind with God, according as we find His mind described in Scripture. It is the habit of agreeing in God's judgment, hating what He hates, loving what He loves, and measuring everything in this world by the standard of His Word.”
- Set apart (from sin), set apart for God
- God's commands (to be holy) reveal some aspect of His character (holiness)
- Aren't we already made holy through Jesus' atoning sacrifice on the cross?
 - Kevin DeYoung: “Holiness, for the Christian as well as for the church, is both gift and calling. We who are perfected in Christ are also being sanctified in Christ. Holiness is what the church already has (Hebrews 10:14), what the church will one day become (Hebrews 12:10), and what the church must presently strive after (Hebrews 12:14)...Important we keep in mind the positional and progressive aspects of the church's holiness. The church already is holy...at the same time the church that is holy is called to be holy”
- **ObeY as God's Beloved Children (v.14a)**
- (cf. 2 Thess 2:16-17, Hebrews 12:5-11)
 - Reminding them of their new birth, adoption, new identity as God's people and children – and God as their heavenly Father.
 - Cultural context: children were expected to obey their fathers
 - Cf. 1 Peter 1:2 “...for obedience to Jesus Christ...”
 - God is our Heavenly Father & Lord – we are not!
 - **Hebrews 12:5-11** Reminds us that God as our Heavenly Father disciplines us not out of hate or spite, but out of love.
 - In fact, in v.8 “If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons
 - J.C. Ryle: “Just as a parent is pleased with the efforts of his little child to please him, though it be only by picking a daisy or walking across a room, so is our Father in heaven pleased with the poor performances of His believing children. He looks at the motive, principle, and intention of their actions, and not merely at their quantity and quality. He regards them as members of His own dear Son,”
- **Don't Be Conformed To Sin (v.14b)**
- (cf. Romans 12:1-3)
 - Context: Many of the pagan beliefs were less about ethics, more about loyalty to the king or just appeasing (offering) the gods.
 - Philosophies like stoicism, epicureanism – minimizing pain, maximizing pleasure
 - Jerry Bridges: When God saves us through Christ, He not only saves us from the penalty of sin, but also from its dominion.
 - Jerry Bridges: As we grow in the knowledge of God's holiness, even though we are growing in the practice of holiness, it seems the gap between our knowledge and our practice always gets wider. This is the Holy Spirit's way of drawing us to more and more holiness.
 - Kevin DeYoung: (Reformed) Christians sometimes make the mistake of thinking that if they are to be really Reformed, they must utterly denigrate everything they do as a Christian. To be sure...we cannot fulfill the law absolutely. But here's where careful distinctions are helpful: good works can be truly good without being perfectly good. Acting like holiness is out of reach for the ordinary Christian doesn't do justice to the way Bible speaks about people like Zechariah and Elizabeth, who ‘were both righteous before God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and statutes of the Lord’ (Luke 1:6). It doesn't take seriously the Lord's commendation of Job as a ‘blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil’ (Job 1:8) or of Paul who frequently commends his churches for their obedience and godly example...Christians can be rich in good works (Acts 9:36, 1 Tim

6:18). We can walk in a way worthy of our calling (Eph 4:1). Looking upon our good works in his Son, God is, 'pleased to accept and reward that which is sincere, although accompanied with many weaknesses and imperfections' (WCF 16.6) –

- It's possible and expected for us obey God and to be holy...

- **Be Holy in All Areas of Your Life (v.15b)**
- (cf. Leviticus 11:44-45, 19:2, 20:7-8, 26)
 - Levitical laws in the OT – every aspect of life from food, clothing, schedule (different feasts of the years, sabbath), sex, hygiene, dealing with neighbors, etc. – not just religious life like temple worship and sacrifices...while no longer under the OT ceremonial and ritual laws today
 - The demand and command for every aspect of our lives by God to be holy is no different as Christians, as disciples, His followers.
 - Jeff Vanderstelt: "This is what discipleship is all about. It is the ongoing process of submitting all of life to Jesus, and seeing him saturate your entire life and world with his presence and power. It's a process of daily growing in your awareness of your need for him in the everyday stuff of life. It is walking with Jesus, being filled with Jesus, and being led by Jesus in every place and in every way."
- 4 Questions (from The Pursuit of Holiness by Jerry Bridges):
 - Is it helpful — physically, spiritually, and mentally?
 - Does it bring me under its power?
 - Does it hurt others?
 - Does it glorify God?
- **Be Like Your Heavenly Father (vv. 15-16)**
- (cf. Leviticus 11:44-45, 19:2, 20:7-8, 26)
 - We become like what we worship
 - Children resemble their parents...
 - Jerry Bridges: When we commit ourselves to the pursuit of holiness, we need to ensure that our commitment is actually to God, not simply to a holy lifestyle or a set of moral values...
 - How do I know if I'm part of God's family? How do I know if I'm forgiven, if I'm really saved? How do I know if I've been born again, have this new life in Christ?
 - Faith and trust in Jesus
 - Am I growing in holiness? Am I growing in greater resemblance to my Heavenly Father, am I growing in Christ-likeness? (faith & works, faith & fruit)
 - Jerry Bridges: "He tells us as believers to ask ourselves; "Is there evidence of practical holiness in my life? Do I desire and strive after holiness? Do I grieve over my lack of it and earnestly seek the help of God to be holy?"

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Reflection Questions

- What are some things which you have consciously (or subconsciously) placed your hope in? Why?
- What are some specific areas in your life where you need to grow in holiness? What areas in your life have you perhaps compromised? What areas might those close to you say?
- Why is it important to remember that God's commands flow from God's character?
- Have you received the new life ("been born again") in Christ? What's preventing you from doing so today?

- **Parent Corner:** What is your child's understanding of holiness? What are some ways this week you can teach and discuss with your child about what it means to be holy?

Recommend Resources:

- The Pursuit of Holiness by Jerry Bridges
- The Hole in our Holiness by Kevin DeYoung
- Holiness by J.C. Ryle