Faith that is Focused
1 Peter 1:13-25
SS Lesson for 11/17/2019

Devotional Scripture: 2 Tim 1:5-14

OUTLINE

LESSON BACKGROUND AND KEY VERSE

Background from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary
Key Verse: 1 Peter 1:14-15
Commentary from the Bible Knowledge Commentary

MAJOR THEME ANALYSIS

FOCUSED ON A HOLY OBEDIENCE (1 Peter 1:13-16)

Obedience through a prepared mind (13-14)
- Be prepared by guarding our mind (Prov 4:23-26)
- Prepared mind by being careful of all things that influence the mind (Matt 6:22-23)
- Prepared mind by being filled with the Holy Spirit (Eph 5:18)
- Prepared mind by bringing every thought under the control of God (2 Cor 10:5)
- Prepared mind by trusting God to control the mind (Rom 7:21-25).

Obedience through holy lives (15-16)
- Holy life that is as perfect as possible (Matt 5:48)
- Holy life that has been purified (2 Cor 7:1)
- Holy life that is lived in a manner worthy of the Gospel (Phil 1:27)
- Holy life that has been sanctified by God (1 Thess 4:3)
- Holy life that is powered by the grace of God (Titus 2:11-12)
- Holy life that lives in peace with all men (Heb 12:14)

FOCUSED ON HOLINESS (1 Peter 1:17-21)

Focus on holiness through the blood of Jesus (17-19)
- Blood that is of the covenant (Matt 26:28)
- Blood that brings redemption (Eph 1:7)
- Blood that cleanses our conscience from dead works (Heb 9:14)
- Blood that brings us near to God (Eph 2:13)
- Blood that justifies and saves us (Rom 5:9)
- Blood that cleanses and forgives us (Heb 9:22)
- Blood that makes us holy (Heb 13:12)

Focus on holiness leading to eternal life (20-21)
- Eternal life that calls for persistence in doing good (Rom 2:7)
- Eternal life that is the result of being set free from sin (Rom 6:22)
- Eternal life that is the result of pleasing the Holy Spirit (Gal 6:8)
- Eternal life to which we are called (1 Tim 6:12)

FOCUSED ON THE WORD (1 Peter 1:22-25)

Focused on loving one another according to the Word (22)
- Loving others by associating with all people (Rom 12:16)
- Loving others by bearing with one another (Eph 4:2)
- Loving others by seeking the interest of others over self (Phil 2:3-4)
- Loving others is the greatest commandment (Mark 12:28-31)
- Loving others comes from a pure heart, sincere faith and good conscience (1 Tim 1:5)
- Loving others should be the only debt we should have (Rom 13:8)
- Loving others sums up the Law (Matt 7:12)
- Loving others in everything we do (1 Cor 16:14)

Focused on being born again through the Word (23)
- Born again as a kind of firstfruit (James 1:18)
- Born again to enter into the kingdom of God (John 3:5)
- Born again through the power of God, not man (John 1:12-13)
- Born again to see the kingdom of God (John 3:3)
- Born again through belief in Jesus (1 John 5:1)

Focused on the enduring Word (24-25)
- God's Word endures because it stands firm (Ps 119:89)
- God's Word endures because it stands forever (Isa 40:8)
- God's Word endures because it must be accomplished (Matt 5:18)
CONCLUSION AND OTHER THOUGHTS

Commentary Thoughts from J. Hampton Keathley
Peter's Call to Holiness

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS FROM THE NIV STANDARD LESSON COMMENTARY

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS FROM THE ECHOES COMMENTARY

Lesson Background and Key Verse

Background from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

Have you ever had what seemed to be a surprising encounter with God's holiness? If so, how did you react? Some may claim to have holiness encounters in certain places (compare Genesis 28:16, 17). Others may claim to encounter God's holiness in certain people (compare 2 Kings 4:9). It seems more likely, however, that we will have encounters with unholiness in this fallen world (compare Genesis 6:5; 19:4, 5; Romans 3:10-18). And before we crave encounters with God's holiness, we may wish to examine biblical incidents of those first! One example to consider is that of Moses in Exodus 3:1-4:17. At age 40, Moses fled from Egypt and lived in Midian for many years (Exodus 2:12, 15, 22; Acts 7:23). There he did the lonely job of shepherding, moving his flock from pasture to pasture. On one occasion, Moses found himself at the foot of Mount Horeb, later called Mount Sinai. There he encountered a marvelous sight: a fiery bush that didn't burn up. Curiosity resulted in his standing on “holy ground” (Exodus 3:1-5). Moses had encountered the holy God. The voice in the bush told Moses he would return to this holy place with the people of Israel to worship the Lord (Exodus 3:12). When Moses did return, he encountered not a burning bush but a mountain on fire (19:18) — the holiness of God on a grand scale! Such encounters and others (Isaiah 6, etc.) have lessons to teach about holiness.

Peter is a perplexing figure in the Gospel accounts. He tended to blurt out whatever was on his mind at the time, sometimes seeming to contradict himself in the process (examples: Matthew 16:22, 23; 26:35; Mark 9:5, 6; John 18:25-27). He was impulsive and recklessly bold, often acting before thinking (Matthew 14:22-33; John 18:10). In short, Peter was an apostle we can relate to. A dramatic change came over Peter after Jesus' resurrection. He grew spiritually, constantly preaching, teaching, and healing in Jesus' name (Acts 2:14-39; 3:1-8, 12-26; 10:34-43, 47, 48; etc.). This confident Peter is the same man who wrote the letters of 1 and 2 Peter. In his first letter, Peter addressed “the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia” (1 Peter 1:1). These regions encompass a very large swath of land in northeastern Asia Minor, now Turkey. Such a large expanse of land suggests that a large number of people were also meant to be reached. The majority of Peter's audience were likely Gentile believers (consider 1:14; 2:9, 10; 4:3, 4). A time of terror, of living day to day and being tempted to abandon the faith, forms the backdrop for Peter's two letters. His first letter mentions being in “Babylon” (1 Peter 5:13), a derogatory code term for the city of Rome (consider Revelation 14:8; 16:19; 17:5; 18:2). After a fire in Rome in AD 64, Emperor Nero blamed the Christian population of the city, putting many of them to death. Both Peter and Paul were in Rome in the mid-AD 60s while Nero persecuted anyone who put their faith in any lord but him. Reliable church tradition maintains that Peter was crucified in Rome in AD 67 or 68.

Key Verse: 1 Peter 1:14-15

14 as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; 15 but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct

Commentary from the Bible Knowledge Commentary

In a doxology of praise to God, Peter encouraged his readers by reminding them that the new birth gave them a living hope in an imperishable future inheritance. The inheritance is sure because believers are shielded by the power of God till it is ready to be revealed. Consequently Christians may rejoice even when they face trials, since trials will prove their faith genuine and thus bring greater glory to Christ. Finally the new birth’s hope is based not only on a future inheritance and present blessings but also on the written Word of God.

1:3. The contemplation of God’s grace caused Peter to praise God, the Author of salvation and the Source of hope. The words Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ are identical in 2
Corinthians 1:3. The phrase in His great mercy refers to God’s unmerited favor toward sinners in their hopeless condition. He has given us new birth; people can do nothing to merit such a gift. The words “has given... new birth” translate anagennēsas, from the verb “beget again” or “cause to be born again.” It is used only twice in the New Testament, both times in this chapter (1 Peter 1:3, 23). Peter may have been recalling Jesus’ interview with Nicodemus (John 3:1-21). The “new birth” results in a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. The “living hope” is based on the living resurrected Christ (cf. 1 Peter 1:21). The Christian’s assurance in Christ is as certain and sure as the fact that Christ is alive! Peter used the word “living” six times (1:3, 23; 2:4-5; 4:5-6). Here “living” means that the believer’s hope is sure, certain, and real, as opposed to the deceptive, empty, false hope the world offers.

1:4. The sure hope is of a future inheritance (klēronomian). This same word is used in the Septuagint to refer to Israel’s promised possession of the land (cf. Num. 26:54, 56; 34:2; Josh. 11:23); it was her possession, granted to her as a gift from God. A Christian’s inheritance cannot be destroyed by hostile forces, and it will not spoil like overripened fruit or fade in color. Peter used three words, each beginning with the same letter and ending with the same syllable, to describe in a cumulative fashion this inheritance’s permanence: can never perish (aphtharton), spoil (amianton), or fade (amarantw). This inheritance is as indestructible as God’s Word (cf. 1 Peter 1:23, where Peter again used aphtharton). Each Christian’s inheritance of eternal life is kept in heaven or “kept watch on” by God so its ultimate possession is secure (cf. Gal. 5:5).

1:5. Not only is the inheritance guarded, but heirs who have been born into that inheritance are shielded by God’s power. “Shielded” (phrouroumenous) is a military term, used to refer to a garrison within a city (Phil. 4:7 uses the same Gr. word). What greater hope could be given to those undergoing persecution than the knowledge that God’s power guards them from within, to preserve them for an inheritance of salvation that will be completely revealed to them in God’s presence. Believers possess salvation now (pres. tense) but will sense its full significance at the return of Christ in the last time. This final step, or ultimate completion of “the salvation of their souls” (1 Peter 1:9), will come “when Jesus Christ is revealed,” a clause Peter used twice (vv. 7, 13).

1:6. A living hope results in a present joy. In this likely refers to the truths mentioned in verses 3-5. Peter encouraged his readers to put their knowledge into practice. Their response to the tremendous theological truths taught so far should be that they would greatly rejoice. Knowledge alone cannot produce the great joy of experiential security and freedom from fear in the face of persecution. God’s omnipotent sovereignty needs to be coupled with human responsibility. Christians are responsible to respond in faith. Faith turns sound doctrine into sound practice. Faith acts on the content of theology and produces conduct that corresponds to that content. Faith makes theological security experiential. The Apostle John wrote, “This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith” (1 John 5:4). This kind of faith or living hope can enable believers to rejoice even when they are called on to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. Peter stressed that a Christian’s joy is independent of his circumstances. James used the same two Greek words (poikilois peirasmois, trans. here “all kinds of trials”). The trials themselves are seen as occasions for joy (James 1:2). Though trials may cause temporary grief, they cannot diminish that deep, abiding joy which is rooted in one’s living hope in Christ Jesus.

1:7. These various trials—which seem to refer to persecution rather than life’s normal problems—have two results: (a) they refine or purify one’s faith—much as gold is refined by fire when its dross is removed, and (b) trials prove the reality of one’s faith. Stress deepens and strengthens a Christian’s faith and lets its reality be displayed. The word dokimazomenou, rendered proved genuine, means “to test for the purpose of approving” (cf. dokimion, “testing,” in v. 7 [“the trial of your faith,” KJV] and James 1:3, and dokimon, “test,” in James 1:12). In addition to comparing faith to gold, Peter contrasted purified faith with purified gold. Faith is more precious, of greater worth, than gold. Even refined gold, though it lasts a long time, eventually perishes (cf. 1 Peter 1:18; cf. James 5:3). It will be valueless in the marketplace of eternity. But faith “purchases” an inheritance that can never perish. Genuine faith is not only of ultimate value to its possessor, but it will also bring praise, glory, and honor to the One whose name Christians bear, when He will return (is revealed; cf. 5:1) to claim them as His own. “Is revealed” translates apokalypsei, from which comes “apocalypse” (cf. 1:5, 12, and v. 13).

1:8. Here is the climax of the experiential joy that results from faith. God accomplished salvation through the work of His Son Jesus Christ. So the focus of a believer’s faith is not on abstract knowledge but on the person of Christ. The apostle’s warm heart overflowed as he spoke of the love and belief in Christ of those who, unlike himself, did not see Jesus when He walked on earth. Peter may have had in mind Jesus’ words: “Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed” (John 20:29). Yet, though Christians do not
now see Him, like Peter they love and believe in Him, and are also filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy. The verb agalliasthē (“are filled with... joy”) was used by Peter in 1 Peter 1:6, “you greatly rejoice,” and agallōmenoi is used in 4:13.

1:9. Believers can rejoice because they are (pres. tense) receiving (komizomenoi, “to receive as a reward”) what was promised, namely salvation, the goal or culmination (telos, “end”) of faith. For those who love and believe in Jesus Christ, salvation is past (“He has given us new birth,” v. 3), present (“through faith are shielded by God’s power,” v. 5), and future (it is their “inheritance,” v. 4, which will “be revealed in the last time,” v. 5, and is “the goal of your faith,” v. 9). Since each day brings believers closer to that final day, they are now “receiving” it. All of this—in spite of persecution which deepens and demonstrates one’s faith—is certainly cause for “inexpressible and glorious joy”! (v. 8)

1:10-12. The living hope of the new birth springs not only from believers’ future inheritance and present experience but also from their faith in God’s written Word (v. 11). Peter iterated that faith is not based on the mere writings of men but on the Word of God. Concerning this salvation (cf. “salvation” in vv. 5, 9) the prophets... searched intently and with the greatest care their own Spirit-guided writings. They longed to participate in this salvation and coming period of grace and tried to discover the appointed time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing. They pondered how the glorious Messiah could be involved in suffering. Again Peter echoed the teachings of Christ (cf. Matt. 13:17). In 1 Peter 1:10-12 the apostle gave a practical illustration of the doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture he clearly stated in 2 Peter 1:20-21. The prophets did not fully understand all that the Holy Spirit had authored through them. It was the Spirit who predicted the sufferings of Christ (Isa. 53) and the glories that would follow (Isa. 11). Peter’s readers would be encouraged by this reminder that Christ’s suffering was followed by glory. They too would experience glory after their suffering (cf. 1 Peter 5:10). Peter gave further encouragement (1:12), stating that the prophets understood they were not writing for themselves but for those who would live later, those who would hear the gospel proclaimed by the Holy Spirit (cf. “the Spirit of Christ,” v. 11), and consequently follow Christ. In the ultimate stage of believers’ salvation they will experience glory, not suffering. The writer of Hebrews also referred to this “ultimate” salvation (Heb. 1:14; 2:3). The reality of the Christian’s living hope was held in awe and wonder by the angelic hosts of heaven. Prophets and angels alike wondered about “this salvation” in the grace that was to come (v. 10).

The believers’ living hope based on their new birth should lead to a lifestyle of holiness. Those chosen for new birth are also called to be holy. Peter exhorted his readers to prepare to meet the challenge of obedience by adopting a new mind-set. The price paid for a believer’s redemption calls for reverence and obedience. Obedience involves purifying oneself and practicing holy living, while offering spiritual sacrifices as a royal priest.

1:13-16. Peter now gave five pointed exhortations: prepare your minds for action; be self-controlled; set your hope... do not conform to... evil desires... be holy. Actually in the Greek the first, second, and fourth are participles, which are subordinate to two commands: “have hope” and “be holy.” The participles either support the commands (i.e., have hope, with a prepared mind and self-control; and be holy, not conforming to evil desires) or they take the role of commands, as in the NIV. (1) “Prepare your minds for action” (v. 13). Obedience is a conscious act of the will. Christians in conflict need a tough-minded holiness that is ready for action. (2) “Be self-controlled” (v. 13; cf. 4:7; 5:8; 1 Thes. 5:6, 8). This word nēphontes, from the verb nēphō (“be sober”) is used only figuratively in the New Testament. It means to be free from every form of mental and spiritual “drunkenness” or excess. Rather than being controlled by outside circumstances, believers should be directed from within. (3) “Set your hope fully” (1 Peter 1:13). Holy living demands determination. A believer’s hope is to be set perfectly (teleiōs, completely or unchangeably), and without reserve on the grace (cf. v. 10) to be bestowed when Jesus Christ is revealed (lit., “in the revelation [apokalyseis] of Jesus Christ”; cf. the same phrase in v. 7; also cf. the verb “be revealed” [apokalyphēnai] in v. 5). Four times Peter has already spoken of the Savior’s return and the accompanying ultimate stage of salvation (vv. 5, 7, 9, 13). The strenuous mental preparation suggested by the three admonitions in verse 13 is needed so that Christians (4) do not conform to (syschēmatizomenoi, also used in Rom. 12:1) the evil desires (1 Peter 1:14) of their past sinful lives (cf. Eph. 2:3), when they were ignorant of God (cf. Eph. 4:18). Rather as obedient children (lit., “children of obedience”) they were to mold their characters to (5) “be holy” in all they did (1 Peter 1:15). Their lifestyle was to reflect not their former ignorance (agnōia), but the holy (hagioi) nature of their heavenly Father who gave them new birth and called them (cf. “called” in 2 Peter 1:3) to be His own. First Peter 1:15-16 do not speak of legal requirements but are a reminder of a Christian’s responsibility in his inner life and outer walk. Though absolute holiness can never be achieved in this life, all areas of life should be in the process of becoming completely conformed to God’s perfect and holy will. The quotation in verse 16 was familiar to all who
knew the Old Testament (Lev. 11:44-45; 19:2; 20:7). The high cost of salvation—the beloved Son’s precious blood—calls for believers to live in reverent fear before God. Holy living is motivated by a God-fearing faith which does not take lightly what was purchased at so great a cost.

1:17-19. Obedient children know the holy nature and just character of this One who judges... impartially. Their right to call God Father leads to their obeying Him in reverent fear. So they are to live according to His absolute standards, as strangers (cf. “aliens” in 2:11) to the world’s shifting, situational ethics. “Reverent fear” is evidenced by a tender conscience, a watchfulness against temptation, and avoiding things that would displease God. Children of obedience should also be strangers to their former empty way of life (cf. v. 14) handed down from their forebears, since they have been redeemed (elytrōthēte, from lýtroō, “to pay a ransom”) with the precious (cf. 2:4, 6-7) blood of Christ (cf. 1:2). That redemption is a purchasing from the marketplace of sin, a ransom not paid by silver or gold, which perish (cf. v. 7), but with the priceless blood of a perfect Lamb. This sacrifice to the sacrificial lambs which were to be without... defect, Christ was sinless, uniquely qualified as “the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29; cf. Heb. 9:14).

1:20-21. This payment for sin was planned before the Creation of the world and revealed for people’s sake through the Incarnation of Jesus Christ. (The pres. Age is these last times [v. 20] whereas the coming Age is “the last time” [v. 5].) It is through Christ, whom the Father resurrected (cf. v. 3) and glorified in His Ascension (John 17:5; Heb. 1:3) that people may come to know and trust in God. As a result of God’s eternal plan and priceless payment for sin, faith and hope can be placed in Him. (Cf. “faith” in 1 Peter 1:5, 7, 9; and “hope” in vv. 3, 13.) The response of holy living that should result from the new birth is now applied to three areas. Obedience to the truth purifies and produces (a) a sincere love for the brethren (1:22-25), (b) repentance from sin (2:1), and (c) a desire for spiritual growth (2:2).

1:22. Holy living demands purification. A positive result of obeying the truth is a purified life (cf. v. 2b). “How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to Your Word” (Ps. 119:9). As trials refine faith, so obedience to God’s Word refines character. One who has purified himself by living according to God’s Word has discovered the joy of obedience. A changed life should also be evidenced by a changed relationship with God’s other children. A purified life allows one to love purely those who share the same faith. Sincere (anypokriton) could also be rendered “without hypocrisy.” All evil thoughts and feelings regarding one’s brothers and sisters in Christ must be removed, for His followers are to love... deeply, from the heart. This kind of loving (agapēsate, from agapē) can come only from a changed heart, from one whose motives are pure, and who seeks to give more than he takes. This love is to be expressed not shallowly but “deeply” (ektenēs, “at full stretch” or “in an all-out manner, with an intense strain”; cf. ektenē in 1 Peter 4:8).

1:23-25. Peter again reminded his readers that they had experienced the new birth (cf. v. 3): For you have been born again. This supernatural event made it possible for them to obey the truth, purify themselves, and love the brethren. This change in their lives would not die, because it took place through God’s Word, which is imperishable (aphthartou, the word in v. 4 that described a believer’s inheritance), living and enduring. Peter supported his exhortation (v. 22) by quoting Isaiah 40:6-8 (1 Peter 1:24-25). All that is born of perishable seed withers and falls, but God’s Word stands forever. This imperishable Word was the content of Peter’s preaching (cf. v. 12). His hearers must be affected by its life-changing power, as indicated in 2:1-3.

2:1. Repentance was called for: Therefore, rid yourselves. Peter then listed five sins of attitude and speech, which if harbored would drive wedges between believers. Malice (kakian) is wicked ill-will; deceit (dolon) is deliberate dishonesty; hypocrisy (hypokriseis), pretended piety and love; envy (phthonous), resentful discontent; and slander (katalalias), backbiting lies. None of these should have any place in those who are born again. Rather, in obedience to the Word, believers are to make decisive breaks with the past.

2:2. Peter wanted his readers to be as eager for the nourishment of the Word as babies are for milk. After believers cast out impure desires and motives (v. 1), they then need to feed on wholesome spiritual food that produces growth. Pure (adolē) is deliberately contrasted with “deceit” (dolē) in v. 1. God’s Word does not deceive; neither should God’s children.) Christians should approach the Word with clean hearts and minds (v. 1) in eager anticipation, with a desire to grow spiritually. The words in your salvation (lit., “unto salvation”) recall the ultimate fulfillment of salvation spoken of in 1:5, 7, 9, 13.

2:3. Quoting Psalm 34:8, Peter continued the milk analogy used in 1 Peter 2:2 and likened their present knowledge of Christ to tasting. They had taken a sample, having experienced God’s grace in their new birth, and had found that indeed the Lord is good.
Major Theme Analysis

(Scriptural Text from the New King James Version; cross-references from the NIV)
(Note: Lesson major points and cross-references copied from previous lesson dated 11/01/2009)

Focused on a Holy Obedience (1 Peter 1:13-16)

13 Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;
14 as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance;
15 but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct,
16 because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy."

Obedience through a prepared mind (13-14)

Be prepared by guarding our mind (Prov 4:23-26)
23 Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life. 24 Put away perversity from your mouth; keep corrupt talk far from your lips. 25 Let your eyes look straight ahead, fix your gaze directly before you. 26 Make level paths for your feet and take only ways that are firm.

Prepared mind by being careful of all things that influence the mind (Matt 6:22-23)
22 “The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light. 23 But if your eyes are bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

Prepared mind by being filled with the Holy Spirit (Eph 5:18)
18 Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.

Prepared mind by bringing every thought under the control of God (2 Cor 10:5)
5 We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

Prepared mind by trusting God to control the mind (Rom 7:21-25)
21 So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. 22 For in my inner being I delight in God's law; 23 but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members. 24 What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? 25 Thanks be to God-through Jesus Christ our Lord!

Obedience through holy lives (15-16)

Holy life that is as perfect as possible (Matt 5:48)
48 Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Holy life that has been purified (2 Cor 7:1)
1 Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.

Holy life that is lived in a manner worthy of the Gospel (Phil 1:27)
27 Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in one spirit, contending as one man for the faith of the gospel.
Holy life that has been sanctified by God (1 Thess 4:3)
3 It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality;

Holy life that is powered by the grace of God (Titus 2:11-12)
11 For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. 12 It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age

Holy life that lives in peace with all men (Heb 12:14)
14 Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.

Focused on Holiness (1 Peter 1:17-21)

17 And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear; 18 knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. 20 He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you 21 who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

Focus on holiness through the blood of Jesus (17-19)

Blood that is of the covenant (Matt 26:28)
28 This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

Blood that brings redemption (Eph 1:7)
7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace

Blood that cleanses our conscience from dead works (Heb 9:14)
14 How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!

Blood that brings us near to God (Eph 2:13)
13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ.

Blood that justifies and saves us (Rom 5:9)
9 Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him!

Blood that cleanses and forgives us (Heb 9:22)
22 In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

Blood that make us holy (Heb 13:12)
12 And so Jesus also suffered outside the city gate to make the people holy through his own blood.
Focus on holiness leading to eternal life (20-21)

Eternal life that calls for persistence in doing good (Rom 2:7)
7 To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life.

Eternal life that is the result of being set free from sin (Rom 6:22)
22 But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life.

Eternal life that is the result of pleasing the Holy Spirit (Gal 6:8)
8 The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.

Eternal life to which we are called (1 Tim 6:12)
12 Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

Focused on the Word (1 Peter 1:22-25)

22 Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart,
23 having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever,
24 because "All flesh is as grass, And all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, And its flower falls away,
25 But the word of the Lord endures forever." Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you.

Focused on loving one another according to the Word (22)

Loving others by associating with all people (Rom 12:16)
16 Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.

Loving others by bearing with one another (Eph 4:2)
2 Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.

Loving others by seeking the interest of others over self (Phil 2:3-4)
3 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves.
4 Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

Loving others is the greatest commandment (Mark 12:28-31)
28 One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?" 29 "The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. 30 Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' 31 The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these."

Loving others comes from a pure heart, sincere faith and good conscience (1 Tim 1:5)
5 The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.

Loving others should be the only debt we should have (Rom 13:8)
8 Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law.
Loving others sums up the Law (Matt 7:12)
12 So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.

Loving others in everything we do (1 Cor 16:14)
14 Do everything in love.

Focused on being born again through the Word (23)

Born again as a kind of firstfruit (James 1:18)
18 He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.

Born again to enter into the kingdom of God (John 3:5)
5 Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit.

Born again through the power of God, not man (John 1:12-13)
12 Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—13 children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

Born again to see the kingdom of God (John 3:3)
3 In reply Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again."

Born again through belief in Jesus (1 John 5:1)
5 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well.

Focused on the enduring Word (24-25)

God’s Word endures because it stands firm (Ps 119:89)
89 Your word, O Lord, is eternal; it stands firm in the heavens.

God’s Word endures because it stands forever (Isa 40:8)
8 The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands forever."

God’s Word endures because it must be accomplished (Matt 5:18)
18 I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.

God’s Word endures because it will never pass away (Matt 24:35)
35 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

God’s Word endures because God's purposes will stand (Isa 46:10)
10 I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.
Conclusion and Other Thoughts

Commentary Thoughts from J. Hampton Keathley

Peter’s Call to Holiness

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.”

Years later, Peter calls the readers of his first epistle to a life of holiness.¹⁸ In these three verses, Peter tells us why we should be holy; he also tells us how. Let us begin with the “why” which can be summed up in two statements:

(1) We are to be holy so that we are obedient to the Word of God which commands it. Peter’s call to holiness is but a repetition of a command given long before by God Himself to the nation Israel: “You shall be holy, for I am holy.” We should be holy because God commands it. To do otherwise is to be disobedient.

(2) We are to be holy to be like God, our Father, who called us to be holy. Those commanded to be holy are the children of God. Never is it assumed that unbelievers can or will strive for holiness. Only His children are able to do so, by His grace and through His Spirit. The “saints” are God’s children, whom He has called to be holy:¹⁹

7 to all who are beloved of God in Rome, called as saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 1:7).

2 to the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling, with all who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours (1 Corinthians 1:2).

The people of God are to be a manifestation of the presence of God to the rest of the world. Thus, we are commanded to be like our heavenly Father:

43 “You have heard that it was said, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR, and hate your enemy.’ 44 But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you 45 in order that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous, 46 For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax-gatherers do the same? 47 And if you greet your brothers only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? 48 Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect (Matthew 5:43-48).

How then are we to be holy? Peter gives us several directives.

(1) We are to be holy in all our conduct. We are to be holy in every aspect of our conduct. Holiness is not to be compartmentalized into certain “religious” areas of our life. Holiness is a way of life that affects everything we do. Holiness is a lifestyle, rather than mere conformity to a list of rules.

(2) We are to be holy by not being conformed to our former lusts. Holiness is a lifestyle which differs dramatically from our manner of life before we were saved. When God brought the Israelites out of Egypt, He called them to live in a way which would set them apart from the Egyptians among whom they had lived and the Canaanites among whom they would live (see Leviticus 18:1-5).

Holiness is the choice to march to the beat of a different drum. Rather than to live as our culture encourages us to, we must live as God requires. If we are not to be conformed to this world (see Romans 12:1-2), neither are we to be conformed²⁰ to our former desires. At first, it may sound strange to think of being conformed by our desires, but this is precisely what happens. Consider the following texts:

21 For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God, or give thanks; but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. 22 Professing to be wise, they became fools, 23 and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures. 24 Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, that their bodies might be dishonored among them. 25 For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen (Romans 1:21-25)

16 Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness? (Romans 6:16).
17 This I say therefore, 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. 20 But you did not learn Christ in this way, 21 if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus, 22 that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, 23 and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth (Ephesians 4:17-24).

Although God’s creation bears witness to His eternal power and divine nature (Romans 1:20), men have chosen to worship creation rather than the Creator. Because of this God has given men over to their lusts, and in the pursuit of these lusts, their minds are darkened and distorted. Men are not only mastered by their lusts, they are conformed to them. They become mere creatures of instinct and impulse. Peter speaks more of this in his second epistle:

12 But these, like unreasoning animals, born as creatures of instinct to be captured and killed, reviling where they have no knowledge, will in the destruction of those creatures also be destroyed 13 suffering wrong as the wages of doing wrong. They count it a pleasure to revel in the daytime. They are stains and blemishes, reveling in their deceptions, as they carouse with you (2 Peter 2:12-13).

Though the Christian has died to sin and been raised to newness of life in Him, he or she must also choose to serve Him and turn from their former lusts. They must no longer allow sin to master them (Romans 6:1-14). Like Paul, they must gain control over their fleshly desires, rather than be mastered by them:

24 Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. 25 And everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable (1 Corinthians 9:24-27).

This is one of the lessons we should learn from the Israelites of old (see 1 Corinthians 10:1-13). The alternative is to present ourselves as a living sacrifice to God (Romans 12:1-2) and the members of our body as instruments of righteousness (Romans 6:12-13). Our minds are to be renewed by the Word of God (Romans 12:2; Ephesians 4:20-24). We are to recognize that sin brings dullness of heart and mind, and that our former lusts are exceedingly deceitful, causing our thinking to become cloudy when we surrender to sin.

Paul lays down a vitally important principle here we dare not fail to grasp. He distinguishes our “former desires” from those we should now possess as children of God. The desires which characterize the fallen world we live in once dominated us. These desires are themselves to be rejected and replaced by new desires. This is what holiness is all about—not just doing what God wants, but desiring those things in which He delights. In the words of the prophet Micah, we are “to do justice” and “to love kindness” (Micah 6:8).

I am beginning to understand Peter’s strong reaction to the vision he received. He was repulsed by the thought of eating anything unclean, just as he was supposed to be so long as God had declared it unclean.

Reading Leviticus 11 teaches me an important lesson about holiness. Those things God declared unclean were unclean. And these “unclean” things were not only to be avoided but to be considered detestable:

10 ‘But whatever is in the seas and in the rivers, that do not have fins and scales among all the teeming life of the water, and among all the living creatures that are in the water, they are detestable things to you, 11 and they shall be abhorrent to you; you may not eat of their flesh, and their carcasses you shall detest … 41 Now every swarming thing that swarms on the earth is detestable, not to be eaten (Leviticus 11:10-11, 41, see also verse 13).

It was not enough for the Israelites to avoid eating what God declared to be unclean; they must also loathe what God called unclean. They were to adjust their desires to conform to God’s desires. They were to delight in what God found delightful and to loathe what God found detestable. This command is not just for Old Testament saints but for New Testament saints as well:

Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good (Romans 12:9).

When we understand and apply this truth, we will find a great deal of practical help. We are not nearly as likely to participate in those things we find detestable as those things in which we delight. George Bush was not nearly as tempted to eat broccoli as he was to raid the refrigerator for his favorite dish. Our problem becomes evident when our desires often do not conform to those things in which God delights. Conversely, we often desire the
very things which displease God. When we find our delight in God and in the things which delight Him, then we, like David, will search His word to know more of His law rather than avoiding the Law of God and restricting its application to our lives.

(Adapted from URL: https://bible.org/seriespage/6-call-holiness-1-peter-114-16)

**Concluding Thoughts from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary**

Not long ago, a friend told me he thought “Be ye holy; for I am holy” is the most neglected command in the church. The great apostle Peter did not think holiness should be neglected or dismissed. He held it as a core element to the gospel he preached. Our failures to be holy ultimately misrepresent our belief in the holiness of God. Since God is holy, then we should care about our own holiness. When we behave, think, or speak in unholy ways, we diminish our relationship with God. Are there holiness gaps in your life, pockets of sinful attitudes and actions you harbor and protect? Are there areas where a holy God is not welcome, where your privacy rights are paramount? Sometimes the holiness gaps are not private at all. Others can see uncontrolled anger, lack of integrity, shameful treatment of a spouse, etc. But no matter how private your hold is on your sinfulness, God is a witness (1 Peter 1:17). This lesson helps us understand why and how to live in stressful times and maintain our faith. We may not face imminent arrest and death for being Christians, but we have trials all the same. Many things call us to acknowledge them to be “lord” in place of Jesus. Peter's guidance helps us to focus on what is important, to live without fear, to strive for holiness, and to always remain faithful to our calling as followers of Jesus. His words encourage us to remain confident in Jesus, no matter what problems might threaten. Peter would do the same.

**Concluding Thoughts from the Echoes Commentary**

**Be Vigilant** - The first century Christians suffered greatly. The Jewish leaders, like Paul before his conversion, killed a number of those who identified themselves with Christ. Some Roman politicians determined to completely rid their territory of Christians. Peter, one of Jesus' original disciples, endured hardships right along with his brothers and sisters in the faith. He spent time in jail, endured beatings, and was eventually martyred. But before Peter’s death, he wrote a strong letter to those in his day and the future generations. He encouraged them to stay loyal to Christ. He started out expressing his appreciation for salvation, explaining the value of suffering, and thanking God for His marvelous plan, beginning with the Old Testament saints. He desired to see the church aggressively move forward, standing clean before the Lord, and displaying great compassion for God and one another.

**Be Serious** - Peter said to roll up your sleeves and work hard concerning the things of Christ. Think seriously and soundly about your commitment. Don't conform to the darkness of the world because remember, you've been delivered. Take control of how your mind is being used. Have an attitude of self-discipline and trust Jesus to the end.

**Be Expectant** - Peter used the word "hope" throughout his letter. God's grace is where His children are to set their expectations. One day this earthly existence will end. The Father will call all those who followed His Son home, to live eternally with Him.

**Be Holy** - Peter said to live a holy life, set apart for God, not for yourself. Keep your heavenly home in mind. God sets the standard for His people. Unlike the pagan gods who were adulterous, unpredictable, and merciless, the one true God is upright, just, and filled with compassion. This is how Christ's followers should be through the power of the Holy Spirit.

**Be God's Vessel** - God planned this all out before He created the world. This assured the new Christians that their belief in the Resurrection assured them of their salvation and eternal life. The more this truth is understood and experienced, the more one desires to be God's vessel in this unbelieving world.