

THE LIFE OF HOLINESS

BIBLE TEXT : I Peter 1:1–25; 2:1–25.

LESSON 452 Senior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "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" (I Peter 1:15, 16).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

1 Peter 1:1-25

1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,
2 Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.
3 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,
4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,
5 Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.
6 Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:
7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:
8 Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see *him* not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:
9 Receiving the end of your faith, *even* the salvation of *your* souls.
10 Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who

Bible References:

I Peter's Comforting Messages

1. We have a lively hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, I Peter 1:1-3;
1 Corinthians 15:20
20 But now is Christ risen from the dead, *and* become the firstfruits of them that slept.
2. An undefiled inheritance is reserved in Heaven for us, I Peter 1:4, 5;
Colossians 1:5
5 For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel;
2 Timothy 4:8
8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.
3. Our faith, though being tried, is more precious than gold, I Peter 1:6-9;
Job 23:10
10 But he knoweth the way that I take: *when* he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.
Psalms 66:10
10 For thou, O God, hast proved us: thou hast tried us, as silver is tried.
James 1:3
3 Knowing *this*, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.
4. This salvation was of deepest interest to prophets and angels, I Peter 1:10-14;
Exodus 25:18-20
18 And thou shalt make two cherubims *of* gold, *of* beaten work shalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercy seat.
19 And make one cherub on the one end, and the other cherub on the other end: *even* of the mercy seat shall ye make the cherubims on the two ends thereof.
20 And the cherubims shall stretch forth *their* wings on high, covering the mercy seat with their wings, and their faces *shall look* one to another; toward the mercy seat shall the faces of the cherubims be.
Ephesians 3:9
9 And to make all *men* see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:
Ephesians 3:10
10 To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly *places* might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God,
5. God is holy. We as His children must bear His likeness, I Peter 1:15-17
Leviticus 11:44
44 For I *am* the LORD your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I *am* holy: neither shall ye defile yourselves with any manner of creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.
Luke 1:74-75
74 That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear,
75 In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.

prophesied of the grace *that should come* unto you:

11 Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.

12 Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.

13 Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

14 As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance:

15 But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;

16 Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

17 And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning *here* in fear:

18 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, *as* silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers;

19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

20 Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you,

21 Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith

Hebrews 12:14

¹⁴ Follow peace with all *men*, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:

6. We were not redeemed with corruptible things, I Peter 1: 18-21;

Acts 20:28

²⁸ Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

Ephesians 1:7

⁷ In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

Hebrews 9:12-14

¹² Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption *for us*.

¹³ For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:

¹⁴ How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

Revelation 5:9

⁹ And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;

II Peter's Advice

1. Love one another with a pure heart fervently, I Peter 1:22-25

Romans 12:9-10

⁹ Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

¹⁰ Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;

1 Timothy 1:5

⁵ Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned:

1 John 3:18

¹⁸ My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.

2. Lay aside all evil tendencies and desire the sincere milk of the Word, I Peter 2:1-3, 11, 12;

Matthew 18:3

³ And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

1 Corinthians 3:2

² I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able *to bear it*, neither yet now are ye able.

Ephesians 4:22-25

²² That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;

²³ And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

²⁴ And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

²⁵ Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.

Colossians 3:8

⁸ But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

Hebrews 12:1

¹ Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset *us*, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

James 1:21

²¹ Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of

and hope might be in God.

22 Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently:

23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

24 For all flesh *is* as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away:

25 But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.

1 Peter 2:1-25

1 Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings,

2 As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:

3 If so be ye have tasted that the Lord *is* gracious.

4 To whom coming, *as unto* a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, *and* precious,

5 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

6 Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.

7 Unto you therefore which believe *he is* precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner,

8 And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, *even to them*

naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.

3. Christ, "a living stone," is precious to believers, but "a stone of stumbling" to the disobedient, I Peter 2:4-12;

Ephesians 2:19-22

¹⁹ Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

²⁰ And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner *stone*;

²¹ In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:

²² In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

4. Christians should be obedient to civil authorities, according to the will of God, I Peter 2:13-17;

Matthew 22:21

²¹ They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.

Romans 13:1

¹ Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

5. Servants should be subject to their masters, I Peter 2:18-23;

Ephesians 6:5-8

⁵ Servants, be obedient to them that are *your* masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ;

⁶ Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart;

⁷ With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men:

⁸ Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether *he be* bond or free.

Colossians 3:22-25

²² Servants, obey in all things *your* masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God:

²³ And whatsoever ye do, do *it* heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;

²⁴ Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.

²⁵ But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.

1 Timothy 6:1

¹ Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and *his* doctrine be not blasphemed.

Titus 2:9

⁹ Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please *them* well in all *things*; not answering again;

Titus 2:10

¹⁰ Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

6. They had gone astray like sheep but were now returned to their Shepherd, I Peter 2:24, 25;

Isaiah 53:6

⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Ezekiel 34:6

⁶ My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek *after them*.

John 10:11-16

¹¹ I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his

which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.

9 But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

10 Which in time past *were* not a people, but *are* now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

11 Dearly beloved, I beseech *you* as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;

12 Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by *your* good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.

13 Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme;

14 Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well.

15 For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men:

16 As free, and not using *your* liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.

17 Honour all *men*. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.

18 Servants, *be* subject to *your* masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.

19 For this *is* thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.

20 For what glory *is it*, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye

life for the sheep.

¹² But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.

¹³ The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.

¹⁴ I am the good shepherd, and know my *sheep*, and am known of mine.

¹⁵ As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.

¹⁶ And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, *and* one shepherd.

Notes:

Peter's Introduction

It is supposed that this Epistle was written shortly after Paul's martyrdom. The churches Paul had established were passing through "fiery trials." It was about 35 years after Pentecost and the church was suffering hard persecution. Nero, the Roman Emperor, possibly to cover up his own guilt, was accusing the Christians of burning Rome.

Peter was writing this Epistle to encourage and bolster the faith of the saints. He possibly had visited the churches mentioned at the opening of the Epistle, and knew many of the saints personally; and we can imagine how happy they were to receive this letter from Peter. He was sending it by Silas, one of Paul's helpers in the Gospel. Silas may have been visiting these churches to carry to them the news of Paul's death.

The Magnitude of the Gospel

Peter wanted the saints to grasp the magnitude of this great salvation. He points out how earnestly the prophets had desired to look into these things when they prophesied of the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. "Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into" (I Peter 1:12). There is possibly an allusion here to the Cherubims who stood at the ends of the Ark of the Covenant. They were in a bending posture, as if intently desiring to look into that which the Ark contained.

If the incarnation of Christ and His great plan of redemption is of great concern to the angels of God, how much more should it be to us for whom Christ came, suffered and died that we might be redeemed.

"Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind," take courage and continue to expect all that God has promised at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Holiness

Holiness is the very essence of God. If God is our Father, then we, his children, should bear the resemblance of our Father. The whole trend of a Christian life is holiness. Our walk, our conversation, our daily living must be holy. In the last few verses of the first chapter of I Peter, the new birth, the plan of redemption and holiness are all brought out so beautifully.

Redemption

Silver and gold are two precious metals that are used as a medium of exchange, but silver and gold could not purchase our redemption. It took something of infinitely more value than precious metals.

Under the Law, if a man through misfortune or otherwise could not pay his debts, he and his possessions were sold to pay

shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer *for it*, ye take it patiently, this *is* acceptable with God.

21 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:

22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:

23 Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed *himself* to him that judgeth righteously:

24 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

25 For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.

the debt. But the Law provided a plan of redemption whereby he could be bought back. The nearest kin could pay the debt and set him free.

Jesus took on Him the form of human flesh, became our elder brother, that He might have the right to redeem us back to God. Our first parents sold us to Satan. Jesus, with His own precious Blood, bought us back. What a price He paid to redeem us back to God! That shows the value God places on a human soul.

Many people treat their soul as if it were worthless. They fling it out, as it were, on the restless sea of time, not caring where they are drifting, until they reach that great precipice, beyond which there is no hope. Satan has blinded their eyes and he strives to keep them blinded. The Gospel brings light. That is why we labour to get the Gospel to a lost world.

Malice

The vices mentioned are wholly inconsistent with the brotherly love about which Peter had been writing. Malice is mentioned first, and each succeeding vice springs out of that which immediately precedes. Out of malice springs guile, out of guile springs hypocrisy, out of hypocrisy springs envy, out of envy springs evil speaking. All are eradicated from the heart when brotherly love reigns within.

The Pure Word

Newborn babies grow naturally when fed on the mother's milk. New converts grow naturally when fed on the sincere milk of the Word. It builds faith, and faith establishes the heart on a solid foundation.

Possibly there never was a time in church history when the foundation of the Gospel was being so undermined as in these days. False doctrine, compromise, loose living, disregard for God's Word, greed for money and power are sending this world on the broad road to destruction.

Jesus Christ is the Foundation on which the Church rests. He is called "A Living Stone," and is the source of life to all who believe.

Obedience to the Law

"Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake" (I Peter 2:13). Paul says the powers that be are ordained of God. It is the duty of a Christian to obey the laws of the land when they do not conflict with the laws of God. We are to be peaceful, law-abiding citizens. The law is for the punishment of evil-doers.

Subjection to Authority

"Servants, be subject to your masters" (I Peter 2:18). In those days - slavery was prevalent; but though we do not have slavery today in our land, we do have trouble between employers and employees. These instructions apply to them.

We are to follow in the footsteps of Jesus who, when He was reviled, reviled not again. There are no thanks to be given to one who suffers for his faults, but when he does well and suffers for it, that is thankworthy.

Wandering Sheep

"Ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls" (I Peter 2:25). Sinners are as stray sheep in the wilderness of sin until Christ, the merciful Shepherd, calls them from their wanderings by sending them the Gospel. He leads them to the best pastures and defends them when they are in trouble.

Peter

We think of Peter in his young days as a large, brawny, impetuous fisherman living on the coarser side of life. We look on him after Pentecost as a strong, brave, courageous soldier of Jesus Christ, daring to face the enemy and denounce those who

crucified the Lord of Glory.

In his old days we view him through his Epistles as a tender, loving father, mellowed by the love of Jesus for lost souls until his Epistles take on an almost heavenly aspect as he encourages the saints to think it not strange concerning the fiery trials that are to try them as though some strange thing had happened to them: These things were just stepping-stones in their faith that would bring them more glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

His encouragement and advice, if followed, will make every saint "more than conqueror" through Jesus Christ who loved them.

QUESTIONS

1. What do you think prompted Peter to write this Epistle?
2. Tell some of the characteristics of Peter?
3. Explain how we can be holy in this life.
4. Upon what foundation is the Gospel built?
5. Why is Jesus called "a living stone"?
6. What was the price of our redemption?
7. How were they to think of their trials?
8. Under the Law, how could a man who had been sold for his debts be set free?