

How Does a Person Become Holy?

Intro:

1. **ILL: God & Adam/Eve in the Garden.** (Gen 3:8-9)
2. God wants fellowship with you so much that He would entice you with a covenant.
3. **Covenant** (בְּרִית) = a treaty, an agreement between 2 parties; coming from the verb “to cut”.
4. It's an agreement that involves promises each to the other.
5. Covenants were sealed by a pledge.
6. **ILL: Boaz' covenant with the next of kin for Ruth.** (Ruth 4:1-12)
7. When you make a covenant with God - you become His holy person!

I Peter 3:18-22

I. God's Part of the Covenant

- A. **Gen 9:1-17 - God's Covenant with Noah** - God promised multiplication of family, that all living things could be used for food & that a flood would never again destroy the earth.
- B. **Gen 12:1-3 - God's Covenant with Abraham** - God promised to bless Abraham's descendants & to make them His special people.
- C. **Ex 6:7 - God's Covenant with Moses** - God would be Israel's God & they would be His people.
- D. **v18 - God's Covenant with you.**
 1. The Lord's death on the cross needed to **happen only once** to benefit you.
 - a. This was in contrast to the Day of Atonement which had to happen every year.
 - b. **Rom 6:10 - The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God.**
 - c. **Heb 7:27** - Although sacrifices occurred daily, the Lord's death had to occur only once.
 - d. **Heb 9:28 - so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people.**
 - e. **Heb 10:10** - You were made holy by the offering of the body of Christ once & for all.
 2. The Lord's death on the cross was a sacrifice **for sins**.
 - a. You can't be good enough to earn God's salvation.
 - b. **I Cor 15:3 - Christ died for our sins.**
 - c. **Gal 1:4 - Lord Jesus gave himself for our sins.**
 3. The Lord's death on the cross was **a substitute** for you, **the righteous for the unrighteous**.
 - a. **I Jn 2:2 - He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.**
 - b. **Atoning Sacrifice** or expiation refers to the Mercy Seat where the blood of an animal was substituted for **the death** of the person who presented it. Remember: death is **the wages of sin!** (Rom 6:23).
 - c. Lord Jesus paid the price for your sins you couldn't pay.
 - d. He died in your place!
 4. The Lord's death on the cross was **to bring you** (προσάγω) to God.
 - a. This is a technical word in Classical Greek for an “Introducer”. He was the person who would introduce people to one another!
 - b. Lord Jesus is your “Introducer” to the Father!

II. Our Part of the Covenant

- A. Noah was to multiply his descendants on the earth (**Gen 9:1**).
- B. Abraham was to remain faithful to God & serve as a channel through which God's blessing could flow to the rest of the world (**Gen 12:3**).
- C. Moses & Israel were to obey the Law (**Ex 24:7**).
- D. You are to commit yourself to Jesus as your Lord.
 - 1. The Good Confession - **Rom 10:9-10** - That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.
 - 2. "Lord" was the favorite term His disciples used for Him.
 - 3. A Christian is a person who has surrendered to Jesus as Lord. Jesus is to call the shots in your life!
 - 4. A Christian is someone who has been redeemed to fellowship with God - to walk with Him **in the c o o l of the day**. God relishes your prayers.

III. The Pledge Sealing the Covenant

- A. With Noah - the pledge was the rainbow (**Gen 9:12-18**).
- B. With Abraham - the pledge was circumcision (**Gen 17:11**).
- C. With Moses - the pledge was the Ark of the Covenant & with Israel it would continue to be circumcision.
- D. **v21-22** - With you.
 - 1. The Holy Spirit is God's pledge to you - **II Cor 1:21-22** - Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.
 - 2. **Pledge** (ἐπερώτημα) = inquiry or demand.
 - a. It's a technical term used in business contracts in ancient society. What made a contract binding was the question, "Do you accept the terms of this contract & bind yourself to it?" The answer: "Yes".
 - b. This dialogue was called "the pledge".
 - 3. **Good Conscience** is the same phrase we found in **v16**.
 - 4. **Symbol** (ἀντίτυπος) = lit. "antitype", the impression made by a seal.
 - 5. **v21** - Christian baptism is your pledge to God - **Act 2:38** - Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
 - 6. **SO** - baptism is the pledge to orient your life to God's life as consistently as you can to have a clear moral conscience.
 - 7. Baptism symbolizes the water that saved Noah during the flood.
- E. So - the pledges of God's covenant with you are:
 - 1. The Holy Spirit is God's pledge to you that He will do for you what He promised - save you from your sin, give you an abundant life now & take you to heaven when you die.
 - 2. Baptism is your pledge to God that you will accept Him as Lord, live His lifestyle & remain faithful to Him.

God has this deal for you!
If you will make your pledge to Him
by being baptized
He will make His pledge to you
by indwelling you with
His Holy Spirit!