

## Be Holy

This article on 1 Peter 14-16 is edited from the Ligonier Ministries

The Book of James reminds us that those with true faith will display that faith by doing good works (James 2:14-26). Our status as the true children of God (e.g. spiritual condition like holiness) shows itself to others through our actions. If we truly have faith then we will — though imperfectly in this life — obey the Lord.

In today's passage, Peter instructs the church this very same theme. Having described the great hope of salvation that we have in Christ Jesus, he begins in 1:13 to tell us how to live in light of the salvation that we enjoy. The understood or implied assumption throughout is that if we truly possess the hope of salvation, and if we have truly set our hearts and minds on this hope, then we will live accordingly.

Not surprisingly, like James, one of the broad, all-encompassing evidences that we possess this hope lies in the simple fact that we now have the capacity to be obedient children (v. 14). No longer can we live like we did before we knew God's law. Rather, we must obey Him in all things.

The second evidence that we possess the hope of salvation is holiness (v. 15). Just as the Israelites in the Old Testament were called to be holy, so too must the Church be holy in the new (v. 16). Not surprisingly, holiness and obedience are intertwined. After all, the Lord commands us to be holy, and only those who are set apart as holy want to obey Him.

This is not to say that perfect holiness is attainable while we live in this world. Although God does call us to cooperate with Him in sanctification, we note that even before we begin to put sin to death, God has first set us apart for Himself (1 Cor. 6:11). Therefore true Christians can and will live holy lives, albeit imperfectly. John Calvin wrote, "As even the most perfect are always very far from coming up to the mark, we ought daily to strive more and more. And we ought to remember that we are not only told what our duty is, but that God also adds, 'I am he who sanctifies you.'" It is God that first marks us as holy, and we demonstrate that He is actively and continually sanctifying us only as we renounce the evil of this world and endeavor to live in holiness before Him.

The holiness that Peter speaks of is to permeate our entire being. It is to be reflective of who we are, how we think, what we do, and what we say. If you are in Christ, God has already set you apart, even while your status as His holy child becomes more evident as you work with the Holy Spirit to put sin to death. Today, focus on being holy with your thoughts, asking God to make your mind pure and to help you stay away from sinful thinking.