

The Marks of Holiness

1 Peter 1:13-21

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Peter moves into instruction language and tells his readers, those who were suffering, what to do with their lives.

"You shall be holy, for I am holy" (v16).

Every command in this passage connects to the idea of holiness. While holiness is often seen as awkward and not sought after, it is a critical part of God's answer to our journey in this hostile world.

The main Hebrew word for holiness in the Bible means 'to cut off' or 'be separate'. To be God's holy people means to be set apart, separated unto Him. This makes whomever that is 'cut out' precious to the person that cut them out. The holy person is someone who says to God: 'I belong to you.' Just as God has set us apart, we want to live out the purpose of being 'cut out'. We want to be holy in the actual way we live. This is the life that God desires for us – a holy life!

'Therefore...' (v13)

Peter spells out the indicatives of how we should live out this holy life. A holy life is always a 'therefore' life. If there is no proper belief in God, there will be no proper motivation to live out the life of holiness.

3 marks of holiness from 1 Peter 1:13-21

1. Focused hope

'preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully...' (v13)

A focused hope requires focused attention and concentration. It also requires us to be sober-minded, setting our minds not on the unstable things of this world but fully on God's grace. God invites every person who feels lost, insecure and hopeless in this broken world to Himself; to behold the good news and let it guide them in their

lifetime to the experience of focused hope. Let us live with focused hope!

2. Childlike obedience

'As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance,' (v14)

To be ignorant is to lack knowledge and understanding. Passions that come out of this bear the marks of ignorance. The passions of former ignorance are a blind guide and will bring harm to those who follow it. Holiness instead, obeys and follows the God of all knowledge and foresight; the One who has cut us out. The command to be holy is deeply relational. God, as a loving Father, receives and calls us, His children, to obey Him in the likeness of His holiness. God does not give His special attentive love to everyone; He only gives it to His children. To reject this holiness is to reject God as our Father. Obey the call to be holy!

3. Reverent fear

'conduct yourselves with fear...' (v17)

God calls His children to conduct themselves with reverent fear, a good fear that grants wisdom and confidence to navigate this fallen world. Such reverent fear is a mark of holiness for God's holy ones. God separates His people for such a fear. It is a blessing to be a God-fearer!

vv.18 -21 - Peter exhorts and reminds the readers that they are redeemed from the futile ways of old, not through perishable things, by the precious blood of Christ. God's Holy One; Jesus Christ, was raised from the dead and through Him, we have faith and hope in God. Holiness is an unbearable burden when we un-Christ Christianity. Let Christ be the centre of

our holiness, and may we find the freedom to be set apart in Christ-like shape for our good and His glory!