

Discovering ways to live with integrity, being the same person on the inside and outside.



Living with integrity

## REVIEW

Recap on your experience of the challenge. Ask the following questions:

### How did it go? Was it helpful?

If you weren't able to try the challenge, explore the question:

### Where and how did you experience God last week?

## READ



### 1 Peter 1. 13-25 Chosen To Live a Holy Life

<sup>13</sup> Be alert and think straight. Put all your hope in how kind God will be to you when Jesus Christ appears. <sup>14</sup> Behave like obedient children. Don't let your lives be controlled by your desires, as they used to be. <sup>15</sup> Always live as God's holy people should, because God is the one who chose you, and he is holy.

<sup>16</sup> That's why the Scriptures say, "I am the holy God, and you must be holy too."

<sup>17</sup> You say that God is your Father, but God doesn't have favourites! He judges all people by what they do. So you must honour God while you live as strangers here on earth. <sup>18</sup> You

were rescued from the useless way of life that you learned from your ancestors. But you know that you were not rescued by such things as silver or gold that don't last forever. <sup>19</sup> You were rescued by the precious blood of Christ, that spotless and innocent lamb. <sup>20</sup> Christ was chosen even before the world was created, but because of you, he did not come until these last days. <sup>21</sup> And when he did come, it was to lead you to have faith in God, who raised him from death and honoured him in a glorious way. That's why you have put your faith and hope in God.

<sup>22</sup> You obeyed the truth, and your souls were made pure. Now you sincerely love each other. But you must keep on loving with all your heart. <sup>23</sup> Do this because God has given you new birth by his message that lives on forever.

<sup>24</sup> The Scriptures say, "Humans wither like grass, and their glory fades like wild flowers.

Grass dries up, and flowers fall to the ground.

<sup>25</sup> But what the Lord has said will stand forever."

Our good news to you is what the Lord has said.

Contemporary English Verse - CEV

### REFLECT

Take time to discuss what you've read and particularly the points that impacted you. Share your thoughts and listen carefully to one another. Use the questions to help you reflect.

Setting the scene:

- ▶ When you read the passage, think about it being written to a scattered group of Christians experiencing suffering and unfair treatment.
- ▶ Peter knows how easy it is to lose spiritual focus. The call to be 'alert and think straight' encourages Christians not to let

their minds get lazy and wander from Christ towards sin and worldly ways of thinking and acting.

- ▶ Being holy and authentic is about more than just avoiding sin; it's also about cultivating our delight in God and welcoming the Holy Spirit into every part of our lives. The promise that he will always be with us, helps us to live this new, authentic, holy life today.
- ▶ Peter genuinely believes that growth in holiness will lead to purity and a deeper love amongst Christians.

- ▶ What are the 'shockers' and 'blockers' for you in this passage?
- ▶ Discuss what it might mean to be 'holy'. Does the idea of living a holy life sound inviting?
- ▶ Christ led a holy, yet deeply attractive life – is it possible to be holy without a 'holier than thou' attitude? How?

### RESPOND

As you have read and reflected on the passage, it's now time to consider how to respond.

**Real lyfe challenge:** As a group, create a challenge to help you exercise integrity and authenticity this week.

**Challenge ideas:**  
If you struggle to come up with your own challenge then why not try one of the following...

#### 01 Tongue Tied

Each morning this week, ask the Holy Spirit to 'help me guard my words' (Ps 141.3). Make a commitment to think about the words you use to respond to situations and circumstances. It could be a conflict at home, or a complicated situation at work. Ask the Spirit to guide you with the right words, delivered in the right way, at the right time.

#### 02 Reflection

Spend some time with God this week, ask him to purify your heart and mind through the power of the Holy Spirit. Be willing to surrender to God. You may want to ask him questions such as: What words have I used that have hurt others? What actions or activities do I engage in that are unhelpful or block my relationship with you? What 'fruits' needs to grow in me, characteristics such as patience, peace, kindness and self-control? Holiness grows out of prayers like these.

#### 03 Service

We see holiness lived out in the life of Jesus time and time again as he constantly turns towards other people through acts of humility and service.

Take time each day this week to consider who or where God might want you to serve? What opportunities might arise where you can resist being the first, best or most important person? Are there situations at home, work or in everyday life where you can serve others this week? Are there times where you can allow others to be first. Pray for the grace to be able to lay aside pride and take the place of a servant. You may wish to reflect on Luke 14. 7 – 14 or Luke 9.46 – 48. A heart focused on others is a heart growing in holiness.

#### 04 Going Deeper

**Celebration Day** - see following page.

*'Train yourself in godliness, for, while physical training is of some value, godliness is valuable in every way, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.'* <sup>1</sup> Timothy 4:7b-8

### Don't Forget

1. To record your experience of the challenge so that you can accurately share it with your lyfe group when you next meet. You might like to text/tweet each other throughout the experience!
2. Consider posting your created challenge on the lyfe facebook site for others to view.

### More resources on 'Real Lyfe'

- **Listen to video interview with Roy Searle**
- **Read article** by Antony Billington on Holiness
- **Read 'Instant Expert' biographies on Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Desmond Tutu**
- **Recommended reading** – *The Rest of God: Restoring Your Soul* by Restoring Sabbath by Mark Buchanan

### GOING DEEPER: CELEBRATION DAY

Living an authentic life requires us to recognise the nature of our humanity. Part of this is our need for deep rest. That is what is at the heart of God's Sabbath commandment. Sabbath is God's command to rest for one day a week from all work. It's his gift and a antidote to fatigue. Sit down with some people and discuss how and when you can set aside one day for rest and recreation. Give yourself permission not to work (even housework or just 'checking your e-mail so it doesn't build up') and enjoy a day of rest. Think about what you could do – sleep, relax over a meal, hang out with friends or make a real coffee! Perhaps you could fast from technology and get away from your phone and laptop for a day. If you don't rest until everything is done you'll never stop!