

# The Anatomy of a Church (13)

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[Acts 20:28](#)

(Continuation from 03/02/14)

## PERSONAL HOLINESS

**1 Peter 1:13-19 (NASB)**

<sup>13</sup> “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.

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

<sup>15</sup> but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all *your behavior*;

<sup>16</sup> because it is written, "YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY."

<sup>17</sup> 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*;

<sup>18</sup> knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers,

<sup>19</sup> 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](#)).

Peter's call to holiness was not new but echoed that of the Old Testament, as he indicates by introducing an Old Testament quote with the common phrase **because it is written** (cf. [Mark 1:2](#); [Luke 2:23](#); [John 6:31](#); [Romans 1:17](#)), followed by the quote, “**You shall be holy, for I am holy,**” derived from [Leviticus 11:44](#); [Leviticus 19:2](#); and [Leviticus 20:7](#). God reiterated this command elsewhere in the Mosaic law (cf. [Exodus 19:5-6](#); [Deuteronomy 7:6-8](#)).

In [Leviticus 11:43-45](#) He also declared,

**Leviticus 11:43-45 (NASB)**

<sup>43</sup> “Do not render yourselves detestable through any of the swarming things that swarm; and you shall not make yourselves unclean with them so that you become unclean.

03-09-14

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<sup>44</sup> ~'For I am the LORD your God. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am holy. And you shall not make yourselves unclean with any of the swarming things that swarm on the earth.

<sup>45</sup> ~'For I am the LORD who brought you up from the land of Egypt to be your God; thus you shall be holy, for I am holy.'”

The dominant, compelling reason for God’s people to live in holiness was their relationship with God: “Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ‘Speak to all the congregation of the sons of Israel and say to them, “You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy”’” ([Leviticus 19:1-2](#); cf. [vv. 3, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 25, 28, 30-32, 34, 36-37](#); [18:2, 4-6, 21, 30](#); [Leviticus 20:7-8, 24, 26](#); [Leviticus 21:6-8, 12, 15, 23](#); [Leviticus 22:2, 16, 32-33](#); [Leviticus 23:22](#)). As the children of Israel were called to love and serve God and to separate themselves from immorality and uncleanness, believers today must heed the sovereign call to bear His image ([Colossians 3:10](#); cf. [Romans 8:29](#); [1 Corinthians 15:49](#); [2 Corinthians 3:18](#)) and obey His commands to be holy since the Holy One has identified Himself with them in an eternally glorious work of saving grace.