

Reclaiming Holiness

26 March 2017

To KNOW Christ and one another more deeply,
To CARE for one another in truth and in love,
To GROW as followers of Jesus.
- CG Mission Statement

Worship: Holy, Holy, Holy

(Here is a passage to help your group as you worship. You can go through it together or in groups in meditation and/or in prayer)

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee;
Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty!
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

Holy, holy, holy! Though the darkness hide Thee,
Though the eye of sinful man Thy glory may not see;
Only Thou art holy; there is none beside Thee,
Perfect in power, in love, and purity.

Holy, holy, holy! All the saints adore Thee,
Casting down their golden crowns
Around the glassy sea;
Cherubim and seraphim falling down before Thee,
Who was, and is, and evermore shall be.

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
All Thy works shall praise Thy name
In earth, and sky, and sea;
Holy, holy, holy; merciful and mighty!
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

Icebreaker

Break the ice with one another by each completing the following sentence:

“I feel _____ right now because _____.”

This can be about anything (don't overthink it), and gives everyone a chance to reflect, acknowledge, and share where they're at and how they are feeling as you begin your time together.

Text for Discussion: I Peter 1:13-25

Turn in your Bibles and read this passage aloud together.

Aid for Discussion: Sermon Summary

In Christ, we have been given a living hope in which we can be content and rejoice, even in the midst of suffering. We might not live like this, but Peter shows those who love God a way forward. To be faithfully present and to be full of life and love, holiness must become desirable – something beautiful we cherish and miss when it is missing. We need to reclaim holiness as a way of life so that we can glorify God.

We are people marked by persistent and sometimes debilitating sin, and yet the Bible dares to call us saints. But this isn't something we simply try to live up to. Holiness isn't intended to be a burden. God is calling us to become who He already declared us to be by virtue of our union with Christ. Holiness isn't something we achieve; it's something we receive. Grace is our fuel to freely pursue holiness, not an excuse to avoid it.

What does it mean to be holy? To be set apart for God. To demonstrate God's character – His justice, compassion and kindness. To live a life of love. We can look to Jesus for our example: Christ, who pursued and loved people. Christ, who was warm and approachable. God saved us so that we could pursue a holy way of life by following Christ, and it is He who empowers us to do so, even as we stumble and fall. As we become a community that prizes holiness, we will begin to see it as a beautiful privilege full of promise as we press on toward it.

What motivates us to be holy? One reason is because God is holy (1 Peter 1:15-16). As we come to understand who God is and who we are, our proper fear of the LORD will also draw us toward holiness (v17). Perhaps the most compelling reason to strive for holiness is by looking at what God did because of how dearly He loves us. Christ paid the price for our freedom so that we could truly, freely live as holy children of the Father (v18-19).

How then do we begin to live a life of holiness? First, we must prepare our minds for action (1 Peter 1:13). This means setting aside time each day to meditate, resetting our hearts and hopes and goals on the Gospel. We have to

set aside time to do this, and it must become a habit or else we will never grow up in Christ. Second, we must make small choices that reflect our new life in Christ. Bearing witness to the truth – especially at work – may be something small, but it is powerful. Only by striving to live a better life can we influence society outside our walls. It is through these small acts of resistance that we begin to live as saints.

Guiding Question of the Week

(This question is intended as a target for the whole conversation. Do not ask for responses now. It will be repeated later in the study.)

What does a life of holiness look like in our lives and in our city?

Questions for Discussion

(Remember it is better to wrestle deeply with two good questions than gloss over many. Sub-bullets are intended for potential follow-up.)

- 1) How would you have described or defined holiness before hearing this sermon?
 - What do you feel has shaped your view of holiness?
 - What images come to mind when you think of it?
 - Is there someone in your life you think of as particularly holy? Is this a good or a bad thing?
- 2) Encourage different members of your group to read these passages aloud:
2 Cor 7:1, Heb 12:7-14, 1 Sam 2:2, 2 Tim 1:8-10, Lev 11:44-45, Col 3:12-17, Eph 1:3-6
 - What jumps out to you from these verses on holiness?
- 3) How do you see Jesus modeling for us what holiness looks like in a human life?
 - How would you react if Jesus looked you in the eyes and told you that you are a saint?
- 4) **Guiding Question: What does a life of holiness look like in our lives and in our city?**
 - What would a life of holiness look like for you? In your workplace? At home? In your relationships?
 - As you reflect on a life of holiness, what is attractive about it? What do you struggle with about it?
 - Do you hear the call to holiness as a call to life and joy? Why or why not?
- 5) How can we as a community pursue holiness together?
Rankin offered two ways to begin doing this:
 - Getting a hold of our time. Do we set aside time each day to re-set our minds and meditate, setting our hearts, hopes, and goals once again on the Gospel?
 - Make small choices that reflect “living in truth.” What would these small choices look like for us at work? At home? With our community group?

Praying for One Another

(Here are some ideas from the study to help focus your time in prayer as a group. Use by themselves or along with other prayer requests.)

- Share with one another what small choice(s) you could make this week at work that would bare witness to the truth of Christ. Pray and follow up with one another regarding these choices.
- Pray through the three motivations Peter gives us for holiness:
 - Be holy because God is holy (1 Peter 1:15-16).
 - A proper fear of the LORD will draw us toward holiness (1 Peter 1:17).
 - Looking at what God did because of how dearly He loves us. Christ paid the price for our freedom so that we could truly, freely live as holy children of the Father (1 Peter 1:18-19).
- Use [Psalm 25](#) as your prayer, praising God’s goodness, faithfulness and holiness.

Reminder: Please encourage group members to consider attending:

New Leader Training

Saturday, April 1st: 9:00 am-12:15 pm

<https://pacificcrossroads.tpsdb.com/OnlineReg/730>

Note: Attending does not commit you to leading, but if you are interested in leading a group this is the necessary first step.