

Holy InDeed

1 Peter 1:16

I. Scripture reading: 1 Peter 4

II. Review... Last week we looked steadfastly into the reality that we are a holy people because God has called us to belong to Him and to be used by Him. Holiness, we saw, means “set apart” and carries the meaning of “sacred” and “pure/clean”. We also saw that our holiness is granted and demanded. We hovered awhile on the truth that we are granted holiness by our God through His Holy Spirit, through our faith in Christ and His gospel, and through the sacrifice of Christ’s flesh and blood for us.

III. Holiness Demanded... This morning let us set our gaze on the other side of the holiness coin, shall we? Though God has granted us our holiness, he also insists that we actualize our holiness in our living. What good is holiness if it is only theoretical, anyway? Consider the young prince or princess who is royal by birth – a royalty that was granted to them without any choice on their part. Doesn’t it make sense that his/her kingly father or queenly mother would exhort him/her to BE royal when they go out? Not only did God make us holy through His Spirit, His gospel, and His Son’s sacrifice, He has also calls us here and now to live out that holiness. (2 Tim. 2:20-21; Romans 6:19; 1 Thess. 4:3-4, 7; Heb. 12:14).

IV. The Wholeness of Holiness (thought, word and deed)... Some have a dangerous misconception about holiness. Some believe that holiness is partial: either the heart (motive) is the only thing that matters or deeds are the only important things. How can we possibly think that our holiness involves anything less than our whole self? The Spirit who makes us holy fills our bodies and gives new birth to our spirits then renews our minds. The sacrificial death of our Master on the cross was the redemption of our bodies and spirits – our whole selves. Don’t forget your hope! Your spirit has been given new birth and soon your body will be granted a new birth as well! Your whole self belongs to God through Christ, so do not cheat God by thinking that you can have some mystical inner holiness that doesn’t have to show itself in holy living. Don’t cheat him, either, by thinking that you can keep the right number of rules to be holy without having the heart of humble submission.

V. Conclusion: The Holy One of God... Perhaps you aren’t sure how to be holy in your day to day living. Perhaps you sense that you need to make some changes in order to cleanse yourself of the ignoble as Paul wrote to Timothy. How do you do that? One word: *discipleship*. Jesus is the Holy One of God. Jesus is the proof that humanity can indeed be holy, because He is the normal human. We were made to be holy, so can pursue holiness with confidence. But how? Look to Jesus. As disciples, we know that we are walking with the Master every moment of every day, so we can always hear His voice calling us to act as holy as we are. As we hear him speak, we humbly submit in obedience and we find that we are holy. Holy lives are built one obedient decision at a time. So then, disciple, heed the voice of your Shepherd and “be holy in all you do.” Amen.