

**SERIES: THE RICHES OF SALVATION**

**MESSAGE #11**

**“PRACTICING OUR SALVATION” Part 2**

I Peter 1:14-16

*“As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.”*

In a western town a cowboy, who had a reputation as a “hell raiser” went to church and heard the Gospel and was converted. The word spread that Jeb had gotten “religion”. His old cronies said, “We’ll have to see it to believe it!” So they watched. After about a week they concluded that evidently Jeb had really gotten religion. Someone asked, “What makes you say that?” One of Jeb’s old drinking buddies said, “Well, Jeb doesn’t hitch his horse to the bar-room hitching rail anymore.”

When a person is born again, changes take place in that life. We have a new Father, a new family and a new future! Paul wrote, “if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” (II Cor.5:17) Should that be a surprise? No! However, it would call into doubt the genuineness of the profession of one in whose life there were no changes evident.

To the church in Philippi Paul wrote, “work out your own salvation.” (Phil.2:12) Salvation is first internal, that is, God works salvation into us – the salvation of our souls. It then becomes external as our lifestyle advertises that God has done an inside job on us! The “new birth” experienced should result in a new life expressed!

In the first 12 verses of I Peter chapter one, the emphasis, for the most part, is on doctrinal matters. Beginning in verse 13 and throughout the remainder of the chapter the emphasis is on the practical aspects of salvation.

A short review of our last study shows that we concentrated on v. 13 as follows:

- The Attitude That Will Stabilize Us - “Gird up your mind ...”
- The Anticipation That Will Mobilize Us - “hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ...”

In this study we continue with the subject: “Practicing Our Salvation” Part 2. Professing salvation is one thing, practicing salvation is quite another. Verses 14-16 are certainly practical in nature. There are three actions pinpointed in these verses:

First, we should respect our Parent;  
Second, we should reject our past;  
Third, we should reflect our pursuit.

Let us examine each phrase in these verses and note the expectations of one who has come to salvation through faith in Christ Jesus:

## I. THE SAVED SHOULD RESPECT THEIR HEAVENLY PARENT.

I Peter 1:14a “as obedient children.” These three words communicate a responsibility that we have as children of God.

Who is our Parent? Believers are the children of the Most High God. What is the best way to show respect for our Holy Parent? Obedience!

### A. Our Relationship Is Based Upon Obedience.

Peter says earlier in this chapter that we were saved by “obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.” (1:2) Heb. 5:9 informs us that Jesus “became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.” We are saved because we obeyed the Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Romans 6:16-17 articulates the importance of obedience to our relationship with Christ as follows: “Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one’s slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness? But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.”

### B. Our Discipleship Is Based Upon Obedience.

*“My sheep hear my voice ...they follow me ...”* (John 10:27)

There is no such thing as disobediently following Christ. If we are following Him it is because we are being obedient to Him.

**Illust.** Eugene Peterson has given the best definition of Discipleship that I have ever heard. He wrote a book on discipleship titled, “A Long Obedience in the Same Direction.” That is both a book title and a definition of discipleship. Obedience is the key to discipleship.

### C. Our Stewardship is Based Upon Obedience.

In Matthew 21 Jesus told of a father who was a vineyard owner who “had two sons, and he came to the first and said, ‘Son, go, work today in my vineyard.’ He answered and said, ‘I will not,’ but afterward he regretted it and went. Then he came to the second and said likewise. And he answered and said, ‘I go, sir,’ but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?” (Matthew 21:28-31)

The answer to Jesus’ question as to which one “did the will of his father?” is obvious. It was the son who obeyed. Stewardship, in all of its many forms, comes down to this one common qualifier: obedience.

### D. Our Fellowship Is Based Upon Obedience.

“If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another.” (I John 1:7) Walking in darkness characterizes the disobedient; walking in light is the conduct of the obedient.

Obedience is the foremost requirement to be a true Christian and to behave as a

Christian ought. Listen to what God said to King Saul through his prophet Samuel: "Does the LORD delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of the LORD? To obey is better than sacrifice." (1 Sam 15:22) Children of the Heavenly Parent are to respect Him by obeying Him.

**Illust.** Mark Twain met a businessman in Boston during his travels who had the reputation of being ruthless. He allowed nothing and no one to get in his way. He ran roughshod over everyone. He said to Mark Twain at a businessman's luncheon, "I have one great unfulfilled desire in my life. I am an admirer of the 10 Commandments and before I die I want to make a trip to the Holy Land and go up on Mt. Sinai where God gave the Ten Commandments to Moses. And when I get up there on Mt. Sinai, I am going to read the Commandments at the top of my voice." Mark Twain replied, "I have a better idea. Why don't you stay in Boston and obey the Ten Commandments?"

If God's children do not respect and reverence their Heavenly Father by being obedient to His Laws, how can we expect those who are not His children to come to know and respond to Him? Practicing our Salvation means to Respect our Parent and, secondly,

## II. THE SAVED SHOULD REJECT THEIR HORRIBLE PAST.

I Peter 1:14b - "not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance."

Every saved person has a horrible past in the sight of God. That is not to say that there were not those who were outstanding citizens of earth, sane, sober and sophisticated; humane and honorable; industrious and intelligent before they were saved. Why was our past so bad in God's sight requiring the death of His Son to save us? Because of our Old Pattern - Adam! "For as in Adam all die" (I Cor. 15:22).

### A. The Old Pattern.

We have the DNA of our forefather Adam. He is referred to as "the old man" in the New Testament. He was our Old Pattern as sinners. Paul admonishes us to "put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts." (Eph.4:22)

Ephesians 2 describes the pre-salvation status of Christians as "dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others." (Eph.2:1-3)

Now, that is not a pretty picture is it? That is the "before" pen-picture of all Christians and Peter says that now that we have experienced God's salvation the "after" picture should be one in which we are "not conforming yourselves to the former lusts." In essence, then, Peter is saying: "Don't act like you once did before you were in God's family. Do not live like those who are not children of the Heavenly Father. We have a New Pattern!

**B. The New Pattern.**

We have a New Pattern that is nothing like our old model. Paul says, "put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness." (Eph. 4:24) Who is the New Pattern? Once again Paul supplies the answer, "put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts." (Rom.13:14)

Christians are not to be "conformists", but we are to be "transformed." To the saints in the godless culture of the Roman Empire, Paul wrote, "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." (Romans 12:2) The word "transformed" in Rom. 12:2 is the Greek word "metamorphousthe" from which we derive the word "metamorphosis." That is the process by which a caterpillar becomes a butterfly. It means a radical change in one's being.

A "conformist" imitates what he sees in others and changes his outward conduct to comply with the externals he observes in them. However, a "transformed" person is one who has undergone an internal change and who manifests that change from the inside out.

The "new creation" ( II Cor.5:17 ) that God produces has the Change Agent living within and He produces new life. That Change Agent is the New Pattern. "But we all ..... are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory ..... by the Spirit of the Lord." (II Cor.3:17-18) The word "transformed" is the same Greek word, "metamorphosis."

Illust. A. W. Tozer, in preaching about the burning bush, (Exodus 3:2) suggested that if there were any parasites on that bush, when it began to glow with the glory-glow of the Almighty, they left in a hurry! The same is true of the life in which Jesus Christ lives. When He is allowed to possess and fill the life by His Holy Spirit, His presence expels the undesirable and impels the growth of the desirable. He transforms – from the inside out.

Our salvation, when put into practice as I Peter 1:13 admonishes, will not only result in us believers respecting our Heavenly Parent by being obedient and rejecting our past horrible lifestyles, but thirdly:

**III. THE SAVED SHOULD REFLECT THEIR HOLY PURSUIT.**

I Peter 1:15-16 - "But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation (conduct); Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy."

Eugene Peterson, in his book on discipleship, wrote, "It is not difficult in our world to get persons interested in the message of the Gospel; it is terribly difficult to sustain the interest. There is little inclination to sign up for a long apprenticeship in what earlier Christians called holiness."

Jerry Bridges wrote a book titled, "The Pursuit Of Holiness." That title conveys the focus

and goal that every child of God should have. For over 50 years I have had the privilege of preaching and teaching God's Word and leading the Lord's people that He has put in my charge. I have met many wonderful Christians along the way. It is my observation that the most joyful and effective Christians are those who have, as their goal in life, to pursue holiness by modeling Jesus Christ.

Let us delve into this verse and see what it says about the pursuit of holiness:

#### **A. The Meaning of Holiness**

Holiness sounds scary to some. They have visions of monasteries, organ music, religious chants, sandals, long robes, beards; no jokes, no sex, no deserts, no TV; fasting, stained glass, getting up at 4:00 a.m. for long hours of prayer. That's part of the mental picture many have of holiness. They associate the word with mystics, monks, martyrs, missionaries and ministers. Those who fit into the above categories may indeed be holy, but they did not become holy by their abstinence or their observances of certain practices.

The word "holy" here in v.16 is the Greek word "hagiosune" and denotes holiness in personal conduct. The verb form is "hagiazō" which means "to be set apart from sin unto God." From this word we get the words "hallow" and "sanctify." It is applied to persons, places and things.

God set us apart for Himself when we were born into His family. We were declared by God to be "holy." We have been set apart from sinner-hood to saint-hood. The word "saint" is derived from the word "holy." The word "saints" literally means "holy ones" – those who have been set apart to God.

In the New Testament, *hagios* is the typical word translated "saint." It is interesting that it is always found in the plural (except for Philippians 4:21, which says, "Greet all the saints in Christ Jesus," a plural context). No individual is ever called "Saint Matthew" or "Saint Paul" in the Bible. Every believer is "sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy" (1 Corinthians 1:2), for God has "called us to be saints" (Romans 1:7). Now Paul can write to "all the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi," or wherever we happen to live. Our "sainthood" is conferred by God's grace, not our merit. We are to live in ways which express our status, but we cannot earn it.

1 Peter 2:9 says that we are a "holy nation." Being holy is just doing what Jesus would do in going about our daily lives at home, work, school or leisure. Do we always look and live like one who is "holy"? No, but we should! That is to be our focus, our aim. So, what Peter is saying here is: "let your practice be consistent with your position."

#### **B. The Model For Holiness.**

1 Peter 1:15-16 "But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; (conduct); Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy."

Who is our standard, our pattern, our model of holiness? It is God Himself! “Be holy, for I am holy.” That is awesome! Those of us who claim to be followers of the Holy God should demonstrate holiness in our character, conduct and in our conversations.

Illust. A Man was sitting in his recliner when his youngest son walked in and asked if he could ask him a few questions. The Father said sure but he asked “what is this for?” The boy replied, “It’s for a project as school. We have to write a report about a role model in our life.” His father was touched, and said, “Son, I’m so pleased that you chose me to be your role-model. Why did you choose me?” The son said, “Yeah, well the kids next to me already picked Billy Graham, Tiger Woods and Obama so you were the only one left!”

Who is your role model in life? Who is it that you are trying to imitate in your daily walk. The majority have chosen the wrong role models. For us Christians, our Model is Jesus Christ, the holy Son of God, God, the Son!

### C. The Measure Of Holiness.

v.15 - “be holy in all manner of conversation” (kjv) “be holy in all your conduct” (nkjv)

We are to be holy in every aspect of our lives. Practical holiness is not to be compartmentalized into certain “religious” areas. Robert Murray McCheyne said, “The greatest need of those around me is my personal holiness.” Holiness should permeate every part of our being just as blood flows throughout our entire body. It is a way of life that should be reflected in everything we do – it is our new nature, our lifestyle! It is who we are – saints, holy ones!

## CONCLUSION

We’ve been thinking about the practical side of our salvation based upon I Peter 1:14-16. We are to respect our Parent, reject our past and reflect the pursuit of holiness in our lives.

Illust. A man and woman got married and were involved in a nighttime car wreck on their honeymoon. The husband carried his injured bride back along the roadway to a sign that they has just passed that read: “Family Medical Practice.” With his wife in his arms he rang the door-bell awakening the Doctor. When he came to the door and saw the injured lady he said, “I no longer practice medicine. I am afraid of a mal-practice suit. You know, the insurance companies are so strict these days.” The exasperated husband said, Doctor, if you are not going to practice your profession, please take your sign down. It is false advertising!”

Christians, practice your position in Christ - that is, we have been declared to be holy by God, therefore “be holy in all your conduct” - in your walk, work and warfare. A Christian is one who has “Christ In.” If you are not going to live up to that worthy name, please take your sign down!

“Souls that are looking for pleasure  
Your follies and pleasures pursue,  
Content with the prizes and fortunes

This world is now offering to you.  
But mine is a nobler ambition  
I seek for a richer reward,  
I want to be Christ-like and holy  
I want to be more like my Lord.”  
- Anonymous

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