

Speaking to the soul



Set apart

You must be holy in everything you do, just as God who chose you is holy. For the Scriptures say, “You must be holy because I am holy. 1 Peter 1:15-16

I suspect that we all respond in much the same way to the command that we should live holy lives. We probably all feel a closeness to Isaiah who, as we saw on Day 41, went into the temple one day and was overwhelmed by the holiness of God (Isaiah 6). He responded with embarrassment, not only because he didn't feel remotely holy himself, but because he was conscious that he lived in a society that was anything but holy. But Isaiah learned that it was possible for him to be totally cleansed and, in that incredible encounter, he was set free from his sin and commissioned to become a spokesman for God.

The word holy means separate or set apart. God doesn't want our lives to be dragged down by the selfish and destructive influences of our society. He wants us to be set apart for him and, just as with Isaiah, that can only happen as we experience God's forgiveness. Without it, we will continue to be held back by our sin, guilt and failures. We won't be able to get on with living today because of the heavy weight of the past. But when we confess our sins and receive God's gift of forgiveness we can step forward into a new life characterised by love.

The danger with a word like holy is that we assume that it is reserved for very special people. We think of people like Mother Theresa or Dietrich Bonhoeffer who lived exceptional lives. But the truth is that you and I are called to a life of holiness too. And that is made possible through the miraculous gift of forgiveness.

QUESTION

What will it mean for you to be set apart for God today?

PRAYER

Loving God, I confess that I have often let you down in thought, word and action. I ask you to forgive my sins and help me to live a life set apart for you. Amen
blessing and freedom of living in obedience to you. Amen

Window - York Minster

