

Title: Called to Be Holy

Text: 1 Peter 1:13-16

Some people, from a very early age clearly know that they have been called to do with their life.

Some believe they are called to be a doctor, or a solider, or a counselor, or a mom, or a dad. They have a very clear-eyed view of their life and they know what their purpose is.

Others, like myself, had “calling ADHD.”

I thought I was called to be a disc jockey (pretty noble, right?), a marine biologist (until I realized how much science and chemistry I would need to learn), a graphic artist, a design engineer (I really enjoyed that one).

The truth be told, I have quite an eclectic resume.

And it wasn’t until I became a follower of Jesus in 1991, that the clarity of my calling and purpose become clear.

I wasn’t sure how it would happen, but I know God CALLED me to the pastorate shortly after I became a Christian.

Again, I didn’t know how it would happen, but I simply told the Lord, if that is what you want, open the doors and I’ll go through them.

That is pretty much how I have followed the will of my Father in Heaven these last 35 years! He has been so good to me!

But not every one of us is called to full-time pastoral ministry. And that’s okay and good.

But as followers of Christ, we are all called.

The question is, what are we called to?

What are you called to do with the life God has entrusted to you?

We are starting a two-part series based on our theme for the year of holiness.

2026 Theme - Saved by Grace, Changed by Holiness.

Every one of us here who names the name of Christ, who is a follower of Jesus, understands that this privileged standing is not accomplished by anything we have done.

No, no, no! It was accomplished through the shed blood of Christ on the cross.

2026 Theme - Saved by Grace, Changed by Holiness.

His sacrifice on the cross was offered to God on our behalf, that if we, by faith, trust this finished work, we will be saved.

Ephesians 2:8–9 ESV

⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

We love this passage and we love this truth! There is nothing we can do to earn salvation from the wrath of God. It is solely an issue of faith.

We are SAVED by GRACE! Amen and amen!

But, this is not the end of the story - it is just the beginning.

Yes, we are saved by grace, but we, by the powerful ministry of the Holy Spirit, coupled with the profound truth of the Word of God, are changed to be holy!

“Any gospel which purports to save people without also transforming them is inviting easy-believism. If you think being a Christian is nothing more than saying a prayer or joining a church, then you’ve confused real grace with cheap grace. Those who are justified will be sanctified.” — Kevin DeYoung

The Hole in Our Holiness: Filling the Gap between Gospel Passion and the Pursuit of Godliness

Friends, God doesn't just want to save you from eternal Hell (and He does want to do that), he wants to transform you to be like Christ!

And to be clear, Jesus Christ was, is, and ever shall be HOLY!

The Apostle Peter has a lot to say about this subject, and I thought it would be appropriate to study some of his writings this morning.

Peter understood firsthand what a holy transformation to Christlikeness looked like in the life of a believer.

In his first letter - in fact, in the first chapter of his first letter- Peter hits this subject head-on and makes no apologies for the role and goal of holiness in the life of the believer.

If you will indulge me, I will read verses 3-16. I want you to notice, as I read, that his first emphasis is salvation.

But I also want you to notice that, from his perspective, the result of salvation is not simply salvation from the wrath of God, but salvation to holiness.

1 Peter 1:3-16 ESV

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, ⁵ who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. ⁶ In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, ⁷ so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. ⁸ Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, ⁹ obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls. ¹⁰ Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, ¹¹ inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. ¹² It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look. ¹³ Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. ¹⁴ As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, ¹⁵ but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, ¹⁶ since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."

Salvation is freedom not only from the penalty of sin, but from sin itself.

As a Christian, you are free!

Free from the debt you owe to God for breaking His holy law over and over again.

But you are also free to say NO to the sin that so easily trips you up.

Before you were a slave to sin, now you are a slave to righteousness!

You, by the power of the Holy Spirit, can say no to sin, and yes to Christ!

This is your calling, friends! You are called to no longer live like you once did. Following the way of this world, being subject to the will of the Evil One!

And you are **called** to pursue **HOLINESS** with the life God has entrusted to you.

Main Idea: All Christians Everywhere are Called to be HOLY!

2026 Theme - Saved by Grace, Changed by Holiness.

Holiness is not optional for the believer. You are a new creature in Christ, the old has passed and the new has come.

Could a duck say, I like being a duck, but I am going to do everything in my life like a monkey? Of course not. A duck is a duck and will always be a duck because its very essence is a duck. His “duckness” is his very essence, regardless of whether he wills it to be or not.

So it is with the follower of Christ.

At the point of your salvation, there was a radical transformation that occurred and you became something different than you were.

You were transformed! You were born again. You were changed and your very essence was changed as well. If you were truly born again, you were truly converted into a holy creation.

Galatians 2:20 ESV

²⁰ I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

This morning, we will focus on verses 13-16 of [1 Peter 1](#) to fully understand the calling of holiness on your life.

1. Holiness is a Call for Right Thinking (vs. 13)

1 Peter 1:13 ESV

¹³ Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Thinking is a critical aspect of life but especially of the Christian life.

We are called by Jesus to love God with our mind...

Luke 10:27 ESV

²⁷ And he answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.”

Christians are not to check their MIND at the door of the corporate church service or in any aspect of this life.

Christians are to engage claims of Christianity found in the word of God, with sound and proper thinking.

2026 Theme - Saved by Grace, Changed by Holiness.

We do not have a blind faith. We have a faith rooted in reality.

Peter, in this passage, reminds us that we are to **direct** our thinking.

In other words he says "*Therefore - in light of what I have just told you about the amazing realities of salvation through Christ alone, I want you to do something...*"

I want you to "*prepare your minds for action...*"

Do not live your life in reaction mode, always reacting to this crisis or that event.

No! Instead, think ahead and realize that the Christian life is a series of actions that conform to the will of God.

I want you to think about this for a moment.

Your life is comprised of choices.

One choice, another choice, and another choice. Choice after choice.

Even as a follower of Christ you live your life based on choice.

It boils down to this simple formula for the Christ follower.

Will I choose to obey God or will I choose to obey self.

Peter, in verse 13, says, because you are a Christ follower, preparing your mind for the action of obedience.

When you set your feet on the floor each morning, be determined in your mind that you will obey Jesus.

Be sober-minded. Be clear-headed in your thinking.

Don't ever allow things to muddle up your biblical thinking.

This can easily happen with our emotions and feelings.

I know the good I am to do, but my emotions tell me, "Wait!" If you obey God in that area of your life you will lose friends or you will be made fun of, or it will cause all kinds of complications at your job.

If you choose to submit to your emotions and your feelings over what God has revealed in His Word, then you are not thinking clearly, you are not sober-minded, you are not determined to obey God above all else.

2026 Theme - Saved by Grace, Changed by Holiness.

Instead, Peter tells his reader what they are to focus on, what they are to set their minds on...

...set your hope...

So we prepare our minds by positioning them in a particular direction.

We fixate our mind on a future event.

And when we do this, we allow a powerful tool to be unleashed in our minds - **HOPE!**

Hope is the realized promises of God.

Hope is nothing to be trifled with.

Hope will keep someone alive.

Hope will produce endurance.

Hope will keep you moving forward when everything and everyone tells you to quit.

Peter says to “*Set your hope.*” This is one Greek verb, and it means ‘*to fix it in place*’.

Like a handprint in wet cement eventually becomes rock hard and unremovable, when we set our hope in a particular direction, a changed life is the inevitable result.

What direction are we to set our hope?

...fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”

Peter is not interested in doing something halfheartedly.

He wants his readers (and us) to FULLY set their hope on the future grace of God when Christ will be revealed.

We are often admonished in the Word of God not to borrow trouble.

Not to worry about tomorrow because tomorrow has enough trouble of its own.

It is a sin for us to worry because it is a direct affront to God’s power, control, and providential care for His creation.

But here we are encouraged to look forward and celebrate His future gracious provision.

When will we receive the full manifestation of His Grace? At the *ἀποκαλύψει* of Jesus Christ. Does that Greek word sound familiar to you?

Apocalypse or Revelation of Jesus.

In other words, when Jesus comes to get us, he brings something with him - the full realization of our salvation!

When Jesus comes to get us he will tell us to “*come and enter into the joy of your Master!*”

This is what Peter wants us to focus on. This is where we need to set our mind.

Paul has the same advice for the Colossian believers.

Colossians 3:1-2 ESV

¹ If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.

When we set our mind and focus it on the grace that we will receive when Jesus comes to get us, well, that is a significant first step in living a life of consistent and God-pleasing holiness.

Holiness is rooted not in mere behavior modification but in renewed thinking.

Tozer reminds us that what fills our minds shapes the person we become — and true holiness begins with the mind focused on God.

Be intentional about what shapes your thinking

Replace mindless input from scrolling on your phone, with God’s Word

Catch sinful thinking before it becomes sinful living

Ask, “*What am I believing right now?*”

Reset your mind daily on Christ and eternal things

Review: Recap the Point

Holiness is a Call for Right Thinking

All Christians Everywhere are Called to be HOLY!

Christlikeness begins and grows with thinking that is based on the truth of the Word of God.

And what is the inevitable result of right thinking? Well, that leads us to the next point.

2. Holiness is a Call for Right Living (vs. 14)

1 Peter 1:14 (ESV)

As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance,

The grace that will be revealed when Christ comes to get us is a powerful motivation to pursue holiness.

However, Peter gives another motivation. Our position with God should press us to holy living.

Who you are matters regarding how you live.

My kids were PK's, and with that title came specific responsibilities.

They didn't choose to be a pastor's kid, but it was their position nonetheless, and because of it, they had to endure certain restrictions and inconveniences that other kids their age did not.

We would remind them, when they were older, that they not only represented the Green family name but also represented Christ.

They were our children but, when they began to follow Christ on their own, they had a new name to live up to. Jesus.

Paul reminds his readers that they are part of a new family and as such this new family has rules to live up to. They are to be "**obedient children.**" They are to live in such a way that their lives are in conformity with the will of the Father.

Some people have the idea that when they become a Christian, they can live anyway they want. Not so!

Salvation is free and a gift from God. But we are not saved to sin, we are saved from it.

Sin brings forth death. And God doesn't want His children to traffic in the things of death.

No, He desires to protect His Children from such things.

So He has commands and expectations of His children to not only protect the name of God, but to also protect them from the harm that sin inevitably brings.

He reminds them that the way they used to live is no longer acceptable because of their new identity.

Look again at what he says...

1 Peter 1:14 ESV

¹⁴ As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance,

The old life is **dead**, stop returning to it.

The old life is **buried**; stop digging it up.

The old life is **gone**; do not invite it back.

The old life is **wrong**, live the new life instead - Mark Green

Paul makes the same argument in [Ephesians 2](#). Listen to his powerful words...

Ephesians 2:1-7 ESV

¹ And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— ³ among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. ⁴ But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— ⁶ and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷ so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

A truly born-again person will be conformed to the image of Jesus.

Some quicker than others, but it is true nonetheless.

And the reason this happens, as Paul so eloquently states, is because of the grace of God!

Listen to these other texts that support the same concept

Romans 8:29 ESV

For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

2 Corinthians 3:18 ESV

¹⁸ And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

2 Corinthians 5:17 ESV

¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

Colossians 1:21–22 ESV

²¹ And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, ²² he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him,

Titus 2:11–14 ESV

¹¹ For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, ¹² training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, ¹³ waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, ¹⁴ who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

“Sanctification is not optional for the believer. No one is justified who is not also sanctified.”

— Jerry Bridges, *The Pursuit of Holiness* (NavPress, 1978), Chapter 1

Reject grace that asks nothing of you

Pursue righteousness and transformation

Take sin seriously because grace is serious

Let the gospel shape how you actually live

Grace does not excuse sin; it empowers a new way of life.

Review: Recap the Point

All Christians Everywhere are Called to be HOLY!

Holiness is a Call for Right Thinking

Holiness is a Call for Right Living

And while Peter has alluded to this, there is only one way to achieve holiness truly...

3. Holiness is a Result of a Right Relationship (vs. 15-16)

1 Peter 1:15-16 ESV

¹⁵ but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, ¹⁶ since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.”

So many religions promise enlightenment, nirvana, a holy position that is beyond this life by doing certain things in this life.

In Hinduism, life is viewed as an ongoing cycle of reincarnation, and liberation from that cycle, called moksha, is pursued through one’s actions, spiritual knowledge, or devotion.

Buddhism teaches that salvation from suffering comes through self-effort and enlightenment, ultimately escaping the cycle of rebirth by achieving nirvana.

Every false system places the burden of salvation on the individual; only the gospel places the burden on Christ and then changes the individual.

Peter makes it clear in verse 15 that Christians are called. It is God who initiates. In fact, the Scriptures are clear that if God did not initiate, we never would.

Romans 3:10-12 ESV

¹⁰ as it is written: “None is righteous, no, not one; ¹¹ no one understands; no one seeks for God. ¹² All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one.”

And the God of all creation is holy.

What is holiness?

The primary biblical idea behind holiness is separation.

The Hebrew word qādōš means to be set apart or distinct.

The Greek word hagios carries the idea of consecration and moral purity.

God is **holy** because He is utterly distinct from all creation and completely free from sin.

Isaiah 6:3 ESV

³ And one [Angel] called to another and said: “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!”

And because those who have bowed the knee to Christ and become His follower have now become his child. We are part of God's family. And because we are part of His family, we take on his characteristics.

Angie and I have three children, and it fascinates me to see how they are like us.

They got all her good characteristics and all my bad ones!

But seriously, this is the point Peter is making.

1 Peter 1:15-16 ESV

¹⁵ but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, ¹⁶ since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."

Because you are the **son** or **daughter** of the HOLY God of the Bible, you are holy as well.

You are CALLED to be HOLY!

It is not an option. Because Your GOD is HOLY.

Because your CREATOR is HOLY,

Because your SAVIOR is HOLY,

You MUST BE HOLY! You MUST be PURE, and You MUST be set apart.

We cannot continue to live our former lives when we have a new identity, a new life, a new calling!

2 Corinthians 5:17 ESV

¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

Listen, if you boil all of this down, holiness is not the price we pay to become God's children, it is the family resemblance that naturally flows from already belonging to Him, and Jerry Bridges captures that truth beautifully when he says,

"We do not pursue holiness in order to be saved. We pursue holiness because we have been saved." — Jerry Bridges

The Pursuit of Holiness (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1978), p. 13.

Holiness doesn't usually change everything overnight. It grows through daily, intentional obedience.

So instead of walking out overwhelmed, do this:

2026 Theme - Saved by Grace, Changed by Holiness.

Ask the Spirit of God to put His finger on one area of your life that needs to change.

Just one.

Maybe it's what you're feeding your mind.

Maybe it's how you speak to your spouse or kids.

Maybe it's a habit that keeps pulling you backward.

Maybe it's your prayerlessness.

Maybe it's your entertainment choices.

Maybe it's unresolved bitterness or lack of forgiveness.

Maybe it's integrity in your work or finances.

Don't excuse it. Don't minimize it. Don't spiritualize it away.

If your Father is holy, then that area matters.

Take one concrete step this week toward holiness.

One decision.

One boundary.

One conversation.

One act of obedience.

Small obedience, practiced consistently, produces real transformation.

You have been called into something better.

Review: Recap the Point

All Christians Everywhere are Called to be HOLY!

We've seen that:

Holiness is a call for right thinking.

What fills your mind shapes your desires, your decisions, and your direction.

Holiness is a call for right living.

2026 Theme - Saved by Grace, Changed by Holiness.

Faith shows up in conduct. The gospel changes how we speak, love, forgive, and obey.

Holiness is a result of a right relationship.

We pursue holiness because we belong to a holy Father.

Identity drives obedience.

This is about growing family resemblance.

Conclusion

So, here's the question I want you to walk out with:

Where does God want holiness to grow in your life right now?

Ask the Spirit of God to show you:

A habit that needs to change.

A relationship that needs reconciliation.

A compromise that needs repentance.

A discipline that needs rebuilding.

A boundary that needs strengthening.

Then obey.

Holiness grows through ordinary obedience practiced consistently.

And listen, if you've been discouraged by slow progress, don't quit.

God is far more committed to your holiness than you are. He finishes what He starts.

One of the great lies of our culture, even inside the church, is that God's highest goal for your life is your personal happiness, but Kevin DeYoung reminds us what Scripture actually teaches when he writes,

"God is more concerned about your holiness than your happiness." — Kevin DeYoung

[The Hole in Our Holiness \(Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012\), Chapter 1.](#)

Church family, imagine a church where holiness is normal.

2026 Theme - Saved by Grace, Changed by Holiness.

Homes marked by purity and prayer.

Marriages marked by faithfulness and integrity.

Children growing up seeing real godliness.

Conversations shaped by truth and self-control.

Decisions governed by Scripture, not culture.

Lives that clearly belong to God.

Not perfect people.

But changed people.

A holy people who belong to a holy God.

That kind of church shines in a dark world.

That kind of church honors Christ.

That kind of church makes the gospel visible.

So church family, let's go live like who we really are, sons and daughters of a holy God, called, empowered, and joyful in the pursuit of holiness.