

In Jesus Steps

Disciples for Life

Unit 2: Christian Leadership

How to positively influence the attitudes and actions of others for Jesus Christ.

Lesson 6

The Leader's Fire of Holiness

Day One

Holy is the LORD

Lesson 5, Leading by Example, was about modeling godly behavior. We can either be a good example of a Christ-follower or a bad one. The apostle Paul's letter to the Romans addresses what happens when we say one thing and do another (Romans 2:17–24). He is speaking specifically to the Jews who had God's law and so bragged about their relationship with Him yet dishonored Him by not keeping it. Paul's words not only applied to the Jews and Christians of his day, but they apply to all believers who do not practice what they profess.

Read Romans 2:24 and answer questions 1–2:

As it is written: "God's name is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you." Romans 2:24

Definition: The Greek word *blasphemeo* (βλασφημέω), translated *blaspheme* in English, means to speak against God, from the Greek word *blaspheme*, meaning to speak against, to slander, to insult. The word *blaspheme* is defined in English as treating God disrespectfully through words or actions.

1. Have you ever considered how your example may either honor God or dishonor Him? Yes No (Underline One)
2. Name one thing that you will do, or think about differently now that you know the seriousness of your example?

The next time we are tempted to engage in sinful behavior, we need to stop and think about what it means to blaspheme and disrespect God. When we consider how our actions affect God, we will be more diligent in overcoming temptation. Being a good example can be difficult, but it is possible for those who have been born again (John 3:1–21).

Sin was officially defeated at the cross of Christ. All believers' sins—past, present, and future—have been forgiven (1 Corinthians 15:3). We have been justified and declared righteous. Not only have we been delivered from the penalty of sin, but we are given the holy position of children of God.

According to theologian Norman Geisler, "There are three stages in the overall battle to defeat sin in the lives of God's children.

Justification (deliverance from the *penalty* of sin) is a past action for all believers, accomplished on the Cross.

Sanctification (deliverance from the *power* of sin) is a present and continuous process of believers becoming Christlike, accomplished by the Holy Spirit's power and presence.

Finally, *glorification* (deliverance from the *presence* of sin) will take place at Christ's return—the dawning of the eternal kingdom."¹

3. What are the three stages in the overall battle to defeat sin in the lives of God's children?

Accountability: Be prepared to share #1–3 with your team.

Christ's work on the cross—defeating sin—has made us holy in God's eyes (1 Corinthians 1:30; Colossians 1:22). Being holy in God's eyes should make us want to live holy lives. Holiness is one of God's attributes we studied in *Unit 1, Who Is God?, Lesson 5: God Is Holy*. Not only is God holy, but He also desires us to be holy.

Definitions: The Greek word *hagios* (ἅγιος) is translated *holy* in the English New Testament. In reference to God, it means that He is morally perfect and worthy of ultimate reverence. *Holy* is also defined as the quality of persons or things that can be brought near or into God's presence. Other definitions of *holy* are regarding: 1. Persons—*holy*, pure, consecrated and set apart to God 2. Faith—that equals an extraordinary relationship to God and 3. Angels and Peoples—dedicated to God's service. The Hebrew word *qodesh* (קֹדֶשׁ) translated *holy* in the Old Testament is defined as awe-inspiring, to be treated with caution, and kept from profane (disrespectful) use. *Holy* not only refers to God but to certain persons, priests, angels, and the Sabbath.

Read 1 Peter 1:15–16 and answer questions 4–6:

But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; ¹⁶for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy." 1 Peter 1:15–16 (quoted from Leviticus 11:45–46)

4. Why are believers called to be holy?

5. Believers are called to be holy in _____ they do (v. 15).

6. Consider your life and activities in relation to being holy in *all* that you do. How does your life and activities measure up?

Accountability: Be prepared to share #4–6 with your team.

¹ Dr. Norman Geisler, *Systematic Theology*, Volume vol. 3, *Sin Salvation* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2003), 173.

Christian leaders are especially called to serve, work, play, eat, drink, think, live, and exist in a *holy* state. It is not a part-time activity or pursuit. It is full-time, all the time.

Not only does God want us to be holy, but He has given us this desire in our hearts. Anyone called to serve the Lord Jesus has this longing to be like Him and take on His character. Holiness was God's plan from the very beginning.

A. Holiness—the Beginning

God made humanity in His image. Both male and female are made in God's likeness (Genesis 1:26–28). The first man and woman lived in a holy home. They lived in the Garden of Eden, a holy garden and real-life sanctuary in the presence of God (Genesis 3:8).

Adam and Eve were created to glorify God and reflect His holy image (Isaiah 43:7). Part of reflecting God's holy likeness was to perform consecrated work—to rule the earth while being fruitful and multiplying. This holy work included spiritual reproduction as well as physical. The reason God created people has not changed.

What changed was Adam and Eve's eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil when they were told not to. They were created good and without evil, but nevertheless, with their free wills they disobeyed God and brought sin into the world. Sin disrupted humanity's ability to glorify God, reflect His *holy* image, and engage in consecrated work. A fuller account of the fall of humanity (often simply called "the Fall") is detailed in *Unit 1, Lesson 1: God Is Good*.

God is good and did not give up on Adam and Eve. He had a plan to restore them and all future human beings to Himself. God prepared people for His plan of redemption and our return to holiness through the law and sacrificial system.

B. Holiness—the Bridge of Fire

God called Moses to act as a mediator between Himself and His chosen people, the Israelites. God gave Moses the commandments, law, and sacrificial system. Everything was designed to glorify God and cover the people's sins so they could reflect His holy image and engage in consecrated work. The law, sacrificial system, and temple opened up a way into God's presence.

Fire, among other functions in the Bible, is used as a symbol of God's presence, power, and holiness. For example, the burnt offerings were consumed by fire, turning away God's wrath from the people so they could be in a right and holy relationship with Him.

The fire on the altar had its origin from God and was to be kept burning continually (Leviticus 6:13, 9:24). God is also the origin of Christian leaders' holy fire whereby we are purified in Christ and gifted with His presence, power, and holiness. As leaders we should be burning with the fire of holiness—continuously. We should be living clean and pure lives dedicated to God.

Read Leviticus 11:44 and answer questions 7–8:

I am the LORD your God; consecrate yourselves and be holy, because I am holy. Do not make yourselves unclean by any creature that moves along the ground. Leviticus 11:44

7. Why did the LORD tell the Israelites to consecrate (set apart) themselves and be holy (v. 44a)?
8. What is meant by the word *clean* and *unclean* in our everyday language?

Physically speaking, if people are unclean, they are dirty. If unclean people wash away all the dirt, grime, and filth, they are clean. Spiritually, the concept of clean and unclean also refers to behaviors that are righteous versus (opposed to) those that are unrighteous. These behaviors originate in and are governed by the mind. Therefore, the mind with its attitudes and motivations can also be clean and unclean.

The concept of “cleanness” was basic to God’s plan for teaching and preserving holiness in His people. He established laws concerning their actions, their diet, and their hygiene. In Leviticus 11:29–33, God is saying that the Israelites are not to eat creatures that move or scamper on the ground like the weasel, the rat, or the lizard.

Although scholars have long debated the reasons behind the regulations, there is not a definitive (final) answer. Three possible reasons or a combination of these for God’s dietary and other laws for the Jewish nation are: 1. To avoid pagan practices. 2. To separate the Israelites in food, ethical, and religious matters. 3. To prevent disease and keep Israelites eating healthy. God may have used all of these reasons, but the overarching reason God used the law was to reveal the sinner’s need for cleanness.² God’s plan was for the law to be fulfilled and humanity purified.

C. Holiness—the Fulfillment

Read Mark 7:21–23 and answer the questions 9–11:

“For it is from within, out of a person's heart, that evil thoughts come—sexual immorality, theft, murder, ²adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. ²³All these evils come from inside and defile a person.” Mark 7:21–23

9. According to Jesus, what makes a person unclean?
10. Explain in your own words the point or concept that Jesus is teaching to His disciples?

² Trent C. Butler, editor, *Holman Bible Dictionary* (Nashville: Holman Bible Publishers, 1991), 268–269.

Definition: *Slander* is saying something false and damaging about another person that damages their reputation. Notice in Mark 7:21–23, *slander* is included with a long list of evil sins, including murder. In a sense *slander* is a type of murder—it is character assassination.

11. Jesus says that just having slanderous thoughts about someone makes us unclean. How will this change the way *you* think and talk about others?

Accountability: Be prepared to share #9–11 with your team.

Jesus was expanding the concept of cleanness to include a person's inward attitudes and motivations. He wants His disciples—then and now—to realize that following God's rules in a mechanical and thoughtless way does not make a person clean. Jesus was also laying the foundation for the New Covenant of grace, which is found in His work on the cross. He is the fulfillment of the law with its regulations and rules. In fact, Jesus Himself declared, "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them" (Matthew 5:17).

Jesus says that He came to fulfill the Law and the Prophets. In other words, Jesus' purpose was to establish the Scriptures, to embody them, and to fully accomplish all that was written. *Christ is the culmination of the law* (Romans 10:4. (Culmination in the sense of fulfilling the purpose or outcome). The predictions of the prophets concerning the Messiah would be realized in Jesus; the holy standard of the Law would be perfectly upheld by Christ, the strict requirements personally obeyed; and the ceremonial observances finally and fully satisfied."

As the website GotQuestions.org explains, "Jesus Christ fulfilled the Prophets in that, in His first coming alone, He fulfilled hundreds of prophecies concerning Himself (e.g., Matthew 1:22; 13:35; John 19:36; Luke 24:44). Jesus Christ fulfilled the Law in at least two ways: as a teacher and as a doer. He taught people to obey the Law (Matthew 22:35–40; Mark 1:44), and He obeyed the Law Himself (John 8:46; 1 Peter 2:22). In living a perfect life, Jesus fulfilled the moral laws; in His sacrificial death, Jesus fulfilled the ceremonial laws. Christ came not to destroy the old religious system but to build upon it; He came to finish the Old Covenant and establish the New.

"Jesus came not to destroy the Law and the Prophets but to fulfill them. In fact, the ceremonies, sacrifices, and other elements of the Old Covenant were *only a shadow of the good things that are coming—not the realities themselves* (Hebrews 10:1). The tabernacle and temple were *holy places made with hands*, but they were never meant to be permanent; they were but *copies of the true things* (Hebrews 9:24, ESV). The Law had a built-in expiration date, being filled as it was with *external regulations applying until the time of the new order* (Hebrews 9:10)."³

Therefore, the dietary laws no longer apply to believers, whether of Jewish or Gentile heritage. Everything God has made is good and now can be eaten without defilement (Acts 10:9–16). Cleanness or holiness comes through Jesus, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the

³ Got Questions, *What does it mean that Jesus fulfilled the law, but did not abolish it?*
<<https://www.gotquestions.org/abolish-fulfill-law.html>>(accessed 4/4/2022).

world. We now obey and follow Christ and His teachings or law (Galatians 6:2), being mindful of our thoughts and attitudes.

The Lamb of God takes away *all* sins from those who trust in Him, even our secret, sinful thoughts. His death on the cross makes our minds as well as our physical actions holy. In fulfilling the Law, Jesus became the sacrificial lamb and paid the debt we owe for our sins.

Under the Old Covenant, the sacrificial Law called for two lambs to be sacrificed each day for the continual atonement of sins (Exodus 29:38–39). These burnt offerings made the priests holy and provided ongoing grace for the Israelites (Exodus 29:44). This too Jesus fulfilled perfectly—He gives His disciples continual grace and makes us a holy priesthood (1 Peter 2:4–5).

In his book *The Book of Mysteries* Jonathan Cahn offers a powerful analogy concerning the original sacrificial law and the sacrifice of Jesus, “the Lamb of God” (John 1:36). The first of the two lambs was sacrificed at 9 in the morning—Jesus was nailed to the cross at 9 in the morning. The second sacrificial lamb was killed in the evening, which was 3 in the afternoon—Jesus gave up His spirit and died on the cross at 3 in the afternoon. During those six hours the Messiah took our place and paid our debt. The meaning is clear: Jesus is our continual, always and forever covering for every sin and every need.⁴

Holiness is important to God. His Son died to restore it and His Spirit, the *Holy Spirit*, works in believers to keep us that way (Galatians 5:16). About 700 years before Christ lived on the earth, God gave Isaiah a vision of His holiness and glory.

Read Isaiah 6:1–3 and answer questions 12–13:

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord, high and exalted, seated on a throne; and the train of his robe filled the temple. ²Above him were seraphim, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. ³And they were calling to one another: “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory.” Isaiah 6:1–3

12. Who did Isaiah see? (See also John 4:24, 12:41; Revelation 1:13)

Definitions: *Incarnation* is the act of God the Son taking on a sinless human nature⁵ in the person of Jesus Christ for the purpose of freeing human beings from sin. *Preincarnate* describes the time before Jesus took on human nature through his holy conception and birth.

⁴ Jonathan Cahn, *The Book of Mysteries* (Lake Mary, Florida: FrontLine, 2018), 49.

⁵ Some “have argued, particularly in the Roman Catholic Church, that the reason for the virgin birth was not that original sin was transmitted by the male rather than the female, but rather because God partly designed the virgin birth to interrupt the normal transmission of human nature from parents to their children. In the mystery of the incarnation, we don’t know exactly what process God used to make it so that Jesus was born without original sin. We do know, as the Scriptures teach us, that He was made like us in every respect except one; namely, He was without sin, and therefore without original sin (Hebrews 4:15).” *If Jesus was born of “the substance” of the Virgin Mary, how was He without original sin?* <<https://www.ligonier.org/learn/qas/if-jesus-was-born-of-the-substance-of-the-virgin-mary-how-was-he-without-original-sin>>(accessed 5/2/2022).

Isaiah had a vision of the preincarnate King of glory, Christ our Lord. That is, he saw Jesus before He took on flesh and walked the earth. How do we know Isaiah saw the preincarnate Christ? The apostle John writes that Isaiah saw Jesus' glory and spoke about Him (John 12:37–41). In his vision, Isaiah saw God and Christ as one—he makes no distinction between Father and Son.

Definition: *Seraph* is a heavenly or angelic being with human form and six wings. The plural, masculine noun is normally rendered *seraphim*. The *seraphim* seem to be positioned over God's throne for divine worship and used as agents of purification. *Seraphim* are only mentioned in the Book of Isaiah, chapter 6.

13. What were the seraphim calling out to one another?

God is holy and sacred. God is set apart on His heavenly throne in perfection. He casts a vision of divine brilliance and majesty. He is pure. He is morally excellent.

The seraphim emphasize the Lord's sacredness by repeating the word *holy* three times. God is holy and exalted as He sits upon His throne. He is the powerful, sovereign, Holy One over all angels, people, and creation. He designed the world and filled it with abundance and splendor.

Read Isaiah 6:4–8 and answer question 14–20:

At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke. ⁵“Woe to me!” I cried. “I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty.” ⁶Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. ⁷With it he touched my mouth and said, “See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for.” ⁸Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send? And who will go for us? And I said, “Here am I. Send me!” Isaiah 6:4–8

14. At the sound of the seraphim's voices of worship, what happened (v. 4)?

15. Write in your own words the reason Isaiah cried out in fear, “Woe to me!” (v. 5).

16. How did God take away Isaiah's sin and guilt (vv. 6–7)?

Isaiah was purified and made holy by a red, hot, coal from the altar. The prophet's sin was covered, and God's holy wrath was turned aside (Leviticus 16:11–13). God is righteous and just—sin must be punished.

17. If a burning coal was immediately placed on your lips or offending body part, how might your sinful actions change?

18. Right after Isaiah's guilt was taken away and his sin atoned for, what did he hear the Lord saying (v. 8a)?

19. What was Isaiah's reply (v. 8b)?

20. What is your reply to God's call?

Action Step

Read and consider the following verses from your Bible and answer question 21: Ephesians 1:4–7; Colossians 1:22–23; Hebrews 10:9–10, 13:11–12.

21. Are you holy? Yes No (Underline One)

22. Regarding your answer to question 21, why or why are you not holy?

Accountability: Be prepared to share #19–22 with your discipleship team.

—End Day One—

Day Two

Effort and Grace

Before you had completed the action step at the end of day one, had you considered your own holy state? It is part of the great mystery that was once hidden but is now openly proclaimed. The Son of God, the visible image of the invisible God, and creator of all things, died a sacrificial death on the cross so we could be reconciled to God. Not only are believers redeemed and adopted as God's children, but Christ's death and resurrection also makes us holy. Through Jesus Christ we are holy before God!

We are set apart from the world to live for God and derive all our enjoyment from Him. In this new holy state, we derive our pleasure in Christ alone, and in our service to Him. Through Jesus' sacrifice we are made holy in God's sight—we are spotless and blameless. Our conscience is cleansed, and we are free to draw near to God (Hebrews 10:19–22).

23. Read 1 Peter 1:18–19. How were you redeemed from your empty and unfilled way of life?

For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors,¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. 1 Peter 1:18–19

Read Colossians 1:22–23 and answer question 24–26:

But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation—²³if you continue in your faith, established and firm, and do not move from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant. Colossians 1:22–23 (compare Hebrews 10:19–22)

24. Why are you holy in God's sight (v. 22)?

25. If you have been reconciled by Christ's death, how does God see you (v. 22)?

We miss the incredible power of verse 22 in the English language. The Greek word *amomos* (ἄμωμος) that is translated “without blemish” is defined as the absence of defects in sacrificial animals. It is used metaphorically of Christ as God's perfect, sacrificial Lamb. Jesus' death makes believers holy and blameless in God's sight (Ephesians 1:4). Similarly, we have washed our robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb (Revelation 7:14)

The Greek word *anegkletos* (ἀνέγκλητος) that is translated “free from accusation” is defined as not having been called up or arraigned before a judge, hence free from reproach, blameless, not accused of having done anything wrong—even, held in high respect. We not only enter into a

personal relationship with God now, but on judgment day we will not be accused of any wrongdoing (1 Corinthians 1:8; Romans 8:33–34)

26. What is the condition for being holy, without blemish, and free from accusation in God's sight (v. 23)?

After writing the amazing news of our holy status, the apostle Paul introduces a conditional clause with the two-letter word "if." Recall from your English grammar lessons, this means that there is a requirement upon which the fulfillment depends. There are many promises of God that include an "if", which is a conditional clause.

For those of us who profess faith in Jesus Christ, we must continue in our faith. That is the condition for holiness—God requires that we continue to live in Christ and not to move away from Him. If we do not live in Christ and keep on sinning, we risk demonstrating that our faith is not genuine (1 John 2:19, 3:1–6).

Faith is not a one-time decision. It is an all-time decision. We repent and submit totally to the authority of Christ. Authentic faith seeks to know, love, and serve God. The faithful rely on His grace for salvation and holy living.

Relying on God's grace is an act of our will. As disciples we do not lose our freedom to choose. We still have our human or sinful nature, and evil adversaries will try to tempt us to sin (Colossians 3:1–5; 2 Corinthians 11:3). We are in a personal battle fighting against sin and putting to death the deeds of the flesh (Galatians 5:16–17). To help us in this battle, God has given us His Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:24–25).

Therefore, we need to use our free will and choose to live holy lives for Him. By faith we rely on the Holy Spirit to help us with all temptations. We are holy in Christ, and through the Spirit we can live holy lives. Born-again believers: *do not think of yourselves as sinners*. You *were* sinners—now you have been saved by grace. The biblical reality is that you are holy people, bought with the blood of Christ, and led by His Holy Spirit. It makes a difference how we view ourselves and how we will subsequently live our lives.

We are in the second phase of God's overall plan to defeat sin in His children. Recall, this is the *sanctification* (deliverance from the *power* of sin) phase. It is a continuous process for becoming more Christlike, led by the Holy Spirit's power and presence.

When we deliberately sin, we are refusing God's grace and quenching (suppressing) the Holy Spirit. We are willfully stepping out from under the cross and Jesus' sacrificial blood—the very blood that makes us holy (Hebrews 13:12). When we do sin the Holy Spirit, the agent of holiness, will convict us and move us to confess and repent (John 16:7–8). Our confession and repentance place these sins under the blood of Christ—we are forgiven—by faith.

Read Hebrews 12:14–15 and answer questions 27–28:

*Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.*¹⁵ *See to it that no one falls short of the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many.* Hebrews 12:14–15

27. Believers are commanded to make every effort to live how (v. 14a)?

28. Believers are also told to see to it that no one falls short of what (v. 15a)?

Believers are commanded to pursue, chase, and seek after holiness. This is the sanctification process of being delivered from the *power* of sin and becoming Christlike. We are commanded to strive for and practice holiness. Yet in the very next sentence the author of Hebrews says, *see to it that no one misses or falls short of the grace of God.*

Definition: *Grace* is God's divine power in action to undeserving people.

In the New Testament, the writers used the Greek word *charis* (χάρις) to convey God's divine power working through a person's life. It was also used specifically to express a believer's unmerited salvation in Christ. Previously there had not been a precise word to describe God's plan of salvation because it was unknown. The actual plan of salvation in Christ was hidden from humanity until the proper time when God revealed it (Romans 16:25–26; Ephesians 3:4–6).

Grace (*charis*) was a secular (not religious) word in use at the time. It had the “idea of a favor or kindness done to another or of a gift that brought pleasure to another. Viewed from the standpoint of the recipient (receiver), it was used to refer to the thankfulness felt for a gift or favor.”⁶ Authors of the New Testament have also used grace (*charis*) in its secular meanings. For example, we say grace (give thanks) before a meal (1 Corinthians 10:30).

The Hebrew word *chen* (חֵן) is closest to the Greek word *charis*. When speaking of God, it can mean His gift of redemption from enemies, troubles, and sins. Although there is not a particular word for grace in the Old Testament that conveys the same meaning as in the New Testament, God's grace, or favor, is revealed throughout Scripture. God is described as gracious. He is merciful and loving. He gives help in time of need. He shows favor to those who do not deserve it. He is steadfast in His promises. He continually delivered His people from their enemies and provided the sacrificial system for taking away sins. The Old Testament is not only a record of God's grace but a promise of His even greater grace which was to come through Jesus Christ.⁷

29. Read Galatians 3:3 and Titus 2:11–12 (shown below). How do you think pursuing holiness and accepting God's grace work together?

Are you so foolish? After beginning by means of the Spirit, are you now trying to finish by means of the flesh? Galatians 3:3

⁶ Butler, *Holman Bible Dictionary*, 573.

⁷ Ibid.

For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. ¹²It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age. Titus 2:11–12

The book of Hebrews is about Jesus, *the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of His being, sustaining all things by His powerful word* (Hebrews 1:3). Jesus, who is supreme and all sufficient, brought salvation to humanity according to the Father's plan. He makes people holy (Hebrews 2:11). In addition, because "he himself suffered when He was tempted, He is able to help those who are being tempted" (Hebrews 2:18).

The inspired author of Hebrews is saying: *take hold of Jesus*. Do not miss what He has done for us. He has made us holy by His blood and will continue to help us through all our temptations. We cannot be holy on our own—we must stay under His shed blood. In fact, if we seek righteousness in ourselves, we will only succeed in corrupting ourselves and others.

God did not take away our free will and our ability to sin. He expects Jesus' disciples to follow Him in pursuing godly lives. We have a duty to discipline our minds and bodies. But even in our pursuit of holiness, God works through us (grace) and helps us persevere each day.

30. How does *your* life demonstrate the right relationship between grace and personal effort?

Accountability: Be prepared to share your answers to questions 29–30 with your team.

Without the right relationship between grace and effort, we might become proud of our holiness. We might tend to look down on others who we deem to be easily tempted or just not as grounded as we are. This is known as spiritual pride. Knowing that it is Jesus alone who makes and keeps us holy should make us humble. Humility is a key attribute of a holy life.

Definition: *Humility* is knowing one's true position before God and attributing all talents and gifts to Him. *Humble* Christians are not concerned with pleasing themselves but with pleasing God and serving His people. Jesus is *the* model of a humble servant (Philippians 2:5–8).

31. Read James 4:6. How can you be assured of God working in your life?

But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: "God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble." James 4:6

32. Read 2 Corinthians 6:1. What does it mean "not to receive God's grace in vain?"

As God's co-workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain. 2 Corinthians 6:1
(Vain, in this context, means without results or to no purpose.)

—End Day Two—

Day Three

Fire of Fear

Jesus Christ's death on the cross for our sins is a free gift. Nevertheless, Paul wrote that we could receive this gift of grace and it would be of no use to us. How could that be? Although we *should* live for Christ, we can still live selfishly for ourselves (2 Corinthians 5:15)—ultimately proving to be an empty and fruitless life.

Action Step

33. Read from your Bible and meditate on Romans 6:1–14. How will you apply the truth of this Scripture to your life?

Accountability: Be prepared to share #33 with your team.

It is staggering to think that we have access into God's presence by the blood of Christ. We are talking about the all-powerful, all-knowing, Creator of the universe—the Holy One who is like no other. We have done nothing to deserve it—it was purely God's act of grace. We are even told to have *confidence* to draw near to God because our bodies have been washed with pure water and we are free from a guilty conscience (Hebrews 10:19–22).

This free access does not mean that we just saunter into God's presence, like He is one of us. He is not one of us and will never be one of us. Yes, He is our Father—our *heavenly* Father. God will always deserve our full reverence and veneration (honor).

34. Read Exodus 3:5–6. What was Moses' response when God revealed Himself (v. 6c)?

“Do not come any closer,” God said. “Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.”⁶ Then he said, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.” At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God. Exodus 3:5–6

Fire had caught Moses' attention (Exodus 3:1–3). He saw the burning bush and started walking toward it. He was curious but not afraid. Even when Moses was told to take off his sandals, he did not seem too disturbed. But as soon as God announced that He was the one true living God, Moses hid his face in fear.

Both Moses and the prophet Isaiah had visible manifestations of God that caused them to fear. God's visible manifestation, that is, His showing or revealing Himself to humanity is called a theophany. God appeared to people in a variety of ways in the Bible, but the greatest theophany

is found in the incarnation of Christ (John 1:18).⁸ Even the apostle John, who spent three years with Jesus, had a fearful reaction when He saw the risen Christ and glorified (Revelation 1:17).

Read Proverbs 9:10 and answer questions 35–36:

“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.” Proverbs 9:10

35. What is the beginning of wisdom?

36. What is understanding?

Definition: In both Exodus and Proverbs above, the Hebrew word for fear is *yare* (יָרֵא). It is used to express Moses' response to God at the burning bush and also the prescription for receiving wisdom. *Yare* means: 1. *fear*, be afraid, be afraid of 2. stand in awe of 3. *fear*, reverence, honor, such as for parents or things and 4. inspire reverence, godly *fear* and awe.

Definition: *Revival* refers to a specific period of spiritual renewal and holiness in the lives of Christians—they exhibit a healthy fear and reverence for God. *Revival* is derived from the word *revive*, which means to recover consciousness or full strength; bring somebody back to life.

J. I. Packer defined *revival* as “God's quickening visitation of His people, touching their hearts and deepening His work of grace in their lives.” When God touches the heart of a single believer it is called *renewal*. It is called *revival* when God quickens (revives or makes alive) the hearts of a group of believers. When God impacts larger segments of believers, even globally, it is called an *awakening*.⁹

Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758), of Puritan and Calvinist theology, is one of the best documented of all Americans of the eighteenth century. He was a contemporary of the English evangelist George Whitefield and one of the leaders of the Great Awakening of 1740–42.¹⁰

The Great Awakening was one of the most intense periods of spiritual fervor (passion) in American history. During this period the Holy Spirit convicted, changed, and inspired large numbers of believers. When believers are renewed, revived, or awakened, they become keenly interested in serving God and living a holy life. This combination allows the Spirit to work through them in order for others to hear and respond to the gospel.

God works through all kinds of people, even brilliant ones. Jonathan Edwards was of this latter persuasion—he was intelligent, curious, and in tune with nature. Even as a child he was intensely

⁸ James D. Hernando, *Dictionary of Hermeneutics* (Springfield: Gospel Publishing House, 1995), 168.

⁹ <<http://www.sbts.edu/resources/files/2009/09/revival-handout.pdf>>(accessed 5/15/2008).

¹⁰ Helen Hosier, *Jonathan Edwards, The Great Awakener* (Uhrichsville, Ohio: Barbour Publishing, 1959). The next 11 paragraphs about Jonathan Edwards are gleaned through this resource.

aware of God's creation. He was filled with wonder at the strength of rocks, the color of rainbows, and the sweet taste of honey.

Highly intelligent and curious, Edwards was also fascinated with spiders and their webs. He would spend long hours in the woods observing insects and classifying them. Succeeding generations in the scientific community would wonder at the boy's notes and conclusions, considering his lack of both training and equipment.

In addition to intelligence, God also blessed Edwards with a father who taught him with diligence and patience. His father, a pastor, was also strict and demanding because he wanted children "to excel in the things of the Lord." As we discussed in *Unit 1, Lesson 3: God Is Love*, God has a plan for those born in helpful families—as well as those who are not. If you did not have a caring family, be encouraged, God wants to be your family—He loves you.

At age 13, with a great passion for Jesus and a desire to see revival, Edwards left home for the Collegiate School, later to become the prestigious Yale College. He was a well-disciplined student absorbed in his reading and studies. He was a loner for the most part as he tackled philosophical¹¹ questions and sought answers.

At age 18 Edwards was granted a degree and a license to preach. During his first pastorate in New York, he wrote, "I had fervent longings of soul after God and Christ, and after more holiness wherein my heart seemed to be full, and ready to break; which often brought to mind the words of the psalmist, 'My soul breaks for the longing that it has . . .'" (Psalm 119:20; author of this lesson translated the old English words into modern language.)

Edwards married at 23 and after a time became pastor of Northampton Church in Massachusetts. He would often take long horseback rides listening to God and writing down notes for his sermons. At times during those sermons he spoke of the terrible wrath of God and the urgency of personal salvation, but often he spoke of God's love and the virtues of everyday holiness.

Piety (devotion to God) was an important topic for Edwards. He was alarmed at the lack of spiritual zeal among his fellow Puritans. They seemed more interested in material comforts and keeping up outward appearances than desiring to please God.

Under Edwards' preaching, God caused the first revival in 1734, which lasted a couple of years and spread to neighboring communities. By spring of 1735, Edwards recorded "three hundred souls" had come to Christ. In thinking about these three hundred, he compared the effects of true salvation to the difference between making a rational statement that honey is sweet and actually experiencing its sweetness.

The first revival ended, and the area seemed to relapse or backslide into its previous state. But in 1740 George Whitefield arrived in the United States from London signaling the Great Awakening. Humbly, Jonathan Edwards wrote Whitefield a gracious letter, extending an invitation for him to preach at the Northampton church.

¹¹ Philosophy is study of nature, reality, ethics, logic.

Whitefield, fiery and dramatic, gave four sermons without notes. Although his style was the opposite of Edward's, who read his sermons, God used both men in reviving His people. The lesson here is to be yourself. God created you in a unique way. Allow God to work through *your* personality and style. Live the life *you* were meant to live. Both men were effective, even though their approaches were different.

Edwards was invited to preach in Enfield, Massachusetts on July 8, 1741, where he delivered his famous sermon entitled "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God." Although this sermon earned him the reputation of a *fire and brimstone*¹² preacher, the truth is Edwards contrasted God's wrath against sin with His loving provision for salvation.

37. How did Edwards' alarm for his fellow Puritans lack of spiritual zeal compare to *your* concern for your fellow Christians today?

38. How can *you* develop passion like Edward for renewal, revival, and a great awakening?

Accountability: Be prepared to share #37–38 with your team.

The only way sinners can stay out of the hands of an angry God is through the blood of Christ. We are judged holy and not sinful by a just and righteous God—we are welcomed into His presence. But even in the blood of Jesus, we are still in awe of a holy God!

Awe is respect combined with fear or wonder. Awe is the right response to a holy God. We are to both fear and reverence God. As we grow in our love relationship with God, our fear changes from debilitating (incapacitating) fright to enabling fear. In other words, believers are enabled to serve God in holy living.

During revival when God makes His presence known, people's reactions are similar to Moses hiding his face and Isaiah crying out "Woe is me!" Their tears and fear are just as genuine. People experiencing revival may not *see* God, but He definitely makes His presence known.

God wants His leaders to recognize His holiness. In fact, the fire of God's holiness should ignite our hearts for purity and piety. Both Moses and Isaiah caught the spark of holiness and dedicated their lives to serving God in righteousness.

39. Why—or why not—have you caught the spark of God's holiness?

40. Why do you think Moses and Isaiah taught about God's holiness?

¹² The term "fire and brimstone preacher" refers to preaching the torments of hell for sinners. Brimstone is a burning rock, such as sulfur, and is described as the judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah in Abraham's day (Genesis 19:24 KJV, NKJV).

Accountability: Be prepared to share your answers to #39–40 with your team.

Moses and Isaiah taught the Israelites not only verbally about God's holiness, but they also wrote their lessons down for future generations. The Holy Spirit inspired both Moses and Isaiah to record the lessons about God's holiness in the Bible. Moses wrote the first five books of the Bible, Genesis–Deuteronomy, and Isaiah authored the book of Isaiah .

41. Read Deuteronomy 6:25. What was to be the Israelites' righteousness?

And if we are careful to obey all this law before the LORD our God, as he has commanded us, that will be our righteousness. Deuteronomy 6:25

Edwards knew that our righteousness and holiness now come through the Lord Jesus, and not through the law. He preached this good news and called people to trust Jesus as Lord and Savior. He was convicted that his usefulness to God's kingdom was related to the condition of his inner life. He spent a lot of time with God in prayer, solitude, meditation, and Bible study.¹³

Edwards taught there must be a new attitude of the heart toward God and a desire for divine things. Men and women must be engaged with God by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit to produce the fruit of love, humility, and kindness. His sermons on this topic have been preserved in his *Treatise Concerning Religious Affections* (1746). It was also written in response to an exaggerated display of emotions in some people that he deemed were not true signs of salvation.

As the revival ended, Jonathan sought a new holiness for the church because he feared the church and the world would blend together. Two areas were controversial. First, he believed full church membership should be restricted to only those who make a profession of faith and give evidence of their salvation. Second, the Lord's Supper should be for believers only.

Some members of the congregation did not agree with Edwards and eventually voted him out as pastor. Both he and his wife, Sarah, acknowledged the providence of God and sought His will for their future. After much prayer they accepted a missionary post among the Native Americans in the United States. He had a heart for missions and had prayed diligently for the advancement of the gospel among this people group.

Edwards was concerned for their spiritual welfare and worked diligently on their behalf. God blessed his work and made it fruitful. Seven years after his work among the Native Americans began, he contracted a secondary fever from a smallpox vaccine and died at age 54.

Jonathan Edwards' life and teachings were based not on the law but on Jesus Christ. He preached holiness for Jesus' sake and for the sake of the people he served. Edwards desired a people set apart by and for Christ so that the righteousness *He* brings would be evident to all.

¹³ Hosier, *Jonathan Edwards, The Great Awakener*. The next six paragraphs about Jonathan Edwards are gleaned through this resource.

42. Do you recall Romans 10:4 from lesson 1? Read it once again below. How do you, or anyone else, get righteousness?

Christ is the culmination of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes. Romans 10:4

Although we do not follow rules and regulations to receive righteousness, we do follow the Lord Jesus. He is our righteousness, and He expects obedience. For example, He taught us through the Holy Scriptures to fear God (Luke 12:4–9).

Definition: The Greek word *phobeomai* (φοβέομαι) is translated *fear* in Luke 12:5. It also denotes being afraid of; being afraid (to do something); worshipping and reverencing (God) and respecting others. The Greek word captures the same meaning as the Hebrew word for *fear* we looked at earlier in this day's lesson. Christians are admonished to fear and reverence God.

43. Read Hebrews 10:29. How do you think God views Christians who deliberately keep on sinning and do not care about their purity?

How much more severely do you think someone deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified them, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace? Hebrews 10:29

Read Acts 9:31 and answer questions 44–47:

Then the church throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria enjoyed a time of peace and was strengthened. Living in the fear of the Lord and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it increased in numbers. Acts 9:31

44. Was the early church living in the fear of the Lord? Yes No (Underline One)

45. Was the early church increasing in disciples? Yes No (Underline One)

46. How are *you* living in the fear the Lord, and being encouraged by the Holy Spirit?

47. How are you encouraging believers to live in the fear of the Lord?

Accountability: Be prepared to share #43–47 with your team.

Action Step

Recall in Unit 1, Lesson 2: *God Is Mercy*, we introduced the subject of holy tension. This means that although it *appears* there are two opposing views, they are kept in balance by God. We need to ask God to show us how to embrace views that seem incompatible, even though we may not fully understand them. A Christian leader must learn to accept holy tension, knowing God's Word is always true.

48. Read 1 John 4:18 and 1 Peter 2:17. How does the teaching “no fear in love” fit within the context of a holy God who is to be “feared” (1 Peter 2:17). Reference other verses to make your case or argument.

There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. 1 John 4:18

Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the emperor.
1 Peter 2:17

Accountability: Be prepared to share #48 with your team.

There is also a holy tension between holiness and sin. We *are* holy and yet we *do* sin. The three stages of overcoming sin were addressed on *day one*. Believers are legally holy in God's eyes because of Christ's sacrifice on the cross. We are free from the penalty of God's wrath and hell.

However, we still have a human or sin nature, and we must overcome the temptation of sin through the power of the Holy Spirit. It is possible to overcome sin because Scripture teaches that believers have been set free from sin.

For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—⁷because anyone who has died has been set free from sin. Romans 6:6–7

Jesus does not wink at sin. He never said, *Oh, it's just your human nature, don't worry about it.* He took it very seriously; He died to set us free from sin. Sin and therefore, holiness, are serious business in God's kingdom. Although we should not be critical and judgmental, neither should we slough off our sins or anyone else's as common mistakes—*It's okay, we all do it.*

—End Day Three—

Day Four
The Struggle

The higher the call to Christian leadership, the higher the call to embrace holiness. The higher the call to embrace holiness, the harder we must discipline ourselves to root out the evil in our lives. We, however, are not on our own. God is always working in our lives, and His grace is sufficient (2 Corinthians 12:9).

Holiness is elusive for many Christians. Either we do not understand the call to be set apart, do not recognize the Spirit's sanctifying power, or we selfishly choose to escape or avoid it. As disciples, we are called to lead pure lives and to lovingly teach, explain, and model holiness to others.

Now purity does not come easily for anyone, especially Christian leaders. Satan attacks and tempts God's righteous followers in various ways (for example, Job 1–2; Luke 22:31). God even permitted Satan to tempt Jesus (Matthew 4:1-11) during Christ's early days of ministry. We will look more at Satan and how to overcome his tactics in lesson 15, *Spiritual Warfare*. But for now, we are focusing on our responsibility in living pure lives. For when you and I stand before God (1 Peter 1:17–19), you and I alone will be held accountable for how we have lived our lives in His grace. The truth is: the actions of the devil are not an excuse for sloppy and impure living.

Read Hebrews 12:4 and answer questions 49–50:

In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.
Hebrews 12:4

49. Do Christians struggle against sin? Yes No (Underline One)

Yes, Christians struggle against sin. The Bible says *in* your struggle, not *if* you struggle. All Christians have to fight back against some kind of sin. Weaknesses vary from person to person, but everyone will have to resist with great effort the extreme desire of self. The self is a hungry and insatiable (greedy) tyrant.

50. How stringently (rigorously) should you fight back against sin in your life?

By saying “shedding your blood,” the author of Hebrews is saying that we are to resist sin to the point of death, if necessary. Remember that believers at this time were being severely persecuted and life was difficult. They were told not to give in to the worldly way of life but to fight back, even to death.

Their leadership model and ours, the Lord Jesus, fought back against sin to death. His struggle, with tears and blood in the garden of Gethsemane was real (Matthew 26:38–39). Jesus, the eternal victor, won the fight and died on the cross rather than turn from His sacred responsibility.

As leaders and disciples, we must remember we have not lost the inclination to sin and how much of a struggle it can be. We will not only be fighting our own battles with sin but helping others to fight theirs. Satan does not like this.

Knowing the truth of Scripture will keep us and others from feeling fatally flawed, wondering “what is wrong with me?”

After we are born again in Christ, we are a new creation. Our sins are forgiven, and we have God's Spirit to lead us in all righteousness. We clearly have the ability to do what is right (Romans 6:11–14) but we can sin (1 John 1:8).

As a new creation, we continue life with our human nature and free will. We still have the ability to choose our thoughts and actions. We can even override the nudging and prompting of the Holy Spirit. Why would we even think of doing such a thing? After all, we *are* holy.

First, we have Satan and his followers prowling around looking for someone to devour (1 Peter 5:8), all Christ followers, and especially those who lead. Both Satan and his followers are masters at making evil choices look good. *Second*, our human nature will always be tempted to put itself above others. We may always struggle against making our own comfort and satisfaction our primary consideration. *Third*, we continue to live in a fallen and corrupted world. Sin is everywhere and affects us in subtle and not so subtle ways.

The Holy Spirit, who lives within believers, helps us resist temptation, even as He guided Jesus when Satan tempted Him after forty days without food. (Matthew 4:1–2). Jesus responded by quoting the truths of Scripture (vv. 4, 7, 10). We need to allow the Spirit and the Scriptures to take over and work through us. Through the Spirit, given by Jesus (John 16:7, 13–15), we can conquer the temptations to sin. Once we are saved, we begin the process of sanctification, becoming more like Jesus.

Sanctification means growing in holiness and purity (2 Corinthians 7:1; 1 Thessalonians 4:3–8). *We become more and more like Christ, taking on the very character of God.* This is our goal and ultimate holiness—conformity to Christ (1 John 3:1–3). We become the image of the heavenly man and not the earthly one (1 Corinthians 15:49–54). Our citizenship is in heaven, and when this world ends, we will receive eternal life and a glorified body like Jesus (2 Corinthians 5:1–5; Philippians 3:20–21).

Read 1 Peter 2:4–5 and answer questions 51–52:

As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him—⁵you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 1 Peter 2:4–5 (“Spiritual” means having no physical substance.)

Definition: “Giving a *sacrifice* involves permanently giving something that has value to the giver, and therefore involves giving up something that most people would rather keep for themselves. A *sacrifice* is given by a lesser being (man) to a greater being (God) as a form of

submission and worship. Animals given for *sacrifice* in ancient Israel had to be 'without blemish,' and were some of the finest animals the farmer owned (Exodus 12:5; Leviticus 1:3)."¹⁴

51. What spiritual sacrifices will you offer to God through Jesus Christ?

52. What are some ways that you will help others become a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ?

Accountability: Be prepared to share #51–52 with your team.

The apostle Peter told us in 1 Peter 2:2 that we need to grow up in our salvation. In order to grow up in our salvation, Christians must choose habits for holy living. The way to pure living is in the Bible. As a leader, encouraging others to be engaged with God's Word is essential.

Growing up means starting on the small things (Matthew 25:21). If we do not handle the minor things, we will certainly not be able to tackle the larger issues that come our way. For example, I was sharing the salvation message with someone who said he loved Jesus. In fact, he said, "I would die for Jesus."

However, upon further conversation, he admitted that he had never surrendered his life to Christ. I said, "You can give your life to Jesus right now." However, he said, "No, I don't want to pray and make that commitment."

When I asked him why he did not want to confess Jesus as Savior and Lord, he admitted he was living with his girlfriend. He knew it was wrong but said he was not willing to give up his living arrangements. If this sinner would not give up his sexual activity for Jesus, he certainly would not die for Jesus.

Action Step

Consider some of your personal habits such as eating, drinking, reading, daydreaming, looking, listening, and watching secular entertainment programs. Are they glorifying to God? Also consider how you view and think about other people. Are your thoughts critical or unkind regarding others? Or do you look at them as individuals made in the image of God and ones whom He loves. Pray and ask God to help you purify these habits so that your living and leading are synonymous (identical). Remember, make every effort to get rid of *all* impurities.

53. Share one unholy personal habit that you will commit to work on with God's grace:

Accountability: Be prepared to share #53 with your team.

—End Day Four—

¹⁴ David Johnson, United Church of God, Treasure Digest Q&A, "What are Spiritual Sacrifices?" <<https://www.ucg.org/united-news/treasure-digest-qa-what-are-spiritual-sacrifices>>(accessed 5/10/2022).

Day Five

Turn, Fix, and Focus

Author and composer Helen Howarth Lemmel (1864–1961) relates that one day in 1918 a missionary friend gave her a Gospel tract. Simply entitled “Focused,” the pamphlet included these words: “So then, turn your eyes upon Him, look full into His face and you will find that the things of earth will acquire a strange new dimness.”

These words made a deep impression upon Lemmel. She could not dismiss them from her mind. She recalls this experience following the reading of that tract: “Suddenly, as if commanded to stop and listen, I stood still, and singing in my soul and spirit was the chorus, with not one conscious moment of putting word to word to make rhyme or note to note to make melody. The verses were written the same week, after the usual manner of composition, but none the less dictated by the Holy Spirit.” The hymn: “Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus.”

Born in Wardle, England, Helen was the daughter of a Methodist pastor. She came to America with her family at age twelve. In addition to being known as a brilliant singer and musician, Helen Lemmel was also widely recognized as a woman with remarkable literary ability. She wrote more than five hundred hymns and poems. She remained active for God in her musical and literary pursuits until her homegoing at age 97.¹⁵

But there is more to Helen 's story. At age 43, she traveled to Germany for intensive vocal training. While there she met and married David Lemmel. In reading a number of accounts of her story, Helen may have become a widow at one time. It is uncertain whether David Lemmel was her first or second husband, who later abandoned her.¹⁶

As one online biographer wrote, “They moved back to the United States in 1911 and she continued singing in the gospel music circuits. Eventually, she became the vocal music teacher at the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago.

“But then tragedy struck. She developed an affliction that resulted in blindness. Her husband could not cope with the thought of a blind wife, so he abandoned her. She had nowhere to turn but to wholly trust in the Lord.

“She retired from Moody and moved to Seattle, where she continued to write poems and set them to music. In complete blindness, she would pick out the notes on a small keyboard and call on friends to record her melodies before she forgot them.

¹⁵ The Old Time Gospel Ministry, *Hymn Stories* <<https://theoldtimegospel.com/dev/hymn3.html>>(accessed 7/15/1999).

¹⁶ Our Christian Heritage, *Helen Lemmel / Ballard Baptist Church*, <https://christianheritage.info/places/united-states/washington/seattle/organization-1/helen-lemmel-ballard-baptist-church/>>(accessed 5/10/2022)

“Whenever her friends asked how she was, her frequent reply was, ‘I am fine in the things that count.’¹⁷

Action Step: Read or sing the following hymn by Helen Lemmel. (If you do not know the melody to this worship song, see the footnote for a music video link.¹⁸) As you read or sing the hymn, think about the words and what meaning they have for you in pursuing holiness.

Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

O soul, are you weary and troubled?
No light in the darkness you see?
There's a light for a look at the Savior,
And life more abundant and free!

*Turn your eyes upon Jesus,
Look full in His wonderful face,
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim,
In the light of His glory and grace.*

Through death into life everlasting
He passed, and we follow Him there;
Over us sin no more hath dominion—
For more than conquerors we are!

*Turn your eyes upon Jesus,
Look full in His wonderful face,
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim,
In the light of His glory and grace.*

His Word shall not fail you—He promised;
Believe Him, and all will be well:
Then go to a world that is dying,
His perfect salvation to tell!

*Turn your eyes upon Jesus,
Look full in His wonderful face,
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim,
In the light of His glory and grace.*¹⁹

¹⁷ Rogersville Review, *Blind woman wrote hymn about vision*<
https://www.therogersvillereview.com/article_fe7c0f90-27b6-5aff-bc01-6883fd6e49a5.html>(accessed 5/10/2022).

¹⁸<<https://www.godtube.com/watch/?v=YKPGGLGNX>>(accessed 7/13/2022).

¹⁹ Helen H. Lemmel, “The Heavenly Vision,” (“Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus”), ©1922, 1950. ,Singspiration Music.

54. How does this hymn, *Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus*, encourage your pursuit of holy living?

55. How does this hymn encourage you to lead others in pure actions?

Read Hebrews 12:2–3 and answer questions 56–58:

... fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

³Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart. Hebrews 12:2–3

Definition: *Fix* means to fasten firmly and to direct one's eyes or attention steadily toward something. This is the meaning of the Greek word *aphorao* (ἀφοράω), which is translated *fix* in Hebrews 12:2 above. It means to direct one's attention without distraction.

56. What does “fix your eyes” on Jesus mean to *you*?

57. How do *you*, or how *will you* “fix your eyes” upon Jesus?

58. What are some ways that *you* can help others “fix their eyes” upon Jesus?

Striving for holiness in an unholy world can be wearisome. Not only can we grow weary of doing good ourselves, but we may grow weary of seeing professed Christians living impure lives. You may put time and effort into other people only to see them make poor choices or stray altogether.

Jesus had the same problem with His disciples. They were not perfect and were often slow to understand (Matthew 20:24–28; Luke 24:18–25). And Judas, one of the original twelve, betrayed Jesus altogether after an intense three-year program of love and compassion. But Jesus persevered and made the remaining eleven disciples champions in God's kingdom. Be encouraged; He will do the same for you and those He has entrusted to you.

Read John 15:19–21 and answer questions 59–60:

“If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you. ²⁰Remember what I told you: ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also. ²¹They will treat you this way because of my name, for they do not know the one who sent me.” John 15:19–21

59. Will the world honor you for your pure life and treat you well? Yes No (Underline One)

60. Explain your answer in #60 regarding the world honoring you for your pure life.

Accountability: Be prepared to share your answers to #59–60 with your team.

D. Holiness—the Climatic Ending

Humanly speaking, it may be easier to join with sinners and be one of the gang than to separate ourselves and stand with Christ—enduring persecution. There is nothing that reveals strength like one uniting with God in the face of ridicule, shame, and the threat of physical harm. That is a major reason early Christianity won over scores of their persecutors. They were amazed at men, women, and youth standing firm while waiting for the lions or some other dangerous creature to enter the arena and tear the Christ followers to pieces.

These martyrs never saw the earthly results of their devotion to Christ, but they most certainly will at the judgment seat of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:10). Martyrs follow their Leader, Jesus Christ, into death and into eternity. He died on the cross in strength and power—to face evil and overcome it.

Jesus did not remain dead but was raised to life after three days. His resurrection proves He is God's holy, powerful, and living Son. We serve a living God who made us in His image. His image is holy. We have a responsibility to understand God's holiness and to make sure that our lives fully reflect His sacred image and secure our climatic ending—eternity with our holy God.

Holy Father, may we burn with a leader's fire of holiness, now and forever, in Jesus. Amen.

—End Day Five and Lesson 6—

Next—Unit 2: Christian Leadership, Lesson 7: The Holy Spirit

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