Therefore, with minds that are alert and fully sober, set your hope on the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at his coming. As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.” Since you call on a Father who judges each person’s work impartially, live out your time as foreigners here in reverent fear. For 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 ancestors, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake. Through him you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and glorified him, and so your faith and hope are in God. Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for each other, love one another deeply, from the heart. For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.

Now that the New Year is off and running, I hope all of you have had your black eyed peas for success this year

- I had mine, and as I mentioned last week- we had the greens and cornbread too

This tradition is one among many, and I hope this year is good to you

- But whether it is or not- it’s largely what you make of it
- And if you make the most of it, it is because the difference your faith makes

Living the Christian life is meant to be that way

- It calls for living a life that is different

1. Christians Are Different Because Our Faith Makes Us Different

Actually, we must go further

- In fact, Peter actually mentions this when he says…

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 marvellous light (KJV)

Now, you are not peculiar in the sense that you are strange

- Like the Humpback of Notre Dame- or like Mr. Ed the talking horse

Today we categorize differences mainly on the basis of externalities

- We see the teenage girl with the nose ring and purple hair
- Or the same sex marriages in the public square

But then we also see the orthodox Jew with his phylactery and beard

- Or the Mormon missionaries on their bicycles

And because of these externals we say they are different

And maybe that is their goal- to be different by looking different

Most might just use the word “peculiar”

2. When Peter Says We Are A Peculiar, He Means To Say Christ Has Transformed Us Into A New Creation
Peculiarity can be a good thing- the world needs more of the good kind
• But it also means having the courage to do it

Today too many sell out- they want to be like everyone else- and not like Jesus
• They have sold out due to convenience
• Or apathy
• Or pleasures of the flesh

That’s the problem we have today…

3. Yet It Is Godly People Who Bring God To People- And If That Makes Us Peculiar, Then So Be It

As Jesus says,
Lk 9.23 Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.

Ques- Cross bearing is the price we pay to being peculiar- so why not be different?
• Can we dare to be different- when all the world is trying to be alike in so many ways?

I. WE MUST DARE TO BE DIFFERENT- FOR GOD DEMANDS IT (vs. 13-16)
1 Pet 1.13 Therefore, with minds that are alert and fully sober, set your hope on the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at his coming. 14 As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. 15 But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; 16 for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.”

Daring to be different takes courage. Consider, for example, what Peter is telling us to do…

1. We Are To Be Righteous in an Unrighteous World

Illus- Different vs. Sameness

The idea of being different scares people
• We will be the first to declare our right to independence
• Until we realize the courage it takes to do so

We have got to have similar haircuts
• Similar clothes to wear
• Similar paychecks
• And similar houses, cars, and food to eat

And we will only dare to be different when it is safe
• Political correctness is the watchword these days
• And certainly not bearing one’s cross

But God is different- he demands we be different
1 Pet 1.13 As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. 15 But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; 16 for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.”

Maybe the greatest compliment someone ever gives you is when they say, “Aren’t they peculiar”

Illus- Peter

I am sure that came back to haunt Peter
• He was the one who was quick to pick up the sword- that Jesus said put it down
• He was the one who encouraged Jesus not to go to Jerusalem
He was the one who abandoned Jesus- and also denied him three times

We can quickly criticize Peter for his failures, but just like us his faith grew

His ideas about Christ had to change...

Jesus never said he was coming as a conquering king- in fact, quite the opposite
Jesus never said he came to be served- but quite the opposite
Jesus never said to expect a life of luxury and comfort- quite the opposite

Peter had a few things to learn- and so do we...

Any time we reject Christ’s commands for what’s politically, socially, or culturally correct
Any time we recast worship, or doctrine, or discipleship, or service in our own image
We are rejecting the distinctions that Christ called us to obey

2. We Are Called To Be Christlike In A World Gone Astray

17 Since you call on a Father who judges each person’s work impartially, live out your time as foreigners here in reverent fear.

As Eph. 2.10 says,

**EPH 2.10** We are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

**II. WE MUST DARE TO BE DIFFERENT- BECAUSE THE WORLD IS WATCHING (VS. 17)**

How many have seen different cultures at Wal-Mart shopping?

- Or the Muslim women shopping in our communities
- Or the beggars on the street corner
- The drug pushers on our streets
- Even the Mennonites- some of our our neighbors- are a bit different

We all can agree- because we have seen it- but Paul does not mean being different like that

So what does he mean?

1. The Question Is- Do We Have The Courage To Be What We Have Been Called To Be?

When I was growing up my dad used to have season tickets to the Miami Dolphins
• I got to see the undefeated Dolphins back then
• Jim Kiick, Larry Czonka, Larry Little, Bob Griese
• I even got some of their autographs somewhere

I had the time to watch professional sports in those days- and pay money to do it too

Ques- But when it comes to being a Christian- who is the player in the game?
• Who is the watcher?
• Isn’t it God who is watching?
• And isn’t it we who participates?
• I wonder how we ever got it turned around?

Ques- We put a lot of stock on our independence- but how independent are we really?
• Looking around, I would say that needs to be questioned
• I see a lot of folks “not” daring to be different
• I see a lot of folks trying to be like “everybody else”

Daring to be different means to have the courage to change
• We need to be the change we wish to see

III. DARE TO BE DIFFERENT- AND DO WHAT OTHERS ARE RELUCTANT TO DO (vs. 22)

22 Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for each other, love one another deeply, from the heart.

Illus- Manhattan Truck Driver

I was watching the news recently about the truck driver who was in Manhattan and ran over several people intentionally
• The driver was 29 years old
• A supporter of ISIS and radical terrorism
• He killed 8 people and injured more

This man had no problem being different
• The only problem is that he was different in all the wrong ways- none of the right ways

I. We Dare To Be Different By Always Doing The Right Thing

Conclusion
In verse 16 we read,
16 for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.”

To be holy is the greatest gift you can give yourself- to ease the trials of living
• But it does mean daring to be different
• That’s what Jesus was- and that is what he wants from me and you

End of Sermon Prayer
Sunday
Disclaimer: I wish to express my gratitude to all the saints before me who are traveling the Narrow Way. Their love and generosity is reflected in my own humble efforts to prepare sermons for the body of Christ. Grace and Peace.