

Standing Fast in the Grace of God

"As Obedient Children"

A Call to Holiness

1 Peter 1:13-16

Peter begins this section (1:13-25) by shifting from what God *has done* for us (vs. 3-12 – seen in the word "wherefore") to what He *expects* from us (vs. 13-25). We will study this section with the overall theme of "holiness" in view. As such, it deals with three areas:

- First, in verses 13-16, we see the call of the holy – how God's people are to live differently because He is holy.
- Then in verses 17-21, we'll see the conduct of the holy – how holiness shapes our fear of God, our faith in Christ, and our hope in His plan.
- And finally in verses 22-25, we'll see the compassion of the holy – how holiness produces sincere, fervent love, rooted in the enduring Word of God.

We will look at the first part in this message: God's call for His children to live holy lives in an unholy world.

The believers to whom this letter was written were about to enter (or already had entered) a period of serious personal trial and they were going to need to keep their testimony. It's very easy to stray when things get so bad that we just can't stand it anymore – it's then that we need these verses. It's then that we need to know we still have a duty to stay right. That sounds harsh but it is the truth of the Word of God.

"As obedient children," we will need:

I. A MIND THAT IS READY – *PREPAREDNESS* (VS. 13A)

"Gird up the loins of your mind"

A. A picture of readiness

"Gird up the loins"

1. "Gird up" (ἀναζωσάμενοι – the only time this term is used in the Greek NT) is in a form (aorist middle participle) that means "having girded up."
2. The word means to "tighten up," "pull together," "prepare for action."

Exodus 12:11-12 [the first Passover]

¹¹ And thus shall ye eat it; *with* your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the LORD'S passover. ¹² For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I *am* the LORD.

Ephesians 6:14

¹⁴ Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

B. A call to mental discipline before spiritual action can take place effectively

"Of your mind"

When ancient soldiers needed to run into battle, they would reach down, gather up the excess of their robes, pull them tight, and tuck them into their belt. That simple act determined whether they would run freely or trip and fall.

Peter is saying: "Christian, don't let loose thinking trip you up. Gather up the loose ends of your mind. Prepare yourself."

- This is a reminder that the trials and troubles we

face in life will require spiritual alertness.

II. A LIFE THAT IS RESTRAINED – SOBERNESS (VS. 13B)

“Be sober”

1 Peter 4:7

⁷ But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.

1 Peter 5:8

⁸ Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

A. Self-control in a world of excess

The word for “be sober” (νήφοντες – present active participle) means “be continually self-controlled,” “be steady,” “be clear-minded.”

B. Clear thinking in a world of confusion

As it relates to alcohol, the idea is that one who is sober is not one who drinks and is sober as opposed to being drunk but it relates to someone who has enough self-control and maintains his whole being to abstain from it in the first place.

Romans 13:13

¹³ Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.

1 Thessalonians 5:6-7

⁶ Therefore let us not sleep, as *do* others; but let us watch and be sober. ⁷ For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.

C. Seriousness in a world of spiritual danger

As it relates to the context here, it is showing, along with the first point, that these believers were going

to need all they had to endure what was coming.

III. A HEART THAT IS RESOLUTE – *HOPEFULNESS* (VS. 13C)

“Hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ”

A. “Hope” in the Bible is confident expectation.

This “hope” is not half-hearted optimism but total expectation placed on Christ’s return.

B. This is hope that looks beyond the suffering

This phrase (τελείως ἐλπίζατε) is a strong command (aorist imperative) that means “hope completely, fully, and perfectly.”

C. Hope that purifies (1 John 3:1-3)

1 John 3:1-3

¹ Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. ² Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. ³ And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

IV. A WILL THAT IS RESPONSIVE – *OBEDIENCE* (VS. 14A)

“As obedient children”

A. Marked by obedience, not rebellion

The phrase (ὡς τέκνα ὑπακοῆς) literally means “children marked by obedience.” Obedience is the *character*, not the exception. Their testimony was that they were obedient.

B. Distinguished from “children of disobedience”

Ephesians 2:2

² Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:

Ephesians 5:6

⁶ Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.

C. Willing submission to the Father's will

V. A WALK THAT IS REFINED – SEPARATION (VS. 14B)

"Not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance"

A. Not patterned by the world

1. "Not fashioning yourselves according to" (μὴ συσχηματίζόμενοι)
 - a) It means to conform to the same pattern outwardly – used of tracing something on a piece of paper.
 - b) The application is that we, as believers, are not to be patterned in our lives after the world around us but patterned after Christ – we are to be separated.
 - c) This is the same phrase translated "be not conformed" in Rom. 12:2 (the only other time it is used in the Greek NT).

Romans 12:2

² And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

2. Think of it as "don't let the world press you into its mold."

B. Not ruled by old desires

“The former lusts in your ignorance”

Peter is telling the believers not to go back to the world that they ignorantly lived in before. Don't be led astray by the “former lusts” they had before they were saved. Stay true to the cause of Christ no matter what comes our way.

1 Peter 4:1-2

¹ Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; ² That he no longer should live the rest of *his* time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.

Ephesians 4:18-22

¹⁸ Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: ¹⁹ Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. ²⁰ But ye have not so learned Christ; ²¹ If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: ²² That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;

C. A new pattern after Christ, not culture

“Stop being molded by the external and fleeting fashions of this age, but undergo a deep inner change” (Zodhiates).

VI. A LIFE THAT IS REFLECTIVE – HOLINESS (VS. 15-16)

“Be ye holy; for I am holy”

A. Holiness is rooted in God's character.

B. Holiness is required, not optional.

1. "Be ye holy" (ἁγιοι γενήθητε - aorist imperative) – literally, "Become holy!"
2. This isn't passive nor gradual – it's a decisive command.

C. Holiness that mirrors the Father

The pattern is God Himself.

A child often reflects the mannerisms, expressions, or habits of their father without even trying. Someone might say, "You walk just like him," or "You laugh exactly like your dad."

Peter tells us: "You already bear the name of your Father. Now bear His likeness."

"Be ye holy; for I am holy."

Holiness is the family resemblance of the children of God.

Conclusion:

We all face moments where pressure pushes us toward compromise. Peter's audience would soon face persecution and they were going to need this help.

We face pressures today maybe of a different kind – discouragement, temptation, cultural hostility, spiritual fatigue.

But the command is the same: "Be ye holy; for I am holy."

Holiness is not just for the super-spiritual (as a preacher I've heard say. It is the daily calling of every child of God.

So, how is your mind? Is it girded – prepared – or tangled in distractions?

How is your life? Is it sober, self-controlled, spiritually

alert?

How is your heart? Is your hope fixed firmly on Christ's coming?

How is your will? Are you living as an obedient child?

And how is your walk? Are you separated from the old life?

Are you pursuing holiness because your Father is holy?

The world will only grow darker, but holiness shines brightest in the dark.