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## I Peter 1:14-16

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.’”

In this passage God calls Christians to the highest standard of holiness. Holiness has to do with purity of mind, body, and behavior. Ephesians 5 gives us God’s picture of human holiness, as a bride adorned for her wedding in verse 27: “that Christ might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless.”

Now most churches, as well as individuals, respond to God’s command-- “You shall be holy, for I am holy”-- in one of two ways. Either they will throw up their hands, run to Romans 7 and say in exasperation, “It can’t be done!”--which of course leads to lawlessness--, or they will try to stuff their people into the strait-jacket of legalism, beating them into outward conformity. Neither

way works, for they do not yield the holiness that God desires for us.

To understand that God calls us to holiness, but maintain that it can't be done is to slight the character of God. It is a cruel God indeed that would call His people to a standard which they are not capable of attaining! This is certainly not the God of love that I preach and serve.

On the other hand, trying to use law to produce holiness only serves to kill people spiritually. And especially their joy. II Corinthians 3:6 states we are "servants of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

So how are we to attain to the holiness of God, as the Scripture commands, "But like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves in all your behavior"?

The only answer, the only way to this standard of Biblical holiness, is through faith as defined by the Word of God.

Consider God's directions in Galatians 2:20, for example. "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who love me and gave Himself up for me." Not especially the phrase "the life that I now live in the flesh, I live by faith." Most modern versions continue with the wording "faith in the Son of God." But the original Greek reads a little differently and is rendered "I live by the faith

of the Son of God.” Notice by our taking on the very faith of Jesus, that He had when He walked in the flesh, we can live life like Christ did. Hence the statement: “It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in (or through) me.” This faith of Christ comes from the Word of Christ-  
-Romans 10:17.

More on this transforming faith next week.