

Master Teacher Key Study **HOLY, HOLY, HOLY**

(15–20 minutes, easy set-up)

Use this outline and any of the corresponding activities to share the Biblical Truth with students.

Intro: In order to be holy, we must understand from where holiness originates as well as the implications for those who strive to emulate the God of all holiness.

Description: We tend to think that holiness is something achieved on human effort, but Scripture is clear that we cannot achieve holiness in our sinful state. We must also realize that being holy is not a solitary moment. It is a journey that Christ fully expects His followers to take.

1. Being holy begins with a relationship with Jesus (1 Pet. 1:13).

Description: Peter reminds us that the ultimate hope and grace of believers is found in Christ and will come to full fruition when He returns. In the meantime, believers are to be vigilant in their obedience to Christ, with their minds always inclined toward Him. Jesus is the embodiment of holiness. By following Him intently, we become more and more like Him, allowing Him to make us holy. Apart from Him, we cannot begin to live holy lives.

Illustration: When we write papers or do other assignments, we have to properly give credit to the places from which we got our information. Because of copyright laws, we cannot pretend that someone else's work is our own. We cannot take credit for someone else's work. The same is true of holiness. We cannot take credit for the work that Christ is done; He alone is holy, and our life of holiness is based in Him alone.

Application: As Christians, we are set apart (holy) because of Jesus. Therefore, as we live in a fallen world and stand out due to this holiness, we must proclaim that the holiness that resides within us is actually Jesus' work in our lives. If we are claiming that Christ makes a difference in our lives, then we must reflect Christ in all that we do. We must remove our own agendas and follow Christ (see Luke 9:23–27). We must make disciples of all nations (see Matt. 28:19–20).

2. The holiness of Christ reveals our imperfections (1 Pet. 1:14–15).

Description: Part of being holy is recognizing sin. Peter explains to his audience that when God called them to follow Him, His holiness revealed their lives of sin. Because they were to be reflections of God's holiness, they were to relinquish their sinful behavior and allow Him to transform all of their behavior.

Illustration: When you're around someone who excels at a particular skill, it is natural to realize how insufficient you are in that area. For example, if most of us were to play basketball with LeBron James, we would quickly realize that compared to James' height of 6'8" and weight of 250 lbs, we are not equally matched. After playing with him, we would quickly realize how terrible we are at basketball when compared to this star. In an even greater way, when we see ourselves next to Jesus, we realize that we are incredibly sinful and must leave that life behind in order to follow Him.

Application: When we've been made holy by the death and resurrection of Christ, we must continue to realize the dangers of our old lives. Being in the presence of perfect Christ, our failures are naturally

revealed. However, we must rejoice that those failures no longer prevent us from knowing Him. Since we have been redeemed from the cost of our sins, we must not live like we used to live.

3. Holiness is a reflection of the holy God whom we follow (1 Pet. 1:16).

Description: Peter quotes God's command to His covenant people from Leviticus. In this context, God was instructing His people on how to be different from the world around them. Peter reiterates the importance of believers being different from the world. The behavior of God's people gives a picture of God to the world. Therefore, His followers must seek to imitate His holiness so that the world will see a holy reflection of God.

Illustration: Have you ever been in one of those carnival activities in which mirrors are set up to make you look tall, short, wide, or skinny? The mirrors give us reflections of ourselves, but the reflections aren't true to what we actually look like. Our responsibility as believers is to be a true reflection of the holiness of God, not a carnival-like reflection that distorts Him. We want the world to know Him for who He truly is and to see His holiness in our lives.

Application: When our lives were transformed by the work of the risen Christ on the cross, we became a people who were automatically different from this world. However, the process of following the way of Christ involves a consistent renewed commitment to being holy. When Jesus called his disciples, they became set apart, but they had to consistently choose to be different from the world. See Matthew 16:13–20 for a picture of Peter's choice to be holy.

Conclusion: Jesus is the embodiment of holiness. We cannot achieve holiness on our own. Therefore, through our redemption, holiness enters into our lives. Because our perfect Savior has entered into our lives, our imperfections are now no longer welcomed. In this process of following Christ (taking up our cross) we are becoming more holy (more like Jesus) every day. It is worth the cost.

Application: When we become a follower of Christ, we automatically become holy—set apart. Holiness is a description of a Christian. However, it's in our decision to daily be holy in which we truly begin to understand the way of Christ. Being holy is a lifestyle, and Scripture is clear that we should pursue it.