

Peter's Epistles Series #3

1 Peter 1:13-25

1. Share a time when you restored something that was old and seemingly useless and repurposed it into something useful.

2. Share what you think it means to be holy (Also see Ex 15:11, Lev 11:45, 19:2, 20:26, Rom 6:22, 12:1, Heb 12:14, etc.). For further reading, you may refer to the article on "Holy" below.

Read 1 Peter 1:13-25

3. How does *Preparing our Minds* and being sober-minded help us to set our hope fully on the grace that will be brought to us at the revelation of Jesus Christ? (v.13-16)

4. Why do you think Peter suggests the *Purification of our Hearts* will lead to sincere brotherly love for one another? (v.22-23)

5. Why should one "conduct ourselves with fear" and how can we *Pattern our Conduct* in the fear of God? (v.17-19)

6. Take some time to reflect and suggest how you can help one another grow in the purity of heart.

HOLY¹ Biblical use of the term “holy” has to do primarily with God’s separating from the world that which He chooses to devote to Himself. As God’s redemptive plan unfolded through the OT, the “holy” became associated with the character of God’s separated people conforming to His revealed law. When the time became ripe for the saving work of Jesus Christ, His redeemed people came to be known as saints (literally, “holy ones”). The cross made this possible by inaugurating the fulfillment of the preparatory OT teachings on the holy, opening the way for God’s Holy Spirit to indwell His people.

God’s Unique Holiness as Separation God alone is “majestic in holiness” (Exod. 15:11; cp. 1 Sam. 2:2; Rev. 15:4). The uniqueness of His holiness is stressed in the repetition of the seraphic cry: “Holy, holy, holy” (Isa. 6:3; cp. Rev. 4:8). Indeed, the frequent title of choice for God in Isaiah is “the Holy One of Israel” (e.g., 12:6; 17:7; 29:19, 23; 41:14, 16; 47:4; 60:9). But God’s perfect holiness—the complete perfection of His attributes such as power and goodness—is a humbling and even terrifying thing when revealed to weak and sinful men (e.g., Isa. 6:5; Luke 5:8; Rev. 1:17).

Those things that God separates to Himself become holy, too. These objects of the Lord’s choosing are set apart from the world. For instance, the holy place in the tabernacle and the temple is hidden from the eyes of the people, and the most holy place (“holy of holies”) is only entered yearly by the high priest with the blood of atonement and a cloud of incense lest he die (Lev. 16). The privilege of being “a holy people to the Lord your God” (Deut. 7:6; 14:2, 21; 28:9) is thus seen to carry weighty responsibility. Interestingly, not only can that which is holy be profaned (e.g., Lev. 21:6, 12, 15) but also contact with the holy transfers holiness to the profane (e.g., Ezek. 44:19; 46:20; cp. Exod. 29:37; 30:29; 1 Cor. 7:14).

The Ethical Mandate of God’s Holiness God’s chosen people, in separation from the world, are called to an ethical life in conformity to His revealed word. The command to His people is to “be holy; for I am holy” (Lev. 11:44–45; cp. 19:2; 20:26). This demand is not abrogated with the coming of Christ but is to find its fulfillment in the Christian community (1 Cor. 7:34; Eph. 1:4; Col. 1:22; 1 Pet. 1:16). Christians are to perfect “holiness in the fear of God” (2 Cor. 7:1 NASB). If necessary, God will discipline the followers of Christ for their own good so they “can share His holiness” (Heb. 12:10 HCSB).

The Ultimate Fulfillment of God’s Holiness David, fearing that his sin would separate him from God, prays, “Do not ... take Your Holy Spirit from me” (Ps. 51:11 HCSB). John the Baptist, however, predicts that Jesus would inaugurate a new era for God’s people by baptizing them with the Holy Spirit (Matt. 3:11). The atoning death of Jesus, by meeting the just demands of God’s righteousness (Rom. 3:21–26), makes possible this intimate relationship of God and His people. Jesus, as the true Holy One, does not see decay in His death as the prophetic Scriptures foretold (Ps. 16:10; Acts 13:35). Thus His resurrection signifies the accomplishment of salvation and the inauguration of the age of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 1:4) in which the followers of Jesus are baptized with the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4). This enduring promise for believers in every generation (Acts 2:38–39) is the empowerment to make them holy: the Holy Spirit makes them so (Rom. 15:16).

¹ Ted Cabel, “Holy,” edited by Chad Brand, Charles Draper, Archie England, Steve Bond, E. Ray Clendenen, and Trent C. Butler, *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2003).

Questions raised through Mentimeter on 28 January 2024 that was not answered during the conversation:

1. Does my Christian identity & citizenship mean to stoically choose to do the good & right thing every time?

Answer: Certainly! We are called to live rightly in the eyes of the world and in the eyes of God. Therefore, we ought to strive to achieve that goal in our daily lives, regardless of the price we pay and the consequences. That's exactly what Peter's call to the elect in exile is in his letter (1 Peter 1:1).

However, our journey to perfection may not be easy, and we may fall from time to time. In His mercy, God will graciously forgive us should we fail to choose the right things. What we need to do is confess and repent, no matter how many times we fall. The assurance that God will forgive our sins will help us avoid becoming legalistic and fearing the possibility of falling. Recognising our identity as Christians will constantly remind us to choose the right path.

2. How does a Christian live fearlessly in faith when they are afraid of being judged by society?

Answer: When we uphold Biblical values in our daily lives, including the decisions we make, society may judge us because we live differently from them, even to the extent that they may hate us for the principles we hold. Jesus has warned us about this, stating that when we follow Him, the world may hate us. But be encouraged; before they hate us, they hated Jesus first (John 15:18).

Another source of encouragement when we are judged by society because of the Biblical values we hold comes from the Epistle of Peter itself. In 1 Peter 1:6-9, Peter encourages the believers that at the end of suffering, they will find salvation for their souls and there is nothing more important than the salvation of our souls. Just be sure that we are judged by society because of doing the right thing and not because of doing the wrong thing (1 Peter 2:20-24).

3. It's easy to lose sight of our priorities to Christ in a demanding world. Do you have any advice or encouragement for worshippers not to lose sight of Christian priorities in the corporate world?

Answer: From time to time, we may lose sight due to the distractions in our lives. Even the apostles who were with Jesus daily experienced the same thing. A clear example is Peter. At one moment, he was convicted and was the only apostle to say, 'You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God,' when Jesus asked them, 'Who do people say the Son of Man is?' (Matthew 16:13-16). At other times, he was afraid and even denied Jesus (Luke 22:55-56; Matthew 26:69-75; Mark 14:66-72).

However, it changed dramatically after the apostles received the Holy Spirit in the upper room (Acts 2:1-3). From that point on, the apostles, including Peter, spoke boldly about Jesus and the Gospel. Therefore, it is important to rely on the Holy Spirit actively working in our lives and to constantly be our advocate, our

counsellor, and our comforter (John 14:26). If we live in obedience to God's word, we will not quench the Holy Spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:19), and as a result, He will help us even in times when we face temptation at works at home and anywhere else.

4. How do we reconcile between living as exiles and conforming to the world in our daily lives? We also shouldn't aim to stand out by being non-conformists too. / How do you reconcile the fact that we are strangers or aliens on earth but at the same time reach out to unbelievers who may find us strange or weird?

Answer: As believers, we need to be aware of our identity and continue to live according to it; as a result, we do not compromise with the world for anything contrary to the Word of God. Having said this, it does not mean that we have to seclude ourselves from the world (John 17:14). In fact, the opposite is true. We live in the world so that we can be influencers for the world. We are called to be a blessing to the world, just as the Israelites are called to be a blessing to the nations. Christians are not only called to be a blessing to the world but also to be priests of the world (1 Peter 2:9).

However, we can't be a blessing to the world and be priests to the nations if we live in conformity with the world. Paul has urged us not to conform to the world but to be transformed by the renewal of our minds, so that by testing we may discern what is the will of God — what is good, acceptable, and perfect (Romans 12:1-2). This does not mean that we live like hermits. We can still live and enjoy what the world offers within the boundaries of God's commands. We can still mingle with our non-Christians friends and do business with them and still holding our Biblical values firmly.

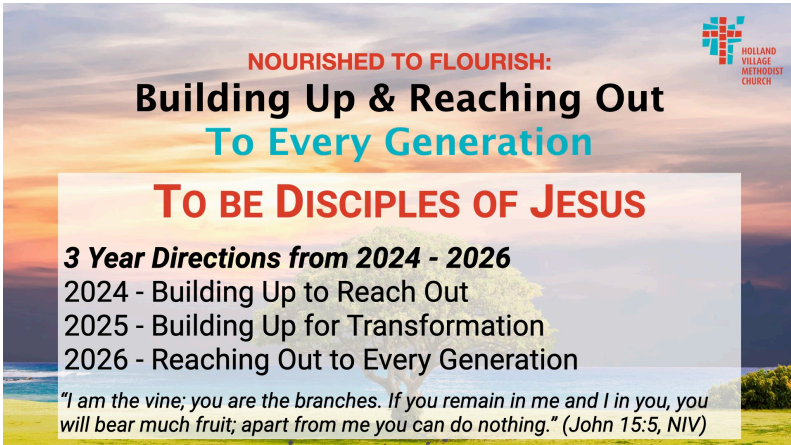
5. Was Jesus a radical individual?

Answer: Depending on what we mean by 'radical.' If we talk about radical in terms of His teaching, ministry, and life, certainly, the answer is yes. However, Jesus did not keep Himself distant from the world. In fact, He lived among the common people and ate with sinners for the sake of saving them. As followers of Jesus, we ought to imitate Him. We live in a radical way in the world not to judge the world but for the sake of saving the world through Christ. In this way, Jesus was not radical because He did not judge and keep Himself distant from the common people.

6. In 1 Peter 1:12, what are the things that angels long to look?

Answer: One commentator suggests that the things that the angels long to look at refer to the preaching that the evangelists delivered. As the readers of the epistle experienced all kinds of trials, they need encouragement to understand how to live in this world and why they are facing the suffering they experience. Though their sufferings are difficult, these Christians still have knowledge and experience that would make the prophets, and even the angels, envious.²

² Peter R. Rodgers ed., *1 Peter, Collaborative Commentary*, (Eugene, Or: An Imprint of Wipf and Stock Publishing, 2017), 29-30




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2025 - Building Up for Transformation
2026 - Reaching Out to Every Generation

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." (John 15:5, NIV)



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