

1.2

CALLED TO BE HOLY

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God calls us to reflect His holiness and His work of transformation in our lives.

TRUTH FOR MY LIFE

I will respond to God's transformative work in my life and reflect His holiness.



FOCUS VERSE: I Peter 1:15

But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.

LESSON TEXT: I Peter 1:13-23



BIBLICAL OVERVIEW

Lesson Text: I Peter 1:13–23

The epistle of I Peter primarily addresses one central theme: the proper response of Christians to suffering. (See I Peter 1:6–7; 2:19–21; 3:13–19; 4:1, 12–16, 19; 5:10.) The first verse of his first epistle indicates Peter’s audience—those scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia—was quite familiar with persecution on account of their faith (*Apostolic Study Bible*, introduction to I Peter).

Part of this appropriate response is holiness: conformity to God’s image and separation from the world. Such holiness is not merely outward in appearance. Indeed, holiness should include a change in our outward apparel, but holiness involves much more than that. Holiness also includes a change in speech (I Peter 1:15), passions (1:14), and actions and deeds (1:17). It includes love for others (1:22) and even the thoughts in our mind (1:13).

Holiness is an action of purification that cannot be separated from the new-birth experience. Holiness is the only logical outcome of being born again. Peter spoke of holiness as “having purified your souls . . . since you have been born again” (I Peter 1:22–23, ESV). The order is simple: be born again, and then be made pure and holy.

Such purification and holiness are not attainable by human power, which is why attempts at holiness without the new-birth experience are futile. Our holiness is a result of God’s holiness (I Peter 1:16). Since at the new birth we receive the Holy Spirit (literally, God living inside us), we receive power to become holy as God within us makes us holy by His very nature dwelling in our lives.

However, just because God is the only one who can make us holy, we who have received God are not absolved of responsibility. No one has ever been made holy with complete passivity. Peter challenged his readers, including us, to consciously and consistently forsake the lusts and sins of this world, call upon the Lord, and conduct ourselves in a manner that reflects the salvation we have so graciously received.

PART OF THIS APPROPRIATE RESPONSE IS
HOLINESS: CONFORMITY TO GOD’S IMAGE
AND SEPARATION FROM THE WORLD.

DAY 1

I Peter 1:13-14

¹³ Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

¹⁴ As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance.

Biblical Insight

The concept of “girding up” is foreign to many Westerners who no longer wear long, flowing robes that inhibit fast movement. However, in ancient times people tucked their garments into their girdle (belt) to free their legs for movement (*Apostolic Study Bible*, note for I Peter 1:13). Such a concept would have been familiar to Peter, a fisherman who likely girded himself daily during physical labor on his boat. This metaphor by Peter called his recipients to remove the unnecessary constraints on their mind in order to focus more fully on Christ.

Daily Devotion

When it comes to the mind, we must use extreme vigilance. Our thought life can influence the decisions we make and how we perceive the world around us.

Like Scripture calls, we must prepare our minds for battle each day. When priests girded themselves in preparation for the day, it freed them to move about and perform their daily responsibilities. If this concept is hard to imagine or seems unrelatable, picture a more applicable profession. Construction workers put on hard hats to protect themselves from potential danger. Police officers gird themselves with bulletproof vests when preparing for a potentially harmful situation.

We are tasked with the daily responsibility of wholly caring for the temple God has entrusted to us. We must protect it. We can do so by caring about what we watch, listen to, and allow to have power over us.

How are you preparing for battle?

Reflection and Prayer

» *What can you do to apply this principle to your life today?*

DAY 2

I Peter 1:15-16

¹⁵ But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;

¹⁶ Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

Biblical Insight

Peter quoted Leviticus 11:44, which states: “For I am the LORD your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy.” The call to holiness is inextricably connected to God’s very nature and our submission to His sovereign rule. We are not holy by our own accord or ability; we are made holy by God’s holy nature, but only as we fully submit to His authority in our lives. We cannot be holy without total submission to God.

Daily Devotion

When a man and woman make a vow to each other and are married, they commit to each other. They are devoted to each other. They have a mutual agreement to forsake all others and be dedicated to one another. There is no such thing as “half-married.” Neither spouse would be happy if the other one was only partially faithful.

In God’s kingdom, there is no such thing as “half-holy.” Our surrender to Christ should be complete. If we struggle with surrendering portions, we must take those to God in prayer. He understands that holiness is a lifelong commitment and process. He is patient and forgiving and longs to commune with us in a wholly surrendered, steadfastly authentic way.

The life He has prepared for you now and in eternity pales in comparison to what you think you have to give up now. Holiness is worth the surrender.

Reflection and Prayer

» *What can you do to apply this principle to your life today?*

DAY 3

I Peter 1:17-19

¹⁷ And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear:

¹⁸ Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;

¹⁹ But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

Biblical Insight

The metaphor of redemption refers to the activity of slaves being set free by payment of a ransom. Similarly, God's children have been redeemed, but not with anything of monetary value like silver and gold. As valuable as those things might be in the earthly economy, they are powerless to save. God's children had to be saved by the precious blood of Christ, the only acceptable payment. Jesus Christ's shedding of blood for humanity's redemption fulfilled the prophecy in Isaiah 52:3: "Ye shall be redeemed without money."

Daily Devotion

If you have attended a funeral, you know funerals are generally somber events. Even if the loved one was ready to meet the Lord, it can still be bittersweet for those left behind.

One of the most gruesome, yet profound funerals of all time included a death, a tomb, but also a resurrection. The death was sorrowful, gruesome, and did not make sense to those observing, but it was meant for good. The three days of waiting in silence were heavy, but they served a greater purpose: the grave made way for grace.

The cross ever continues teaching us valuable lessons. Where Jesus was laid could not contain Him because He did not belong there. He reigns on the throne where nothing—not our problems, worries, failures, or even death itself—can have the victory. The grave was meant to bury the Savior, but it served as the catalyst for new life. Calvary gave us a priceless gift, a way to be eternally saved.

Reflection and Prayer

» *What can you do to apply this principle to your life today?*

DAY 4

I Peter 1:20–21

²⁰ Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you,

²¹ Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.

Biblical Insight

The word translated “foreordained” is connected to a Greek word found in I Peter 1:2, which is translated “foreknowledge.” The implication of this word does not imply predestination, as if things were set in motion from the beginning of time and cannot be changed. Rather, this phrase signals to the reader that God knew in advance (foreknowledge) the necessity of redemption through Christ’s blood; therefore, He planned (foreordained) to make a way for redemption. The pre-planned element refers to Christ coming and shedding His blood, not a removal of human free will and decision making.

Daily Devotion

Since before the Fall in the Garden of Eden, God knew humanity would need salvation. He already had a plan in place to redeem His people. He realized we would make mistakes and need a way of escape.

Whether we stray or get overwhelmed trying to fix the broken pieces on our own, Jesus is consistently close. He stands with outstretched arms, beckoning us to return. He offers help and a loving embrace as we run, walk, or even limp back toward Him.

He recognizes the nights get dark and the journey can wear us down. He gifts us with times of respite beside still waters, but He never said we wouldn’t crawl through valleys. He did, however, assure us He will be with us when we go through them. Home is waiting at the end of the well-trodden, sometimes hard-to-handle path. Heaven—eternity with our Savior—makes it worth every step.

Reflection and Prayer

» *What can you do to apply this principle to your life today?*

DAY 5

I Peter 1:22-23

²² Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:

²³ Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

Biblical Insight

A key indicator of a purified soul is when love emanates from a pure heart. Scripture is consistent in demonstrating love as a key marker of God's children. Love is a fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22). Jesus proclaimed, "Ye shall know them by their fruits" (Matthew 7:16). Jesus said His followers would be easily identified by their love for one another (John 13:35). Paul said he could speak with tongues of angels, have the gift of prophecy, and give generously to the poor, but all would profit nothing without love (1 Corinthians 13:1-3).

Daily Devotion

In the present age of vegan, gluten free, sugar free, or whatever dietary restriction or preference one has, modifications can be made. It seems a substitution exists for just about everything.

In the kitchen, substitutions can work. However, when it comes to living for God, substances cannot, under any circumstances, be substituted. Love is a key ingredient in the Christian life. Without it, the rest of the creation is meaningless. You can have all the sprinkles, frosting, good works, and missions trips, but without the vital element of love, something will always be missing. A life without true, godly love will not turn out as it should. Love is essential and God-ordained.

Consider doing an inventory of the ingredients you need to stock up on. Make sure authentic love is part of your list and your life.

Reflection and Prayer

» *What can you do to apply this principle to your life today?*
