

**A Bible Study Lesson of The Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church**

**A Call to Holy Living Part 1**

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**INTRODUCTION:** Did you know that every Christian is called to live a holy life? That one sentence probably made many of us want to walk out of the lesson you are about to engage in because of all the things promoted in Christendom, HOLY LIVING seems to be significantly far down the list of priorities. The trendy fashion bracelet could have changed our direction, but the WWJD (What Would Jesus Do) push was simply another trend that had no sustaining power. Why? Because we lack the desire to truly live and to do as Jesus requires. It is clear in the way we talk. For instance if you have heard or said, “I just don’t see it that way,” in relation to God’s word, you are resisting Holy living. If you have heard or said, “The Lord knows my heart,” as a get out of jail free card, then you are resisting living up to the standard of Holy living.

Our dislike of the Godly standard does not override that there is a standard. From the Garden of Eden until the end of time, God’s holy standard is complete obedience to His Written, Spoken, and Living Word. The purpose of this lesson is to help define God’s call to a holy life. By the end of the lesson, students will be able to explain the command for holy living. Enjoy! Dr. Ken Patterson



Key Verse: I Peter 1: 1-2; 15-16

## Citizens are Holy 1 Peter 1:1-2

*<sup>1</sup> To God’s elect, exiles scattered throughout the provinces of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, <sup>2</sup> who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to be obedient to Jesus Christ and sprinkled with his blood: Grace and peace be yours in abundance.*

The construction of Peter’s letter begins with a greeting to a group of non-Jewish believers (Gentiles) who are in various cities. He acknowledges who they are (elect exiles), that they have been chosen (Always part of God’s plan), and how they were chosen (through the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit). Peter’s introduction sets the foundation for their understanding of holiness.

You and I cannot live holy lives without recognizing that holiness is intertwined with our relationship with The Lord. This two-way, voluntary

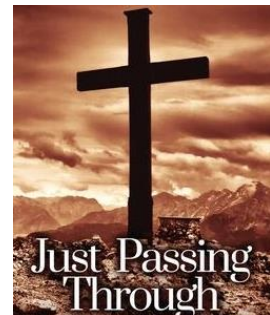
relationship based on God's love for mankind allows any and every person to gain what previously was unavailable. Ephesians 2:12-13 speaks to Gentiles but also can be understood to cover all mankind

*<sup>12</sup> remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. <sup>13</sup> But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ.*

All believers give up their citizenship as earthly residents and become citizens to the promise in Jesus Christ. Peter describes it as taking on the role of pilgrim (exiles). A *pilgrim* is a person who, in the most basic sense, is on a journey from one place to another. Christians are pilgrims. We live physically as residents of this world yet our ultimate home is heaven. We are residents of Earth but citizens of Heaven!

1. What does it mean to have citizenship in a country?
  - a. Characteristics
  - b. Understanding
  - c. Responsibilities
  - d. Rights

Citizenship to any country identifies a uniqueness of personhood. As American citizens, we are unique to this country, it's way of thinking, governmental structure, laws, and privileges. Peter used language which helped them to understand that they were spiritually no longer residents under the authority of spiritual earthly ideas, behaviors, laws, actions, or attitudes. In short, Peter told them to remember, you are here, but here does not have ownership over you. Likewise, you are not to consider this your ending place because you are a pilgrim, an exile, a sojourner on your way to your home country. You are just passing through!



Today's Christians should exhibit uniqueness in behavior, outlook, thought, and future as well. We are not like everyone else.

PART OF CITIZENSHIP LOOKS LIKE THIS Peter 2:9-10---  
THIS IS HOLY LIVING!

*<sup>9</sup> 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 marvelous light;*

*<sup>10</sup> 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.*

Our citizenship:

1. Chosen
2. Royal priesthood
3. Holy nation
4. Peculiar people
5. Living in light not darkness
6. Identifiable people of God
7. Have received mercy (forgiveness through Jesus Christ)

As a citizen of a country, one abides by the law of the land. What is the law of the land that Peter addresses in this portion of his letter? HOLY LIVING. Who set the rule? God! The law of the citizens of heaven is that we are to be holy because God said so. We are not the ruler. We are citizens or servants. More importantly, we do not define holy living. It is defined by our leader, God. Thus when God tells His servants we are to be holy, He is calling on all of us to live according to His defined characteristics of citizens of Heaven.



**Consider this:** If you are not living a holy life, your citizenship can be questioned. The harder question we often face from the world is “How can you be a Christian and act/think/behave/talk like this?” What people are saying is that they know you are acting out of character and wonder what is going on with you! If the world knows what it looks like, why don’t you???

## Holiness is Commanded

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

*<sup>16</sup> Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.*

Peter reminds them of the change that happened at the time of salvation. He uses the word sanctification (vs. 2). This leads to the need for a discussion of two words. Justification and Sanctification.

### Matching Game-which goes with which?

Directions: Draw a line matching the word and definition you think is most accurate.

#### Word

1. Justified
  
2. Sanctified

#### Definition

- A. To be made holy by process
  
- B. Considered holy by proxy

Peter's letter was to people who had been justified (considered holy) by their decision for Jesus and were being sanctified (made holy by personal choice) by the Holy Spirit. A deeper dive reveals that they may have been relatively new Christians because they were called newborn babies in 1 Peter 2: 2 in which Peter pushes them to crave milk that will help them grow or mature. Regardless of their time as believers, they were to understand and abide by the standard of holiness. Holiness was the command, so excuses are not tolerated. To be holy requires growth in the word and submission to the Holy Spirit over time.

Another word which may help you understand sanctification is growth. **Growth** is the process where we learn more and put into action what we have learned because it is our identity or DNA. Christians are admonished to grow so they can become. What are we becoming? More like Christ which means more holy each day. This is the process of sanctification.

In the following space, explain justification and sanctification as two separate ideas.

Justification = \_\_\_\_\_

Sanctification = \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Let's put it together. At the point of any person accepting Christ, they are immediately saved and are given the gift of the Holy Spirit. They are \_\_\_\_\_ They get all of the Holy Spirit they are going to ever receive. He comes into a completely dirty house and takes up residence. As they grow in Christ, they are \_\_\_\_\_ !

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit (Any Holy Spirit class students in the house?), if we choose to submit to His will, sanctifies us over time. Peter assumes that these apostles of Christ function under the direction of their new governing body (the Holy Spirit). Therefore, they would be willing subjects to the commands they were given.

The lessons for this week center on one command of heavenly citizens. Peter explicitly identifies the command to the citizens. *Be holy, because I (God, the one who called and chose) am holy.* Holy living requires us to submit ourselves to God. God living inside of us ( The Holy Spirit) tells us what to do, however if we have not submitted totally to Him, we find ourselves unusable for Christ. As we complete the lessons for this week, the definition of holiness will be expanded beyond simple daily behaviors to include function. The question will then become less about whether I can be identified by my holiness to am I usable due to my holiness. This will lead us to thoughts about purpose and impact for Christ!

**Final Activity:** In the space below, write a short paragraph about what you learned from this lesson and turn it into your instructor. Also, if you still have questions, please write them as well.

I learned:


I am still wondering:
