

# 1 Peter 1:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance:

## Analysis

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Peter develops the holiness theme, first addressing identity: "as obedient children" (hōs tekna hypakoēs, ὡς τέκνα ὑπακοῆς)—literally "children of obedience," a Hebraism indicating those characterized by obedience. This contrasts with former identity as "children of disobedience" (Ephesians 2:2). Believers' new nature as God's children produces obedient response to Father's will. The negative command follows: "not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance" (mē syschēmatizomenoi tais proteron en tē agnoia hymōn epithymiais, μὴ συσχηματιζόμενοι ταῖς πρότερον ἐν τῇ ἀγνοίᾳ ὑμῶν ἐπιθυμίαις). The verb syschēmatizō (συσχηματίζω) means to conform to a pattern, fashion oneself according to a mold. Believers must not let "former lusts" shape their lives. "Former" (proteron, πρότερον) emphasizes pre-conversion lifestyle's pastness—it's over, finished. These desires characterized "your ignorance" (tē agnoia hymōn, τῇ ἀγνοίᾳ ὑμῶν)—the state of not knowing God or His truth that preceded salvation. "Lusts" (epithymiais, ἐπιθυμίαις) encompasses all sinful desires, not merely sexual—greed, pride, selfish ambition, revenge, idolatry. Peter's point: regeneration changes not just standing (justification) but character (sanctification). Former desires shouldn't control those born again.

## Historical Context

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Peter addresses predominantly Gentile readers (see references to former pagan lifestyle in 1:18; 4:3-4). Before conversion, they lived according to pagan culture's values—sensuality, materialism, idolatry, self-gratification—in spiritual ignorance.

Paul similarly describes Gentiles' pre-conversion state in Ephesians 4:17-19. Peter's prohibition counters cultural accommodation—believers must not conform to surrounding paganism despite social pressure. In Roman Asia Minor, Christians faced intense pressure to participate in civic religious festivals, trade guild ceremonies involving idol worship, and popular entertainment (games, theater) celebrating immorality. Refusing participation brought economic loss and social ostracism. Peter insists: Christ-followers cannot be shaped by culture's sinful patterns. This requires conscious resistance, active non-conformity—Rom 12:2's "be not conformed to this world." Early Christian counter-cultural lifestyle attracted both persecution (from those offended by Christian rejection of pagan practices) and converts (attracted by Christian moral purity and love).

## Related Passages

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**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

## Study Questions

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1. What specific 'former lusts' or sinful patterns from your pre-Christian life still tempt you to conformity, and how are you actively resisting them?
2. How does your identity as a 'child of obedience' rather than 'child of disobedience' motivate pursuit of holiness?

## Interlinear Text

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ὥς	τέκνα	ὕπακοῆς	μὴ	συσχηματιζόμενοι	ταῖς
As	children	obedient	not	fashioning yourselves according to	G3588
G5613	G5043	G5218	G3361	G4964	
πρότερον	ἐν	τῇ	ἀγνοίᾳ	ὑμῶν	ἐπιθυμίαις
the former	in	G3588	ignorance	your	lusts
G4386	G1722		G52	G5216	G1939

## Additional Cross-References

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**Romans 12:2** (Parallel theme): And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

**Ephesians 2:2** (Parallel theme): Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:

**1 Thessalonians 4:5** (Parallel theme): Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God:

**Acts 17:30** (Parallel theme): And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:

**Romans 6:4** (Parallel theme): Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

**Ephesians 5:6** (Parallel theme): Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.