

SET APART

THE LESSON: 1 PETER 1

Way back in the book of Genesis, God called a man named Abram (later to be renamed Abraham) to leave behind everything he knew and to follow after him. As we look through the Old Testament, we find this recurring theme of God calling and reminding his people that they are to be *different*: “You shall be holy to me, for I the Lord am holy and have separated you from the peoples that you should be mine” (Leviticus 20:26).

Do you remember the words of Jesus when he called his disciples? They, too, were called to leave everything behind and “follow”. The road was not going to be an easy one, in fact, Jesus said that following him would involve “taking up a cross”, but his disciples followed because they knew that it was better to travel a hard road with Jesus than to take any other path without him.

In each encounter, responding to the call to follow God requires something of us. It requires that we leave behind an allegiance to this world, and align ourselves with a holy pattern – God’s pattern. The relationship that he invites us into means taking on an identity and purpose characterized by holiness – by being set apart for God.

+++

In the first letter of St. Peter, the Apostle reiterates this call to his readers. He wants them to know that by God’s “great mercy” they have been given “a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading” (1:3-4). Yet this amazing gift has some important implications for how they live.

AT-HOME CHALLENGE

Each morning and evening, follow your own rule of prayer.

(IF YOU DON’T HAVE ONE, TRY SAYING THE MORNING AND EVENING PRAYERS FROM THE “FORMS OF PRAYER TO BE USED IN FAMILIES”, WHICH BEGINS ON PAGE 728 OF THE BCP. IF YOU DON’T HAVE A COPY, YOU CAN LOOK IT UP HERE: [HTTP://PRAYERBOOK.CA/RESOURCES/BCPONLINE/FAMILY-PRAYER.](http://PRAYERBOOK.CA/RESOURCES/BCPONLINE/FAMILY-PRAYER.))

Take a moment to read through this general thanksgiving from Morning Prayer:

Almighty God, Father of all mercies, we thine unworthy servants do give thee most humble and hearty thanks for all thy goodness and loving-kindness to us and to all men. We bless thee for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; But above all for thine inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ; For the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. And we beseech thee, give us that due sense of all thy mercies, that our hearts may be unfeignedly thankful, and that we show forth thy praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives; By giving up ourselves to thy service, and by walking before thee in holiness and righteousness all our days; Through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, world without end. Amen. (BCP PAGE 14)

Each day this week, take a moment to pray with the words of the General Thanksgiving. If it helps, rewrite the prayer in your own words and using “I” instead of “we”. (For example, “Almighty and merciful Father-God, I am an unworthy servant, but I give you sincere thanks for all of your loving generosity to me...”) Spend a bit of extra time meditating on the phrase “walking before thee in holiness and righteousness all our days”.

- AND/OR -

SET APART

Take some time to pray through this collect.

Almighty God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious Majesty, to judge both the quick and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, now and ever. Amen. (COLLECT FOR THE FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT, BCP PAGE 95)

1 PETER 1: **WHO WE ARE IS BECAUSE OF WHO HE IS**

¹³Therefore, 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. ¹⁴As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, ¹⁵but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, ¹⁶since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.” ¹⁷And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one’s deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile, ¹⁸knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, ¹⁹but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.