

The 1st Letter of Peter (Week 3)

As we continue with the 1st Letter of Peter, the emphasis again is on practical “Holiness”. At the beginning of chapter 2 there is the familiar “put off put on” formula. Followed by a description of the believers’ privilege of belonging to a holy community – the Church.

Read 1 Peter 2, verses 1 to 10

Verses 1 – 3

Here we have the negative and positive bases of holiness. There is a call to get rid of all that holds us back from living a full Christian life – the wrong thoughts and desires hidden deep within. A reminder in verse 3 that as believers we have already “*tasted the kindness of the Lord*” (Psalm 34, verse 8.) Note - If you are feeling down, then the whole of Psalm 34 can be a comfort! “*This poor man cried and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.*” Verse 6.

Verses 4 – 10

There is often a difficulty in giving an accurate one word translation from one language to another. Even with an apparently simple word like “*holy*” it is not easy to fully appreciate the full meaning. Here it means being “chosen”, “set apart”, “dedicated”, “consecrated” for a special purpose.

In verse 4 we are reminded that we are coming to the Lord Jesus Christ, the chosen corner stone, the foundation of our faith. The quotes in verses 4 and 6 are from the book of the prophet Isaiah, chapter 28, verse 16. Time and again in this Letter of Peter, he refers back to the scriptures as he knew them. Remember he only had the Old Testament, which time and again points forward to the coming of the Messiah – the Lord Jesus Christ. (Remember chapter 1, verses 10 – 12).

The emphasis on the Chosen People of God being a “*holy priesthood*” - verses 5 and 9 – 10 again refers back to the Old Testament calling of the Jews as the People of God. - read Exodus 19, verses 5 – 6, Isaiah 43, verses 20 – 21, Deuteronomy 7, verse 6 etc.!

A reminder then of the role of the Church of God – to “*declare the glorious deeds of him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light.*”

We, as foreigners and aliens have been chosen and called to belong to the holy people of God. Once we were outside, now we are part of Christ’s Body, His Church. Once we were nobody (Hosea chapter 1, verse 6 and 9, chapter 2, verse 23), now we are beloved and safe in the hands of our Lord (John 10, verses 28 – 29)

The role of the Old Testament priesthood was to represent the people to God and God to the people. The role of the “People of God” in the Old Testament was to show God to the world and to pray to God for the world, remember Exodus 19, verses 5 -6.

The role of the Church, the Body of Christ should be to bring God to the world – show His Glory to people and to bring people to God through Our Lord Jesus Christ.

When did you last hear the saving Gospel of Christ preached?

What should be our witness to fearful, divided communities, as well as to individuals?

This Letter of Peter should be an encouragement to us in our time of exile.