

How to Use Sermon Resources

- READ AHEAD TOGETHER - MCG's should use the Devotional at the end of this resource as a reading plan for the week leading up to your meeting.
- SIT UNDER THE WORD - This resource is filled with scripture references. Read them aloud, together before you answer any questions.
- APPLY TRUTH - The goal is deep discussion and application, not necessarily to complete this resource. Don't squash a good discussion. If you get into something important along the way that's fine.

Small Group Discussion Guide

Opening Prayer [2 mins]

Use the Overview [5 mins]

- Cover any key points for people who missed parts or all of the sermon

Scripture Deep Dive [30-40 mins]

- Opening Question
- Read the scripture for each question then ask the question. Some have multiple scriptures.

Practical Applications [10 mins]

- This section is optional but there for you should you need a final thought or something to challenge your group with.

Close in Prayer

- In this extended prayer time, ask others to pray as they feel led, pray in a circle, pray over one another, pray to your left, or pray for someone specific. Whatever seems best.

Split Time (if applicable)

- Men with men, women with women
- Share in a circle. "What's one thing you want to celebrate? What do you need prayer and accountability for?"
- After everyone shares, pray in a circle for the person to your left/right.

SERMON OVERVIEW

"Be Holy" 1 Peter 1:13-19

Sermon Summary: This sermon explores the call to holiness for believers through 1 Peter 1:13-19. Pastor Kirk emphasizes that holiness begins with engaging our minds and setting our hope on God's promises rather than worldly distractions. The core message is that believers have already been declared holy through Christ's sacrifice, and now must live in a way that demonstrates this reality. Holiness is not earned but received through grace, yet it requires intentional effort to resist conforming to former sinful patterns.

Key Points:

- The indicatives (what God has done) inform the imperatives (what we must do) - we cannot obey commands without understanding God's promises
- Preparing for holiness requires engaging our minds actively and being sober-minded, not allowing worldly distractions to dull our awareness of God
- Holiness means being set apart for God's express use and becoming what we have already been declared to be
- Living carelessly demonstrates "cheap grace" and devalues Christ's sacrifice
- Holy living displays the infinite value of the One who died on our behalf

Scripture Reference:

- 1 Peter 1:13-19 (primary passage)
- 1 Peter 1:3-6 (foundation for the command)
- Ephesians 1:4 (chosen to be holy and blameless)

Stories:

- Pastor Kirk's personal experience going to Budapest twice to serve children who don't speak his language, teaching sports he's not good at, as an example of living a life that seems incomprehensible without understanding God's call to holiness
- Personal testimony about receiving his father's red 2001 F-150 truck in high school and how the fear/respect/reverence for his father kept him from getting tickets for 37 years
- Reference to German pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer's concept of "cheap grace" during World War II, observing how the German Lutheran church attended services but lived no differently than non-believers
- The metaphor of "girding up the loins" - the ancient practice of tucking long garments into belts before battle or work, applied to preparing our minds for spiritual action

Scripture Deep Dive

Opening Question:

Reflect on your daily life and consider what your deepest hopes are anchored in. How does the world influence where we place our hope, and how might that differ from what God invites us to hope for according to His Word?

Preparing for Holiness

1. **1 Peter 1:13** - Why does Peter emphasize that believers should "gird up the loins of your mind"? How might this concept of mental readiness and focus relate to other scripture such as Romans 12:2, which speaks about the transformation and renewal of the mind?
2. **1 Peter 1:13*** - What does it mean to set your hope "completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ"? Compare this directive with the description of hope in Hebrews 11:1. How does understanding our future hope in Christ shape our present mindset and actions?

The Call to Holiness

3. **1 Peter 1:14-15** - Peter instructs believers not to conform to the "desires of your former ignorance." How do Ephesians 4:22-24 and Colossians 3:5-10 further elaborate on this transformation from old ways to a holy lifestyle?
4. **1 Peter 1:15** - Peter states, "as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do." What are the implications of this call to holiness in practical daily life? Consider also 1 Thessalonians 4:3-7 in your discussion on what it means to live a life pleasing to God.

Living in Reverence and the Motivation for Holiness

5. **1 Peter 1:17** - Peter prompts us to conduct ourselves in reverent fear. How does Proverbs 9:10, which states, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," help us understand what it means to live with reverence toward God? What role does this reverence play in living a holy life?
6. **1 Peter 1:18-19** - Considering that believers were redeemed by "the precious blood of Christ," how should this truth impact the way we respond to grace? Compare this with Romans 6:1-2, which questions if we should continue sinning so that grace may abound. How does recognizing the cost of our redemption motivate us toward holiness?

Practical Applications:

How can we practically prepare our minds for spiritual action in our everyday lives, as Peter encourages in 1 Peter 1:13?

Suggested Answer: Practically, preparing our minds can involve engaging in regular prayer and Bible study to renew our minds, seeking accountability with fellow believers to stay aligned with God's will, and intentionally reducing distractions by setting aside dedicated times for reflection and meditation on God's promises.

In what ways might we unknowingly conform to the “desires of our former ignorance,” and how can we counteract this tendency in our daily routines?

Suggested Answer: We might conform by allowing old habits or thought patterns to influence our decisions, such as prioritizing worldly success over spiritual growth. To counteract this, we can consciously replace old habits with new, God-focused practices, like engaging in faith-based community activities, setting spiritual goals, and continuously reflecting on our identity in Christ.

What are some specific actions we can take to pursue holiness in our conduct, as mentioned in 1 Peter 1:15, and ensure our lives reflect God's holiness?

Suggested Answer: Specific actions might include practicing honesty and integrity in all interactions, serving others selflessly, setting clear moral boundaries, and consistently aligning our decisions with biblical teachings. Additionally, regularly evaluating our lives against scripture can help us measure our progress and stay committed to holiness.

How does living with reverence and a healthy fear of the Lord, as discussed in 1 Peter 1:17, manifest in everyday choices and behaviors?

Suggested Answer: Living with reverence involves respecting God's authority and prioritizing His word in our decisions. This can manifest in choices like showing kindness and forgiveness, maintaining integrity even when no one is watching, and choosing actions that honor God over personal gain or pleasure. Seeking God's guidance through prayer before making decisions is also a reflection of reverent living.

Reflecting on the precious cost of our redemption in 1 Peter 1:18-19, how should this knowledge influence how we respond to temptation and sin?

Suggested Answer: Knowing that our redemption was purchased at the cost of Christ's sacrifice, we should be motivated to resist temptation, understanding the seriousness of sin that necessitated such a great cost. This knowledge should inspire gratitude and a desire to honor Christ by pursuing holiness, staying close to God through prayer, and seeking support from the Christian community in areas where we struggle.

5 Day Devotional

Day 1: 1 Peter 1:13, Romans 12:2

Devotional: Peter begins by encouraging believers to prepare their minds and hearts for action. He emphasizes the importance of sober-mindedness, urging us to set our hope fully on future grace. This requires a deliberate focus and readiness, much like the transformation Paul speaks of in Romans, as we renew our minds and avoid conforming to the patterns of this world.

Reflection Question: What changes can you make in your daily routine to better prepare your mind for spiritual action and focus?

Day 2: 1 Peter 1:14, Ephesians 4:22-24

Devotional: Peter calls us to live as obedient children, leaving behind our past ignorance and desires. This transformation mirrors Paul's words to the Ephesians, where believers are called to put off the old self and embrace the new. Both apostles remind us that our past should not dictate our future, as we are now children of God with a new identity.

Prayer Suggestion: Ask God to reveal any areas in your life where you might still be conforming to past patterns. Pray for the strength to step into the new life offered through Christ.

Day 3: 1 Peter 1:15, Thessalonians 4:3-7

Devotional: Holiness is not just an attribute of God but a calling for every believer. The call to holiness extends into every area of conduct and activity, underscoring the reality that our lives are to mirror the character of our Holy God. The passage in Thessalonians encourages sanctification as a direct response to God's call to holiness.

Reflection Question: What practical steps can you take to ensure that your conduct reflects the holiness God desires for you?

Day 4: 1 Peter 1:16-17, Proverbs 9:10

Devotional: Living in reverence and fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, as Proverbs teaches. Peter reminds us of our status as sojourners and calls us to live with an awareness of God's holiness. This perspective shifts our focus to eternal values, encouraging a respectful and holy way of living that sets us apart.

Prayer Suggestion: Pray for a deeper understanding of God's holiness, and ask for the wisdom to live your life in a way that honors Him as a respectful sojourner in this world.

Day 5: 1 Peter 1:18-19, Romans 6:1-2

Devotional: Our redemption through Christ is not bought with temporary riches; it is secured with His precious blood, underscoring its precious value. Understanding the cost of grace compels us to live lives reflective of its worth, avoiding sin as a response to such a costly, unmerited gift as Paul articulates in Romans.

Reflection Question:

How does recognizing the cost of your redemption through Christ's sacrifice influence the way you live your daily life?