

The Well of Living Water: *Part One*

Light + Life Group Conversation and Study Guide

Based on *Life-Giving Holiness* by Bishop Linda Adams
in Light + Life Magazine, February 2021



Part One: What is Holiness?

This is the first study guide in a series of four. Be sure to download [part two](#), [part three](#) and [part four](#).

“Therefore, with minds that are alert and fully sober, set your hope on the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at his coming. As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.” Since you call on a Father who judges each person’s work impartially, live out your time as foreigners here in reverent fear.”

(1 Peter 1:13–17)

Let’s begin with this question for discussion: What does it mean to be set apart to God?

Life-Giving Holiness is the first of five values from *The Free Methodist Way*. These values are not merely statements with which we might agree, but rather a **way** for us to live. With that in mind, let’s consider how we might live as holy people — set apart to God in all we do and say.

Bishop Linda Adams has written an article to guide us. Take time to read, re-read, ponder, and engage with each point.

Life-Giving Holiness

By Linda J. Adams

After a communion service at New Hope Church in Rochester, New York, a spunky 6-year-old girl made a beeline for the kitchen. As the leftover communion cups were being emptied, she asked to drink some of the juice. Given the go-ahead, she exclaimed, “I need all the holiness I can get!”

Her novel idea that a few ounces of grape juice would boost her holiness may not be much more of a misunderstanding than some adults’ ideas. Expressing her need in the language of holiness makes her seem like an old-fashioned Free Methodist, since we don’t often use the term anymore.

The doctrine of entire sanctification was a hill the first Free Methodists were willing to die on. Benjamin Titus (B.T.) Roberts, our principal founder, embodied John Wesley’s desire to recover New Testament Christianity, summarized by the mandate to “raise up a holy people.” Free Methodists determined to be holy. Like John and Charles Wesley, from whose theology and hymns they gained much of their inspiration, early Free Methodists were sometimes misunderstood, mocked and maligned for their insistence that God both expects and empowers an all-encompassing holiness in the life of the believer.

Have you ever felt like that 6-year-old who said, “I need all the holiness I can get!”? Why? What do you “run to” believing that it will make you more holy – more like Jesus?

Bishop Linda points out our “doctrine of entire sanctification.” Is this term new to you?

Whether on your own or in a group, grab your smart phone or computer and look up these three words and write their definitions:

1. Doctrine:
2. Entire:
3. Sanctification (see also Sanctity, Sanctus, Sanctified):

Now, write a longhand, expanded version of the “doctrine of entire sanctification” using the definitions. Write it here:

How does this definition change, enhance or clarify any thoughts you’ve had concerning holiness?

The Free Methodist Way begins with *Life-Giving Holiness* because to our forebears, a radical transformation of heart and mind resulting in fully loving God and neighbor was considered the birthright of the child of God. For us as a movement to abandon holiness as a defining value would be as foolish as

Esau throwing away his birthright for a bowl of stew (see Genesis 25:19–34). God wants 21st century Free Methodists to believe in and experience the Holy Spirit's presence that makes us more like Jesus from the inside out. To be made holy brings freedom and life. This is our message!

Consider Bishop Linda's words: radical – transformation – heart – mind – love – experience – Holy Spirit's presence – freedom – life. Which word(s) impact you most and why?

The legacy we've been handed as Free Methodists is that holiness was considered the "birthright of the child of God." What is a birthright and how do you connect this to Scriptural holiness?

Let's Pray:

Lord God, we want to be holy as You are holy. We pray that You would teach us as we look into Your Word. Guide us into truth and change us. We simply and humbly declare that we do not want to be people marked by sin and the ways of the world. We want Your holy ways to be our ways. Teach us Your ways.

In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.