

The Anatomy of a Church (12)

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[Acts 20:28](#)

(Continuation from 02/23/14)

PERSONAL HOLINESS

[1 Peter 1:14 \(NASB\)](#)

¹⁴ As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts *which were yours* in your ignorance,

For believers, such former lusts... were theirs in ignorance, before they were saved and when they did not know any better (cf. [Acts 26:18](#); [Ephesians 2:1](#)),

[Acts 26:18 \(NASB\)](#)

¹⁸ to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.'

[Ephesians 2:1 \(NASB\)](#)

¹ And you were dead in your trespasses and sins,

The same thing could be true of both Gentiles (cf. [Ephesians 4:17-19](#)) and Jews (cf. [Romans 10:2-3](#)).

[Ephesians 4:17-19 \(NASB\)](#)

¹⁷ So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind,
¹⁸ being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart;
¹⁹ and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness.

[Romans 10:2-3 \(NASB\)](#)

² For I testify about them that they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge.
³ For not knowing about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God.

Regeneration creates a new life ([2 Corinthians 5:17](#)) that has both the desire and the power to live righteously.

[2 Corinthians 5:17 \(NASB\)](#)

¹⁷ Therefore if anyone is in Christ, *he is* a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

Paul's inspired words in [Colossians 3:1-10](#) echo Peter's call to holiness:

Colossians 3:1-10 (NASB)

- ¹ “Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.
² Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.
³ For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.
⁴ When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.
⁵ Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.
⁶ For it is because of these things that the wrath of God will come upon the sons of disobedience,
⁷ and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them.
⁸ But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, *and* abusive speech from your mouth.
⁹ Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its *evil* practices,
¹⁰ and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him.”

1 Peter 1:13-19 (NASB)

- ¹³ “Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober *in spirit*, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.
¹⁴ As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts *which were yours* in your ignorance,
¹⁵ but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all *your* behavior;
¹⁶ because it is written, "YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY."
¹⁷ If you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay *on earth*;
¹⁸ knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers,
¹⁹ but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, *the blood of Christ.*”

Peter then presents the positive standard of holiness as the very perfection of **the Holy One who called** believers, namely God Himself. Negatively, they are to stop living sinfully as they did prior to regeneration; positively, they are to **be holy... in all their behavior**. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus set forth this same standard, “**Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect**” ([Matthew 5:48](#); cf. [Ephesians 5:1](#)). In this life believers cannot be sinless (cf. [Romans 7:14-25](#); [1 John 1:8](#)) as God is, but no less than His holiness is the goal at which they are, equipped by the Word and the Spirit, to aim ([Ephesians 2:10](#)).