

AM 1 Peter 1:1-25

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Preacher: Rev Douglas Cranston

[0 : 00] Well, good morning friends and warm welcome to morning worship. It's a joy and a delight to be with you again.

I was going to be on a wee run of Sundays, but Kerry is doing a baptism, I think, next Sunday, God willing.

So I'm changing, I'm going to go and preach at Downvale, which is always a privilege as well to be there. So what I'm going to do this morning is I'm just going to do a one-off in the morning.

We're going to look at the opening chapter of 1 Peter under the title Biblical Holiness. It's not a topic that we have preached very often.

And then, God willing, in the evening, I'm going to be just really following on from the sermon on Nicodemus. I'm going to be looking at the woman at the well.

[1 : 03] Because I think, given what we learned about what John is doing there and the context of all that, it's quite helpful to have that underlined for us and emphasised for us as we go on to look at the very next encounter that Jesus has with somebody.

Remembering, of course, that John has specifically put these things together with a specific in mind. And we'll remind ourselves of that this evening.

So I hope you can join us for evening worship at the usual time of 6 o'clock. Norman tells me that the news about Jack is much, much better.

He's returned home from hospital on Wednesday. And we give thanks to God for that and for the care and attention, especially in these very difficult days when hospitals are having to do all kinds of unusual things.

It's really good that he's home and home safe. And as far as we know, COVID free. So that's a relief. And he's very grateful for everybody's thoughts and prayers and messages.

[2 : 26] Wednesday, as is the norm, at 7 o'clock, prayer meeting and Bible study led by Jonathan. And over the last few years, we've bought Christmas presents such as clothing and chocolate for men and women who come to the Wednesday drop-in.

At the moment, the only service provided is weekly provision of takeaway sandwiches from the door of Bethany Christian Church of White Sands. And the supervisor, Pamela Crosby, feels it would be more suitable this year for provide a purchase take-home meal.

So if it will be helpful if financial contributions can be made over the next three weeks, please leave gifts in the collection box in an envelope marked drop-in.

So instead of the usual gifts, they're looking for financial gifts. And if you can do that, then I'm sure that will be greatly appreciated and more importantly, will be blessed of the Lord.

Sunday next is 11 and 6 as usual. And as I've said, Kenny will be here, God willing, at both ends. National Day of Prayer.

[3 : 40] The General Assembly has appointed a National Day of Prayer on Wednesday, the 25th of November. We are asked to set aside on that day a time for prayer for both church and for the nation.

And it will be the focus of the meeting that evening. It's good to come together for prayer because, I don't know about you, I find it very difficult to know what to pray these days for our leaders and for our representatives.

And sometimes God moves in other people and stimulates us to find the words to pray. So that's on Wednesday, the 25th of November.

My wife sends her apologies. My daughter returned home for the weekend. So mum and daughter are going to be watching something online this morning for worship.

But she hopes to be here this evening. And again, I've been having bother with my neck. So apologies again for not having a tie on this morning.

[4 : 51] Okay, all that's of a fairly trivial nature. Let's worship God. Let's sing to His praise and to His glory. From Psalm number 40, we sing the opening five verses of Psalm number 40 from the Metrical Psalms.

I waited for the Lord my God and patiently did bear. To God's praise. I waited for the Lord my God and patiently did bear.

I waited for the Lord my God and patiently did bear.

He did bear. But when to me, He did not hide. He did not hide my voice and cry to hear.

He did not hide my voice and cry to hear. He did not hide my voice and cry to hear.

[6 : 09] He did not hide my voice and cry to hear. I pray, as all the Lord besets my feet, who is publishing my way.

He put my youth song in my mind, my God to my good heart, and He shall see in hands of fear, and on the Lord we lie.

O blessed is the man who trusts upon the Lord we rise, respecting not the proud of the stars, as time as light to light.

Let's come to our Heavenly Father in prayer as we read again from the Heidelberg Catechism.

Question number 55. What do you understand by the communion of saints? The answer is first, that believers, all and everyone, as members of Christ, have part in Him and in all His treasures and gifts.

[8 : 38] Secondly, that each one must feel himself bound to use his gifts readily and cheerfully for the advantage and welfare of other members.

He goes on to ask the question, What do you believe concerning the forgiveness of sins? That God, for the sake of Christ's satisfaction, will no more remember my sins, neither the sinful nature with which I have struggled all my life long, but graciously imparts to me the righteousness of Christ, that I may nevermore come in to condemnation.

Let us unite our hearts in prayer. Let us pray. Father, as we are reminded in the confession, of just the wonder of the forgiveness of sins, the enormity of it, the extent of it, the breadth and depth of that cleansing blood of Christ, we come before you because you are like no other and the salvation that so graciously comes from your hand is like nothing that this world can give or even conceive of.

And we worship you. We praise you. We adore you. And we do that because you are almighty and we know that the salvation that you promise, you alone have the almighty power to see that salvation through.

And so we stand in confidence, but not, Father, a confidence in our own, not in any self-righteousness, but a confidence in the very promises of God, in the person of God, in the proclamation of God, that if we are in Christ Jesus, if we are ransomed in him, if his blood has cleansed us, if we have come in saving faith to him, then our sins are no more.

[11 : 22] We are redeemed. We are washed. We are washed. We are washed in the blood of the Lamb. We thank you, Heavenly Father, that you are a God who draws to yourself a people, a people of power and a people of praise.

We thank you, Heavenly Father, for an opportunity to be here this morning and amidst all the uncertainty and confusion of our world and of our nation.

we thank you that you are the same yesterday, today and forever. We thank you that we turn not only to our God but to a Heavenly Father who cares for us and loves us and has the focus of these events revolving round his redeemed people.

Father, in your mercy and by grace, we pray that we might know more of you, that we might know more of that salvation and that we might worship you in the gifts of the Holy Spirit, praising and adoring you because your Holy Spirit has convinced us of the truth of your word, of the joy and blessings of salvation.

And so, Heavenly Father, we come to you now asking you that you will forgive our sins anew. We are sinners, we have sinned and Father, it is our delight to know that you stand ready and able and willing providing that forgiveness.

[13 : 07] Father, we adore you. We lay our life before you. Father, take us, melt us, mould us, fill us as only the Spirit of the Living God can.

And as we gather this morning, we gather with no other desire than to raise up the name of Jesus Christ, to lift Him high and exalt Him, to praise His name and to rejoice in being part of His redeemed people.

We pray particularly this morning for the children that are in our midst in these days when they cannot receive specific counselling.

We pray for the responsibility of parents and grandparents at this time that they might teach their children the truths and the duties of the Christian faith and that by prayer and example that they might bring them up in the ways of the Lord.

Strengthen them, encourage them in these desperately confusing days when it must be so difficult to raise our children. Bless them and strengthen them and empower them.

[14 : 25] And we pray for next Lord's Day Father God willing when that child will be presented for baptism. We pray that you will be with the family as they prepare for that and we ask that journeying mercies might be afforded to Kenny as he comes here next Lord's Day to take these services.

Bless him at Downvale and all the work and all the preaching and pastoral care that he seeks to exercise. And as you are with him this day, Heavenly Father, be with all your people throughout this world as they cry out to you that you might be the true and the living God through Jesus Christ the Lord we ask this.

Amen. Now we talked last time about Thomas and today I want to think about another person in the Bible and he's known to us because he wrote the first book in the New Testament.

Does anybody know what his name is? No? No? What's the first book that we come to when we start the New Testament? It begins with an M.

Matthew. Excellent. Very well done. Well, Matthew, and does anybody know what Matthew's other name was? There's a very, very difficult question.

[15 : 56] Begins with an L. It says he was called Levi. I'm not quite sure if he was called Matthew or Levi maybe like some people call me Dougie and other people call me Douglas and maybe that was one of his other names but we know him most regularly as Matthew.

Now, Matthew had a very special job and it really wasn't a nice job in those days because what he did was he collected taxes of the people for the Romans so people really hated him and despised him because of what he did.

He was kind of regarded as somebody who was a friend of the Romans but he wasn't himself a Roman. And this was one of the people that Jesus chose to be one of his special disciples, one of his special followers.

And Jesus went to him and he said very simply to Matthew just leave what you're doing and come and follow me. Now it was interesting that Matthew as he began to follow Jesus almost right away did something that was very very important.

He probably didn't know a lot about Jesus. He probably didn't know a lot about the Christian faith. He probably didn't know a lot about the gospel. In fact, the fact that he wasn't liked by a lot of people, he probably wasn't all that useful and yet Jesus chose him.

[17 : 33] And when Jesus chose him he was maybe sitting there thinking, what can I do to serve Jesus? And so he sat down and I think he probably thought about it and said, well, the one thing I'm good at doing is throwing parties.

That was a very, very strange thing but it was what Matthew was good at. And he says, I know what I'm going to do because I'm good at throwing parties. I'm going to have a party.

I'm going to invite people to my house. And I'm going to let them know and meet Jesus. And that's what he did. He began to serve Jesus right away by just doing the thing that he did well and offering that to Jesus.

Now in your young lives, you maybe don't think you've an awful lot that you can offer Jesus and you're probably right. but there are things that you can do, things that you're good at.

You can love each other, you can be kind to each other, you can be friends with people. And if you're good at that and you give that over to Jesus, Jesus will bless you for that and all that you do for him.

[18 : 52] so remember Matthew, very, very new to Jesus and yet he was able to do something for Jesus because he just gave over to Jesus what he did well.

So I hope you remember that story about Matthew. So we're just going to pray just before we sing again. We're going to remember about Matthew and we're going to ask God's blessing.

Father, we thank you for this man, Matthew. He didn't have a very nice job. He wasn't probably a very nice person. He said he wasn't liked and yet you chose him to be one of your disciples.

And he responded to that by being faithful to what he could do. We pray, Heavenly Father, for these young children who are in our midst, that as they learn to serve Jesus, as they learn to understand what Jesus has done for them in the cross, that you will bless them in their lives.

Honor the service that they give now and honor the service of their lives that we pray they will ultimately give to you. Watch them, keep them, nurture them, and as we've already prayed, bless their parents as they seek to be that example and that testimony to your love and your grace in their homes.

[20 : 21] This we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. Now we're going to sing again, we're going to sing again from the Metrical Psalm, Psalm number 61.

Psalm number 61, I think we're singing the whole of the Psalm. O God, give ear unto my cry, unto my prayer, attend to God's praise and glory.

O God, give me, hear unto my I unto my prayer, attend from the most corner of the land, I cry to thee, I'll send.

What time my heart is overwhelmed and in perplexity, do thou me lead unto the road that higher is and I for thou hast come thy refuge me thee thy shelter by thy power and for defense against my wounds as he must come down.

In thy summer miracle night forever with thy and under cover all of his peace yet confidence beyond.

[23 : 11] For thou the bones that I did make, O Lord, my cross that spear thou hast there places a cross thy name that fear.

Well, as we consider God's word this morning, turn with me to the first letter of Peter. and we're going to just read from verse three of the opening chapter there.

This is the word of God. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to our living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power has been guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith, more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honour at the revelation of Christ Jesus.

Though you have not seen him, you love him, though you do not see him, you believe in him, and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory.

[25 : 17] obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls. Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours, searched and inquired carefully, inquiring what person or time the spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the suffering of Christ and the subsequent glories.

It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves, but you and the things that have now been announced to you through those who preach the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look.

Therefore, preparing your minds for action and being sober minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all your conduct, since it is written you shall be holy, for I am holy.

And if you call on him as father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourself with fear throughout the time of your exile, knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

[26 : 58] He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you, who through him and believers in God was raised from the dead and gave him glory so that your faith and hope are in God.

Having purified yourself by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart, since you have been born again not of perishable seed, but of imperishable through the living and abiding word of God.

for all fresh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of the Lord remains forever, and this word is the good news that was preached to you.

Amen, and may God bless to us this reading of his holy word, and to his name be praise and glory given. Let's again unite our hearts in prayer. Let us pray.

Gracious and eternal God, we cry out to you from our sick and our broken and our fallen world.

[28 : 24] We cry out to you for the things of God that they may be established, peace, justice, integrity, and holiness.

And we pray that these might be established and evident first within the believing people of God, those who have been ransomed, healed, restored, and delivered.

We pray that they might be marked by the very marks of Jesus. And our prayer is that we would that others might see the marks of Jesus in me.

For they will not believe if they do not perceive the marks of Jesus in me. And so we pray for that sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit to be very evident in our lives that as we engage with each other here in this place, we might do so with a warmth and appreciation for each other.

that is born of love of the family, love of the Christian family, that we gather here not as strangers but as brothers and sisters in Christ, that whatever our backgrounds, whatever our status, whatever our level of learning, whatever our understanding of the world, great or small, we are brought low and brought together as one family and no other relationship other than sons and daughters of the Most High God.

[30 : 06] And therefore we honour one another, we raise each other up, we count others better than ourselves. Our instinct is to think the best of each other.

And we pray that you will instil in that a real sense of fellowship and belonging. We thank you for news of our brother Jack this day and we pray that you will continue to be with him and his wife, that you may bless him in these days that he might know your peace and your presence very evident in his life and in his home.

Bless those who will continue to work with him and to minister to him through medicine and through their clinical skills. We pray Heavenly Father that it might be your will that you might restore him soon back to our fellowship here.

As we think of our world Heavenly Father we think of the United States and the political turmoil that has ensued there following their elections. We pray for the President at this time Mr. Trump and we just pray that you might be with him and President-elect Biden and we pray Heavenly Father that as he looks to bring men and women around him that you will guide him and particularly guide him to people of biblical faith and biblical lives.

For all our nations need that guide and need that direction. And we just pray for Christians in that nation as they come to terms with a dramatic change in ideology and lifestyle and the new government's approach to marriage and to abortion and to life itself.

[32 : 10] That there might be a transformation that takes place in the lives of those who would govern this people that might be born of a fresh expression of you in their lives and a following of your word.

We pray that for our own government in Westminster and for our parliament in Scotland and Edinburgh. And we just pray Heavenly Father that you will raise up men and women of faith and integrity.

That we might be led with honour and dignity and with honour and dignity of people who honour you and give you the glory.

Bless our churches up and down the land. Bless those who are in authority over us and positions of responsibility within our church. And may you continue to bless and to grow your church throughout the world.

We remember brothers and sisters in Christ who are in lands that are persecuted who will meet this day in secret for fear of their lives or their freedoms because they seek to follow Jesus.

[33 : 26] Bless them Father. Be very near to them. Pour out your great blessing upon them as only the living God can. And this we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen. Just before we turn to consider God's work let's sing again in Psalm number 98.
We'll sing a new song to the Lord.

Psalm 98. Thank you. Thank you. Oh, sing a new song to the Lord.

For wonders He hath done. For wonders He hath done. His right hand and His holy arm in
victory and won in victory and won in victory and won in victory and won He hath done.

The Lord of this salvation have wanted to be known and wanted to be known His justice in
the obligation can import in His grace and truth To which girls must have been, to which
girls must have been.

[35 : 42] And the salvation of our God, O'er the earth has been, and the sin of the earth has been,
O'er the earth has been, and the sin of the earth has been.

Let all the earth come to the Lord, send forth the joyful noise, Send forth the joyful noise,
lift up your voice and love to hear.

Sing praises and rejoice, Sing praises and rejoice, Sing praises and rejoice.

Let's pray together. Father, we have absolutely no desire this day to hear opinions of a
mere man. But we have a deep desire to hear God speaking to us through his word.

And so we pray that you will make that man a channel of your Holy Spirit. That the words
he speaks might indeed be so of God, That they might penetrate our hearts and our lives.

[37 : 27] Challenging, changing, transforming us, And moulding us into the people that you desire
us to be. May your words speak to us, O Lord, this day.

Show us ourself, show us yourself, And show us the Saviour. And may your words speak
to us, O Lord. Amen.

Well, as I said, I had hoped that I was going to start something that might lead us nicely up
to Christmas time. But we'll do that, God willing, in two weeks, When we come back.

And what I'm going to do, Because obviously the congregations are slightly different in the
evening from the morning. I'm going to do a series in the morning, And another series at
night, up until Christmas.

So, I hope God will honour that, And bless that ministry for us all. As I prepare it, and
preach it, and as we all receive it.

[38 : 38] So, I want you to have your books open at what I think is another amazing chapter in the
Bible. This opening chapter of this book of Peter.

I think outwith the Gospels. In my ministry of 35 years, I've preached more from Peter and
from Philippians than I have done from any other book in the Bible.

Because every time you go back to them, they are absolutely packed full of great biblical
truths, Explaining the Gospel, explaining the Lord Jesus Christ, And explaining what the
Lord Jesus Christ, through the ministry now of the Holy Spirit, Is expecting of His people.

And they can be, in the one hand, as the Gospel often is, as the Bible often is,
Challenging on one hand, and yet on the other hand, deeply encouraging.

And what this opening chapter is essentially about, as hopefully we are going to see, Is
about a call to biblical holiness.

[40 : 01] We can see that emphasized for us in verse 16 of this opening chapter. You shall be holy,
for I am holy. Now it's a sad reflection of our evangelical church, and indeed the church as
a whole, Today that it is very seldom that we come to church on the Lord's Day, And we
hear about the subject of holiness.

It's had a lot of bad press. Holiness. Holiness. I suppose, and I hesitate here, being in Burns country, And when we admit I'm not a fan of Burns, I know that might be sacrilege in these parts, But his depiction of Holy Willie, Gave a picture of holiness that was hard, harsh, angry, Hypocritical.

And in many ways, the church reacted to that by seeking to underplay any notions of holiness In the life of the believer.

Also, many of our liberal churches have portrayed holiness as something that's ethereal, Something for people whose heads were just in the clouds.

People who cared more about doctrine and about open lifestyle than they did about other people. Totally false understanding, but they portray it as that.

[41 : 52] And you get clever sayings like, He was so holy minded that he was no earthly use, Or so heavenly minded that he was no earthly use.

Well, let me tell you, in 36 years of ministry, I've never had a problem with people who were heavenly minded. They were the heart and soul of my congregations.

They were a lifeblood to me as an encouragement. And their life and an example, particularly of elderly people who lived that holy and godly lifestyle, Were an inspiration and a prayerful desire that one day God would refine me to that kind of person.

Indeed, all the problems in my life were people who were so earthly minded, There were no heavenly use. And so, the whole emphasis of holiness is something that I think it is useful to remind ourselves of.

And Peter does that, I think, quite obviously, simply and straightforwardly. And to help us just work our way through this important topic, I want to divide it up into three questions.

[43 : 28] First of all, what is the means towards biblical holiness? Secondly, what are the marks of biblical holiness? And thirdly, what is the motivation to biblical holiness?

The means, the marks, and the motivations of biblical holiness. Now, understanding the means of holiness is of the essence of importance.

Because right at the outset, we have to be clear that holiness does not save us. Holiness does not save us.

And Peter makes that very clear by giving us these opening 11 or 12 verses. By reminding us of what we must never forget.

That the means of biblical holiness is the saving work of God in our lives. And that grace and that saving into a new birth, back to Nicodemus.

[44 : 55] Into a living hope through the resurrection of the dead. That we have been saved to obedience in Christ by his blood.

And as we saw last time, that begins before the beginning of the world in God's electing work. Of calling for himself a people.

A salvation. That has been before the beginning of the world that will be revealed in the last times. The prophets prophesied about that grace.

They inquired about it. And it came in the saving death of the Lord Jesus Christ. And in the subsequent work of the Holy Spirit. Convicting us of our sin.

Assuring us of the truth of the cross. Of the promises of God that in Christ crucified. Our sins are forgiven. That the means to the new birth.

[46 : 04] Verse 3. Is that according to God's great mercy. He has caused us to be born again.

To a living hope. Through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Into an inheritance that is imperishable.

Undefined. Unfading. Kept in heaven for you. And the holiness. That work of sanctification that the Holy Spirit goes on to produce.

In those who have saving faith. We need to understand. Is part of one whole work of God. God doesn't save.

And then stop. He saves. He sanctifies. And the whole golden chain of salvation.

[47 : 05] Salvation. Sanctification. Justification. Mortification. Glorification. Is actually one complete act. Of God's gracious.

Redemption plan. For each of us who are born again. Who have our living hope. Through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. And just as an aside.

As we see God's whole saving plan. As one single work in different parts. So we need to understand too.

That the parts of Jesus saving activity. His coming. His obedience to death. His dying on the cross.

His resurrection. His exaltation into heaven. And the sending of the Holy Spirit. The sending of the Holy Spirit. They too are all one thing.

[48 : 07] They are all one saving activity. And we risk getting a lot of things wrong. If we do not see these as one complete work.

And if we divide them up. If we divide them up. And we want to isolate any one of these things from the other. Wrong. The Bible tells us that's wrong.

The Bible tells us that these things all go together. And so we need to begin then. By anchoring our understanding.

In the context of who God is. He is. As we saw last time. As we will see tonight. A saving God. A God who by grace.

Before the beginning of the world. Saves us. And so there is no. And here this is where. The Buddhist. Where the Muslim.

[49 : 08] Where even many of our Roman Catholic friends. Where they get it wrong. There is no means to holiness.

Outwith the saving work of the Lord Jesus Christ. On Calvary's cross. You cannot work at it. Outwith salvation work.

You cannot gain it. You cannot merit it. You cannot get it as a reward. It can only be produced. In the work of the redeemed man or woman or child.

And God then begins. Through that salvation. To produce. Holiness. And the link.

The link. We see again. Very clearly in the Bible. Is in verse 13. Under the word. Therefore. Therefore and buts.

[50 : 10] If we are to understand the New Testament. We need to work out. And watch. For the therefore. And the buts. Because they are key conclusions.

From the statement. That has been made. To what then God goes on to produce. Or do. Or change.

Or transform. And so we move from Peter. Having very clearly outlined us. That the means of holiness begins. In the new birth. In the new birth.

In the context of who God is. And of his saving work of Jesus Christ. On the cross. And because he has done that. He then goes on.

You will notice. To identify the marks. Of biblical holiness. Of holiness. And he identifies.

[51 : 08] Four specific areas. You will notice. In which. These marks. Of holiness. Are going to be evident.

If you are taking notes. There are four of them. The first of those is. What does holiness mean. In relation to God. What does my holiness mean.

And your holiness mean. In relation to God. What are the marks. Of my personal holiness. In relation to God.

What are the marks. Of my personal holiness. In relation to myself. And to yourself. What are the marks.

Thirdly. Of my personal holiness. In relation. To the world. To others. To those. To those who are. Outwith. The fellowship.

[52 : 10] And fourthly. He goes on. To identify. What are the marks. Of biblical holiness. In relation. To each other. To.

The relationship. That I have. With you. Or you. Or you. How does holiness. Work itself out. Because you see. That. That. That.

Ultimately. Is. Is. The testimony. That the world. Is going to look for. The testimony. Of. What difference. Your saving faith. Makes. Life. And. This is. The inconsistency. With. The liberal. Church. The liberal. Church. Don't. Understand. The liberal. Church. Don't. Understand. That.

[53 : 05] What the world. Wants. To see. When somebody. Says. I'm a believer. I follow. Jesus Christ. Christ. Has come. Into.

My life. The question. That the world. Is. What. Does that. Make. In. Your life. And.

For. Countless. Decades. When. I've. Been. Speaking. To. Young. People. Within.

My. Church. And. Some. Of. Some. Of. Some. Of. Some. Of.

Some. Of. I'll. Say. The. First. The. The. The. The. This.

[54 : 00] Iss. massive. That. You. have. Different. au excited. I tell. them. They're.

The. Best. Anything. They're. The. People. The. The. The. One.

The. They. The. And that you're different. So let's look at the detail of this.

And first of all then, the marks of biblical holiness, and this, don't panic about the time, this will take up the substance of what we're going to be looking at.

And it actually doesn't take long because it's pretty simple. The mark of biblical holiness in relation to God, you will notice, is obedience.

[54 : 58] Is obedience. So verse 13 begins, therefore, preparing your minds for action. Now that's a fairly loose translation.

It really means that the picture there in the Greek is about gathering up, rolling up your sleeves. Would be how we would describe it in Scotland.

It's talking about the work that begins. And notice the work of holiness begins with God, but in terms of us, begins in our minds.

Be sober-minded. Set your hope fully in the grace that has been given to you. And here it is now. What does biblical holiness mean in relation to God?

That you will be, verse 14, obedient children. Obedient children. Someone has once said that actually being a believer, being a Christian, is a relatively straightforward thing to do.

[56 : 07] It's about doing what you're told. And you see, this deals with the whole business of lordship salvation.

It tells us that when Jesus saves, we engage with him in a relationship as our saviour. But in addition to that, and going along with it, and part of the same thing, is that he also becomes our lord.

So John MacArthur is perfectly correct when he says that if you're truly redeemed and saved, you don't just rejoice in Christ being your saviour, but you become obedient to Christ as your lord.

And that is going to be the mark of biblical holiness in relation to God. That we do what we are told.

We bring ourselves under his lordship, under his authority, and under the rule of his word. And so his word exercises an authority on our lives as well.

[57 : 31] Because we are committed to obedience before we know what God might ask of us to do. You see, the test of true obedience, friends, comes at the point of choice.

The test of true biblical obedience comes at the point of choice. So when I have a choice to make, do I make it as an obedient servant of the Lord?

Or do I make it as an independent sinful human being? Am I acting as one under authority? Or one who is free to do whatever the dickens they like?

Obedient children. We live under authority. So holiness in relation to God is obedience. Holiness in relation to self, secondly, and we have already looked at this and mentioned it, is about self-control.

Prepare your minds for action. Be sober-minded. Bring a self-control.

[59 : 00] Now again, that's so contrary to the ways of the world. That talks about self-indulging.

And I'll please myself. I think it's true. I've never actually checked it. But I read somewhere that the prefix self is the most used prefix in the English language.

In other words, if you go to a dictionary, there will be more words under the prefix self than any other prefixed word. And that displays the human capacity to indulge self and to please self.

And to do whatever self wants. But if we are to be holy people, we will be marked by self-control.

We will be known for the people who bring a calm, an order, a balance, a demeanor into all our relationships, into our places of work.

[60 : 22] How do we witness in our work? By being self-controlled. By allowing God's Holy Spirit to so impregnate our lives that we show the very marks of Jesus.

In being calm, in being kindly, in being orderly, in being consistent. In being known as sober-minded.

Not being known for people who fly off the handle. Who are moody. Who you never know what they're going to be like when they turn up to work. There is a consistency.

There is an order in our minds. And it begins with the preparation of the mind. A mind that's focused on God. A mind that is focused on obedience.

Holiness in relation to God is marked by obedience. In relation to self is marked by self-control. And thirdly, holiness, you will notice, in relation to the world is marked by the fact that we will be one, both different and two, distinct.

[61 : 44] We will be one, different from the people that we once were. That goes back to what I was saying to these young people about what our parents, our unbelieving parents, are going to look for when we come in from some church meeting and we tell them that we've been converted.

What will they look for? That we are different. Verse 14, As obedient children, do not conform, no longer conform to the passions of your former ignorance.

You will be different. God is living in you. That is the mark of biblical conversion.

We spoke about that when we were looking at that notion of the where is the temple in that last chapter, penultimate chapter of Revelation. Where is the temple? It's no longer there. Because where is God's dwelling in New Testament Christianity?

Christianity. It is in our lives. And of course that's the most logical and consistent thing in the world. If at the beginning of a meeting we did not know the Lord and by the end of it God has miraculously through His grace come to dwell in our lives and we go home to tell our parents that.

[63 : 13] It is the most logical thing in the world for them to expect us to be different. Do not conform to the passions of your former ignorance.

And then the second thing, not only will we be different from the people that we once were, we will be different from those around us who do not know Jesus.

Verse 17 And if you call on Him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourself with fear throughout the time of your exile.

You are strangers in the world. We are here in exile.

We will be different. We are foreigners in this world. What is it the old hymn says?

[64 : 20] This world is not my home. I'm just passing through. And the world for all it will ridicule the fact that we're different.

They will poke at us. They will jide us. We will become the butt of their jokes. They will expect us to be different.

And you are people of this world. You live in this world. They're strangers. You will know that. You will know that if a believer publicly steps out of line all of a sudden the world is in shock and horror because they expect us to be different.

They expect us to be distinct. And fourthly and very briefly and it just goes almost in the passing in relation to God it is obedience in relation to self it is self-control.

In relation to the world we are different and distinct. And fourthly holiness in relation to the believing people is that we love one another. Verse 22 Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love love one another earnestly from a pure heart.

[65 : 53] From the very first days I went in to both my charges I said the most important thing that we will ever do together in relation to evangelism is learn to love each other to speak well of each other to think well of each other to support each other to believe each other's burdens that people will come into our midst who are unbelievers and see that we are genuinely together as a family of God believing belonging upholding sustaining and loving each other and that will minister to them in ways that you cannot possibly imagine and finally and only in a sentence the means the marks and what is the motivation to be

God's holy people and the answer is we have been bought at a great price this salvation that is the beginning of that golden chain of salvation did not come cheap it did not come cheap we are bought by the very blood of Christ and to use Peter's own words it was not with silver or gold nor with perishable things that you were purchased verse 19 but with the precious blood of Christ like that of a lamb without blemish or spot let us pray oh teach us what it means the great cost to you of your only begotten son the second person of the trinity who came to our world and was obedient to death even death on the cross and you lifted him to the highest place and gave him the place that is above all names and he came and he bled and died that we might have the blessing of sins forgiven and so heavenly father as your word has been proclaimed we pray that you will minister to our very hearts and lives to your glory through

Jesus Christ the Lord we ask this amen we close by listening to the hymn all hail the power of Jesus name hail the power of Jesus name let it does fall let it does fall before before the is you on on on on on on The glory is found in God's ways of snow, in God's ways of snow, in God's ways of snow.

The glory is found in God's ways .

O sinners have redeemed thy grace, the blood of saviour's blood, the blood of saviour's blood.

[70 : 48] O sinners have redeemed thy grace, the blood of saviour's blood, the blood of saviour's blood.

O sinners have redeemed thy grace, the blood of saviour's blood, the blood of saviour's blood.

O sinners have redeemed thy grace, the blood of saviour's blood. O sinners have redeemed thy grace, the blood of saviour's blood.

And now may the blessing of God Almighty, the one true living God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, rest and abide with each and every one of us this day and forevermore.

Amen.