Why does God say "be Holy for I am Holy"

 **(I Peter 1:16)**

The Lord gives His children an admonition to be holy because the Lord Himself is holy. He's saying that our behavior should be holy. But what does holy mean? -The Webster's dictionary defines 'holy' as: dedicated to religious use, belonging to God, consecrated, sacred; spiritually perfect or pure; untainted by evil or sin; sinless; saintly; connotes spiritual purity.

The text noted above, I Peter 1:16, is a summation of the previous verses which start out in I Peter 1:3 and concludes with verse 16. These verses explain that it is because we have received salvation from the Lord Jesus Christ and as obedient children, consequently we should be self controlled, obedient to the Word of God, and not conformed to the evil desires that we had previous to our salvation. Our behavior now should reflect our Father God Who is holy. This then would be a learning process from the first day of our new salvation. We would learn what God wants us to do as we study His Word in the scriptures.

The clue that the Lord gives us is that it is not 'the evil desires that we had previous to our salvation.' In other words there should be a change is directional values.

The reason for keying in on this particular verse is because the values of our old nature before salvation and our values after receiving salvation appear to be blurred today. Perhaps it's because there is not a clear teaching on this subject from the pulpits of our churches. In fact I believe that many pastors willfully refrain from teaching this admonition because they are afraid to upset their congregations.

God is Holy, meaning there is no evil in Him, and if we're to be like Him, there should be no evil in us. Meaning we should be separated from sin.

It's true that Christians have been declared 'righteous', (Romans 4:22-24), and we have been 'justified', (Romans 5:1), as a result of our placing our faith in Jesus Christ and accepting Him as our Lord and Savior. That means that in the eyes of the Lord, we are holy! So why does He give us this admonition to now 'be holy' if in fact we are already declared holy? It's because the Lord wants our behavior to now match our salvation. In other words we should not live by our flesh, (old nature), which **Galatians 5:19** says is "sexual immorality, impurity, and debauchery, idolatry and witchcraft, hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy, drunkenness, orgies, and the like."

Galatians 5:16 says "we should live by the Spirit, and in so doing, we will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature."

The Lord spells out most of the obvious things that we are not to do, (notice He says 'and the like' to the above statement.)

 He also tells us in the Old Testament Exodus 20:7 "you shall not misuse the Name of the Lord you God, for the Lord will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses His Name." --(there are various definitions of what 'misusing' His Name means but the most obvious would be not to use God's Name in a derogatory manner, or using it as a curse word.) Doing so under the Old Testament Law would demand the person be put to death. Therefore, God must have a grave reason that we should not only not misuse His Name, but on the other hand, to highly respect it.

Today, the devil has prompted society to not only misuse His Name but he has made it a common name, a curse word. The movies are filled with misusing His Name, books, literature of every kind, in many households it's a derogatory word used in anger or as an expression. (see the article 'Taking God's Name in Vain'-)

Does hearing others take the Name of the Lord in vain bother you? How about hearing it taken in vain in the movies, or reading a book which misuses the Lord's Name? In some instances when we hear it taken in vain we can't do much about it due to the circumstance but there are times when we can do something about it. For instance would you allow yourself to be entertained in a movie where the Lord's Name is used in vain?

Many Christians today do not take a stand for the Lord. They allow themselves to go to movies that bring down God's Name, they read books that do the same, all in the form of enjoyment. The reason some give is 'Well, everyone misuses it so it's not a big deal.' That tells me that that person no longer holds the holiness of God as sacred. They have allowed themselves to drift into the standards of the world, (which is controlled by the devil.)

How can Christians allow themselves to be entertained when the Lord Who died for them is being brought down? It's because they no longer hold the holiness of God with respect any longer. They have become like the world.

The Lord has a reason for giving us this verse in I Peter 1:16- "Be Holy for I am Holy."