

1-23-26

Walking in Holiness: Living Set Apart for God

Opening Prayer

**Father God in heaven,
We come before You acknowledging
that You alone are holy. As we open
Your Word, we ask that You would open
our hearts and minds. Teach us by Your
Spirit. Correct us where we need
correction, encourage us where we are
weak, and lead us into truth. May Your
Word shape how we live, how we think,
and how we walk with You. We ask this
in Jesus' name.
Amen.**

Introduction: A Lost Word in a Modern World

One of the clearest themes throughout the entire Bible...from Genesis to Revelation... is that God desires a people who **walk with Him** and are **set apart for Him**.

Holiness is not a side topic. It is central to the Christian life.

Many believers struggle here because holiness is often misunderstood. Some think it means moral perfection. Others think it means isolation from society. Scripture shows us something far richer and far more practical.

The word “**holiness**” has almost disappeared from modern culture—even in the church. To many people, holiness sounds harsh, legalistic, outdated, or unattainable. Some think holiness means perfection. Others think it means isolation from the world. Some avoid the word altogether because it feels uncomfortable.

But holiness is **not optional** for the believer. It is not reserved for pastors, missionaries, or “super-Christians.” Holiness is God’s calling for **every follower of Jesus Christ**.

To understand holiness correctly, we must let **Scripture interpret Scripture**, verse by verse.

God does not merely save us *from* sin...He saves us *unto* a holy life.

1. The Biblical Meaning of Holiness

The word **holy** means “**set apart,**” “**distinct,**” or “**belonging to God.**”

God Himself is holy.

Isaiah 6:3 (NIV):³ And they were calling to one another: “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory.”

God’s holiness means He is completely separate from sin, corruption, and evil. Yet in His grace, He calls sinful people to walk in holiness with Him.

1 Peter 1:15–16 (NIV):¹⁵ But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; ¹⁶ for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.”

Holiness is not about becoming God—it is about reflecting God.

Isaiah 6:1–3 (NIV) 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. ² Above 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. ³ And they were calling to one another:

“Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory.”

Explanation:

Holiness is not first about what we do—it is about **who God is**. God’s holiness means He is completely set apart from sin, corruption, and imperfection.

Everything else the Bible says about holiness flows from this truth.

2. Holiness Begins With Salvation, Not Self-Effort

A critical truth: **You do not become holy to be saved...you are saved to become holy.**

Salvation is by grace alone through faith alone.

Ephesians 2:8–9 (NIV):⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast.

But grace does not end with forgiveness—it leads to transformation.

Ephesians 2:10 (NIV):¹⁰ For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Holiness flows **from** salvation, not **toward** salvation.

1 Peter 1:15–16 (NIV)¹⁵ But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do;¹⁶ for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.”

Explanation:

This command is not selective. God does not say “be holy in church” or “be holy when it's easy.” He says **“in all you do.”**

Holiness is not optional for believers—it is our calling.

3. Walking in Holiness Is a Daily Walk

The Bible repeatedly describes the Christian life as a **walk**, not a moment.

Galatians 5:16 (NIV):¹⁶ So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

Walking implies:

- . Direction
- . Progress
- . Consistency
- . Dependence

Holiness is not about never stumbling—it is about continuing to walk **toward Christ** when we do.

- **Holiness Begins With Salvation, Not Behavior**

Hebrews 10:10 (NIV) ¹⁰ And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Explanation:

Notice the past tense: *have been made holy*.

This is positional holiness...what Christ accomplished at the cross.

We do not work toward holiness to earn salvation. We live holy lives **because we are already saved.**

Ephesians 2:8–10 (NIV) ⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— ⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰ For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Explanation:

Grace saves us. Holiness flows from that grace.

Works do not save us—but saved people will walk differently.

4. Holiness Is Both Position and Practice

Positionally Holy

When we trust Christ, we are declared holy before God.

Hebrews 10:10 (NIV):¹⁰ And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Practically Holy

We are then called to live out what God has already declared.

2 Corinthians 7:1 (NIV): Therefore, since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.

Holiness is not pretending...we live out what Christ has already done within us.

- **Holiness Is Described as a Walk**

Galatians 5:16 (NIV) ¹⁶ So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

Explanation:

The Christian life is not described as a leap, a moment, or a feeling...but a **walk**.

Walking implies:

- . Daily dependence
- . Direction
- . Growth over time

Holiness is lived **step by step**, not instantly.

5. What Holiness Is NOT

Holiness is **not**:

- . Legalism
- . Perfectionism
- . Isolation from society
- . Self-righteousness

The Pharisees looked holy outwardly but were corrupt inwardly.

Matthew 23:27 (NIV):²⁷ “Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of the bones of the dead and everything unclean.

True holiness starts in the **heart**, not just behavior.

The Conflict Between Flesh and Spirit

Galatians 5:17 (NIV) ¹⁷ For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever^[a] you want.

Explanation:

This explains why holiness feels like a battle.

The presence of conflict does not mean you are failing...it means the Spirit is at work.

6. Holiness Affects Every Area of Life

Our Thoughts

Romans 12:2 (NIV):² Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Simple One-Sentence Definition

Renewing the mind is the daily, Spirit-led process by which God reshapes a believer's thinking through His **Word**, replacing worldly and sinful patterns with Christ-centered truth, resulting in a transformed life that pleases God.

Explanation:

A holy walk starts with a renewed mind. What we allow into our thoughts shapes our actions.

Our Speech:

Ephesians 4:29 (NIV):²⁹ Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

Explanation:

A transformed heart produces transformed speech.

Holiness is visible in our words...especially under pressure.

Our Bodies:

1 Corinthians 6:19–20 (NIV):¹⁹ Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own;²⁰ you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.

Explanation:

Holiness is not abstract. It includes how we live physically, morally, and justly.

Our Relationships

Colossians 3:12–13 (NIV):¹² Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.¹³ Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

Holiness is visible—but it is not performative.

- **What the Flesh Produces**

Galatians 5:19–21 (NIV) ¹⁹ The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; ²⁰ idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions ²¹ and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Explanation:

Paul does not soften these words. The flesh produces destruction.

Walking in holiness means refusing to let the flesh dominate our lives.

- **What the Spirit Produces**

Holiness is impossible without the Holy Spirit.

Galatians 5:22–23 (NIV) ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

Explanation:

Holiness is not just about what we stop doing...it is about what God produces in us.

Fruit is not forced...it grows as we remain connected to the Spirit.

The Spirit does not “just” restrain sin...He **produces righteousness.**

- Trying to be holy without the Spirit leads to burnout.

- Walking in step with the Spirit leads to freedom.
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7. Holiness in a Corrupt World

Jesus prayed not that we would be removed from the world, but protected within it.

John 17:15–17 (NIV): ¹⁵ My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. ¹⁶ They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. ¹⁷ Sanctify them by^[a] the truth; your word is truth.

Holiness shines brightest in darkness.

Just as salt preserves and light exposes, holiness points people to Christ.

- **Holiness in Relationships**

Colossians 3:12–14 (NIV) ¹² Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. ¹³ Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. ¹⁴ And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Explanation:

Holiness is not isolation from people...it is Christlike love toward people.

8. When We Fail: Grace Restores the Walk

Every believer stumbles.

1 John 1:7 (NIV):⁷ But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

Walking in holiness does not mean never sinning...it means never hiding from God when we do.

Repentance is not failure...it is evidence of life.

- **When We Fail in the Walk**

1 John 1:7–9 (NIV)

“If we walk in the light... the blood of Jesus... purifies us from all sin.”

Explanation:

Walking in holiness does not mean sinless perfection.

It means ongoing repentance, honesty, and reliance on Christ.

9. The Reward of Holiness

Holiness leads to:

- Deeper fellowship with God
- Spiritual clarity
- Power in prayer
- Eternal reward

Hebrews 12:14 (NIV):¹⁴ Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.

Explanation:

Holiness does not save us...but it prepares us to see Him.

Holiness prepares us for fellowship with God...now and eternally.

Conclusion: A Call to Walk

Holiness is not about trying harder...it is about **surrendering daily**.

It is not about rule-keeping...it is Spirit-led living.

It is not about separation from people...it is about devotion to God.

Walking in holiness means daily choosing **Jesus** over self, **truth** over compromise, and **obedience** over convenience.

To walk in holiness is to walk closely with Jesus, allowing His life to be lived through us.

Closing Prayer:

**Lord God,
We thank You for Your Word and Your
patience with us. Teach us to walk in
holiness...not in our strength, but by
Your Spirit. Where we have
compromised, restore us. Where we are
weak, strengthen us. May our lives
reflect the holiness and love of Jesus
Christ in a world that desperately needs
You.**

**We ask this in your wonderful name,
Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior.
Amen!**