

1 Peter 1:15-16

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Preacher: Chris Steward

[0 : 00] Yesterday, I had a conversation with my oldest, Britton, and we were listening to a song on the way home on the radio and she asked if that was this Christian song. Which is a great question. It allowed me to kind of think about it and how do I want to answer this question.

And I answered it by saying, let's not think about things in just Christian music or Christian books or Christian bookstore or Christian t-shirts or Christian clothing kind of idea.

But let's think about the lyrics and do the lyrics move you to think of God or not. And in that case, I pushed my 8-year-old, soon to be 9-year-old, to think and use her brain a little bit and not just claim something to be Christian music or Christian TV or Christian movie or whatever.

And so my question this morning kind of got me thinking was, is that the idea of holiness that we should believe? Where we have our Christian music that we listen to and we have our Christian school we go to and we have our Christian bookstore that we shop in.

And we have our Christian t-shirts that we wear. And so we're set apart based on the definition of holiness. If you don't know, that's what holiness means. We're set apart and we kind of go down this road of this is where we're going to stay.

[1 : 20] We're going to stay within the boundaries of the Christian title. Is that the idea of holiness that we should believe? I don't think so.

I don't think that that biblically that that lines up with how we should view holiness. How we should pursue a specific way of living.

Imagine for a moment that we're up in an airplane really, really, really high. And we look down and we're so high that a forest doesn't look like little individual trees or you can't see the definition of the trees.

It's just a green mass on the land below you. Now, one can assume, well, that's a forest. But you can also assume, well, it's green and kind of, well, that's a body of water.

That could be water from this height. We're not really sure. And just to claim that it's water or claim that it's something without really knowing what it is, without viewing it on a map and saying, well, that's Cherokee Forest.

[2 : 28] That's the National Reserve or whatever. We cheapen and make a quick assumption by saying, well, that's just water.

Yeah, it looks like water. That's water. And I think what we've done with holiness, if we believe that that's how we should pursue holiness is by separating ourselves completely, then we cheapen that idea and make an assumption that that's what holiness is.

So this morning, I want to bring the plane in a little bit. I want to look at the forest and I want to see the trees. I want to see the animals crawling on the ground. I want to see the different types of trees and see what this holiness really does look like for you and I.

Because when we read Scripture and we have familiar verses and we know just by being a Christian that, well, if God is holy, then we are to be holy. You guys and all of us in this room would believe, yes.

But what does that mean? How does that affect the way we live? How does that affect how we walk out this life? Or is it just a cheap assumption? Yes.

[3 : 37] I believe that we should be holy. So that's my goal this morning, to bring that plane down a little bit for us so we can kind of see some details of the forest.

So in 1 Peter 1, we're going to read four verses starting in verse 13. It says, Therefore, Therefore, preparing your minds for action and being sober-minded sets your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance. But as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct.

Since it is written, you shall be holy, for I am holy. Let's pray together. Father, I ask for your grace this morning to speak to us clearly.

God, I ask that words that come from my mouth will be true words. And that all of us in here, including me, would hear from you this morning. God, I pray that you would help us in the hearing of your word, but also in the action to follow, in the obedience to follow whatever you have laid out for us to do.

[5 : 05] Help us. We cannot do it apart from you. We beg and we ask in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. So, we're going to start from verse 16 and work our way back to verse 13.

That's the plan. Verse 15 and 16 says, But as he who called you is holy, you will also be holy in all your conduct. Since it is written, you shall be holy, for I am holy.

So what does God being holy mean? What does the holiness of God actually mean? Well, as I mentioned a few minutes ago, the definition is to be set apart.

So how does God become set apart? How do we set God apart? Well, here's how. God is utterly unique. He is in a class all to himself.

There is no one like him. No one compares. He is unequalled. He is without beginning and without end. And he has no need for improvement. He is perfect.

[6 : 09] He always is and always will be and always was perfect God. So, this is who God is.

God is the source of holiness. God is the author of holiness. He is holy, perfect, sinless God. Now, let's think about this for a minute.

One of the Christian terms that we read and we throw out there is the glory of God. What is the glory of God?

Well, the glory of God is that outward expression of God's holiness. So, let me help you. You could say that the sun, the light is the glory of God.

The light that we get from the sun is the glory of God. The fire is the holiness. It's the root of that source, of the source of light. So, just kind of give you a little bit of perspective there.

[7 : 07] So, this is who God is. He is without comparison. Perfect, holy, sinless. The source. He is the sun that our life should revolve around.

So, in verse 15 and 16 in 1 Peter, we have, Be holy for I am holy. Now, a little bit of context here for 1 Peter. And we studied this a few summers ago or a couple years ago.

1 Peter, Peter writes this letter to the churches in Asia Minor, which would be modern day Turkey. Ephesus would have been in this area. And he's writing to them and he's giving them kind of a warning, giving a heads up that persecution is headed their way.

Peter is writing from Rome. He's getting a lot of persecution in Rome and he sees the Roman Empire moving that direction. And so, he's writing this to the Christians there, the churches in Asia Minor, telling them there's persecution coming and this is how you should stand firm in it.

This is how you should live because of what's coming your way. And so, we read this. And we read our text this morning and we've got some practical things.

[8 : 21] We've got God being holy. So, I'm hoping to kind of pull all that in together for us, even with the context of who Peter is writing to. So, verse 15 and 16, Be holy for I am holy.

Be holy because God is holy. We as Christians are to be holy. Everybody in here who is a Christian, who has read the Bible, would shake your head yes to that. Yes.

So, how can we be holy? How is it that we can live and be set apart based on the definition of who God is? Well, one way, and the main way, is that we are imitators of God.

We imitate God. Now, this shouldn't surprise any of you. If you're a Christian, your name claims that you're little Christ's. You are little Christ's.

You're Christians. We bear His name. So, it should not surprise us that we are to be imitators. But what it does mean here is that our lives should revolve around God.

[9 : 24] As the earth revolves around the sun, our lives should revolve around God. Meaning, that our lives are consumed with God. Our lives are all about God. Our lives are formed by God.

We are called by God, and we are set apart by God. We are to imitate God's holiness. The question is, how? How do we do that then?

Where is the practical? So, let's bring this plane in a little bit more. So, how? Well, based on our text, the first thing we need to do is that we need to admit God has called us out of darkness into

light.

Look at verse 15. It says, But as He who called you is holy, you will also be holy in all your conduct. Now, I chose this verb, admit, on purpose.

That we need to admit that God has called us out of darkness. We must admit that it was God's act on our lives. And nothing in us that caused God to call us, or that even we called on Him.

[10:29] Colossians 1, 13 and 14 says that He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

So, if you caught it there, He has, being God, delivered us from the domain of darkness. He has delivered us, He's pulled us out, and He has transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son.

God's action on our lives. Basic gospel truth, but very important. Romans 3, Colossians 2, Colossians 1, what we just read, tells us that we are dead in our trespasses and sins.

For the wages of sin is death. For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. We have nothing in us that has deserved or earned God's favor. It is God's grace to us to bestow on us. God's favor to give us life and to pull us from darkness into light. So, when we admit this truth, when we admit that God has called us out of darkness into light, then we accept that truth.

[11:40] Then we acknowledge that truth. And when we accept, we are humbled. We are moved to humility because of that grace and that mercy that He has shown us. In James 4, verse 6, it says, God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.

Verse 10 of that same chapter in James 4, Humble yourself before the Lord and He will exalt you. Humility is important for the Christian. We must acknowledge the grace and the mercy that we have been shown.

We live in light of that. We love other people in light of that. We make decisions in light of that. Not because we have earned it, but because He has shown us grace and favor.

In Isaiah chapter 6, Isaiah writes and tells the story of being in the throne room of God. And Isaiah is face to face with God.

Face to face in the same room with His holiness and His righteousness. God perfect without comparison. And what is Isaiah moved to?

[12:52] Immediately to his knees to worship. And he says, woe is me, for I am a sinner. Humility will and can lead to holiness for us when we acknowledge and we admit that God, it is God on our lives delivering us and as Colossians said, transferring us from darkness into light.

So we've got to admit, we've got to admit that God has called us out of darkness into light. But we also have to admit as Christians that we are children of God.

As we bear His name, little Christ, we are children of God. Look at verse 14 of 1 Peter. It says, as obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance.

Now, to understand that we are children of God is important. It's important because it shows that God has changed us from the inside out.

Now, I have four kids and my four kids are always going to be my kids. I can't change the fact. Now, legally, sure, we can make an argument. But blood-wise, they're always going to have my blood in them.

[14:09] They're always going to be mine. I can't do anything about that. But God, God can change a heart and make it His.

God can change a person and transfer them from darkness into light to make them a child of wrath, as Ephesians 2 says, to a child born son or daughter of the King.

Turn to Ephesians 2, as I just kind of mentioned. Ephesians 2. If you love the Gospel, you believe the Gospel, then you are familiar with Ephesians 2, I hope.

Ephesians 2. Ephesians 2. Starting in verse 1, it says, And you were dead in the trespasses and sins 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, 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.

But God, being rich in mercy because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ. By grace, you have been saved.

[15:40] And raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming age he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace and kindness toward

us in Christ Jesus.

So not only has he taken us from darkness into light, we were dead and now alive, we were children of wrath and now we're children of the King. This is important because it is God who has made that change in us.

We can't make that change. We can't do it. Jesus says in one of the Gospels, and I apologize because I could not find it this morning, but it's true, I promise.

He talks about how an earthly father, when a son asks for bread, will not give him a stone. And he says, how much greater will your heavenly father then provide for you?

I will provide for my kids as much to the end of my ability, but how much greater will that heavenly father, our heavenly father, as Christians, children of God, provide for us, care for us, love us, nurture us.

[16:54] This is who our heavenly father is. And we are children children of this king. So with a heart change then, we will not be conformed, back to 1 Peter 1, we will not be conformed to the passions of our former ignorance.

A new heart means new passions and new desires. A new heart means that those passions and those desires lead to holiness, not to fill in the blank, sin.

A new heart means that our want-tos change. We want to pursue holiness. We want to honor God. We want to love Jesus. We want to share the gospel.

We want to live in such a way this passion, this desire, has no limits before Christ.

Why do you think the commandment says do not covenant another man's wife? There are no limits to the passion and the desires. Somebody else's stuff. There are no limits to that. It's whatever fulfills that hunger in us.

[18:12] Well, when our heart is changed, when we become children of God, those desires change and those passions are fulfilled with only one thing and that is God. That is His holiness and that is Him Himself.

When our hearts are changed, we will not desire the gift. We'll enjoy the gift, but we won't desire the gift. We will desire the giver of the gift who is God.

We'll desire what He gives us and we'll look for opportunities and situations and things we can do with that item, with that gift that will bring honor and glory to Him and not fulfillment for us.

That's an example of the change in us. A new heart changes. So our heart has changed. Our passion has changed. So our desires and passions now lead to holiness.

Pursuing holiness. So thirdly, first, admit God has called us out of darkness into light. Admit that as Christians we are children of God, meaning that God has changed us, given us a new heart, now sons and daughters of the King.

[19:31] Thirdly, we place our hope in our future. We place our hope in our future. Verse 13, the second part of verse 13 says, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Now, this does not mean or is suggesting a flight into dreamland thinking of future, hoping that maybe that thought of our future glory will dull the life here, what we're going through, the persecution or the struggle or the whatever.

That's not what he's suggesting here. As if it's some sort of drug that just kind of numbs us and we just kind of keep going through and just ho-hum. That's not what he's suggesting.

What he's suggesting is that instead of viewing the present circumstance, we view it in light of what's to come, the promises of God.

we view the situation saying we can endure because of the promise of God that we will overcome, the promise of God that we will be perfected, that though my body breaks and I'm sick and I am suffering and I have cancer or whatever, my body will be perfected eventually and I'm okay with this situation now because hopefully in those situations I can bring glory to God and I can pursue holiness with a new heart.

[21:10] So, we endure because of what God will do, has done even. The church in Asia Minor, remember Peter is writing to them, warning them of what's to come.

Guys, it's coming your way. Gather up, get together, understand, realize, look at chapter 1, verse 3, it says, blessed be the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, according to His great mercy, He has caused us to be born again to what?

To a living hope. Third sentence, second sentence, whatever it is, He's already saying look ahead to what's to come. Look ahead to your future hope.

And hope in that because of what's to come. Their persecution, heavy persecution. Kids, vegetables, don't usually go together.

But you tell a child, you say, eat your vegetables and you can have cake. What are they going to do? They're going to eat their vegetables. You put that cake in front of them, those vegetables are gone.

[22 : 21] Likewise, for us, we endure, we go through struggles, we suffer here on earth, we have physical ailments, we live in such a way, we pursue holiness, even in those situations, looking ahead to what's to come.

We're going to be perfected. God is going to receive glory through the way that I live this out. Our desert, I know illustrations fall short, but our desert is to come.

Fourthly, this is where we'll spend a little bit more time. So not only do we admit that God has called us out of darkness into light, not only do we admit that as Christians we are children of God, meaning we have a new heart, that God has changed our heart from the inside out, we cannot do it. Not only do we place our hope in our future, but fourthly and finally, we prepare our minds for action. Verse 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.

Preparing your minds for action. If you have an ESV Bible and you're reading in it, there's a footnote that says in the Greek, it's actually gird up the loins of your mind. Now this picture that Peter is painting for us is back in this time, they would wear long dress-like tunics.

[24 : 00] And if they're just talking in the marketplace, if they're just slowly meandering, if they're just hanging out at home, it's all the way down to their ankles or close to that. But when they're working, when they're getting ready to run or going into war or whatever, they pull that up and they tuck it into their belt.

And that's called girding their loins. It's getting ready, freeing up their legs so that they can be men or women of action, men of action, so that they can run and they can fight and they can do these things, they can work in their garden or whatever, freely.

This is the idea, preparing your minds for action and being sober minded. It's an act of preparation for active work. So, I love golf.

I love playing golf. I'm not good at golf. I enjoy every bit of it. I enjoy buying new golf balls. That's silly, I know. I just love playing.

I love being outside and walking. I like how manicured it is and just everything about golf, even if I hit a bad shot. Now, I am not going to get any better if I just play golf three or four times a year.

[25 : 13] I'm going to probably maybe get worse or just kind of stay right where I am. It's not going to happen. You've got to put time in. You've got to practice. You've got to make commitments to prepare for times and wanting to get better and putting in those hard work.

All those phrases that you find on milk commercials and NFL commercials, all those, put in the hard work. Likewise, holiness takes practice and takes preparation, preparation, preparing our minds. Now see, unlike golf, where golf is just my ability, there's no supernatural power out on the golf course. I mean, maybe, if I hit it straight, possibly. But for the most part, it's just me and the golf ball and the golf club.

But for us, holiness, it's God in us that can empower us and strengthen us and push us to do what He has commanded us to do.

He can accomplish what He commands through us and through the Holy Spirit. So preparing our minds, girding up our loins. So, the next thing it says in this verse is, and being sober-minded.

[26 : 30] A definition of this is complete clarity of mind and it's resulting in good judgment. So, I know all of us in here have made really bad choices at some point in our life.

We made a bad decision. We didn't have good judgment. We weren't sober-minded in that moment. Peter, when writing this, knew that this world, the cares of this world, the temptress of stuff, the difficulties and the persecutions, speaking to the church in Asia Minor, but even to us today, can intoxicate us as much as alcohol can.

When we're intoxicated, we are controlled by that substance. We don't have much of a say. It's controlling us to a specific point.

And the desires of this world, the things that we want, the things that we think we need, the boyfriend, the girlfriend, the husband, the wife, the car, the house, fill in the blank, the specific grade that you think you need, all of this can intoxicate us, can consume us.

And so Peter is warning the churches in Asia Minor and warning us today, be sober minded, be of good judgment, complete clarity of mind, knowing what was headed their way, knowing what we deal with even today.

[28 : 18] Turn to Philippians chapter 4. So we need to have a clear mind so that we can think on godly things, that we can think on God and His holiness so that we can pursue Him and Him alone.

In Philippians chapter 4, Paul is getting ready to close this letter to the church of Philippi and he says, finally brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

Here's the kicker here, is God is these things. Who is honorable? Who is just? Who is pure? Who is lovely? Who is commendable? Who is excellent? Who is worthy of praise? Think of these things. God encompasses all of those things.

He is all of those things. Now, there's other things that from God we can think on. Think on His word. Think on our brothers and sisters in need.

[29 : 46] Think on our brothers and sisters who are pursuing holiness. They are from Him and out of His work. So, in 1 Peter in verse 13, it says, therefore, preparing your minds for action.

Now, what we have here is a present tense. Preparing your minds. It doesn't say, prepare your minds. It doesn't say, since you have prepared your minds. It's just preparing. So, this is a continuous action by you and by me.

Meaning, that if you are going to the movie, prepare your minds for what you may see or hear. If you are going to class, prepare your minds for the opportunity to share the gospel.

Remember the definition of sober-minded, complete clarity of mind and its resulting good judgment. Sober-minded, preparing our minds for action, whenever, wherever we go, preparing our minds for that action.

Your holiness and my holiness depends on it. Now, here's the beauty of the gospel. Here's the beauty of the gospel.

[31 : 08] God is holy and He is the source of holiness. And in Christ, if you are a Christian in this room, if you have confessed your sins and you believe that Jesus died for your sins and you are a Christian, then in Christ, you are holy before God.

In Christ, you stand as if no sin had ever been committed. You stand set apart. Right now, here in this room, we get done, we pray, we leave, we drive down the road, we make a bad choice on the road, we say something we shouldn't have said, we struggle, we have difficulties here on earth, because sin still is in us.

But here on earth, we have the power of Christ through the Holy Spirit in us to pursue holiness, to strive to be holy, to prepare our minds, to be sober-minded with God in us, and we can live in His power.

So verse 13 starts with therefore. Therefore, preparing your minds for action. Now, this therefore is there for a reason.

In light of what I've just said, prepare your minds for action. Well, what has He just said? Let's start reading in 1 Peter chapter 1, verse 3.

[32 : 49] 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 to the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, 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.

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, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

This salvation is through who? Jesus Christ. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. To His great mercy, He has caused us to be born again to a living hope.

It is God in us, through us, that we are able to pursue holiness, that we are able to do any of these things, that we are able to repent and confess and believe.

[34 : 18] It is by God's power, by this great salvation that we have, that the Holy Spirit in us, Jesus in us, that we can admit that God has called us out of darkness.

We can admit it that God has called us out of darkness and into light. that we were enemies of God and now we are children of God.

We have to admit that we are children of God, that He has changed the heart in us, made us sons and daughters of the King through Jesus Christ.

We can place our hope in God and our future and His future plan, not our own. Some of you are college students in here and you have your ideas of what you're going to do and where you're going to go.

You have no idea where you're going to go. You think you know. William, you can relate to this. You think you know where you're going. You really don't.

[35 : 18] But God does. God knows what you're going to encounter. God knows what struggles you're going to face. God knows what joys you're going to have.

God knows what will become of you in your life. And that's okay. That's good. We can settle.

We can be comforted in that. We can place our hope in God. And then finally, we can prepare our minds for action.

We can be sober-minded. We can make right judgments. We can be in the right place in our minds to make good decisions, to pursue holiness, not be intoxicated by this world, not be wooed by what this world has to offer.

A lot of this stuff here in this world is not bad. God created it. But the problem is what intoxicated us is when we think we need that over God.

[36 : 26] When we pursue that. over God. That's not holiness. That's sin. Little change. Change in our thinking.

Our want to's change. Our desires and passions change because God has acted in us. So I pray for all of us in here that we would pursue holiness so that when we read Leviticus through our Bible reading plan or we read numbers or we read another hard book that gives us a bunch of laws shows what he required of Israel we read it and say yes God has made us holy as he is setting Israel apart in the Old Testament.

He has set us apart and we celebrate in that and we pursue holiness. We desire holiness. We acknowledge and admit that we are his children and he has called us from darkness and delight. Let's pray together. Let's pray together.