

# Be Holy for I am Holy

## 1 Peter 1:10-21

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Joy in Suffering (1 Peter Series)

Prepared by: Matthew S. Black

Sunday, July 2, 2017, 10:30am at Living Hope Church of Roselle, Illinois

[livinghopechurch.net](http://livinghopechurch.net)

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. **Welcome to our Visitors!**
2. **Pick up a July Missionary Prayer Calendar**
3. **VBS Group Leaders:** We are still in need of two male and 2 female Group Leaders. (Volunteers for this position must be at least 18 years old).
4. **VBS Registration:** We are requesting that parents pre-register ASAP so that we can have an accurate headcount for snacks and crafts. (Even if students won't be attending the full week, they need to pre-register).
5. **Aziz Aljuktan:** Don't miss Aziz Aljuktan this Thursday at 7pm at Living Hope. He'll be sharing his testimony of how he as a Muslim who memorized the Quran by the age of 13 came to know Jesus Christ. He'll also help us know how to point Muslims to Jesus Christ. I hope you'll be there for that.

*We're* looking in our Bible **1 Peter 1:10-21**.

"If you don't plan to live the Christian life totally committed to knowing your God and to walking in obedience to Him, then don't begin; for this is what Christianity is all about. It is a change of citizenship, a change of governments, a change of allegiance. If you have no intention of letting Christ rule your life, then forget Christianity; it's not for you."

~ Kay Arthur

### Intro

Last week we studied the majesty of creation and I looked up some more amazing facts about God's creation.

- The **earth** is rotating (spinning) at 1000 miles per hour.
- We are hurling through space in an orbit around the sun at 67,000 miles per hour.
- The **Milky Way Galaxy** is also spinning at half a million miles an hour.
- We inhabit a galaxy that is 100,000 light year wide and if you measure all the galaxies and universes, they measure 13.7 billion light years from one side in distance to the earth. So the entire width of the universe is 27.4 billion light years.

Studying God's creation is a good introduction to this week's theme of God's holiness. Holiness is God's "God-ness." It speaks of his infinite greatness and his moral perfections.

The essence of our message today is that we are to reflect God's holiness in this earth. We live in a very fallen world, and we are God's "elect exiles" that stick out on this earth because we don't belong here. God says to Peter and to us, "Be holy for I am holy."

## Scripture

**1 Peter 1:10-21**, "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."

17 And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile, 18 knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. 20 He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you 21 who through him are believers in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God."

## Holiness Defined: Putting on God's Moral Perfections

The theme of this passage and of the whole Bible is holiness. What is holiness? In one word it describes that our God is set apart and unique. It is his "God-ness." No one compares to Him. "There is none holy like the Lord" (1 Sam 2:2). As David says in **Psalm 40:5**, "LORD my God, no one can compare with you." Can you just tell your neighbor, *"No one compares to my Jesus"*?

Holiness speaks of God being set apart from His creation. And yet, God calls us from the beginning to "be holy," he says for "I the Lord am holy." We need to know what that means.

**We are Not Holy** – We are not naturally like God. We are fallen. We are sinful. God calls us to reflect him. We are his image bearers. We are to reflect the moral attributes of God.

**We cannot reflect God's Infinite Attributes** – We cannot reflect his infinite attributes. That's what separates him from us. He is eternal, immutable, and infinite in his knowledge, power, and presence.

**We are called to reflect God's Moral Attributes** – But what God does call us to imitate and reflect is his morality. God is love. God is light (morally perfect). God is gracious and merciful, abounding in his relentless love. Oh the ocean of God's love and kindness. We are not naturally like that until we meet God. God must reveal Himself to sinful creatures. He is able to transform us by his love.

## Holiness Encountered

**Moses** – When **Moses** encounters God's presence in the Old Testament, he is told to take off his sandals, and is also told not to come any closer. Moses covers his face in fear.

The **Temple** – In the same way, the **temple** was the main place where God’s holy presence was. God’s name is so holy, that when you come to him, you must be pure. God’s holiness is deadly – a lamb or a goat must be slain vicariously for the worshipper. Sacrifices shout: without holiness you will die.

The **World** – God’s name is not always treated with holy reverence. His name is tramped through the dirt of this world. It functions as a curse word, a platform for the obscene. That the world has little respect for God is clearly seen by the way the world regards His name. No honor. No reverence. No awe before Him.<sup>1</sup>

The **Church** – If anyone would ask, what is the top priority of our church? Some would say, “Evangelism. The preaching of the Word. Spiritual nurture.” But I tell you that the top priority is to be conformed to God’s image. In other words, to be holy.

The **Lord’s Prayer** – What is the first petition of the Lord’s Prayer? Jesus said, “When you pray, pray like this: ‘Our Father, which art in heaven...’ ” The first line of the prayer is not a petition. It is a form of personal address. The prayer continues: “... hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come...”<sup>2</sup>

**First Peter** – Peter tells us in 1 Peter – You are elect exiles. You have been chosen. You have an inheritance guarded for you in heaven. Your faith that will bring you to heaven is being guarded.

Trials will come to grow you and train you. Why? Because you are to be holy. This is the theme of the Bible. A holy God chooses an unholy and wicked people and makes them holy.

Peter says, **1 Peter 1:15-16**, “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.’”

## Outline

Holiness is the primary mark of the Christian. Here are three motivations for holiness...

- The **privilege** of holiness (10-12)
- The **preparation** for holiness (13-16)
- The **price** of holiness (17-21)

God is calling us into his holiness! We are called to live a separate, holy life from this world. God keeps you believing. He’s in you preserving you from this sinful world. He’s working a hatred for the deceptions of the world in you.

The Apostle John says in **1 John 5:18**, “We know that everyone who has been born of God does not keep on sinning, but **He who was born of God protects him**, and the evil one does not touch him.”

He who was born of God, by the seed of the Holy Ghost in the virgin Mary is the one who keeps you from going on in sin. Christ lives in you by the Holy Spirit. **Christ protects** you, and the **evil one cannot touch you and overtake you permanently**.

With that in mind, I want to give you three motivations for holiness: **privilege, preparation,** and the **price** of holiness.

## I. The **privilege** of holiness, vs. 10-12.

<sup>1</sup> Sproul, R. C. (1993). *The holiness of God* (pp. 18–19). Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

Oh, what privilege we have in Christ. We have a greater privilege than the OT prophets and even greater than God's holy angels. God has brought us to a great salvation that the prophets longed to **inquire** into.

**1 Peter 1:10-12**, “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.”

**Our privileges greater than OT saints** – The spiritual blessings now experience are greater than anything that was envisioned by Old Testament prophets or even by angels.<sup>3</sup> No matter what you are going through, are you thankful for the supreme privilege of holiness?

**Life hurts** – I know life hurts. I know you are going through many trials. But look at the awesome privilege that God has included you in his plan of redemption. **Gratitude** should **motivate** us to be like our holy God.

### **The Prophets wrote for you**

Peter says, you New Testament saints, you are more privileged than the Old Testament prophets. Vs 10, “Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully...” Vs 12, “It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you.”

The Old Testament prophets experienced much, but they wrote of things which fascinated them that were better than what they experienced.

- Abraham heard the voice of God
- Jacob wrestled with God
- Moses had the burning bush and saw the glory cloud by day and night.
- Elijah rode in a chariot of God's glorious presence
- Isaiah saw the Lord in all his glory and majesty

But we who live after the resurrection of Jesus have it better than them. They longed to know the details of Christ's suffering on the cross and his resurrection. They looked “searched and inquired carefully.”

From **Moses to Malachi**, all of the Old Testament prophets were fascinated by the promises of salvation. However, they did not merely *wish* to receive that salvation; they *actually* obtained it. But they received the gift of God's salvation without seeing its full accomplishment (cf. Heb. 11:39–40), without seeing Jesus Christ or having a relationship with Him. Though the prophets wrote of Messiah, they never fully comprehended all that was involved in Christ's life, death, and resurrection.<sup>4</sup>

They wrote in detail about Christ's life, death and resurrection, not for themselves, but for you! “It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you” (1 Pet 1:12a).

God invites you to partake in his holiness. The Old Testament prophets had this privilege, but you partake in a much deeper, richer way than they. They looked forward to the coming of Christ. For you these glories are not predictions – they are realities!

<sup>3</sup> Grudem, W. A. (1988). *1 Peter: an introduction and commentary* (Vol. 17, p. 72). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

<sup>4</sup> MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2004). *1 Peter* (pp. 51–52). Chicago: Moody Publishers.

## The Angels long to look

Peter says in verse 12, the glorious events of Christ's work of redemption that the prophets wrote about "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." (1 Pet 1:12b).

The angels hear about this redemption that has been announced to you, and they peer over the rail of heaven with curiosity. They long to look into this redemption and understand it.

You see the angels cry day and night, "Holy, holy, holy, the whole earth is filled with his glory" (Isa 6:3). How could a holy God redeem sinful man? Fallen angels don't get redeemed. Why fallen man?

This grace of holiness that we have is something the angels long to look into. If you think about it, none of the fallen angels will ever be redeemed, but God has chosen to redeem mankind. Oh how grateful we are to have the privilege of holiness, a privilege greater than all the Old Testament prophets and even the angels themselves.

## Are you Grateful?

How about you today, are you seeking God's holiness by being grateful, or are you focused on the negatives in your life? What ever you are going through is not worthy to be compared with the glorious privileges you have in Christ.

It's so sad to hear Christians who love to complain about just about everything. They complain about their marriage. They complain about their job or their health. Brothers and sisters, we have nothing to complain about. Our suffering is only temporary. We've been delivered by Christ. For eternity we will live in all the perfections of God. Our short, difficult life is like a vapor that appears and then vanishes. Our glorious eternity will be forever. We are more privileged than the prophets and angels, and we have nothing to complain about.

Your suffering will last a little while on this earth and then will be removed at the revelation of Christ at His Second Coming.

## Psalm 100

"Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth!

2 Serve the Lord with gladness!

Come into his presence with singing!

3 Know that the Lord, he is God!

It is he who made us, and we are his;

we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

4 Enter his gates with thanksgiving,

and his courts with praise!

Give thanks to him; bless his name!

5 For the Lord is good;

his steadfast love endures forever,

and his faithfulness to all generations."

## II. The **practice** of holiness, vs. 13-16.

How are we to be holy? Remember, holiness is God's "God-ness." It is his infinite and moral attributes. We can't put God's **omnipotence** or his **omniscience**, but we can put on his **purity**,

**love, goodness, kindness, and faithfulness.** That's holiness. It's being conformed to God's likeness. When God says "Be holy for I am holy," he is calling for the image of God in us that was corrupted to be restored by our relationship with Christ.

**1 Peter 1:13-16**, "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.""

## **A Call to Fight (1 Pet 1:13a)**

Peter says, "prepare your minds for action..." (1 Pet 1:13a). or literally, "*roll up the robe of your mind.*" In the middle east, everyone wore robes. Many still wear robes.

This command is a military term. Soldiers wore robes. How can you fight in a robe? You have to roll it up and tuck it into your belt. Prepare yourself for a fight, because you are living in a wicked world. Be ready to fight for holiness.

The fight is real. Paul describes it in two places.

The first idea is that in the flesh we cannot please God. There is no power in the flesh to please God. **Romans 7:18-19**, "I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. 19 For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing."

**Galatians 5:17-18; 24-25**, "I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. 17 For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.... 24 And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit."

So the question is: how do we fight in the power and grace of God. Peter gives us three attitudes to fight with grace.

1. Sobriety (be on guard), 2. Hope (look for the Second Coming), 3. Humility (be childlike in your obedience to God)

## **Three Attitudes to Fight with Grace**

Peter says, "set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet 1:13c). In other words, God has given you grace now and that grace will come to a climax at the coming of Jesus. How do we fight with grace?

### **1. Sobriety (1 Pet 1:13b) – Serious Mindedness.**

He says first to be "sober-minded." Be on guard. You are always under attack. We are to take the battle seriously every day. The Christian life is not a vacation. That's why the prosperity Gospel is a lie from hell. Our rest comes later. Right now we are at war. You have a bunch of Christians who are telling God's people to take a vacation in a war zone. That's reckless. You have to take this battle seriously. How do you do that? By putting God first above everything in your life where He belongs.

Holiness means we follow our King no matter where He leads us. Being a Christian is a change of citizenship, a change of governments, a change of allegiance.

Holiness means that we let Christ rule in our lives and transform us and train us to be like Him, good, loving, faithful, kind, just, and filled with self-control.

This world is a fight. It's a battle. Your unsaved friends and family are going to be pulling you and tempting you constantly to come back to the world. You must gird up the robe of your mind and focus your heart on Jesus.

**Are you Sober?** – are you sober-minded? When people meet you do they see above all that Jesus Christ is at the control center of your life? Are you taking this war against your soul seriously?

It takes sobriety. “being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ” (1 Pet 1:13b).

## 2. Hope (1 Pet 1:13c)

Peter is telling us how to fight the battle. It takes **hope**. Jesus Christ is coming at any moment, and you should be ready and filled with joy considering His coming. We are to be “sober-minded, set your **hope** fully on the **grace** that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ” (1 Pet 1:13b).

**1 John 3:2-3**, “We know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. 3 And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.”

As you hope in Christ and look for his coming, you will have a transformed life. Jesus is coming again! He may come today!

Focus on God's grace – You can't do this alone. You can't do it in your own power. It's all God. Grace is not just God's unmerited favor, but it is his transforming power. Look at 1 Corinthians 15:10.

In order to live a life of holiness, separate from this world, you must focus your mind fully on the transforming grace of Jesus at His Second Coming. You have this grace right now.

Paul says in **1 Corinthians 15:10**, “But by the **grace** of God I am what I am, and his **grace** toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the **grace** of God that is with me.” Grace is not merely **unmerited favor**, but **transforming power**. Put your hope fully on the grace that is working in you and will finally transform you into the image of Christ at the Second Coming.

**Where is Your Hope?** – Is it in the grace you have in Christ? Or is it in something else?

– Is it in a **job** promotion? Don't get bogged down with the exhaustion of your work and employment. Do your best. But your ultimate hope is not in an earthly paycheck. It's not in a bigger house. Soon Christ will redeem the planet and cleanse it from the filth of sin.

– Is your hope in **worldly entertainment**? Is that where you go when you are hurting? Be filled with the hope of Christ. Don't settle for worldly substitutes. Don't get caught up in this world's **entertainment**. Learn what you can in this information age, but don't be info junkies. Instead be addicted to worship. Be addicted to grace!

– Or when you hurt are you a **shopper**? There's not enough stuff at Stuff-mart to fill the emptiness in your soul. Don't set your hope in the obtaining of this world's goods. When Jesus' glory is revealed, your stuff will be worthless. Don't lay up junk on this earth. Sell your junk and invest the proceeds in missions. What are you doing with your money? Is your money going toward holy purposes?

– If you hope in earthly relationships, you will be cruelly disappointed. Christ alone is our hope. His **grace is sufficient!**

### 3. Humility (1 Pet 1:14-16)

**1 Peter 1:14-16**, “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.””

I love how Peter says the final way to fight with grace is to be helpless as a child. Rest in God as an obedient child. Don't be conformed to your “former ignorance” but instead be like an obedient child, humbly resting in the command of the Father.

In **Matthew 18:3**, Jesus called a little child to sit on his lap and proclaimed, “Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.”

**Do you have the attitude of an obedient humble child?** So often we act as if we know so much, but without humility we confuse holiness with self-righteousness and spiritual pride. Without humility, we are also prone to “be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance” (vs. 14). Without humility, you are going to fall into your former lifestyle.

Listen you can't do it alone. You need the Lord and you need the saints. Don't be too proud to ask for help. Have the attitude of an obedient and humble child if you want to be holy.

How many times do we know exactly what is in the Bible, but we make excuses? We are a proud person, not an obedient child. We have a temptation to question the all-wise God. His way is perfect!

### Be Holy

**Be Holy** – The command, it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy” is from **Leviticus 11:45**, “I am the Lord who brought you up out of the land of Egypt to be your God. You shall therefore be holy, for I am holy.”

God goes into the land of Egypt with a glory cloud, and appoints Moses to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt.

God took a sinful people out of the world to reflect his holiness. You are chosen as a remnant out of this world to be holy.

Jesus said it in other ways on the Sermon on the Mount. He said:

- “You are the light of the world” – you are to be holy by shining in a dark and **sinful** world.
- “You are the salt of the earth” – you are to be holy by preserving a **rotten** world.

### III. **The price for holiness**, vs. 17-21.

Finally, we consider the price for holiness. God wants you to be holy, and you as a sinner can die to your old life and be holy. But it comes at a price. You were ransomed by the blood of Christ.

### Conduct Yourselves with Fear

Peter begins with a sober outlook for the Christian life. He says “fear” should be the overarching attitude of our lives. We should live and conduct our lives with fear and sobriety.

Why? Because a high price was paid for you.

**1 Peter 1:17-19**, “And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile, 18 knowing that you



were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.”

We should fear the Lord because He sent His Son for us. He gave the blood of the Son for you.

Gold and Silver and the Blood – God will judge you in how you treat the blood of Christ. It’s not like gold or silver. When you die, you can’t take gold or silver with you. Earthly treasure is perishable. But the blood of Christ is precious and imperishable. You will take the blood of Christ with you. When we speak of the blood, we are talking about the substitutionary atonement of Christ. It is the blood that gives you a righteous standing before God for all eternity.

**2 Corinthians 5:21**, “He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”

So count the blood of Jesus as precious. Fear God as you consider the awful price that was paid for your soul. **Don’t trample underfoot the blood of Christ.**

Listen, don’t play around with grace. The author of Hebrews says in **Hebrews 10:29**, “How much worse punishment, do you think, will be deserved by the one who has trampled underfoot the Son of God, and has profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has outraged the Spirit of grace?”

Consider the Almighty God in the person of Christ hanging there on the Cross. Don’t be flippant about that. You can never be the same again once you’ve seen such an awful price. Fear God my brothers and sisters. This price is not to be taken for granted. “Do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh” (Gal 5:13). “Don’t turn the grace of God into an opportunity hide your sin” (Jude 1:4, paraphrase).

### **Conduct Yourselves with Faith**

So on the one hand there is fear when it comes to the blood of Christ. We don’t want to trample Christ’s blood underfoot and

**1 Peter 1:20-21**, “He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you 21 who through him are believers in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.”

Listen, Christ’s sacrifice was planned from the foundation of the world, but has been revealed in these last days for you! God loves you. He has **planned** for your redemption before the world was formed.

It is Christ who has made you a believer in God. God the Father raised Christ from the dead so that that you could have the gift of faith and hope!

To put it more simply: **You are to hold on to God, but more importantly, God is holding on to you.** He’s got you. He’ll never let you go. He’ll never leave you and never forsake you.

Oh, saint, be holy for your Lord is holy. Don’t be conformed to the world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

### **Conclusion: The Ermine**

“In the forests of northern Europe and Asia lives little animal called the ermine, known for his snow-white fur in winter. He instinctively protects his white coat against anything that would soil it.

Fur hunters take advantage of this unusual trait of the ermine. They don't set a snare to catch him, but instead they find his home, which is usually a cleft in a rock or a hollow in an old tree. They smear the entrance and interior with grime. Then the hunters set their dogs loose to find and chase the ermine. The frightened animal flees toward home but doesn't enter because of the filth. Rather than soil his white coat, he is trapped by the dogs and captured while preserving his purity. For the ermine, purity is more precious than life.”<sup>5</sup>

Dear saints, we are called to holiness. This is your purpose and destiny. No child of God can live comfortably in sin for any length of time.

God has called you to holiness and provided the way. Let us be like that ermine who would rather die than soil ourselves with this world. Let us live holy and separate lives from this depraved planet.

### **It's not about Us**

It's not about us. It's not about self-righteousness. It's all about reflecting the greatness and perfections of the Lamb of God who is the King of kings! Behold his holiness and greatness!

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<sup>5</sup> Our Daily Bread, April 21, 1997