



Called to a New Life (1 Peter 1:13-25)

When we are born again, we are called to a new life (v23), a life characterized by personal holiness, reverence for God, and love for each other. God has redeemed us with the precious lifeblood of Jesus Christ, the sinless, spotless, Lamb of God. We now belong to him and we have received a sacred calling to this new life, a life which demonstrates that we are actually born again.

1. We are called to be holy (v15). It's easy to think of God as holy, but what does it mean for us to be holy? How is it even possible? To be holy, is to be set apart for God's purpose. To be set apart is to walk with God in sober-minded obedience. To be set apart is to distance ourselves from the profane, and live a life of purity and moral integrity. To be set apart is to love the things that God loves and hate the things He hates. Fortunately for us, personal holiness is not the same as sinless perfection. Holiness is an overall measure of our spiritual condition and usefulness for God's purposes. *How am I making progress in personal holiness? What needs to change in my life – either to start doing or stop doing?*

2. We are called to live in reverent fear of God (v17). The Bible says, the fear of the LORD is the foundation of all wisdom and righteousness (Pr 9:10). God is a loving Father, but He is also an impartial judge. Salvation is a gift, undeserved and unearned, but our works will be judged by Him, with no favoritism. To fear God is to maintain a proper perspective. Jesus said, "don't fear men, who can kill the body, but fear God who can destroy both soul and body in hell" (Mt 10:26-31). Fear of God is the remedy for those who suffer from the fear of man. I've learned the hard way that fear of man can cripple our effectiveness as a Christian. You cannot be a man of God and be controlled by what people think of you. *Do I fear God or man?*

3. We are called to love each other (v22). Not superficial, group hug love, ("I love you man") but real love, love that is sincere and results in action. Love is the mark of a true disciple, not bumper stickers or jewelry. Jesus himself said, "Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples." (John 13:35) Love is the purest expression of Christian community, but it is not easy. It's a challenge to love each other sincerely, especially when it involves tough love. Christian love, both given and received, is the way we share the love that God has given us. *How and who is God challenging me to love more?*

The spiritual transformation to holiness, reverence and love is a life long process that begins when we are born again. In my life, each breakthrough is often followed by the realization of more attitudes and behaviors that need to change. Thank God, He is patient with us, and with His help we must stay committed to the process. God cares about all your needs, but He is most concerned about the man you are and the man you are becoming.

- DJS