



Week Five

As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance.

1 Peter 1:14

This study follows a pattern of gathering—reflection—sharing—prayer.

GATHERING

Last week our practice focused on renewal of mind, a concentration on holiness. How did that go for folks?

This week's theme in worship was holiness as it related to love and hope. Who is an older believer whose life has had a loving effect on your own growth in faith?

SHARED REFLECTION: 1 Peter 1:13-25

Read 1 Peter 1:13-25 out loud once.

Now read it out loud a second time, listening for the descriptions of hope (13), holiness (14-21) and love (22-25).

What actions or character are unique to God when it comes to our hope, holiness and love?

What responses does Peter call for when it comes to our lives of hope, holiness and love?

Peter says an interesting thing related to grace and hope. In 1:13 he says something that is a little tricky to capture in the translation from Greek to English, but the NRSV comes the nearest: *set all your hope on the grace that Jesus Christ will bring you when he is revealed*. It is the notion that the grace we experience now is only a portion of the full grace that will transform and renew all of life when Jesus returns. Have you thought about grace and hope being related before? What difference does it make?

Laurie proposed that holiness is essential to love, and that hope is essential to holiness — where do you see that in this text? Where have you experienced that in life?

How did you respond to Laurie's extended use of the "Nones and Nuns" story (New York Times, May 31, 2019)? At one point she quoted the article as saying, "The Nones, many of whom said they felt overwhelmed by life's choices, were drawn to the discipline and the notion of sacrifice." How might this feeling of being drawn to discipline and the notion of sacrifice be related to a life of holiness?

Anything that felt inspiring in the idea of a 30 year vision and the charism we have to give here at West Side? Anything that your spirit resisted in Laurie's discussion of these ideas?

Week Five ...

SHARED LIFE —

Practicing holiness ... Hope — Holiness — and love

“So roll up your sleeves, put your mind in gear, be totally ready to receive the gift that’s coming when Jesus arrives. Don’t lazily slip back into those old grooves of evil, doing just what you feel like doing. You didn’t know any better then; you do now. As obedient children, let yourselves be pulled into a way of life shaped by God’s life, a life energetic and blazing with holiness. God said, “I am holy; you be holy.”

1 Peter 1:13-16, *The Message*

The practice for this week is to connect holiness and love—here is how. Reflect on one place where your “old life” attractions get more of your best self and attention than your love for another. Now get creative — what would it look like to choose discipline in this area for the sake of loving another person? Be very concrete.

For example, Laurie can easily go down the rabbit hole of internet stories on European royalty! This week she will stop herself when she gets the impulse to start clicking, and instead use that time to send an email or make a phone call to a particular friend she has in mind whose friendship she has been neglecting.

How goes it with your soul?

For a shared life of common purpose questions like these are really important ... have you tried using them at all with anyone?

Where is God at work in your life?
Where are you resisting?

Where are you cooperating?
How can we pray & encourage you?

PRAYER

Be sure to dedicate time to praying together in God’s presence and for one another. You may want to take some notes here to remember how to hold each other in prayer during the week.