

Preacher's Pen points

Are You One of God's People?



Peter began his strengthening first epistle with a detailed description of who God's people are.

"Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who reside as aliens...who are chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, that you may obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood: May grace and peace be yours in fullest measure" (1 Pet. 1:1-2).

God's people are those selected by the Father.

God knew before the foundation of the world that He would redeem fallen men through the death of His Son on the cross. Peter affirms that Jesus was *"foreknown before the foundation of the world but has appeared in these last times"* for the salvation of man (1 Pet. 1:20). In keeping with His foreknowledge, God determined that only those who enter into an obedient relationship with Christ could be saved. They are "the elect" or His chosen ones.

God's people are those sanctified by the Spirit.

God's people are called to Him through the teaching of the Holy Spirit. When sinners respond to the gospel they are consecrated to God's service. This sanctification is indicated, not in an overwhelming emotional experience separate from the word of God, but rather in faith and obedience to the powerful life-changing gospel of Christ. The Holy Spirit sanctifies sinners through the truth (Jn. 17:17).

God's people are those sprinkled by the blood of Christ.

The Hebrew writer reminds us of the beginning of the old covenant when Moses *"sprinkled the book and the people saying 'This is the blood of the*

covenant which God commanded you' (Heb. 9:19-20). So in a similar way those who come to Christ enter into a covenant inaugurated by the shed blood of Christ (Mt. 26:28). By this blood, *"as of a lamb unblemished and spotless"*, they are redeemed from sin (1 Pet. 1:17), having their *"hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience"* and their *"bodies washed with pure water"* (Heb. 10:22).

God's people are those submissive to the commands of Jesus.

Those who believe that Jesus has died for their sins will gladly relinquish control of their lives to Him. They will repent of their sins and be baptized in Jesus' name (Ac. 2:38). In doing so, they will have *"purified their souls in obedience to the truth"*. They are the ones who have been *"born again...by the living and abiding word of God"* (1 Pet. 1:22-23).

God's people are those sojourning on earth.

Those who have obeyed the gospel are no longer a part of the devil's domain. Their citizenship is in heaven from which they look for their Savior (Phil. 3:20). And so they are *"aliens and strangers"* here on earth (1 Pet. 2:11). A true Christian is not living for this world but for the one to come.

Are you one of God's people?

If so, there resides in you a living hope through the resurrected Savior. There is an *"inheritance which is imperishable, undefiled, and that fades not away, reserved in heaven for you"* (1 Pet. 1:3-5). If not, let this be the day you become one of the Lord's people!
—Johnny Felker