



Session 1: Real lyfe introduction



Stepping into the Real lyfe stream...

Being a Christian is not simply about adopting a new private, internal system of beliefs. Our life with God is meant to impact the whole of our lives. This includes our identity, our relationships, the way we spend our money and time, the language we use and the choices and decisions we make. The Real lyfe stream explores the way our faith transforms every part of life, from the inside out. In this session we are invited us to find ways to exercise integrity and authenticity.

Previous session review

- Recap on your experience of the previous challenge. 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

Read the passage several times through, slowly and prayerfully. It might help to use your imagination to picture the scene. At the end of the text you will find helpful background information in our 'Setting the Scene' section.

As you read, look out for shockers and blockers.

Shockers – a phrase, word, image or something from the text that resonates, stands out or connects with you.

Blockers – something from the text that raises questions for you.

1 Peter 1.13-25

So then, have your minds ready for action. Keep alert and set your hope completely on the blessing which will be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed. Be obedient to God, and do not allow your lives to be shaped by those desires you had when you were still ignorant. Instead, be holy in all that you do, just as God who called you is holy. The scripture says, "Be holy because I am holy."

You call him Father, when you pray to God, who judges all people by the same standard, according to what each one has done; so then, spend the rest of your lives here on earth in reverence for him. For you know what was paid to set you free from the worthless manner of life handed down by your ancestors. It was not something that can be destroyed, such as silver or gold; it was the costly sacrifice of Christ, who was like a lamb without defect or flaw. He had been chosen by God before the creation of the world and was revealed in these last days for your sake. Through him you believe in God, who raised him from death and gave him glory; and so your faith and hope are fixed on God.

Now that by your obedience to the truth you have purified yourselves and have come to have a sincere love for other believers, love one another earnestly with all your heart. For through the living and eternal word of God you have been born again as the children of a parent who is immortal, not mortal. As the scripture says,

"All human beings are like grass,
and all their glory is like wild flowers.
The grass withers, and the flowers fall,
but the word of the Lord remains forever."

This word is the Good News that was proclaimed to you.

Setting the scene:

- This letter was written to a scattered group of Christians trying to work out how to live out their faith in a hostile environment.
- Peter knows how easy it is to lose spiritual focus. The call to be 'have your minds ready for action' encourages Christians not to let their minds get lazy and wander from Christ towards sinful 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 believes that growth in holiness will lead to purity and a deeper love amongst Christians.

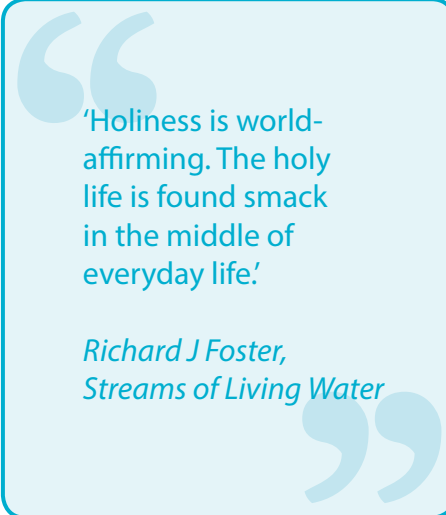
Reflect

After you have all had time to read the text, pause and be still to listen to God through the Scriptures.

Begin your reflection time by each naming your shockers and blockers. Listen carefully to each other, share your thoughts and reflect on this passage together.

You might also like to explore these questions:

- Q1.** Discuss what it might mean to be 'holy'. Does the idea of living a holy life sound inviting?
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- Q2.** Christ led a holy, yet deeply attractive life – is it possible to be holy without a 'holier than thou' attitude? How?



Respond

As a group, create a challenge to help you exercise integrity and authenticity this week, or choose one of the following ideas.

Challenge ideas:

1. Tongue Tied

Each morning this week, ask the Holy Spirit to help you 'guard your words' (Psalm 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.

2. Reflection

Schedule some time for quiet reflection this week. Ask God 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 holy characteristics need to develop in me, characteristics such as patience, peace, kindness and self-control? Holiness grows out of prayers like these.

3. 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, at 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.

Group Prayer

Commit to praying for each other this week. Pray for God's peace to be with you in your hearts, minds, homes and places you work. Pray that each will person will find a richer experience of God as you live holy and authentic lives.