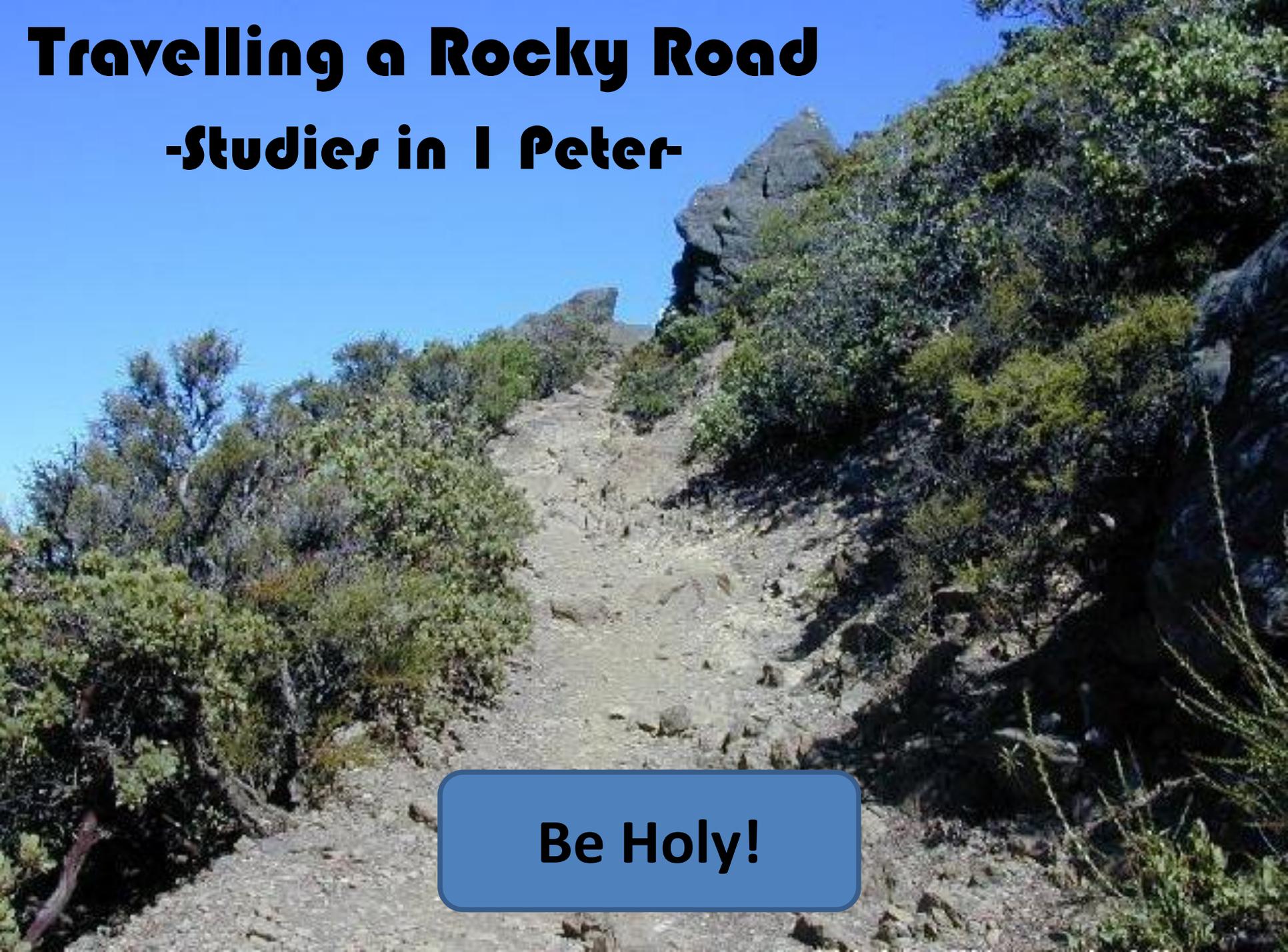


Travelling a Rocky Road

-Studies in 1 Peter-



Be Holy!

Introduction

- *Holiness* is a foreign concept to our secular, sinful world
 - “Holier than thou” connotation
 - Saints* are thought to be perfected, departed spirits
- This text may challenge us more than any other in the letter: 1:13-21
 - Struggle for holy living is a battle of the mind
 - We must take responsibility for our lives!
- We will read the entire text and concentrate on the words, “Be holy, because I am holy.”
 - Please give your attention to the Scriptures

Our text, 1 Peter 1:13-21

- ¹³Therefore, prepare your minds for action; be self-controlled; set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed. ¹⁴As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. ¹⁵But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; ¹⁶for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy."

- ¹⁷Since you call on a Father who judges each man's work impartially, live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear. ¹⁸For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, ¹⁹but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. ²⁰He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake. ²¹Through him you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and glorified him, and so your faith and hope are in God.

Overview

- Peter's list of 34 imperatives begins in v. 13
- "Prepare your minds"
 - Roll up your sleeves!
 - Prov. 4:23; Philippians 4:8
- "As obedient children, do not conform..."
- God judges impartially; live in reverence
- The price of our salvation
 - Matt. 26:28; Acts 20:28
- Let's talk about being holy...

What IS holiness?

- Major biblical concept
 - The term in various forms appears 600 times
 - The entire book of Leviticus is devoted to holiness
- False standard
 - A list of “Thou shalt not’s”
 - Danger of Phariseeism
- *Holiness* is separation to God; belonging exclusively to him
 - A husband and wife are sanctified to each other
 - Doing all we can do to be like HIM

“Pursue holiness”

- Americans believe in the right to “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.”
 - The American way is a good way
- God gives us life and liberty in Christ and DEMANDS that we pursue HOLINESS
- ¹⁴ Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord
Hebrews 12:14 (NKJV)
- A lifelong task-- pursuing, not *attaining*
- Not optional!

God is completely holy

- ¹³ Your eyes are too pure to look on evil; you cannot tolerate wrong.

Habakkuk 1:13

- ⁵This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.

1 John 1:5

- God has not called us to be like those around us, but like HIMSELF

Can we be saved, but *not* holy?

- Do we wish to be saved, to be with God, or to escape the punishment of hell?
- Do we wish to be “just good enough” to make it to heaven?
- Do we wish to be *thought of* as holy, or to truly be morally upright?
- Do we excuse ourselves from holiness by suggesting that God expects the impossible?

Psalm 15: Dwelling with God

- ¹ LORD, who may dwell in your sanctuary?
Who may live on your holy hill? ² He whose walk is blameless
and who does what is righteous,
who speaks the truth from his heart
- ³ and has no slander on his tongue,
who does his neighbor no wrong
and casts no slur on his fellowman,
- ⁴ who despises a vile man
but honors those who fear the LORD,
who keeps his oath
even when it hurts,
- ⁵ who lends his money without usury
and does not accept a bribe against the innocent.
He who does these things
will never be shaken.

How to regard sin

- By definition, sin is “to miss the mark,” or to violate the standard of our holy God
- What should bother us most about sin?
 - That it disappoints others
 - That it may lead to embarrassment
 - That it shows our weakness
 - That it leads to being lost eternally
 - That it disappoints almighty God
- All sin is ultimately against God, Ps. 51:4
- We don't take sin seriously enough

The battle for holiness

- ¹⁹For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. ²⁰Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.
- ²¹So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me.

Romans 7:19-21

- Satan actively pursues faithful Christians
- Sinful habits die hard!

Know what the Book says

- It is vain to attempt holy living without knowing God's will
- ¹⁵Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, ¹⁶making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. ¹⁷Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. Eph. 5:15-17
- We will be judged by the Word, John 12:48
- Do your best to know it, understand it, and live it, 2 Timothy 2:15

What if the Bible is not specific?

- How do we develop convictions about matters not specifically discussed in Scripture?
- ¹²"Everything is permissible for me"—but not everything is beneficial. "Everything is permissible for me"—but I will not be mastered by anything. 1 Cor. 6:12
- Questions to ask?
 - Is it beneficial to me, and to others?
 - Does it bring me under its power?
 - Does it glorify God?

The “just one more time” syndrome

- We wish to indulge in our favorite sin just one more time before quitting!
- ¹My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. 1 John 21:1
 - “not sin” is isolated action-- “not even once”
- Jonathan Edwards made this resolution:
“...never to do anything which I would be afraid to do if it were the last hour of my life”
- We must say “Enough!” Be done with sin!

Holiness requires training

- There is no such thing as instant holiness
- At baptism, our sins are washed away, but we must work on holiness the rest of our lives
- ⁷Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, train yourself to be godly. ⁸For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.

1 Tim. 4:7-8

Holiness requires sacrifice

- ¹Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Rom. 12:1
- Instead of denying ourselves sinful pleasure, we pamper and indulge ourselves!
- Some religions are known for legalistic abstinence
 - At least they DO regard the body as the temple of the Spirit

Plan to be holy!

- ¹⁴ But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to *fulfill its* lusts.

Romans 13:14, NKVJ

- Do we reserve the right to sin?
- Do we leave room for sin?
- Do we make provision for sin?
 - Stay away from places that involve temptation
 - Stay away from people that entice
 - Put away things that make sin easier

In Conclusion

- We must live faithfully in the context of an unholy world
- Next week: 1 Peter 1:22 - 2:3
- Do you need to obey the gospel?
- Do you need to be restored?