

The First Letter of St Peter - *Encouraging words for our time.*

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Session Three: Be Holy for God is Holy

Recap

We have seen that Peter the apostle is writing to the suffering church in Northern Turkey to encourage them. It would appear he is heavily influenced by his time spent with Jesus. In this session we will look at how his view of God determines his teaching.

Warm up Exercise.

Take a blank sheet of paper and write down as many words as you can that describe God. ie. Complete the sentence: "God is....." Try and list more than 20 words.

Pray:

**Holy God,
Holy and Strong
Holy and Immortal
Have mercy on us.**

I was first introduced to this ancient prayer, The Trisagion - Thrice Holy, by a Russian Orthodox nun. It is the standard hymn in orthodox worship. Recently I have found it helpful to recite whilst lying awake at night or as an introduction to my daily devotions.

Recite this prayer often as you do the study.

Read: 1 Peter 1:13-2:3

Peter says we should be holy because God is holy. 1Peter 5:15

Where did he get this idea that God is Holy?

Peter was a Jew and familiar with "the Law and the Prophets" (The Old Testament).
See: Leviticus 19:2; Exodus 3:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Psalm 99:3,5&9 cf Revelation 4:8

Did Peter have an Isaiah 6 moment? Look back over the events of Peter's life with Jesus from session Two. (There are at least three.) See particularly Luke 5:1-11

Write down what you think it means for God to be Holy?

(Consider: We join with the Angels to sing Holy, Holy, Holy. But we never sing Love, Love, Love .)

Pray the Trisagion

From this week's passage, what does Peter want us **to do** to be Holy?

Would you agree with this statement? " when we suffer we can go one of two ways: give up and indulge our desires or strengthen our resolve and grow in holiness."

In your time of trial is there one thing you need to stop doing and one thing you should be doing?

In this passage Peter is placing an emphasis on the holiness of God, but is this really his overriding view of God? Or are there others or is there a more important underlying aspect of God that motivates him? Read the whole letter. List the words which Peter uses to describe God and Jesus. You should find Peter is very much a believer in the Trinity and that there is one other important attribute of God the Father and one phrase concerning Jesus.

Clue: I usually use the NIV but its translation 1 Peter 2:3 is misleading? Consider King James, or Youngs Literal Versions . Compare with 1 Peter 5:10 & Exodus 34:6, Jonah 4:2, Psalm 111:4 etc. Peter seems to have changed his mind regarding Jesus? See the incident in Matthew 16:21-23.

Finally compare Peter's list of the attributes of God with your own. What did you miss out? Does that say anything about the faith of the church today or yourself?

SING: Holy, Holy, Holy See words and music YouTube: <https://youtu.be/AgHrNNM23p8>

Next Session: Living Stones. A study with pictures!