

We Are Becoming What We Already Are

I. Slide1 Announce:

A. **Prayer:** Lord, *write this* on our hearts. Lead us to *repentance*. Lead us to *pursue holiness*. Help us to **live** and **reflect** our Holy God.

II. Slide2 Intro: We Are Becoming What We Already Are

A. I remember going to get my drivers license at age 16 (tell story).

1. **A California driver's license examiner** told about **A teenager** who had just driven an almost perfect test for his driver's license. "*He made his only mistake,*" said the examiner, "*when he stopped to let me out of the car. After breathing a sigh of relief, the boy exclaimed, 'I'm sure glad I don't have to **drive like that all the time!**'"*

a) *That boy sounds like a lot of us christians.* We put up a good front when we *know someone is watching*, *but* the rest of the time *we let down our standards*.

B. **Slide3** As we talk about the topic of holiness, we shouldn't feel condemned (as believers), *but* we **should** feel convicted. *Let's differentiate between our positional holiness and our practical holiness.*

1. **our positional holiness** - we are holy in Christ (as He is). *You are a holy nation.*

2. **our practical holiness** (we are not) - *we are still working out what He has worked in us. We are becoming what we already are.*

C. **Slide4** What Holiness is **NOT** ...

1. *It is not Isolation.* We are not to quarantine ourselves from culture. (that's not a Covid statement, ha). *We are to be separate from sin but not isolated from sinners* (Jesus wasn't. be like Jesus!)

2. It is not Appearance. i.e. wearing of robes, not trying to look holy. Not external but internal.
3. It is not giving up happiness. You don't have to give up happiness when you go after holiness.

D. But it IS God's will for your life ... are you sure? any loop-holes? 1 Thes.4:3,4 *For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor.*

1. Paul makes it sound kinda important!

E. Up to this point in ch.1, Peter has not told us one thing to do, but instead has been talking about our Identity (we are children, called, have a Father, ransom, purified soul, born-again). Since this is true, our outline ...

1. Slide5 Pursue holiness in an unholy world. Proclaim Christ glory to a dark world. Practice good deeds to a watching world.

F. How do we live in an unholy, hostile, wicked world? Filled w/1000's of trials & dark temptations? Our focus must rise above our present circumstances.

1. We must live by a higher standard than the world around us. That's the meaning of holiness Peter is addressing. It means being different.
 - a) OT focus was difference by outward appearance (clothes, food, marriage)
 - b) NT focus was difference by inward change (Fruit of Spirit/attitude/character)

G. Slide6 (Swindoll said) *For now, we walk in the way of the cross; but because the cross was not the end of Christ's story, so it is not our end either.*

1. He conquered death & rose to new life, enabling us to be born into His same new life - a life everlasting in the loving presence of God. It is kept safe for us in heaven (4) & we are kept safe for it by God's power (5).

H. If the question in the 1st part was, *How can I remain joyful in the midst of suffering?*
 Then the question this week is, *How can I stay clean in a corrupt society?*

1. Christians throughout history have responded to this question w/all sorts of extremes:

- a) **Slide7** Some took the **hermit approach** living in **caves** - desiring solitude.
- b) Some took the **monk mentality** living in **cloisters** - dwelling only w/believers.
- c) Some took the **utopian approach** attempting to rebuild a perfect society (**communes**). *Desiring a world w/o worldliness? [if only we get **our guy** in office then ...]*
 - (1) Each approach falls under the same idea of **sanctification by isolation**.
 - (2) It's a **withdrawal from the world** to keep it from *rubbing off on them*.
- d) **The Biblical approach is** - not isolation but **insulation**.
 - (1) This approach calls us to be different from our depraved society **w/o** running to the **caves, cloisters, or communes**.¹

I. **So Peter pens a quick bullet point to-do list ...**

III. **Slide8 PURSUE HOLINESS IN AN UNHOLY WORLD (13-16)**

A. (13) **Therefore** - means live in the **power** and **hope** of your new identity (3-12).

B. **Preparing your mind for action** - Gird up the loins of your mind (**explain men's robe**). [from Ex.12:11 eat passover with your **belt fastened, sandals on feet, staff in hand**. **Gather your thoughts don't let em fly loose**. Cinch your belt tight]

1. Put your game face on. Lace em up. Be ready for war. **Sin doesn't sleep, & neither does Satan**.

C. **Sober-minded** - diligences, be self control [*opposite is* drunken-mindedness, drinking in unhealthy excess]

1. Our primary battlefield is our mind.

2. Your enemy has set his sights on **your** mind.

¹ Charles Swindoll, James, 1 & 2 Peter, pg.154.

3. I wonder what *social media sober-mindedness* looks like? Because what I mostly see a bunch of *drunken politicized & polarized crazy-mindedness*
4. **Rather than** being controlled by outside circumstances, **believers should** be directed from within. (don't be drunk w/wine **but** be filled with the spirit)
- D. Set your **hope** fully on the **grace** that will be brought to you at the revelation of JC.
1. **Faith** looks upward; **Hope** looks forward (anticipation).
- E. (14) do not be **conformed** to the passions of your former ignorance - instead conform to *Christs holiness*.
- F. **As obedient children** - if we are God's **children**, **then** we ought to be like our **Father**.
- G. (15,16) **you shall be holy**, for **I am holy** - **Are you holy? Not**, do you think you are **holy, are you holy?**
1. **Holy Is as Holy Does** - **Forrest Gump** popularized the statement, "*stupid is as stupid does*", meaning **one's actions** indicate one's level of stupidity.
 - a) Of course the opposite of that is true, *a person's intelligence may be judged by the wisdom of his or her actions*.
 - b) **And so Holy Is as Holy Does**, one's actions of holiness indicates one's level of holiness.
 2. **Here Peter cites Lev.19:2**. Both in the OT and the NT periods, God calls His people to **holiness** - *to reflect His character*.
 - a) When we talk about **God's Holiness** we mean *His Transcendence, His Remoteness* from everything **earthly & wrong**.
 - b) When we talk about **Man's Holiness** we mean *consecration to God*.
 - (1) It's being *set apart, dedicated, devoted, sold out to ... the love and service of God*.
 3. **Examples of Holiness, or being set apart**. We have the **holy scriptures** (writings set apart from all other human writings). We have **holy matrimony** (a husband and wife making a verbal commitment to each other, setting their lives **apart** for one another only).

H. Ok, so Holy in which area? You also be holy and *all* your conduct - maybe we can start this process early in the morning by *setting apart* our minds for the day. Then our passions, or ears, or eyes, or lips, or motivations, or attitudes, and our disciplines.

IV. Slide9 PRACTICE GOOD DEEDS TO A WATCHING WORLD (17-21)

- A. (17) Christians are to **fear God**, *not man i.e.* those who *persecute* us.
- B. **Conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile** - we are dwelling as a resident aliens/foreigners. **We are not settlers, only pilgrims.**
- C. (18) **Silver and gold** - worthless scrap metal compared to the price of a human soul.
- D. **The precious blood of Christ**, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot (which qualified it for service).
1. **Precious to the Father** Who gave His Son. **Precious to the Son** Who died. **Precious to the Spirit** Who applies. **Precious to the believer** who receives. **Precious to all eternity** to God's praise & glory.
 - a) **Because** we have been redeemed w/something **this precious**, **we need to live** w/that reality always before us **& honor the One** who paid such a price!

V. Slide10 PROCLAIM CHRIST GLORY TO A DARK WORLD (22-25)

- A. (22) **Love one another earnestly from a pure heart** - there's no more *brother bashing* or *sister smashing*. This is a challenge to **be** the body of Christ.
1. **We need each other to laugh with us, cry with us, accept us, struggle with us, and suffer with us.** Our call as *the family of God* is a call to *authentic living and genuine love* for each other.
- B. (24,25) From Is.40:6-8 - reminds them of the **contrast** of their **temporary suffering** vs the *assured and lasting nature of God's message of redemption*.
- C. **Slide11 End:** How do we live in an unholy, hostile, wicked world?

1. Pay close attention to what you look at. Your eyes our the closest connection to your mind.
 - a) They capture images that are *alluring, attractive, sensual, & pleasurable*.
 - b) We see 30-60 FPS. It's possible we see more than that, which is why video game developers are making increasingly more elaborate games. I calculated it out: if we took just 30 FPS. There are 3600 seconds in 1 hour, let's say we sleep 7 hours, leaves for 17 hours. So $17 \times 3600 \times 30\text{fps} = 1,836,000$ images a day ... Pay close attention to what you look at.
2. Give greater thought to the consequence than to the immediate pleasure
 - a) Walk through the consequences of your actions. Name the people that will be effected or harmed. Remind yourself of the high cost of a ruined reputation.
3. Start each day by renewing your sense of reverence for God
 - a) In prayer, devo's, in consecration *Lord, I'm here. I'm Yours. I give You my day*
 - b) Renew that Father-child relationship.
4. Throughout the day refocus on Christ
 - a) Whatever happens *realign* your focus on Christ.
 - b) Plan intentional regular short times of prayer throughout the day (at breaks/ lunch).

D. ****

E. Mark Twain said, *"It isn't the portions of the bible which I don't understand that bother me; it's the ones I do!"*

F. Keywords: Holiness, holy, practical, positional, sober-minded, hope, precious, blood.