



Wednesday, April 06, 2022



2 Cor. 5:15--And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.

Introduction: Holiness is about transformation that begins on the inside with the person's heart and migrates to the outside into every aspect of one's life. Thus, holiness involves internal and external transformation. As we discussed in the previous section, internal holiness must be achieved by purifying our hearts and thought-life. Needless to say, we live in a world filled with sinful things. Therefore, perfecting holiness is a moment-by-moment decision to steer clear of that which is unholy. As Christians follow Christ, the desire to be holy becomes natural and living holy becomes a joy, not a burden.

Perfecting Holiness: 1 Cor. 6:19-20, 2 Cor. 7:1, Gal. 4:19, Phil. 2:5-8

1 Cor. 6: 19-20—(19) What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? **(20)** For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

2 Cor. 7:1-- Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Gal. 4:19—(19) My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you,

Phil. 2:5-8-- ⁵ Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: ⁶ Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: ⁷ But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: ⁸ And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Note: In his first epistle to the saints at Corinth, Paul reminds the saints that their bodies belong to Christ. That passage also teaches us that holiness is both internal and external. Our goal is to glorify God in our body and spirit. The word glorify means to worship, adore, or exalt. In 2 Corinthians 7:1, Paul reiterates the need to be physically and spiritually holy. But what did he mean by "perfecting holiness" and how is it done? The Greek word for perfecting "epiteleo" (ep-ee-tel-eh-o) means to "to fulfill further" or execute. If God expects us to "further fulfill" His work of holiness, then the goal is achievable, but not without God. Holiness involves God and the believer. After conversion, the process of perfecting holiness occurs as the new convert follows Christ and the teachings of His apostles. The people in the church of Galatia were born-again, but not fully matured. As we walk with Christ, He is formed within the heart; meaning, we take on more of His holy attributes. As Christ

forms in us, His holiness will begin to flow from within and to the outside. However, for the process to work, the Christian must permit Christ's formation. Paul said, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." In other words, we must humble ourselves and obey the Word and will of God. Just as Christ denied Himself the privileges due the King of kings, and humbled Himself and became obedient to death on the Cross, so must Christians denounce our rights of self-ownership and permit God to develop His holiness within us.

Holiness in Every Aspect of Life: 1 Pet. 13-16, Matt. 5:14-16

1 Pet. 1:13-15—(13) Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; (14) As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: (15) But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; (16) Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

Matt. 5:14-16— (14) Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. (15) Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. (16) Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

Note: In both the Old and New Testaments, God expected His people to live holy as examples for others. Peter's admonishment that the saints "gird up the loins" of their minds and be sober, was His way of telling them to be serious about their living. They were not to "fashion" themselves according to their old way of living. The word fashion in this text means, "being alike or conforming to the same pattern." This is precisely what Paul wrote to the Christians in Rome when he told them not to be "conformed" to the world (Rom. 12:1-2). But what does it mean to be holy in "all manner of conversation?" In the King James Bible, "conversation" is rendered "behavior," particularly behavior towards other people. Peter uses the word "conversation" eight times in his two epistles, which indicates the significance of holy living. The word "holy" primarily implies that which is dedicated to God. Therefore, being "holy in all manner of conversation" means living all aspects of one's life in a way that glorifies God. Jesus said, Christians are the light of the world. When we live holy, we cannot be hidden, because holiness is such a contrast to worldliness. Holiness stands out. It shines like a lamp in a dark room. Jesus said when we live holy, people will "see our good works" and glorify God. Christians will influence unbelievers to worship, exalt, and adore God and point them to God's standards.

Associations Can Negatively Influence Holy Living: 1 Cor. 15: 33, Prov. 12:26, 1 Cor. 5:9

1 Cor. 15:33—(33) Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.

Prov. 12:26—"The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour: but the way of the wicked seduceth them."

1 Cor. 5:9—(9) I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators: (10) Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world.

Note: To cleanse ourselves of the flesh and spirit we must guard against things that negatively influence our flesh and spirit. One area of concern is associations. Paul's passage to the saints at Corinth was a warning about maintaining the wrong associations. The Greek word for "communications" is *homilia* (*hom-il-ee-ah*), which means companionship or intercourse. Communications means contact, relations, association or social relations. Companionship implies friendship, fellowship or closeness. The word "manners" refers to moral habits. Another way to

express Paul's passage is 'Bad companionship corrupts moral habits.' The righteous are more excellent than unbelievers, but unbelievers can corrupt the righteous. To perfect holiness, Christians must avoid relationships with people, groups, societies or organizations that negatively influence physical or spiritual holiness. Such associations include cults, secret clubs or societies, friendship with unbelievers, backsliding Christians, non-conforming church members, family member etc. However, because association with unbelievers is a normal part of life, Christians are not expected to disassociate with unbelievers entirely. To do so, we would have to leave the world.

Help With Holy Living

- **Does it glorify God? 1 Cor. 10:31**--So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. **Heb. 12:1**-- Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us

Note: As royal priest-believers, our desire should be to glorify God in all that we do. Our attitudes, speech, and actions should be filtered to determine if what we are about to engage in brings glory to God or not. The more we submit to Christ, the more this filtering process will become a natural response to the holiness developed in the heart.

- **Is it spiritually and physically detrimental? 1 Cor. 6:12**--All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any."

Note: We should avoid anything that is spiritually, mentally, and physically harmful to our mind or body. As an example, we abstain from drinking alcohol. While some religious organizations permit alcoholic consumption on the grounds that only "drunkenness is sin," numerous Scriptures warn of the dangers associated with the consumption of wine and strong drink. Alcohol consumption has also been proven to cause problems in the body, lead to sinful activity, and even cause death. Thus, the numerous passages in the Bible that warn about the effects of alcohol should be heeded. The association with alcohol can corrupt one's morality or give the appearance that one is not holy. This would bring dishonor to God, not glory. Therefore, Christians should abstain from alcohol. For similar reasons, Christians should abstain from smoking, drug use, etc.

- **Can or does the activity have control over us? Matt. 7:21**--"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." Only those who did the will of the Father would enter into heaven.

Note: We must be careful not to allow any substance, person, or activity etc. to captivate our will. Therefore, it is important that we regulate things in our lives so that nothing causes us to disobey the will of God. The will of God is the Word of God. To determine if an activity has control over us, we should ask ourselves how much time, energy, and resources we invest in an activity. For example, if I cannot fast because I must have a cup of coffee each morning, then coffee has me in bondage. It has control of my will so that I cannot fast as the Word of God teaches.

- **Will our activity be harmful to others? Phil. 2:4-4— (4)** Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

Note: Our liberty in Christ should not harm other people. We are not to set a stumbling block for a brother or sister. Paul said, “Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend” **(1 Cor. 8:13)**. Even if something is not against a moral law, it may not be appropriate. We are to “abstain from all appearance of evil.”

Summary: Christ was holy in every way, so Christians must be holy in every aspect of life. To achieve God’s standard of holiness, God makes us holy at our conversion (John 3:1-8, Acts 2:38, Eph. 1:13-14, 4:4-6), and we further fulfill what God began through a process known as perfecting holiness (2 Cor. 7:1). Holiness is perfected by guarding against things that influence the flesh and spirit in an ungodly manner. One area that we must monitor closely is our associations with people, places, or things. Even though we are holy, the wrong associations can keep us from “perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” Therefore, we must not have “corrupt communication,” that is, companionship, friendship, or close social relations with anything or anyone that influences us in an unholy manner. We do this by evaluating whether or not our associations glorify God, and abstaining from associations with things that do not glorify Him. We filter our associations to determine if they are physically and spiritually detrimental to us. We ask ourselves, “Can this person, place, or thing influence me so that I disobey God’s word?” And finally, “Will my association with a person, group, place, or thing be detrimental to the physical or spiritual well-being of others?” In other words, will my involvement give the appearance of unholiness? If so, perfecting holiness demands that we refrain from such associations. While filtering our associations requires thought and effort, doing so will lead to Christ being formed in us and the physical and spiritual holiness God requires.