

Being God's Holy People

1 Peter 1:13-21

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Up until this point in Peter's letter, he has not asked us to do one thing. First comes the description of a believer's new life in Christ. Now comes the call to action. This is the way the Christian faith works. We begin with understanding who Jesus is and what He's done for us. However, this understanding inevitably leads to action. This is why Peter writes, "Therefore, preparing your minds for action..." (1:13). The Christian life involves much more than simply believing the Gospel and going to heaven after we die. Our faith in Christ impacts the way we live right here and now in a fallen world.

In response to what Jesus has done for us, followers of Christ are called to live holy. However, how can we, as sinful people, possibly hope to "be holy in all (our) conduct" (1:15)? Thankfully, Peter not only calls his readers to holiness—he provides them with an incentive and power to live holy as well. As we'll see, our incentive for living holy and obeying God's commands changes everything. Many religious people who do not understand the Gospel do their best to be holy in hopes that God will accept them. At the same time, many irreligious people reject Christianity—assuming that holiness is the opposite of happiness—in favor of pursuing their sinful passions (1:14). However, people who understand the Gospel have a radically different incentive for living holy. Unlike religious people, they live holy as "obedient children" based on God's unmerited acceptance of them in Christ (1:3-5; 14)!

Likewise, Christians resist the lie that holiness is the opposite of happiness. Instead, they realize that the call to holiness—as challenging as it is—is also an invitation to glorify and enjoy God forever. As we place our "faith and hope" in God—as opposed to ourselves—He graciously covers our impurities with "the precious Christ's blood of Christ" and fills us with the Holy Spirit (1:2, 19). Because of this, God's people are purified and empowered to live differently in this world!