

# Be Holy!

Being a Christian is wonderful. You are saved by grace, through faith, not by anything that you have done. God loved you so much that He sent His Son, Jesus, to die in your place so that your sins may be forgiven.

Jesus not only died for you, He was resurrected for you. He gives you new life. He gives you His righteousness, His spiritual authority, and His victory. And it's all free, there's nothing you can do to earn it, that's what makes being a Christian so great!

But too many people in this day and age want all of these benefits of being a Christian without actually being a Christian. Don't get me wrong, they want people to THINK they are a Christian, deep down they probably even want to BE a Christian, they just don't want to have to ACT like a Christian.

Last week I preached out of John 15 where Jesus reveals that He is the True Vine. He is the source of life and every good thing. As Christians, we simply need to do one thing.....abide (or remain) in the Vine. If we remain in Christ, He bears the good fruit, it's a passive act on the part of the branches (us). The Vine, bears the fruit, through the branches.

Basically, if we remain in Christ, with Him as our source for everything, He will use us to produce good fruit that lasts for His glory. There's nothing you have to do other than simply remain in Him. There should be no pressure on you, you only have to be obedient! It should be a liberating thought.

One of the main and most important results of obedience to Christ is HOLINESS.

I believe that a lack of holiness is the biggest issue in church today. I saw this secular survey recently.

If Jesus suddenly came back to earth today, would He approve or disapprove of modern Christianity?

- 9% said Jesus would approve
- 87% said Jesus would disapprove
- 4% said it Depends on which denomination of Christianity

I believe you can throw that 4% in with the 87%. A lack of unity is another major problem with today's believers, one that is contrary to the Word and one that Jesus would not approve of.

But I think this survey goes to show you that whether a believer or unbeliever, people recognize that Jesus would not approve of what most refer to as Christianity today. There is something wrong with what we know of as "modern Christianity"

Today's Christian and today's church lack holiness! A Christian is a person who exemplifies in his or her life the teachings of Christ.

All of the teachings of Christ teach holiness. Holiness is a core principle of Christianity. Holiness isn't something reserved for the pope or people in full time ministry. Holiness is for all believers to practice. Holiness simply means to be "set apart" or separate.

So today I want to take a look at holiness. Let's see how we can be set apart....

Turn to 1 Peter 1:13

PRAY

To put these verses into context, just before these verses Peter is talking about our salvation in Christ and our heavenly inheritance which is one that is incorruptible, undefiled, and does not fade away. So because of those....

**1 Peter 1:13-16 (NKJV)**

13 Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; 14 as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; 15 but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, 16 because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy."

This is what our response should be to our salvation and heavenly inheritance. Because of them, you are to gird up the loins of your mind. This is referring to the ancient practice of gathering one's robes when needing to move in a hurry.

Here it is used metaphorically and applied to one's thought process. To pull up all of the loose ends of your thinking, rejecting the hindrances of the world and focusing on our eternal inheritance.

Girding up our minds means being ready and able to recognize and reject the worldly influences around us.

More simply put, prepare your minds for action, think clearly.

v 13 then says be sober, meaning to be calm and collected in spirit, watchful, cautious, morally alert, have self control!

When you are sober minded, you have control of your priorities and you are not easily distracted or lured away by the things of this world. We are to be spiritually minded....

### **1 Corinthians 2:14-16 (NKJV)**

14 But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. 15 But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one. 16 For “who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him?” But we have the mind of Christ.

Think about all of the junk we deal with in this life. Think about how you deal with things, how you react to trials and conflict. Things catch us off guard and we react out of emotion because we are not doing what Peter instructs us to right here.

To have your mind prepared and ready you have to read and know the Word of God. And if you read and know the Word of God, you can be watchful, morally alert and exercise self control.

### **Romans 12:2a (NKJV)**

2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind

This is a description of holiness. You are not to be conformed to this world. The word “world” means this period of time or age. That means you are not to make your mind and character like this period of time or this age.

We as born again believers shouldn't think like or act like the world. We shouldn't act like or think like others do in this present day and time.

Holiness - being separate, or set apart, NOT the same as.....

Take kids for example, so many kids want to stand out and be different today.

Kids, you don't have to be like the others at school. You don't have to be the class clown. You don't have to be disrespectful to adults and authority. You don't have to be angry. You don't have to cuss, smoke, drink, do drugs, sleep around, (quite frankly you don't even need to be pursuing relationships if marriage is not in your sights).

Those things don't make you stand out. They make you just like everyone else. If you want to be a rebel, if you want to be different. Be holy! Separate yourself from what everyone else does.

Be the kids that respect their parents and leaders. Honor them whether they deserve it or not. Be the one to stand up for righteousness. Have godly values. Be a representative of Christ on the earth..... at all times!

If you do those things, you will stand out, you will be different!

That doesn't just go for kids either. Adults have a little rebel inside, they too often have a desire to stand out....

Adults.....ACT LIKE ADULTS! Lead by example. Don't do the very things you tell your kids not to do....

Don't show favoritism. Show love when others won't. Don't be gossipers and slanderers. Guard your lips. Watch what you say and do. When there is something you don't like, take it to Jesus. Don't just jump on facebook and start a rant tearing someone down. (I see more adults do this than kids) It doesn't make you different, it makes you just the same as everyone else....

What makes you different is making that choice to keep it to yourself. If you've just gotta get your two cents in, share it with Jesus! He's the one that can do something about it.

END RANT ;-)

In our attempt to be different, if Jesus is not the source that we are simply the same as everyone else. We are judgemental, egotistical, prideful, self seeking and self serving.

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Renewing your mind means to completely change for the better. You do that by having the mind of Christ (1 Cor 2:16)

Let's choose today to renew our minds. Let's think differently. Let's pursue holiness!

Back to 1 Peter 1:13 - rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

The fullness of grace is something that will be complete on that day when Jesus returns. We are to live for the future. We are to have our hope in His return.

### **1 Corinthians 15:19 (NKJV)**

19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable.

James tells us how this life is life a vapor, before you know it, it's over. We are to be pitied if that's all we look forward to. Eternity is forever. Our hope needs to be in spending it with Jesus!

### **1 Peter 1:14 (NKJV)**

14 as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance

That commands holiness. Over and over throughout the bible we are commanded to flee wickedness and immorality and instead to pursue what is righteous and good....to be holy!

Don't change your mind and character back to your former desires, they are forbidden! If you know Jesus, you are not ignorant anymore.

Before Christ you have a lack of knowledge regarding your ways.

He is the light, He exposes darkness.

**1 Peter 1:15-16 (NKJV)**

15 but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, 16 because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy."

We are to prepare our minds and recognize and reject the worldly influences around us.

We are to have control of our priorities and not be easily distracted or lured away by the things of this world.

We are to look to Christ. Hope for His coming.

We are to resist our old desires.

We are to be holy, set apart, unlike all others but like one....Jesus.

One of the main obstacles of holy living is this.....ignorance!

Ignorance is one of those "bad words", you know a word that SOUNDS so horrible. People don't like to use it and people are offended by it. Why is it you can call someone stupid or dumb and it's ok, it's accepted but if you say someone is ignorant, the gloves come off?

Ignorance is more often than not, a fitting and appropriate word when we use stupid or dumb. Ignorance simply means a lack of knowledge.

Many Christians are ignorant about holiness. We look at a word like holy and form our opinion of what it means. We make assumptions like we have to be perfect and completely without sin, thus making holiness unrealistic and impossible.

When we make holiness seem impossible it becomes unattainable, and we don't pursue it! And when we don't pursue it, we are in disobedience toward God because He says Be Holy!

Just to clear something up. If God says Be Holy, then you can be holy. God doesn't command you to do something that can't be done.

**1 Thessalonians 4:7 (NKJV)**

7 For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness.

Think about people you know. Can't you recognize traits and characteristics in them that they get from their mom or dad? Parents that is one more reason you need to be holy, that is what you want your kids to reflect, not your temper, sarcasm, etc.

It's the same for the Christian. If you are a child of God, there should be something about you that reflects your Father!

God said "Be holy, for I am holy." God is set apart, separate, there is none like Him.

**Jeremiah 10:6 (NKJV)**

6 Inasmuch as there is none like You, O Lord  
(You are great, and Your name is great in might),

**1 Chronicles 17:20 (NKJV)**

20 O Lord, there is none like You, nor is there any God besides You, according to all that we have heard with our ears.

God's holy nature is to be the motivation for Christian holiness!

Our God is unlike any other. There is none like Him. Just the same, you are called to be different. There isn't another person on this earth that you are to model yourself after. You realize that?

Often times people get hung up in trying to be like other people. You realize that God has created you for your own special purpose? You are unique. You have a destiny that is just for you. God has a plan and a purpose for your life that only you can fill.

We are certainly to be like God, but not like any other man or woman. We may resemble other men and women because they have influence in our lives. But if you let the Word influence you more than anyone else. You will look more like Jesus than anyone else.

You will be holy, as He is Holy!

**Hebrews 12:14 (NKJV)**

14 Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord:

I hope every one of us now will desire to see God. Seeing the Lord doesn't only mean meeting Him in person or face to face. But feeling His presence in every moment of our lives, when you are to make a decision, or even in your marriage. Seeing the Lord is being with His presence.

There are other passages pointing to the importance for a Christian to live a holy life. But the sad reality is that only few Christians are striving for holiness. And as a result, the church is no longer different from the world.

Evaluate your relationship with Jesus!  
Evaluate your relationship with your brothers and sisters in Christ!  
Evaluate how you deal with and relate with non-Christians!

It's time for Christians to live holy lifestyles. It's time as individuals and time as a church body.

### **2 Timothy 1:9 (NKJV)**

9 who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began,

That is God's purpose for you, you be set apart, holy, for His purpose, not your own...

### **1 Peter 2:9 (NKJV)**

9 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

The Hebrew word says priest comes from a root meaning either a "prince" or a "servant".

A believer is a "royal" priest, therefore a prince; and he is a holy priest, to serve God with a holy life. A prince indicates a high position; a servant is a lowly position. Divine grace has made us princes; that by the same grace God uses us to serve others.

We are holy priests - to worship God by our praise and our sacrificial service. As Peter puts it: "to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." Worship is the priest's first and most important responsibility.

We think we are to be priests for the Christian community, but the whole of the Christian community is to be priests for the world.

This is why our actions are so important. It goes with last week's message. Christ is the Vine, do we allow Him to produce fruit through us so the world will see Him in our lives?

### **Ephesians 4:22-24 (NKJV)**

22 that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, 23 and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

### **2 Corinthians 7:1 (NKJV)**

7 Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

**Romans 12:1 (NKJV)**

12 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

I'm tired of hypocrites. I've been one, you probably have too. Let's live this life of holiness that Jesus deserves.

Let's show people who HE is, not who WE are!