

Incentives For Holy Living from the Epistles of Peter

Intro: In the early part of 1 Peter 1 the Apostle Peter shows how (1) our heavenly hope, (2) our present experiences, especially suffering, and (3) the Scriptures, all point to the fact that God is concerned about our complete transformation from what we used to be to what he wants us to be.

The completed work is called salvation (vv. 5, 9).

In other words salvation is both a present possession and a process.

The person who receives Christ is as saved at that moment as he ever will be — but his salvation will become, or should become, more apparent to others the longer he is a Christian.

So while Peter indicates that we are saved to go to heaven, his chief emphasis is the WE ARE SAVED TO BECOME HOLY.

As it is often stated:

(1) We were saved from the PENALTY of sin.

(2) We are being saved from the POWER of sin.

(3) We will be saved from the PRESENCE of sin.

This positive, yet progressive deliverance results in HOLINESS.

- This does not mean that we become sinless now; in fact, it implies that we will always be bothered by sin until we get to heaven.

But it also means that our salvation should bring us more and more to the place of deliverance from sin which we would otherwise commit.

Since the word holiness means basically something that is set apart, to be set apart from sin results in holiness of life, and the greater the separation from sin, the greater the holiness.

- now God knows that we need to be motivated to do whatever we do:

Hunger motivates us to eat.

Thirst motivates us to drink.

Wearyness " " " rest.

Needs " " " work

Fear + love " " " protect.

And on & on we can go.

WHAT WILL MOTIVATE MEN TO BE HOLY - i.e., those who are saved.

Let me mention four that Peter suggests.

- I. The Person of God (1:13-16)

Peter quotes from Lev. 11:44.

Thus, reaching across the OT + including the NT the basic motive for being holy is because

This is what God is like, and He wants us to be like He is.

- See the progression of this with Moses:

(1) Ex. 3:5.

(2) Ex. 15:11

(3) Lev. 11:44

The man (cf. v. 14) who allows his life to be fashioned by lust, any kind of lust, is ignorant — especially ignorant of God.

We need to learn to know what God is like + then to desire to be like Him.

How amazing that this should be possible — and yet it is!

The world wants us to conform to it; God wants us to be like Him. This is His desire — and it is to motivate us.

~~Sec II~~

PERSONAL

III The desire for pleasure (3:8-12)

What person is there who does not love life?

Our desires for pleasure may differ, but we all have the desire. We want to get just as much out of life as we can.

A child doesn't want to take naps because he is afraid he will miss something!

How do you as a Christian seek pleasure?

Through sin?

This is what the world does.

- Men are out to satisfy every desire of the flesh, but do they satisfy?

Absolutely not! There may be pleasure, but it is so fleeting that it is not worth the price.

Listen to the Word! (Read vv. 10, 11.) Pleasure is not found in doing evil, but in fleeing from it. What God forbids in His Word can never bring lasting pleasure. It only ruins lives!

But note!

v. 12 is inseparably linked with the preceding.

- WE SHOULD SEEK HOLINESS, NOT ONLY BECAUSE IT SATISFIES US, BUT BECAUSE IT PLEASES GOD.

And this is vitally related to prayer.

God has eyes, & ears, and a face.

"But the face of the Lord is against them that do evil." Cf. 1 Jn. 3:22.

Do you love to pray? Does God answer your prayers? What you are in your relationship with sin has a direct bearing on the answer to these questions.

- According to v. 9 you were "called that ye should inherit a blessing". God delights to answer prayer, but the prayer must be holy - living a life deliberately set apart from sin.

III. The purpose of God for us. work (2: 11, 12).

The word "honest" here is the word that the Greeks used for that which is complete, and therefore beautiful, harmonious, idealized.

There is a paradox here.

- (1) The Gentiles will call a godly person an evil doer.
- (2) But they still recognize the beauty, the completeness, the desirability of such a life.

But they would never admit it.

When do we discover it?

"In the day of visitation"

- (1) The time of judgment, or
- (2) The time when God moves upon their heart.

Then they "glorify God".

Why?

Because their own hearts have been reached by a godly life.

But what philosophy do we often follow?

Do what they do to reach them.

This never works. It is only through holy lives that people will ever be turned to Christ.

IV. The purpose of God for the world (2 Pet. 3:10-12).

As conditions deteriorate - and they are! Crime, lit., noises, etc. as ~~conditions~~ outlook becomes darker - and it is! War - & rumors of war, Communism, political corruption, etc.

The world says,

"Eat, drink, & be merry - tomorrow we die."

And if we had no more than the world has we would say the same.

But God says,

"Seeing them that all..."

Cond: There are other motives for happy living, but do we need more?

Holiness makes us like God.

→ Holiness is the true way of pleasure for us so that we please God at the same time.

It provides us with a witness and it is the only sensible life in view of the judgment to come.