

# Studies in I Peter (15)

## The Responsibility of Salvation

### Introduction

- A. While salvation brings the greatest benefits of any relationship to the believer -- it also brings solemn responsibilities.
- B. Both of these truths form the content of this Epistle. In the passage before us, Peter explains how to live as a believer.

### **I. The Grace of God in the Believer's Salvation, I Peter 1:3-2:10.**

- A. The description of salvation, Vs 3-5. (Lesson # 11)
- B. The joy of salvation, Vs 6-9. (Lesson # 12)
- C. The greatness of salvation, Vs 10-12. (Lesson # 13)
- D. The responsibility of salvation, Vs 1:13-2:3.
  - 1. The responsibility of dedication, V 13. (Lesson # 14)
  - 2. The responsibility of holiness, Vs 14,15

*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.*

- a. The basis of holiness -- "As obedient children."

The answer as to WHY a Christian must live a holy life and HOW he can do so -- is found in the truth that he is a child of God. He has been born of God (V3, John 1:12,13), he is called to walk in fellowship with God (V5, I Corinthians 1:9), he is to glorify God (V7, I Cor. 6:20), and he has the presence of the Holy Spirit in his life (V2, I Cor. 6:19) Who makes available to him the power of the Resurrection (V3, Romans 6:4). This summary indicates the sufficiency of God's provision and how inconsistent we are when we sin. We must confess that we sin because we want to!

- b. The characteristic of holiness -- "As obedient children."

While Biblical holiness does not originate with actions, but with the will (choices of faith and love) and the mind (knowing God's will), it is inseparably related to practice. The Lord Jesus said, "*By their fruits ye shall know them*" (Matthew 7:20), and James said, "*But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves*" (James 1:22). There is a great truth here: obedience brings the transforming work of God which changes our character and makes us holy. As we learn to obey -- God works in us (Romans 6:16-18). There is no holiness -- apart from daily practice.

- c. The warning regarding holiness -- "not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance."

While we have been born again and have entered into a life of newness (II Corinthians 5:17), we all see patterns in our attitudes and life which were formed before salvation. Paul spoke of his old nature (flesh) manifesting itself in a "law" (pattern of action) in his life (Romans 7:18-23). Too often we allow our former sins to "go into hiding" or we express them in a more "Christian" way. Every believer must face his self-centeredness, jealousy, covetousness, pride, self-righteousness, grudges, spiritual laziness, irresponsibility, dishonesty, role-playing, anger, manipulation, gossip, malice, unbelief, and negativism.

- d. The pattern regarding holiness -- "But as he which hath called you is holy."

Peter reminds us that we are to be holy as God is holy. In God there is a complete separation from all sinfulness and the fullest expression of righteousness, truth, and love. This is the pattern which must be found in our life -- separation from all evil, and the practice of righteousness, truthfulness, and love. Such a life means honesty, trustworthiness, integrity, faithfulness, lovingkindness, consistency, with the priorities which are in harmony with these virtues.

- e. The command regarding holiness -- "So be ye holy."

These few words bring the believer's responsibility clearly before us. We must be holy people. As we have seen, true holiness is the result of the work of God in transforming us, as we learn to obey Him by faith and love. We must make the choices necessary to be free from sin and to live a life within and without that is summarized by such virtues as righteousness, truthfulness, and love. All that is a contradiction to such a life, or questionable, must be confessed as sin and refused.

We have no option -- we must be holy people.

- f. The extent of holiness -- "In all manner of conversation."

The old English word "conversation" means "daily life." The emphasis here has to do with the importance of honest and consistent practice. We are all embarrassed as to how hard this is to do. In reality, however, the difficulty is not due to a lack of provision -- but to a lack of desire on our part. Too often we do not realize how serious a sin may be -- that we permit in our life. Many Christians have brought great harm to their children, their church, and their own life -- by an unbridled use of their tongue, or through worldliness, or dishonesty.

We may not live with sin in our life.

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