

STREAMS

INTRODUCTION



THE INTEGRITY-FILLED LIFE

Discovering ways that lead to an inner re-formation of our heart.

REVIEW

Review your experience of the previous practice. How did it go? If you weren't able to do the practice, consider how you were able to connect with God last week?

READ

Read the passage several times through, read slowly, use your imagination to picture the scene and soak it up. As you read, look for one or two points that really impact you. We call these 'shockers' and 'blockers'. The 'Setting the Scene' information adds some further context about the passage.



1 Peter 1.13-25

Be Holy

¹³ Therefore, with minds that are alert and fully sober, set your hope on the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at his coming.¹⁴ As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. ¹⁵ But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; ¹⁶ for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy."¹⁷ Since you call on a Father who judges each person's work impartially, live out your time as foreigners here in reverent fear. ¹⁸ For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. ²⁰ He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake. ²¹ Through him you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and glorified him, and so your faith and hope are in God.

²² Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for each other, love one another deeply, from the heart. ²³ For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.

For, "All people are like grass,
and all their glory is like the flowers of the field;
the grass withers and the flowers fall,
²⁵ but the word of the Lord endures forever."

REFLECT

As a group take time to discuss what you've read. Start by sharing your 'shockers' and 'blockers.' As you share your thoughts, listen carefully to one another. Feel free to use the questions to help you reflect further and extend your conversation.

Setting the scene:

- As you read the passage, think about it being written to a scattered group of Christians experiencing suffering and unfair treatment.
- Peter (the author), knows how easy it is to lose spiritual focus. The call to be 'alert and think straight' encourages Christians not to let their minds get lazy and wander from Christ towards sin and worldly ways of thinking and acting.
- Being holy and authentic is about more than just avoiding sin; it's also about cultivating our delight in God and welcoming the Holy Spirit into every part of our lives. The promise that he will always be with us, helps us to live this new, authentic, holy life today.
- Peter genuinely believes that growth in holiness will lead to purity and a deeper love amongst Christians.

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What are the 'shockers' or 'blockers' for you in this passage?

Discuss what it might mean to be 'holy'. Does the idea of living a holy life sound inviting?

Christ led a holy, yet deeply attractive life – is it possible to be holy without a 'holier than thou' attitude? How

RESPOND

As you have read and reflected on the passage, it's now time to consider how to respond.

Consider the following set of practices to help you respond to the theme of this session over the coming week. Choose one and feel free to adapt to make it work for you.

01 Speak Well

Each morning this week, ask the Holy Spirit to 'help me guard my words' (Ps141.3). Make a commitment to think about the words you use to respond to situations and circumstances. It could be a conflict at home, or a complicated situation at work. Ask the Spirit to guide you with the right words, delivered in the right way, at the right time.

02 Reflection

Take time this week to be with God, inviting Him to purify your heart and mind through the power of the Holy Spirit. Approach Him with a spirit of surrender and humility. Consider questions like:

- How do my words and actions wound others?
- Are there actions or habits in my life that hinder my relationship with You?
- What fruits of the Spirit - patience, peace, kindness, self-control etc (Galatians 5) need to be more evident in my life?

Prayers like these cultivate holiness, drawing us closer to God's heart.

03 Service

Jesus shows us holiness through humility and service. This week, ask God where He might be calling you to serve others - at home, at work, or in daily life. Look for opportunities to encourage others, to resist seeking importance, and to take the posture of a servant. Pray for the grace to set aside pride and develop a heart focused on others. It may help to reflect on Luke 9.46-48, Luke 14:7-14 or John 13.1-20.

GOING DEEPER

Celebration Day

Living authentically means recognising our limits and need for rest. That's the heart of God's Sabbath command - a weekly invitation to stop working and be refreshed. Give yourself permission to step away from chores, emails, and tasks. Instead, sleep, share a meal, spend time with friends, exercise or simply enjoy a good coffee. Try taking a break from technology! Come away from distractions and work to rest in God and enjoy being with Him.

You might also be interested in:

- Listen to Richard J. Foster talk about 'A Well-Functioning Life' on the Renovaré Podcast: <https://renovare.org/podcasts/lifewithgod/richard-foster-streams-holiness>
- Read this article about Holiness: <https://renovare.org/articles/defining-the-holiness-tradition-virtuous-life>

'Train yourself in godliness, for, while physical training is of some value, godliness is valuable in every way, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.'

1 Timothy 4:7b-8