

Pursuit of Holiness, Pt. 2
Selected Scriptures

Introduction

I remember a Disney advertising campaign from many years ago in which they would ask an athlete who was still on the field after achieving a lifetime goal such as winning the World Series or Superbowl the question, *“What will you do now that you have won . . . ?”* They would then answer *“I am going to Disneyland”* or *“Disneyworld.”* Their effective message was either that one of Disney’s theme parks was the best way to celebrate such an important event or that going there was as important or perhaps better than what they had just accomplished.

The question, *“What will you do now that you have . . . ?”* Is a good question. It was used in a very effective tract that simplified the question to *“Then what?”* You graduated from High School - *“Then what?”* You got your college degree - *“Then what?”* You got a good job - *“Then what?”* You got married - *“Then what?”* You got your own home - *Then what?”* You had children - *Then what?”* You retired - *Then what?”* You traveled and enjoyed your grandkids - *Then what?”* Eventually the line of questions is going to get to *“You die - Then what?”* And when you face your mortality, you are forced to come to terms with the question, what was the purpose of your life? Did you really achieve what was important the few years of your existence on this earth? And who decides what is important? Most people do not give serious thought to those questions.

Solomon observed in Ecclesiastes 1:11, *“There is no remembrance of earlier things; And also of the later things which will occur, There will be for them no remembrance Among those who will come later still.”* So of what value is fame in the end? Jesus said in Matthew 16:26, *“For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?”* So of what value is wealth in the end? And those that inherit the fruit of the labor of your life could be wise or may be fools according to Ecclesiastes 2:18.

Depression has become so normal in our society that asking about it has become a routine question when seeing the doctor. There is constant advertising for drugs to deal with the multifaceted symptoms of despression. Suicide rates remain high and even those that would be considered successful by the world fall victim to either the nihilism or selfishness that is behind it. The nihilism is a recognition that the various philosophies of man render existence ultimately meaningless, so why bother with life when it is either painful or too frustrating? Those who are selfish and foolishly think that death will be an escape from what they do not want to experience conclude suicide is a good option. Tragically, they cause suffering to many around them and their suffering for eternity has just begun.

There are many events in life that are enjoyable and satisfying. There are many purposes within life that are good, but if there is not some ultimate reason that unifies it all, everything will eventually reduce down to Solomon’s declaration in Ecclesiastes 1:2 & 12:8, *“Vanity of vanities,” says the Preacher, “all is vanity!”* That is why I have been preaching the last several weeks on the purpose of Creation, of man and of redemption.

Review

God created everything to glorify Himself. He created man in His own image and gave man dominion over the earth and its creatures in order to glorify Himself in particular ways. Man reflects God’s nature by having the qualities of personhood - cognition, emotion and volition. Man also reflects God’s communicable attributes. God will also glorify Himself in both redeemed and unredeemed man as He displays particular attributes in

dealing with each. The unredeemed are vessels of wrath upon which God demonstrates both His patient, longsuffering nature as well as His righteousness and justice and He makes His power known in His wrath upon them in judgment. The redeemed are vessels of mercy upon whom God displays attributes such as love, mercy, forgiveness, lavish grace and faithfulness. Scripture also states several additional specific reasons that God redeemed man. These include being a gift from the Father to the Son (John 6:37-40), to be to the praise of the glory of His grace (Ephesians 1:5-8), to be conformed to the image of His son (Romans 8:29-30), to do good works and bear fruit (John 15:16; Ephesians 2:10), and to be holy and blameless before Him (Ephesians 1:4).

Last week I concentrated on that last reason of being holy and blameless by defining them and the reason holiness is essential as a fundamental purpose of life for the Christian. Holiness is not optional for followers of Jesus Christ because God has promised to do that in them. The only question is whether the individual believer will become holy the easy way by willing cooperation with God in its pursuit, or will learn the hard way as God disciplines, corrects and chastens him.

As I pointed out last week, the root meaning of holiness, in both Greek and Hebrew, is to be separate, to be set apart. God is set apart from everything in Creation because He is the Creator and therefore something other than a creature, and He is also perfect in all that He is and all that He does. Holiness is the over arching attribute of God that applies to all of His attributes. Everything about God is holy. Any created thing that is holy is holy because it is set apart to God, and holiness is always related to that object's relationship to God including man. We use the related term "sanctified" to describe that. People become holy when they are set apart to God at salvation. Whatever you were prior to salvation, you were washed, sanctified, and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God when you placed your faith in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sin (1 Corinthians 6:11). The righteousness of Christ is imputed to you so that you are holy in your position before God.

Humans become more holy as they grow and mature in their walk with Christ so that they are more like Him. They become more set apart to God and more set apart from the world. We call that process sanctification. When Jesus returns and we receive our new immortal and incorruptible bodies and become like Jesus, we will reach final sanctification for our position and our walk will become the same in the perfection of glorification.

Last week I started in on practical matters of becoming more holy in this life, but I only got as far as dealing with some of the common obstacles that hinder or block a person in that quest. That included a false profession of faith, ignorance & immaturity, laziness & selfishness, a wrong view of sin and dealing with sin in some manner other than following God's directions. Those obstacles have to be removed or overcome in order to become holy in daily life. Today I want to focus on the positive ways to become holy.

Humility

The first step toward holiness is being humble. Why is humility so crucial to holiness? Let me give you two reasons starting with the fact holiness means to be separated unto God and no one will seek God unless they are humble. Psalm 14 and Romans 3:10 are very direct on the fact that *"There is none righteous, not even one; ¹¹ There is none who understands, There is none who seeks for God; ¹² All have turned aside, together they have become useless; There is none who does good, There is not even one."* In addition, the summary statement in James 4:6 that *"God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble"* is declared and demonstrated throughout the Scriptures. Without humility, no one will come to God and that is the starting point of holiness.

Jesus taught in Matthew 5:3, *"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."* I have preached sermons on that passage several times before ([link](#)). It is His first statement in the Sermon on the Mount and the first of the Beatitudes which describes the characteristics of those who are righteous and will be part of His kingdom. Poor in spirit is a good description of humility, for the word used is very strong meaning destitute. Someone who is reduced to begging and depending on the charity of others for they have nothing to give and nothing to offer in exchange for what may be given to them. That must be the nature of the

man that comes to God in recognizing that He has nothing to give or offer God. He can only cry out for mercy and grace. Only those who are humble will recognize both their position as one of God's creatures and their guilt for their sin in order to cast themselves upon God's mercy and grace to forgive them through faith in Jesus Christ.

If pride remains, then even the man who recognizes he is a sinful creature who has offended his holy Creator will seek a way to earn his way into God's favor in order to be forgiven. And that is impossible. As Isaiah 64:6 puts it, "*all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment.*" Such a person might think of themselves as holy and even perform the actions that someone who is actually holy might do, but they are not actually set apart to God. That is why Jesus had such conflict with the Pharisees and charged them with being of their father, the devil (John 8:44), and it is why He will declare to some that even did things in His name, "*I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness*" (Matthew 7:21-23)

Titus 3:4-7 explains the basis of salvation from sin and it is not by what you do. ⁴ "*But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared,* ⁵ *He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit,* ⁶ *whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,* ⁷ *so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.*" As Paul states in Ephesians 2:8-9, ⁸ "*For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;* ⁹ *not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.*"

Where does such humility come from? There are two sources that work in harmony with each other. The first is the ministry of the Holy Spirit in convicting people of sin, righteousness and judgment (John 16:8-11) joined with God drawing them to Christ (John 6:44) as Jesus calls them to repent and come unto Him (Matthew 4:17; 11:28-30). God gives a universal command to repent from sin and believe in Jesus Christ (Acts 17:30-31) and an universal offer to seek and call upon the Lord (Isaiah 55:6). God's creation itself should result in man being humble such as in Psalm 8 as David considered the majesty of the heavens and marveled that God would even pay attention to man. Contemplating the character, nature and actions of God should also bring fear to man and a corresponding humility before Him.

The second is the response of man to the work of God in them. After stating that "*God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble,*" James 4:7-10 explains, ⁷ *Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.* ⁸ *Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.* ⁹ *Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy to gloom.* ¹⁰ *Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.*" Drawing near to God begins with what is said in Hebrews 11:1 & 6, "*Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen . . .*" ⁶ "*And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.*" Humility comes as you obey the command to repent - change your mind about what is true - and take advantage of the offer to seek and call upon the Lord.

A second reason humility is required for holiness is that the above truths still apply even after salvation in the process of sanctification. The Holy Spirit still convicts of sin and you are still to repent and humble yourself to walk closer to the Lord and father away from the world. James 4:4-6 is a strong rebuke written to those that professed faith in Christ. ⁴ "*You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.*" ⁵ *Or do you think that the Scripture speaks to no purpose: "He jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us"?* ⁶ *But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, "God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble."*

Humility is to be a key character trait in Christians just as it was in Jesus as Paul points out in Philippians 2:5-8, ⁵ "*Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus,*" ⁶ *who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped,* ⁷ *but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.* ⁸ *Being found in appearance as a*

man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.” To be humble is to be more like Christ, and that is to be more set apart to God which is what holiness is about.

Genuine Profession of Faith

Humility is necessary to become a Christian, and having a genuine profession of faith is necessary to be holy for it is the first mark of being set apart to God. As I have pointed out previously, those who are saved by faith in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ are set apart to God and justified having the righteousness of Jesus imputed to them. That is a radical change which Paul expressed in 2 Corinthians 5:17, *“Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.”* You become something different when you become a Christian and holiness is part of that.

Another aspect of becoming a genuine Christian that will have an effect on holiness is that the Holy Spirit will indwell you to enlighten you to know and live according to spiritual truth which was not possible before. Paul explains in 1 Corinthians 2:14–16, ¹⁴*“But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised. ¹⁵But he who is spiritual appraises all things, yet he himself is appraised by no one. ¹⁶For who has known the mind of the Lord, that he will instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ.”* Why can’t the natural man understand the things of God? As Paul explains in Romans 8:5-8, *“the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God,”* and in Galatians 5:16-17, the desires of the Spirit and the flesh are set against each other so that you can do one or the other, but not both at the same time. The natural man is unredeemed and so only has the flesh, so He cannot understand the things of God, and even if he could, he would not follow them.

Without the genuine profession of faith in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation from sin, a person cannot be holy or pursue holiness.

Another additional aspect of true salvation is that you become a child of God who is loved by Him as a father loves a son. For that reason Hebrews 12:4-11 explains that God *“disciplines us for our good, so that we may share His holiness”* (vs 10). While God’s chastening is sorrowful at the time, it is part of our training so that we will gain the peaceful fruit of righteousness (vs. 11). Those without such chastening by the Lord are illegitimate children and not sons (vs. 8). When that is kept in mind, God’s discipline becomes a source of comfort for it demonstrates you belong to Him and it produces in you greater holiness.

Knowledge & Maturity

The command of God to His people is that we are to be holy for He is holy (1 Peter 1:16). The next step in the process of becoming holy is to *“grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ”* (2 Peter 3:18). Throughout the Scriptures the knowledge of God is directly tied to both an increasing love for God and being able to walk in His ways. Perhaps Psalm 119 is the greatest expression of that. The Psalmist loved God and so He loved what God revealed in His word so that He might know God and walk in His ways. While it would be rare for Psalm 119 to be the expression of the life of a new Christian, it should be normal for it to be true of an old Christian since it reflects maturity.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge and wisdom (Proverbs 1:7; 9:10), so you begin by learning all you can about what God has revealed about His character, nature and works. This would include both special revelation in the Scriptures which is a lamp to your feet and light to your path (Psalm 119:105), and natural revelation of Creation in which He has revealed aspects of His eternal power and divine nature (Romans 1:20). I don’t know of any study that has had a greater impact in producing holiness in myself and those studying with me than a focused examination of the character and attributes of God. (***Link to Knowledge of the Holy study***).

Growth in holiness continues as you learn the law, testimony, precepts, commandments, fear and judgements of the Lord which are perfect, sure, right, pure, clean and true and which restore the soul, make wise the simple, rejoice the heart, enlighten the eyes, endure forever and are righteous altogether which makes

them more desirable than gold and sweeter than honey by giving warning from straying and reward for obeying (Psalm 19:7-11). Knowing God and His word draws you closer to Him and enables you to walk properly with Him, and that is increasing holiness.

2 Peter 1:2–4 ties the knowledge of God to increasing separation from the world and unto God. ² *“Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord;”* ³ *seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.* ⁴ *For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.”* Without the knowledge of God you would not know His precious and magnificent promises and therefore would not become a partaker of the divine nature and therefore would not escape the corruption of this world. You would remain unholy. But in knowing God, you learn His promises, you become His child and you become holy.

Increasing knowledge of God and His word should result in increasing maturity. There is a time factor in this, but that is because it takes time to learn. As Hebrews 5:14 describes it, maturity comes with practice of having your senses trained to discern good and evil. But if you squander that time and do not learn, you remain immature. That is why Paul gave a strong rebuke in 1 Corinthians 3:1-3, ¹ *“And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to infants in Christ.”* ² *I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for you were not yet able to receive it. Indeed, even now you are not yet able,* ³ *for you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men?”* They had adequate teaching from Paul and Apollos about God and His will, and there had been enough time for them to put into practice what they had learned to be mature, but they were still immature having a faulty idea of what it even meant to be spiritual. Do not be like them. Put into practice what you learn. And do not be like those in Ephesus that Paul warned Timothy about who were *“always learning and never able to come to a knowledge of the truth”* (2 Tim. 3:7). They had head knowledge, but they were not able to put it into practice and so were those *“holding to a form of godliness, although they denied its power”* (2 Tim. 3:5).

Holiness is pursued by gaining knowledge of God and His will and then putting into practice what is learned.

Diligence

Another aspect of pursuing holiness is being diligent in the pursuit. You do not become holy by being passive. It will take more than just coming to a church worship service and even reading a daily devotional. 2 Peter 1:5–11 explains, ⁵ *“Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge,”* ⁶ *and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness,”* ⁷ *and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love.”* ⁸ *For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.* ⁹ *For he who lacks these qualities is blind or short-sighted, having forgotten his purification from his former sins.* ¹⁰ *Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble;* ¹¹ *for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you.”* God will always do His part in the production of holiness in your life, but you must also do your part as explained in this passage. The characteristics listed here by Peter are those of holiness.

The pursuit of holiness requires personal effort in growing in the knowledge and grace of the Lord, and it requires personal effort to put into practice the commands of God that will develop your character into one that is more like Christ. It will require the spiritual disciplines of Bible reading, study, prayer and worship. Those are things that are to be done actively both personally and corporately. Attendance is not enough and neither is just going through the motions. You must meditate on what you learn and consider how to implement it in your life.

That is why it takes diligence otherwise either selfishness or just the business of life will take over to keep you from growing.

It will also take diligence to be involved within the church, the body of Christ, so that you are using your spiritual gifts and practicing all of the one another commands to benefit others and they are doing the same for you in the pursuit of holiness. Paul points this out in Ephesians 4:11-16. As each Christian uses their spiritual gift the whole body is built up to attain the unity of the faith, the knowledge of the Son of God and to maturity so that we can stand firm against the false teaching and deceitful scheming of wicked men. Get involved in church life. For those who hear or read this sermon that do not have a church, do your best to find one, and if you can't find one, look for a small fellowship group of other believers or start one.

Being involved with other believers will require you to be selfless, but that is to be a normal part of the Christian life anyway. Paul expressed this in Philippians 2:3-4, ³ *“Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves;”* ⁴ *do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.”* Selfishness is an obstacle to holiness while selflessness promotes it as believers help one another in the quest, and the characteristic itself make you more like Christ and therefore more holy.

Holiness and Sin

Holiness is an issue of your heart, mind and soul - your “innermost being” as David described in Psalm 51:6. If you are pursuing holiness internally, then that will be displayed externally in your life. But be careful that you never confuse outward displays with inward reality since people can be very good at conforming to those around them without believing the same things, and people can also be very self deceived and substitute the religious standards of their group for holiness. Again, that was a major problem among the Pharisees who substituted the traditions of men for the doctrines of God and why Jesus had such conflict with them.

Since true holiness is to be an inward reality, then outward conformity to standards of behavior is not enough. Attitude and motivations are just as important if not more important. A loving action is good, but God wants the action to arise from love that abides within the person. That is why Paul and Peter both speak of Christians having a goal of loving one another from a pure heart (1 Tim. 1:5; 1 Peter 1:22).

This also has a direct effect on our understanding of sin. It is easy to identify a particular action as sin when it violates a command of God. It is not as easy to identify the sinful motives that generated the action. It is even harder to identify sin when the action is good but the motive is wrong. Let me give you an example.

Someone who steals violates God's clear command, but what about the sinfulness of the motives. Proverbs 6:30 states that *“men do not despise a thief if he steals to satisfy himself when he is hungry.”* That does not excuse the theft but it mitigates the reaction to it. The theft is still sin, but what about the possible motivations for it? That would include pride for refusing to ask for charity and lack of trust in the Lord to provide if righteousness was pursued. True holiness is concerned about those motivations and not just the actions. Worse motivations would be stealing due to greed - covetousness. Even worse would be stealing to purposely harm the other person which would be the case in vandalism which steals the value of the property of the owner by destruction.

How about a good deed with a wrong motive? Charity is good, but Jesus criticized those who blew a trumpet to call attention to their charitable deeds. The motivation of charity is to be used by God to help those in need, not to feed pride by gaining the acclaim of people (Matthew 6:1-4). Prayer is certainly good and proper, but its motivation is to be to talk with God, not to impress others by displays of supposed piety (Matthew 6:5-6).

Confession of sin is to arise from genuine sorrow of offending God and it produces repentance which leads to greater holiness (2 Cor. 7). The regret of either failure or getting caught is worldly sorrow that does not produce repentance because it is self centered. They don't actually care they have offended God and harmed the other person. We have all had people say to us, “I'm sorry,” yet not seek forgiveness or even show concern for the harm they have caused to anyone except themselves.

God said that David was a man after His own heart (Acts 13:22) which was demonstrated in many ways including his response to sin. David's response to Nathan's confrontation of him about his sin in 2 Samuel 12 was a simple confession, "I have sinned," and he took responsibility for its consequences. That was the opposite of Saul's response when Samuel confronted him in 1 Samuel 15. Psalm 51 is David's full expression of his confession and it is a good model for us when we sin. He did not give any excuses. He recognized the sin was primarily against God. He cast Himself on God's mercy to forgive and cleanse him. He sought not just outward cleansing, but also inward cleansing to have a clean heart that sought truth. That is the path of holiness.

The instructions the apostle gives in 1 John 1:9 follows this same model as David in dealing with sin. *"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."* We seek God out and agree with Him about our sin. He is right, we are wrong. And we cast ourselves on His character and promises to forgive and cleanse. According to Hebrews 4:15-16, we know our Lord was tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin, so He sympathizes with our weakness, and because of that we can *"come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."* In doing this, we join in the praise given in Psalm 66:18-19, ¹⁸ *"If I regard wickedness in my heart, The Lord will not hear; ¹⁹ But certainly God has heard; He has given heed to the voice of my prayer. ²⁰ Blessed be God, Who has not turned away my prayer, Nor His mercy from me!"*

Those who pursue holiness will do the opposite of Adam & Eve who sought to hide from God after they had sinned. We will seek God out that we might be right with Him and be moved farther along in the process of being conformed to the image of His Son. We desire to actively fulfill the purpose of our existence and redemption in bringing glory to God as vessels of His mercy redeemed by the Lord Jesus Christ.

We will celebrate communion this morning with these truths in mind, but before we do, I want to again want to recommend to you *Pursuit of Holiness* & its study guide by Jerry Bridges and J.C. Ryle's, *Holiness*. Either them or both would be helpful in your own pursuit of holiness. If possible, discuss them with others who can encourage you and hold you accountable to put its principles into practice.

Sermon Notes - September 19, 2021
The Pursuit of Holiness, Part 2 - Selected Scriptures

Introduction

What is your answer to the question, What then? _____

Depression in our society has become _____

Without an ultimate reason that unifies the purpose of life, all is _____ (Eccl. 12:8)

Review

The Purpose of Creation & Man: _____

The Purpose of Redemption: _____

Holiness is: _____

Humans become holy as they _____

Obstacles to Holiness include: _____

Humility

Humility is _____ in order to seek God - Romans 3:10-12

The necessity of being _____ in Spirit - Matthew 5:3

The danger of pride is seeking to _____ salvation & remaining lost - Isaiah 64:6; John 8:44; Matt. 7:21-23

Salvation only comes as a _____ from God - Titus 3:4-7; Ephesians 2:8-9

Humility arises from the ministry of the _____ - John 16:8-11; 6:44; Matthew 4:17. Psalm 8

Humility arises from the response of _____ to the work of God in them - James 4:7-10, Hebrews 11:1,6

Humility must continue after salvation to _____ holiness - James 4:4-6

Humility is to be a key _____ trait of Christians - Phil. 2:5-8

Genuine Profession of Faith

Holiness begins when a person is _____ to God at salvation becoming a new creation - 2 Cor. 5:17

Only a true Christian will have the Holy Spirit _____ them - 1 Cor. 2:14-16

The mind of the unredeemed is set on the _____ & against the Spirit - Rom. 8:5-8; Gal. 5:16-17

Only a true Christian will be properly _____ by the Lord - Hebrews 12:4-11

Knowledge & Maturity

The _____ of God is tied directly to increasing love for God and walking with Him - Psalm 119

Start by _____ all that you can from special & natural revelation about God's character, nature & works

Growth in holiness continues as you learn God's _____ and walk with Him - Psalm 19:7-11

Knowledge of God _____ separation from the world and unto God - 2 Peter 2-4

Increasing knowledge of God results in increasing _____ - Heb. 5:14

Time does not bring maturity unless knowledge is sought and _____ - 1 Cor. 3:1-3

Diligence - 2 Peter 1:5-11

You do not become holy by being _____

Holiness requires personal effort to know God and put into practice His commands - Spiritual _____

Diligence is needed to use your spiritual gifts & practice the “_____” commands - Eph. 4:11-16

Involvement with other believers requires you to be _____ - Phil. 2:3-4

Holiness and Sin

Holiness is to be in your “_____ being” and not just outward - Psalm 51:6

Holiness is to be an inward reality and so it involves attitude & _____ - 1 Tim. 1:5; 1 Peter 1:22

A sinful action can arise from _____ sins of attitude or motivation

Example: Stealing _____

A _____ of motivation can occur even when doing a “good thing.”

Example: Charity _____

Confession of sin is to arise from genuine sorrow of offending _____ & it produces repentance & holiness

Regret for either failure or getting caught produces _____ sorrow without repentance (2 Cor. 7)

David’s example - Psalm 51 _____

We _____ our sins (1 John 1:9) coming to the throne of grace knowing Jesus sympathizes (Heb. 4:15-16)

Pursuit of _____ results in holiness

Recommended Books

The Pursuit of Holiness, Book & Study Guide, Jerry Bridges, NavPress, 1978

Holiness: It’s Nature, Hindrances, Difficulties, and Roots, J.C. Ryle, Hendrickson Publishers

KIDS KORNER – Parents, you are responsible to apply God’s Word to your children’s lives. Here is some help.

Young Children – draw a picture about something you hear during the sermon. Explain your picture(s) to your parents at lunch. Older Children – count how many times the words “holy” or “holiness” are mentioned. Talk to your parents about what holiness is, why it is important and how you can pursue it.

THINK ABOUT IT – Questions to consider in understanding the sermon and its application. Why don’t people think deeply about the purpose of their existence? Why do you think depression has become so common in American society? What is the purpose of Creation? Of Man? How does God glorify Himself in vessels of wrath? In vessels of mercy? What is holiness? How is a human made holy? What are some obstacles to holiness? Why is humility necessary to be holy? What are the dangers if pride remains? How does the ministry of the Holy Spirit produce humility? How does obedience to God produce humility? Why is humility still required to produce holiness after salvation? Why being saved from sin necessary for holiness? How the Holy Spirit work in believers to produce holiness? Why is God’s discipline an act of love? What is the effect of an increasing knowledge of God? What should be the relationship of time and holiness? Why is that not always true? What is man’s part in the pursuit of holiness? Why does that require personal diligence? What is relationship between involvement with other believers and holiness? What is the relationship between selflessness and holiness? Why is holiness and issue of the “innermost being” and not just outward actions? Why are attitudes and motivations important considerations in dealing with sin and pursuing holiness? How is David a good model for both proper response to sin and the pursuit of holiness? What is your commitment to the pursuit of holiness.