

TITLE: Responding to Salvation Grace (Part 5)

PASSAGE: 1 Peter 1:15

THEME: Our Response to the Glory of our Salvation

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Read Passage

One of the songs we sing rather frequently here at CCC contains t/words: "Holiness, holiness is what I long for. Holiness is what I need. Holiness, Holiness is what you want from me."

When we sing that song, we're not singing about our positional holiness. That is, we're not talking about t/perfect holiness we have because of t/imputed righteousness of JC - a right. we received when we repented of our sin & believed in Him as our L&S.

That sort of H. is tantamount to salvation itself. IOW - if we were talking about that kind of H. we'd be singing, "Justification, justification is what I long for. Justification is what I need. Justification, Justification is what you want from me."

We sing as believers in JC & if we are genuine Xns, regenerated by Sp. of God, we have been justified (declared right. in his sight).

Hebrews 10:14 **For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.** [the pos. H. we spoke of last week]

That's not the holiness we sing about in that song

The H. we claim we desire is that H. of life which is to mark every believer. It's t/H. of sanctif. // of life, thought, practice, passion, pursuit.

I ask t/question: "when you sing that song // hear those words do you really mean them?" Do you really believe it's what you need? // long for it? // desire to be holy? Of course, IF there's absolutely NO desire to be holy as God is holy then there's no real life of X in t/heart. The child

must be like t/parent (cf. v. 14 - obedient children). If there's no likeness, no desire to be like t/parent (in this case God), then t/child is illegitimate.

But even as legitimate Children we still struggle with the concept of holiness

Sometimes it's because we are ignorant of what H. really is.

Back when I was in college we spent a day doing door-to-door evangelism. It was a Christian college and the "day of evangelism" was a requirement for students and faculty. I was paired with Jim Lanning & together we worked a neighborhood in East Mesa. I remember one gal who answered the door. She sort of kept half of her body behind the door while she talked. She told us she was Pentecostal holiness (but apparently no longer went to a church). Toward the end of our talk I realized why she kept her left side behind the door. Streams of smoke began to waft from behind her over her head from the cigarette she held in her left hand behind the door. She identified with holiness, but the cigarette, in her mind, contradicted that profession. But is that what being holy really means? Is it resolving neither to drink, smoke, or chew, nor go with gals who do? God's standard flows out of a transformed heart, not out of a check-list of do's and don'ts.

Some fear that personal holiness will be 'boring' (not cool)

Fonzi from Happy Days . . . Back in t/70s he was t/epitome of "cool." We don't picture people like that pursuing H. *"Holiness is cool, Hey!"*

"C.S. Lewis once commented to an American friend, 'How little people know who think that holiness is dull. When one meets the real thing, . . . it is irresistible. If even 10% of the world's population had it, would not the whole world be converted and happy before a year's end?'" [C.S. Lewis, Letters to an American Lady, 19]

But that really misses t/issue

The issue is that by very nature of our relationship w/X, God has placed w/i us a desire to pursue hope and holiness.

It's like Jesus in John 6

J. is in Capernaum in Galilee. He's teaching t/multitudes & he's telling them some very unpop. things. He's telling t/people that He's t/true bread from heaven // all t/Father gives to Him will come to Him & that no one can come to Him unless drawn by t/Father // no one can come to Him unless t/Father has granted it. People didn't like t/idea of a sovereign God any more then than they do now, so v. 66 says that as a result many of his followers had forsaken Him.

I can just picture it - "Gee, Jesus, that's not the kind of God we believe in." "Jesus, that's not fair." So, they depart, Jesus turns to t/12 and asks, "Do you want leave me, also?" What does Peter say? "To whom shall we go? You have t/words of eternal life and we have believed and have come to know that you are t/Holy One of God."

A heart transformed by the grace of JC will respond differently

That's what we have been studying together in our text in 1 Peter.

Responding to salvation grace results in the pleasure of hope and the pursuit of holiness.

We have been looking at ==>

I. Our Response to the Glory of our Salvation (13-21)

C. We are to Pursue Holiness (15-16)

Part and parcel to that response will be ==>

1. The Pursuit of Holiness (v. 15)

But like the holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior;

We have been setting t/stage t/past few weeks. We've noted that==>

a. The Standard: A Holy God

But like the holy One who called you . . .

We've asked t/?==>

(1) What Does it mean that "God is Holy?"

We've noted that ==>

(2) God's calling is a holy calling

[He is] the holy One who called you . . .

We spent some time answering t/? ==>

(a) What is the "call" of God

We said that ==>

(b) You can't separate the call of God to salvation from the call of God to holiness (They are inextricably connected)

Then, in light of all of that, we asked the question==>

b. What does it mean for us to be "holy?"

What does it mean when it says ==>

. . . like the holy One who called you, be holy yourselves . .

Last week we began to examine what I called a ==>

2. A Balanced Approach to Holiness

That approach ==>

a. Starts with taking sin seriously

I have to confess that last Sun. was 1 of t/most emotionally draining sermons I have ever preached. In that message I quoted the 17th c. English Theologian & Preacher, John Owen who said that ==>

. . . for Christians, the doctrine and conviction of sin form the basis of all we have to do with God . . . "

I. Our Response to the Glory of our Salvation (13-21)

Includes the fact that ==>

C. We are to Pursue Holiness (15-16)

1. Starts with taking sin seriously

Also includes understanding (and appreciating) ==>

2. What Christ Has Done for Us

a. Knowing Our Union with Christ

b. Knowing our Positional Holiness

c. Knowing His Passive as well as His Active

Obedience for us

After understanding t/foundational truths of what God has done for us by His grace, we must also know (our next point)==>

b. What We are to Do (Phil. 2:12-13 principle)

12 So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; 13 for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.

Let me refocus your attention once again to vv. 15-16==>

But like the holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; because it is written: "You shall be holy, for I Am Holy."

(1) First Thing: This is a Command (not a suggestion)

Like t/"Holy One" who called you (called you to salv.) - Like He is Holy you be Holy. We spend quite a bit of time talking about H. as a central aspect of God's character. 2 weeks ago I said (if I may quote myself)=>

"God's Holiness is the fulcrum upon which his character rests. It's the epicenter of His Goodness & Greatness. Every one of God's attributes, be it sovereignty, omnipotence; omniscience; mercy; wrath are driven by his holiness. All of his attributes (perfections) are pure & holy because God is pure & holy. His omnipotence is a holy omnipotence // love // mercy // graciousness // wrath // justice . . . "

It is that which Isaiah the prophet saw in Isa. 6:3 ==>

And one called out to another and said, "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the \Lord\ of hosts, The whole earth is full of His glory."

It's axiomatic; when we say God is Holy, simply saying that God is God.

(a) He's not holy on a part-time basis

He's not just holy when he feels like it // on Sundays. What about us?

... be holy yourselves also in all your behavior;

(b) Note ἐν πάσῃ ἀναστροφῇ

"In all your behavior." As God is holy in all of his behavior, even in his very character, so you be holy in all your behavior.

Hypocritical self-professed Xn are those who strive for H. (religiosity) in certain places at certain times (i.e. at CH). That sort of H. is no H. at all. It's really no better than t/Pharisees whom J. condemned, calling them "whitewashed tombs" (tombs/graves were painted white so that no one would mistakenly step on one and be defiled). Like those white-tombs these hypocrites looked pure on t/outside, but inwardly they were full of death/decay.

(c) Genuine holiness will impact us in all of our behavior

ἀναστροφῇ - compound of ἀνα (again) & στροφῇ (a turning). Orig. meant "turning up & down, or back and forth" (so ATR). Latin equiv.= *conversatio*. Where we get our old Eng. "conversation," which meant not talking w/someone (as we mean it today), but "manner of life or behavior." KJV can be a little misleading.

But like the holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior;

(2) In that regard Holiness is like breathing

Neg. / Pos. aspects to it. Take in good oxygen, exhale t/bad. Spiritually, we need to take in t/good & forsake t/bad. Both of these need to be in balance w/each other. Sim. to contrast we see dev. in v. 14/15 {state}

It's like breathing. No matter how much good air you have, if you don't exhale what's going to happen? Anyone want to try it? Conversely, No matter how much bad air you expire, if you don't inhale the good, you're going to die.

Same way w/our spiritual lives. We exhale, or expel anything that isn't holy & good. We expel sin, bad thoughts, attitudes, behaviors. But we also must inhale. Holiness isn't just a putting off, it's a replacing of that which we put off with righteousness. Must be positive affections & practices. It isn't just the putting off, it's also the putting on.

(a) We have to put off the flesh

Forsake sin. We have to be about "repentance." Repentance is a life-long duty of the believer (not just something we do once).

i. Old Fashioned Theological Term: "Mortification"

To mortify sin is to put it to death. What Paul wrote about in Col. 3:5=>
Therefore, put to death the members of your earthly body . . .

Word used in Col. 3:5 is imperative $\text{Νεκρωσατε (νεκρώω)}$ - to kill, to put to death. It's a spiritual execution of sin in our lives. We are to do as Paul stated in 1 Cor. 15:31 ==> **I die daily**. Every day when you get up you need to die . . .

ii. I hate to disappoint you

No such thing as a silver bullet, a book you can read, a conference you attend, an experience you have, that will place you on easy street when it comes to personal holiness. No universal "quick-n-easy" panacea.

Walking a holy life before God is an often wearying, never-ended battle against sin. (note t/metaphors of Xn discipleship that Paul uses in 2 Tim. chapt. 2 ==> A disciplined soldier // hard-working farmer // an athlete.)

Though we fall to the same stupid sins over and over again, we continue to get up in optimism to fight again knowing that the final victory over all sin has been won.

iii. Sin is the proverbial 'boogy-man'

Sin in our lives is t/monster that seemingly will not die. How many times have you seen a movie where t/villain (boogy-man if you will) threatens to kill t/good guy. Sometime late in t/movie t/villian is finally destroyed. T/good guy sighs, takes a deep breath, he wipes his brow. "Now that's over. I'm safe." But you know it isn't over. Not really. It can't be (after all, you look at t/clock & there's 45 min. left in t/movie). T/hero is usually in a sitting position. T/villain is behind him; laying still; dead; finished. Then t/camera refocuses & behind t/hero we see movt. Slowly (what happens?) t/monster sits up; quietly he stands (our hero isn't looking, we want to cry out: "look behind you! Run!"). Battle starts all over again. That's what our battle against sin is like.

We fight, we battle, we put on God's armor, raise up our sword. We win many battles, we lose some battles. But whether we win or lose we have to keep fighting.

* Some of you are discouraged

You struggle w/what t/Puritans called a "besetting sin." There's some sin that you just can't seem to beat; not finally. It's like t/monster in t/ horror movie. Let me encourage you to keep fighting. You may have lost 100 battles, but you will one day win. And like t/hero in our proverbial movie, t/story will end w/you winning a victory of obedience.

Puritan Richard Baxter==>

"Use sin as it will use you; spare it not, for it will not spare you; it is your murderer, and the murder of the world; use it, therefore, as a murder should be used. Kill it before it kills you; and though it brings you to the grave, as it did your Head, it shall not be able to keep you there."

(3) Negatively we must forsake sin – Positively ==>

(a) We have to be spiritually disciplined

Don't get me wrong. The battle against sin is discipline in itself. But our discipline has to be offensive as well as defensive.

Donald Whitney in his book Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian life, writes: "Godly people are disciplined people. It has always been so. Call to mind some heroes of church history--Augustine, Martin Luther, John Calvin . . . George Whitefield . . . Jonathan and Sarah Edwards, Charles Spurgeon, . . . they were all disciplined people. In my own pastoral and personal Christian experience, I can say that I've never known a man or woman who came to spiritual maturity except through discipline. Godliness comes through discipline." [page 15]

"Holiness" is simply another word for "obedience" & obedience comes thru personal discipline. Discipline is t/key. If you are not willing to be disciplined, & work at being disciplined. You might as well forget everything else I've said and will say. Cf. 1 Cor. 9:24-27 {read}

Frederick the Great of Prussia was walking on the outskirts of Berlin when he encountered a very old man proceeding in the opposite direction. "Who are you?" asked Frederick. "I am a King," replied the old man. "A King!" laughed Frederick. "Over what kingdom do you reign?" "Over myself," was his reply. [cited in Maxwell, Developing the Leader Within You, 162]

1 Timothy 4:7 **But have nothing to do with worldly fables fit only for old women. On the other hand, discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness;**

Bartolucci contemporary thought paraphrase of 1 Tim. 4:7 ==>

"have nothing to do with all those trendy books that make their rounds throughout the churches which are no more than worldly fables [I'm not mentioning any titles...]. On the other hand, discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness by going back to the tried and true basics of the faith."

(a) We have to be spiritually disciplined

We could spend weeks going through the spiritual disciplines. Obv. we can't do that. But here's my short-list. Not exhaustive. Check them off and ask yourself, "How am I doing here?"

i. We have to be disciplined in our Bible Intake (includes: reading, study, meditation)

Do you regularly spend time in God's Word? Do you meditate on it? Study it?

Psalm 119:9-11 9 How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping it according to Thy word.10 With all my heart I have sought Thee; Do not let me wander from Thy commandments. 11 Thy word I have treasured in my heart, That I may not sin against Thee.

Back in the 17th and 18th centuries English sailors spending long periods of time at sea fell prey to some strange illness. They became so weak they could hardly walk. Their gums were swollen and bleeding. Their teeth began to fall out. Their legs were purple from bruises. In 1747 British Medical Dr. James Lind hypothesizes that something was amiss with these sailor's diets. He conducts an experiment with six groups of sailors. 1 group drank one quart of cider per day; 2nd G. gargled with sulfuric acid; 3rd G. had two spoonfuls of vinegar, 3 times a day; 4th G. drank 1/2-pint seawater a day; 5th G. barley water; 6th G. ate two oranges and 1 lemon a day. The mystery disease was called "scurvy" and t/group that ate the citrus fruit were the only ones who recovered.

Because of what Dr. James Lind discovered, the Royal Navy made sure that all sailors had lemon juice to drink when they were at sea for longer than one month. They thought it was the acid content of the lemon juice that cured scurvy (we now know it was the vitamin C & that scurvy is a vitamin C deficiency). Back in 18th c. doctors thought that lime juice would work better because it has more acid than lemon juice, so they substituted lime juice for lemon juice. This is t/origin of the slang term for an English person in general, a sailor in particular: Limey.

If you suffer a Vit. C deficiency, you will get scurvy. If you're deficient in your intake of God's Word, you will suffer spiritual scurvy. Drink in t/Word of God. You need it for your spirit as much as you need vit. C for your body.

Read God's Word; Study God's Word; Meditate on it (Psa. 119:15, 27). Delight in hearing it proclaimed. This CH has a high view (historic) of preaching. That's good, because I share in that view. I don't understand how Xns can be bored by God's Word. I don't understand how so many today are captivated by preaching/ & preachers that masquerade as t/real thing. There's little real biblical exposition where t/Very Word of God is proclaimed in t/power of God's Spirit. That needs to be appreciated & respected. Not for my sake, but for yours and for God's glory.

A few times in my min. I have had Xns remark that they weren't getting much of anything out of t/preaching. I cannot understand that. Frankly, I'm offended at the suggestion. Not because I think I'm so good or entertaining. (Maybe they feel that way because I'm not entertaining enough // because they have been brainwashed into thinking that real preaching consists of some slick speaker telling you all that you want to hear. The pulpit version of whispering sweet nothings in your ear!)

I am offended because I know one thing: I may not be t/most entertaining preacher around; But I do take God's Word seriously, work hard at studying it, & proclaiming it faithfully. I want my ministry to be centered on God's Word & if someone rejects that in part or whole I'm offended because I see it as a rejection not of me but of Script. itself. That deeply offends me because I love God's Word. I love to hear it preached in its fulness.

(a) We have to be spiritually disciplined

Central to that ==>

i. We have to be disciplined in our Bible Intake

That intake includes: reading, study, meditation, proclamation.

Secondly. A balanced view of personal holiness demands ==>

ii. We have to be disciplined in our Spiritual Worship

When I said "worship" t/first thing that popped into your head was probably a picture of us gathered together on any given Sun. morning singing songs. That's as much of worship as is picturing a doctor putting a stethoscope to a patient's chest is of t/medical practice. Worship includes singing, as much as it transcends it. All of our lives are to be disciplined in W. because all of our lives are to be lived in W.

Romans 12:1 **I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.** What is Xn worship acc. to Rom. 12:1?

*** This includes walking by the Spirit & not the flesh**

Could spend time reflecting on t/role of t/HS in our lives as it relates to our own H. Rem. t/3rd Person of t/Trinity is called "HOLY" Spirit for a reason. Our spiritual worship includes being disciplined in cultivating t/ministry of t/HS in our lives, being filled w/Him & walking in Him.

Not a "let go and let God" sort of thing. It's t/Power of God working through our discipline. It's t/parallel we see in Col. 1:29 ==>

... *I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me.*

Thirdly ==>

iii. We have to be disciplined in Guarding our minds

Rom. 12:2 *And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.*

*** So Essential - Goes back to the first verse of this section: Verse (13)**

This is where Peter starts this theme of hope and holiness==>

Therefore, having girding up the loins of your mind . . .

That is a literal translation of the Greek Text. "Girding the loins" was a common image to 1st c. readers (Men wore long outer garments, robes. Around t/waist they wore a broad belt. Whenever hard word or action was necessary they would shorten their robe by pulling it up & tucking it into t/belt to give them freedom of movement).

That's t/picture here only it's not literal garments that God has in view, but our minds.

Back several weeks ago when I was preaching thru v. 13 I said that "the road to holiness is paved w/personal discipline that starts in the mind."

Are your minds "girded up" or are they "hanging loose?" All of our problems, failures, struggles in some way relate to how we think.

The mind is the incubation center for sins acted out in reality. Where every outward sin has its genesis – after it has been incubated in t/mind.

2 Corinthians 10:5 We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ,

iv. We have to be disciplined in our Church Life

One of t/essential points of t/Reformation was t/distinction between t/Visible CH & t/Universal CH. Simply put - Roman Catholicism made salvation tantamount to being a member of a CH. T/Reformers said, "No, you can be a member of t/visible CH & still be unregen. You must be a member of t/universal CH."

That shift in thinking has been good, but not w/o it's abuses. Sometimes Evangelicals act as if they can take or leave t/CH. We have too low a view of it.

Many times those who leave Protestantism for R.C. do so because they sense that Protestants don't appreciate t/CH. Read of 1 man who said that "Prot. don't seem to appreciate t/CH. The CH is an institution founded by JC. He loves it. The CH is everything to Catholics; it is nothing to most of my Prot. friends."

Bonhoeffer wrote in the 1940s that the word "church" to most Protestants has the sound of something infinitely commonplace, more or less indifferent and superfluous, that does not make the heart beat faster; something with which a sense of boredom is so often associated." [cited by John MacArthur in Onward Christian Soldiers: Protestants Affirm the Church]

We can't do w/o t/CH. The CH is t/place were we minister our gifts // fellowship // disciplined // partake in t/Lord's Supper & Baptism // corporately worship // hear God's Word proclaimed.

NT knows no such thing as a Xn who is not actively associated w/the local CH.

1) We have to be disciplined in our Bible Intake; 2) We have to be disciplined in our Spiritual Worship; 3) We have to be disciplined in Guarding our minds; 4) We have to be disciplined in our Church Life

v. We have to be disciplined in Prayer

I really believe that prayer is such an essential aspect of personal holiness. The man or woman who would commune w/God in prayer daily will forsake sin daily.

One Christian leader so rightly observed ==>

"Not only does sin hinder prayer; prayer hinders sin. The two are always opposed. The more careless we are about sin, the less we will pray. The more we pray, the less careless we will be about sin. Both sin and prayer are powerful forces. Which one is moving you?" [Dr. Alvin Vander Griend - National Facilitator of Lighthouse Ministries for The Mission America Coalition]

Come to JC every day in prayer; come to Him in fasting & humble repentance. Read His Word & commune w/Him & you will grow in holiness.

John Piper admonishes us with these words==>

Oh, how we need to wake up to how much "nothing" we spend our time doing. Apart from prayer, all our scurrying about, all our talking, all our study amounts to "nothing." For most of us the voice of self-reliance is ten times louder than the bell that tolls for the hours of prayer. The voice cries out: "You must open the mail, you must make that [phone] call . . ." But the bell tolls softly: "Without Me you can do nothing." Both our flesh and our culture scream against spending an hour on our knees beside a desk piled with papers. Take one of your days off and go away by yourself and pray about how you should pray. Say to yourself right now: "God help me to do something radical in regard to prayer!" Refuse to believe that the daily hours Luther and Wesley and Brainerd and Judson spent in prayer are idealistic dreams of another era. . . . Are our packed calendars and handheld computers really fulfilling our hunger for life in Christ, let alone the hunger of our people and the world? Are not our people really yearning to be around a man who has been around God? Is it not the lingering aroma of prayer that gives a sense of eternity to all our work? [John Piper, *Brothers We Are NOT Professionals: A Plea to Pastors for Radical Ministry* (Broadman and Holman, 2002), p. 55-58.]

A Puritan saint of generations ago once prayed==>

"Grant me never to lose sight of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the exceeding righteousness of salvation, the exceeding glory of Christ, the exceeding beauty of holiness, and the exceeding wonder of grace. I am guilty but pardoned. I am lost but saved. I am wandering but found. I am sinning but cleansed. Give me perpetual broken-heartedness. Keep me always clinging to Thy cross." [cited in MacArthur, Matthew 1-7, 394]

A Balanced Approach to Personal Holiness

We take sin seriously. We fight against it. We recognize that t/battle will be won, not because of us, but because it's already been won in X.

We know and glory in all that God has done for us. We are united to his Son, JC (we live in him and he in us) // We are positionally holy because God chose us in Christ and imputed his righteousness to us // We partake of Christ's active obedience for us. The life of perfect obedience to the Law that he lived is credited to us by his grace.

We are to be disciplined. We are to be disciplined in our intake of God's precious Word // Worship // Minds // Church Ministry // Prayer

We know that we cannot be perfectly holy. We flee for refuge in Christ. We rejoice, knowing that God will keep us. We are brought back to verse 5 {read}.