

## Living Like You Belong to God

### Lesson Five: Living Daily in the Light

*“But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be Ye Holy: For I Am Holy.” (1 Peter 1:15-16)*

As those who belong to God, we are called to the practice of holiness. The call, as we discussed last week, is based on the character of God Himself. This week we'll consider further what it looks like to practice holiness in our dealings with others.

A. **Observe:** Let's begin by looking at **1 Corinthians 3:16-17 and 6:19**.

#### Discussion:

- Within these verses of Scripture, the word *temple* is used four times. We learn that we are 1) the temple of God and 2) that the Spirit of God (Holy Spirit) dwells within us. **1 Corinthians 3:17** uses the word holy to describe the temple of God. As we think about that, we should realize that we are holy and should behave in a manner pleasing to God.

B. **Observe:** In these next two verses notice how Paul describes the two different churches to whom he was writing (**Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2**).

**Insight:** *Saint* means “one who is holy or set apart.” The term implies separation and devotion to the service of God.

#### Discussion:

- Paul is specifically addressing in these verses the church of God in Rome and the church in Corinth. He uses phrases like “To all who are beloved of God in Rome...” and “... to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus.”
- The people of the churches are also called saints. Paul uses the words “saints by calling and called to be saints.” Think about it. Do we consider ourselves saints and if so how does that or should that knowledge impact our daily lives?

C. **Observe:** The apostle John wrote a clear description of God's character and what that means for those who worship Him (**1 John 1:5-7**).

**Insight:** In the Bible, light is often a symbol of God and His holiness, while darkness represents evil and sin.

#### Discussion:

- In **verse 5**, John said that the message heard from God that he (John) is giving to the readers is that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. God is good, pure, holy,

righteous, reliable, and just. In Him no evil or sin dwells. It is not, nor will ever be, part of God's character.

- Secondly, we learn from these verses that if we say that we have fellowship (a relationship) with God and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But, if we walk in the Light as God Himself is the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His son cleanses us from all sin.
- How does Jesus' blood cleanse us from every sin? In Old Testament times, believers symbolically transferred their sins to an animal, which they then sacrificed. The animal died in their place to pay for their sin and allowed them to continue living in God's favor. God graciously forgave them because of their faith in Him, and they obeyed God's commands.
  - Those sacrifices anticipated the day when Christ would completely remove sin. Real cleansing from sin came with Jesus, the "Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (**John 1:29**).
  - Jesus did not die for His sins, He had none. He died for the sins of the world. It was a transaction that we will never fully understand, but by faith, we believe it. His death becomes our death—the payment for our sins.
  - Just as Christ rose from the grave, so we rise to a new life in fellowship with Him (**Romans 6:4**).

D. **Observe:** **John 8** records part of Jesus's public teaching in the temple area during the Feast of Tabernacles. At this time the large lamps were burning in remembrance of God's leading the Israelites out of the wilderness by a pillar of fire (**John 8:12**).

#### **Discussion:**

- Jesus identifies Himself as the "Light of the world," and those that follow Him will not walk in darkness, but will have the "Light of life." This does not mean that we will never sin, but that we don't make a lifestyle or practice sin.
- And when we do sin, we can confess, ask for forgiveness, and God will cleanse us from all unrighteousness (**1 John 1:9**). Believers should have a lifestyle of walking in the Light, not as those walking in darkness.

E. **Observe:** Let's look at a passage in which Paul addressed the believers in Ephesus who were learning how to live a holy lifestyle (**Ephesians 5:8-13**).

#### **Discussion:**

- Paul gives a contrast between the believer's former life in darkness and the new life as walking in the Light of the Lord. The "fruit" of being children of the light is goodness, righteousness, truth, and trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord (NASB).

- Paul gives instructions for believers to walk as children of Light, and not to participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but to expose them. As a result of light (of God's precepts) shining in a person's heart everything in that person is exposed.

F. **Observe:** In Jesus's teaching in the Sermon on the Mount, a recurring theme is the distinctiveness of the believer (**Matthew 5:43-48**).

### **Discussion:**

- In these verses Jesus is contrasting the life of non-believers and believers. Jesus is setting a standard that is above that of the natural man and that of the Law. Jesus wants His followers to love their enemies and pray for those that persecute them. He asks them to do this that they may overcome evil with good and be children of the Heavenly Father.
- According to **verse 48**, our goal as believers should be that we should be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect. The word perfect (Greek *Teleios*) as it relates to people means maturity. The Law and the Prophets find their perfect fulfillment in the perfection of the Father, which is what all Jesus' disciples are called to pursue.

### **Wrap It Up**

The practice of holiness leaves little room for personal comfort or even personal concern. Our practice of holiness is to be God-centered and people-focused. We are not to be distracted by selfish concerns. We are to be holy as He is holy.

Each aspect of the fruit of the Spirit is seen in relation to others. In fact, the only way to prove that holiness even exists in our lives is to live it out in relationships with others. The practice of holiness would be easy if it were not for the people we all have to interact with!

That prompts us to leave you with a challenge: close today by praying through the fruit of the Spirit, asking God to produce this fruit in your own life. But please understand, the moment you do this, He will begin a process in your life of causing you to die to your own self-centeredness and training you to practice holiness by putting Him first, all others second, and yourself a distant third.

Are you up to the challenge?

**Next Week's Lesson:** What Holiness Looks Like in Our Relationships

**Homework:** Read **1 Peter 2:18-25; Romans 12:19-21; 1 Peter 3:1-9**, and **Ephesians 5:22, 25**.

*"Let's be doers of the word and not hearers only deceiving our own selves."* (**James 1:22**)