

# SET APART FOR HOLINESS

## 1 Peter 1:13-2:2

### OBJECTIVES

- To explain our calling to be holy.
- To define specific disciplines of holiness.

### OVERVIEW

I'd like to think I'm a runner, but since running indicates speed I think a more appropriate term is "jogger." I jog on a dirt path because the constant pounding on concrete hurts my knees. Yesterday it rained and the dirt path was soft, but it didn't look too muddy. Next to this dirt path is a concrete rain gutter that the water washed clean of any mud or gunk. When I started to jog I could feel it was muddier than it looked but I still thought it would be better than the concrete.

The mud built up on the soles of my shoes. This extra weight slowed me down and made my legs hurt. When I finished, I tracked the mud into my car. Even though I tried to wipe it off on the grass some mud also made its way into my house. It got on the carpet and I got into trouble with my wife.

Here's the point of my jogging story: The concrete rain gutter was clean and I could have run on it and kept my shoes, my car, and my house clean. It may have been a little tougher on my knees but I now know it would have been worth the pain.

I believe God wants us to "run" our Christian lives as far away from the "mud" as possible. Using this analogy, the dirt path represents the route of sin. At first glance, the way of sin can often look appealing and easy. But once you go that way you quickly find yourself deceived and discover that sin not only slows your life down, but it sticks with you in the form of negative consequences.

The Bible tells us that our world system lies in the lap of Satan (see 1 John 5:19). The evil one drives the world's way of thinking. He nurtures evil, cultivates it, motivates it, and gives it nourishment. Satan runs a system that operates at odds with God. This evil is designed to appeal to us and give us physical and fleshly pleasures—and to seduce us away from God. Basically, the philosophy of the world is at odds with God's philosophy. Peter knew this when he called Christians to be holy. God wants Christians to be set apart from the world and to resist being sucked in. Peter knew firsthand how subtle sin can be. He wants us to be set apart from the dirt of the world and to run our faith on God's concrete path.

*But now you must be holy in everything you do, just as God—who chose you to be his children—is holy (1 Peter 1:15 NLT).*

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### OUTLINE

This teaching outline is intended to inform students about their identity in Christ, and to challenge them to be on guard against the seduction of the world.

### You're Set Apart

#### 1. You have been made NEW!

*Don't lazily slip back into those old grooves of evil, doing just what you feel like doing. You didn't know 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 (1 Peter 1:14-15 MSG).*

Peter's challenge to be new takes on a strong meaning when he uses the word "holy." Although this is a scary word, it simply means to be "set apart." He's saying to set yourself apart from the ways of the world. Being made "new" brings with it some new lifestyle choices. Peter knew this new life was difficult so he gives us strong words in verse 13.

#### 2. Prepare yourself for a different LIFE!

*So roll up your sleeves, put your mind in gear, be totally ready to receive the gift that's coming when Jesus arrives (1 Peter 1:13 MSG).*

Peter is saying, "This isn't the time to take it easy and kick back." Peter bears down with his pen: Get serious. Roll up your sleeves. Put your mind in gear. These are commands! He knows that Satan has no empathy, no guilt, and no mercy when Christians give in to the world's ways. Being set apart takes discipline. The opposite of discipline is drifting. Drifting doesn't do anything to prepare you for the Christian life. Drifting is doing what you want to do and breeds apathy in your relationship with Christ. He wants you to be prepared and disciplined for a different life because . . .

#### 3. God PAID a PRICE for you!

*For you know that God paid a ransom to save you from the empty life you inherited from your ancestors. And the ransom he paid was not mere gold or silver. He paid for you with the precious lifeblood of Christ, the sinless, spotless Lamb of God (1 Peter 1:18-19 NLT).*

Peter wants Christians to know their value in being made new. God paid a price for you so that you can live a different life. Now begin acting like it!

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### DISCUSSION GUIDE

#### Open

- Which word best describes you: “disciple” or “drifter”? Why?
- Why should Christians be set apart from the world?
- Who is someone you know that is an example of holiness? In what ways is he or she set apart?
- In what ways do you see this person guarding himself/herself against Satan?

#### Dig In

**1. Transition into your study** by suggesting specific ways in which we need to discipline ourselves for the purpose of holiness. We are going to identify three specific actions to take to help us be set apart and disciplined.

a. Be disciplined with your REACTIONS.

*Now you can have sincere love for each other as brothers and sisters because you were cleansed from your sins when you accepted the truth of the Good News. So see to it that you really do love each other intensely with all your hearts (1 Peter 1:22 NLT).*

- When is it most difficult for you to respond to others in love?
- How can you become more disciplined in your reactions?

b. Be disciplined with your MOUTH.

*Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind (1 Peter 2:1 NIV).*

- What do you need to do to learn to control your tongue?

c. Be disciplined with your DESIRES.

*Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation . . . (1 Peter 2:2 NIV).*

- What do you need to do to become a person who hungers for God’s Word?

#### CLOSE

1. What are the biggest obstacles keeping you from developing these disciplines?

2. How can accountability to others help you to become more disciplined? Who can help hold you accountable?

3. Write a letter to the person you described as a model of holiness. Encourage that person and tell him or her that you are trying to be set apart.