

I. Introduction

A. Holiness

1. Not morality or goodness or ethics, but not an absence of these things either
2. Holiness is being set apart or distinct in being and conduct as God is.
3. But what does holiness look like?
4. *We have an answer that is evident throughout the entire Bible, but we don't like it, so we tend to front load other things that suit us better.

B. This morning we continue our series in 1 Peter, called "Doing really hard things that are absolutely worth it."

II. Reborn

A. Evident holiness (1 Peter 1:22-2:3)

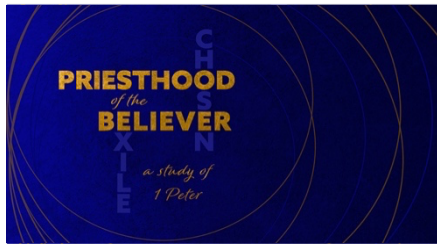
1. Big picture: holiness, obedience, love
 - a. Holiness exists only with a genuine love of others.
 - b. Holiness is developed in community—community with people different than you.
 - c. Foundational marks of holiness are humility and love but often morality and truth are easier.
2. Holiness comes through obedience to love one another. (v 22)
 - a. Purified souls
 - 1) Old Testament=Temple sacrificial system
 - 2) Soul=the whole person/life
 - b. Obedience to truth
 - 1) The Gospel
 - 2) Love God and love others
 - c. Love one another
 - 1) Sincere=not hypocritical or play acting
 - 2) Regard for the well-being of the other person unattached to what I get back
 - d. Pure heart of love
*Heart=the will/control center of me, volitional center of my being
 - e. *We are cleansed to love one another sincerely and authentically which sets us apart from the world, which is holy like God is holy.
3. How? (vs 23-25)
 - a. Because we are new, re-born, redeemed into a new family
 - b. What springs up from a seed has the nature of that seed. Our entire nature is of a new seed!
 - c. Verse 25: this is the Gospel
4. Further obedience (1 Peter 2:1-3)
 - a. In order to live the way of our new birth, we need to reject some things in ourselves.
 - 1) Malice=literally badness
 - 2) Deceit=lies, trickery

- 3) Hypocrisy=two-faced, play acting
- 4) Envy=wishing I had what you have, treating others poorly because of jealousy
- 5) Slander=running people down, talking bad about others including both in our own mind and on social media
- b. *Empathy
 - 1) As long as we say about someone else, "How could they," we aren't really empathizing with them.
 - 2) "How could they live/vote/think like that?" is not empathy.
 - 3) See Jesus and Jerusalem (Luke 19:41-44)
- c. Process/new behavior: old life response or action } pause } conflict between old and new } choose new behavior
- d. Just like babies, we grow so that our salvation can be more fully lived out.
- e. Lord is good=kindness of God
- B. Holy, fleshly, building for the world to see (1 Peter 2:4-10)
 - 1. Living house/temple
 - a. Jesus = living stone, rejected by men, chosen by God
 - b. We also are living stones constructing a living house/temple.
 - 1) Living stones=to glorify God with our lives, rather than build for our own glory or power, it transforms how we understand power and status.
 - 2) Buildings showed off power and status; they had nothing but Jesus Christ.
 - c. A holy (set-apart being and conduct) priesthood offering spiritual sacrifices
 - 1) Priest=represented people to God; God to people. In Christ, we represent God to people and people back to God.
 - a) Does not mean we don't need each other; reformation mistakes
 - b) Does mean the gathered, unified priesthood is the most powerful, accurate, and influential witness to the world!
 - 2) Spiritual sacrifices=service in God's Kingdom toward God's purposes
 - 2. Two results of the cornerstone
 - a. Believers (Isaiah 28:16)=salvation and honor
 - b. Unbelievers (Psalm 118:22)=stumble in disobedience
 - 3. Our defining identity (v 9)
 - a. We have a task, not simply an honor. We are priests, representing the King of the universe in the midst of a world that does not acknowledge its Creator or Redeemer.
 - 1) *Israel often forgot this task and thought of its election as status. The church often exhibits the same behavior.
 - 2) *We are to be God's witnesses in the world, testifying God as Creator and Redeemer. And we are priestly people interceding on behalf of that world.
 - b. We are ...
 - 1) Chosen: God's foreknowledge, Spirit's sanctification, obedience to Jesus
 - 2) Royal: part of the King's family
 - 3) Priesthood: also those who represent

- 4) Holy nation: set apart from all other nations and cultures to be distinct and dedicated to God alone; we pledge our allegiance to the Lamb
- 5) His possession: belonging to God at great cost
- c. *So that we proclaim his excellencies/praises (Exodus 19:5-6)
- 4. A people (v 10)
 - a. Not a people; now God's people
 - b. No mercy; received mercy

III. Obedience

- A. You are set apart to represent God's desire for people here and now. You inhabit that purpose by obeying Jesus, humbly loving others toward surrender to King Jesus.
- B. Three significant hurdles to holiness
 - 1. Family: parents, spouse, children
 - 2. Community: church, social, school, work
 - 3. Distant: politician, celebrity (secular and sacred), etc.
 - 4. *I must be loving family, community, and the distant toward Jesus. When I do this, I am pursuing holiness
 - 5. Telling others they're wrong vs. living right and loving others
- C. Who do you need to humble yourself to love? Give examples.
- D. *This is holiness.



REBORN

1 PETER 1:22-2:10

AUGUST 28, 2022 | PASTOR MATT WHITEFORD



CHECK IN AFTER A LONG SUMMER BREAK

SPEND SOME TIME CATCHING UP, INCLUDING VACATIONS AND SUMMER FUN, BUT GOING BEYOND BY ASKING HOW GOD HAS BEEN SPEAKING TO EACH OTHER, WHAT HE HAS BEEN REVEALING ABOUT HIMSELF AND SOME THING(S) GOD MAY BE CALLING YOU TO DO.

QUICK REVIEW (OPPORTUNITY FOR PEOPLE TO SHARE WHAT MOST STOOD OUT FROM SUNDAY'S MESSAGE)

Looking back at your notes from this week's message, was there anything you heard that caught your attention, encouraged, challenged, or confused you?

DIG DEEPER (OBSERVATIONS FROM THE SCRIPTURE OR COMPLEMENTARY SCRIPTURES FROM SUNDAY'S MESSAGE)

1 Someone read 1 PETER 1:22-25.

²² Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart, ²³ since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; ²⁴ for "All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, ²⁵ but the word of the Lord remains forever." And this word is the good news that was preached to you.

How does the Word of God create a longing in our hearts for the hope of Heaven?

What role does Scripture play in helping us love others more fervently (vs. 23-25)?

People are drawn into Christ by seeing the way that Christians love each other. **How does our love for one another reveal Christ to others and bring glory to God?**

2 Someone read 1 PETER 2:1-10.

¹ So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander. ² Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation ³ if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good. ⁴ As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, ⁵ you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ⁶ For it stands in Scripture: "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in Him will not be put to shame." ⁷ So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe, "The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone," ⁸ and "A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense." They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do. ⁹ But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. ¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

What do these verses (1:22-2:10) reveal about God's character?

What do these verses (1:22-2:10) reveal about people, our relationship with God and our relationships with other people?

The call to priestly service is indeed a call to sacrifice, but not to spiritual deprivation. Look again at v. 9 and all the compelling descriptions Peter heaped up in expressing the status of those called by God – the priesthood. **How might those descriptions have impacted the original, persecuted recipients of Peter's letter? How do they impact you today?**

What does it mean to be “God's people”? To “have received mercy”?

LIVE IT OUT (DISCUSS HOW YOU CAN LIVE OUT THE TRUTHS YOU JUST OBSERVED IN SCRIPTURE)

- 1** How will you serve Jesus by loving family, your community and the distant toward Jesus? How can we help each other do this? Who do you need to humble yourself to love?
- 2** What does it mean to you that you, as a believer, have been called to serve as part of a holy, royal priesthood? How do you exercise that calling? Are there areas of your life where you have difficulty exercising your priestly calling? Explain.
- 3** Does a sense of community and unity, or lack thereof, make it easier or more difficult for you to carry out your priestly calling? Explain. What can you do to facilitate a stronger sense of unity and priestly effectiveness?
- 4** If what we looked at in God's Word is true, what needs to change in your life? Who in your life needs to hear about this?

CLOSING PRAYER

If you have not already done so, take some time to share needs and praises to your group so that you can pray for one another, both during your group and throughout the week.

NEXT WEEK: 1 PETER 2:11-12

Take some time before Sunday to pray that the Holy Spirit would reveal Himself to those who hear the message next Sunday. As you hear from the Spirit, ask God for the courage needed to obey the Spirit's direction in your life. Bring that and any notes from Sunday to add to the conversation you will have together.

PRAISE/PRAYER REQUESTS (TRY TO HAVE ONE OR A FEW PEOPLE PRAY FOR ONE TOPIC AT A TIME)

Use this space or the back of this paper to write the requests and find a way to share those with the group so you can be praying for each other during the week.

TIPS ON GROUP PRAYER

PRAY FOR ONE TOPIC AT A TIME: Anyone in the group is free to introduce a prayer request or praise during the prayer time. Once a topic is introduced, the group focuses on that request alone. Once it's covered, the group moves on to the next request or praise.

PRAY MORE THAN ONCE: If your group is focusing on one topic at a time, each person is encouraged to pray several times during the prayer time for those topics they feel most led to pray about. No one should be required to pray.

KEEP PRAYERS SHORT AND SIMPLE: Group prayer goes better when members keep their prayers short and to the point. When someone prays for a long time, it's hard for the other members to stay focused and long prayers tend to intimidate those who are just learning to pray out loud in a group.

How to Use this Discussion Guide

This guide is meant to serve you and your group as you intentionally create a healthy environment for Gospel community, growing in friendship, and becoming like Jesus together. Use the guide as a tool to help your unique group.

With that in mind, please review the guide before your group meets to see if some content or questions might resonate more or less with your group. Don't feel the need to ask every question during your group discussion. This guide is not meant to be something you power through for the sake of completing. Pick the content from the guide you feel will help your group grow in Gospel community. In addition, spend some time praying for your group each week, preparing your heart, and asking God for wisdom and guidance as you lead. We are praying for you too!

Visit cpmodesto.org/groupleaders to download the sermon discussion guide every week. Not in a Home Group, but want to be in one? Visit cpmodesto.org/homegroups and use the Home Group Finder!

COMMENTARY

1 PETER 1:22-2:10

1:22-25. Peter exhorted his readers to love their brothers (i.e., other believers; v. 22) as those who are born again through the living and enduring word of God, the Gospel.

2:1. “Rid” carries the idea of taking off a suit of clothes. Previously, as pagans, these Christians had clothed themselves with all manner of wickedness—deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander. They were to remove and throw away such clothing. These words concern believers’ relationships with one another and with the world. Believers are not to deceive others. Deceit includes all hypocrisy—pretending something other than the truth. Neither are believers to envy others. Envy reveals a failure to rejoice in God’s gifts to us and to live in gratitude for His generosity. Slander means “speaking against” others in rumors, false accusations, gossip, or harsh criticism. All such speech violates the command to love that Peter had mentioned a few sentences earlier (1 Pet. 1:22).

2:2. The apostle resumed his earlier analogy of the new birth (1 Pet. 1:23) and compared the readers to newborn infants. This does not necessarily imply they were recent converts or spiritually immature. Peter’s emphasis here was on the natural craving of an infant for its mother’s milk, not on the readers’ spiritual condition. Desire means “to crave.” They were to desire God’s milk with the kind of craving an infant has for its mother’s milk. Peter called this milk unadulterated, meaning “pure”; it is devoid of impurities or anything to dilute it. Furthermore, it is spiritual, as opposed to the physical milk a baby seeks. Obviously Bible study is one source of this milk. The apostle then spelled out the reason for drinking deeply of this milk: that you may grow by it in your salvation. The new birth is only the beginning of our salvation. We must not stop there, as if receiving salvation is all there is. We must continue to grow in that salvation; and we mature only by drinking of the unadulterated spiritual milk that alone produces spiritual growth and maturity.

2:3. Peter then arrived at the point that enables us to understand the nature of this spiritual milk. In saying they had tasted that the Lord is good, Peter implied these Asian Christians should continue to drink what they already tasted. In other words, the spiritual milk they needed centered in Christ Himself. The apostle likely took this idea from Psalm 34:8, which refers to tasting the Lord to see that He, the God of Israel, is good. In applying this verse to our Lord, Peter implied Jesus’ Deity in the strongest way possible. To grow in your Christian life, you absolutely must remain in constant, daily fellowship with Jesus Christ. Daily immersion of yourself in God’s Word is a valuable discipline in drawing you close to your Savior. Periods of deep, concentrated prayer unite your heart with the living Lord. Periods of meditation on God’s Word or listening to what your Lord has to say molds you in His image.

2:4. Many years earlier, Jesus had given Simon the nickname “Rock” (petros in Greek, from which the name Peter comes). Here the apostle nicknamed “Rock” described Jesus as a living stone. (See Psalm 118:22, which refers to the cornerstone that the builders rejected, and also see Peter’s use of this psalm in v. 7.) The world at large had rejected Jesus, but God had chosen Him and declared Him valuable. Jesus is the chosen One, and we are chosen because we are in Him. Our entire identity is wrapped up in Him.

2:5. Because of our relation to the resurrected and living Lord, we too can be called living stones (but not in the same sense as Jesus). Just as stones were used to build the temple of God in Jerusalem, so we are being built into a spiritual house, a temple, to God. God now dwells in His people, not in a building (1 Cor. 3:16-17; 6:19). Then Peter changed to another word picture and described believers as priests who offer spiritual sacrifices. Under the old covenant the priests of Israel sacrificed bulls and goats in the temple. As Christians, we are priests of the new covenant who offer spiritual sacrifices to God. These sacrifices are truly acceptable to God because they are offered through Jesus Christ. Peter specified the nature of these spiritual gifts in verse 9.

2:6. Peter then cited a series of texts from the Hebrew Scriptures on which he based his comments. “It stands” in Scripture is a solemn formula for citing quotations from Scripture as the Word of God. Peter first quoted Isaiah 28:16 as it appears in the Septuagint, a Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures. The Septuagint was the Bible of many in the early church, particularly those who spoke or read Greek. Isaiah had condemned Israel for rejecting the Lord’s message and for relying on pagan nations for their support. Through Isaiah, God told Israel He was laying the true foundation stone on which His people were to be built. A cornerstone was the great stone lying at the corner of a building uniting one wall to another. This foundational cornerstone supports everything else and ties it all together. The cornerstone God

was laying in Zion was either God Himself or the Messiah. Thus whoever believes in Him will never be put to shame. Those trusting in Jesus never have to worry about whether He will disappoint them. God made that clear to Isaiah, to Israel, and to us.

2:7. Peter pointed out a great difference between those who believe in Jesus as their Lord and those who do not. God gives honor to those who believe. The unbelieving, on the other hand, will be disconcerted to discover that the stone they rejected ... has become the cornerstone. Here Peter quoted Psalm 118:22. This verse could describe an event in the construction of the temple or perhaps it was a proverbial saying from that period. "Cornerstone" here may mean either a foundational cornerstone as in Isaiah 28:16 or the topmost capstone. Though rejected by the leaders of Israel and Rome, Jesus was the most important stone of the true temple, the people of God.

2:8. Peter next quoted Isaiah 8:14. In this verse, Isaiah said God should be a rock of sanctuary to His people. Instead, they failed to obey God, and they stumbled over Him as they would a huge rock placed in their paths. In a similar manner, Jesus the Messiah is a sanctuary to believers, but the One over whom unbelievers stumble. The statement "they were destined for this" expresses God's sovereignty, but it does not mean unbelievers have no responsibility for disobeying the message. They reject Jesus as Savior and suffer the consequences.

2:9. Peter then identified implications of the new identity that Christians have and are to understand. As Israel was God's chosen people, believers are a chosen race. We are also a royal priesthood, belonging both to the family of the King and to the priestly family. We are a holy nation, a people for His possession, as Israel had been. Our purpose as the people of God and as priests is to proclaim the praises of God. Here we learn the nature of the spiritual sacrifices of this new priesthood—praising God. Hebrews 13:15 refers to "a sacrifice of praise." Romans 12:1 speaks of the spiritual worship of offering our "bodies as a living sacrifice" to God. Although Peter did not name the sacrifice of our bodies here, the entire passage implies it. Such a sacrifice of praise is merited by the nature of what God has done for us in Christ. He has called us out of the darkness of our world into His marvelous light in Christ.

2:10. Peter then applied Hosea 2:23 to these largely Gentile congregations. Once they did not belong to God's people Israel, but then they became part of God's people, the church. Formerly they knew nothing of God's mercy to Israel, but then they received mercy through the Lord Jesus Christ. Many believers have a faulty sense of identity as Christians. They may see themselves only as church members or as possessing a certainty of a home in Heaven. Such believers can find their lives transformed by understanding they are part of something far greater than themselves. They belong to the new people of God. God now lives in them. They are priests serving before God, offering up the sacrifice of praise to Him amid a perverted and lost world.