



TURN TO: LEVITICUS 20

Today I want to talk to you about Holiness

D.L. Moody said a holy life will make the deepest impression. Lighthouses blow no horns, they just shine.

Holiness is one of the most talked about topics in scripture and yet it's one of the most misunderstood

- Sadly there are many believers who live with a misconception that they have to do something to have a righteous standing before God
- When they've had a good week, reading their Bibles, doing good deeds for the Lord – they feel that God is pleased with them
- But when they've had a tough week spiritually – then they've failed,
- When they've sinned – they think God can't be pleased with them
- Since God isn't pleased with me I might as well not go to church or read my Bible – why bother?
- I would be just like all the other hypocrites if I showed up to church trying to act all spiritual
- We measure our holiness based on our sinfulness and thus our holiness becomes characterized either by victory... I'm living that victorious life over sin or defeat... I'm living a defeated life, controlled by my sin
- When the truth is... Jesus conquered the power of sin and death at the cross and now you are victorious because sin has no power over you
- Thus – we're not fighting for victory, but we are fighting from victory

The Question I'd like to look at is... what does it mean to be holy?

- As we look at the subject of holiness, I want us to understand that holiness isn't defined by what I do, but what's been done for me

There are three qualities that characterize a life that is holy

- First, holiness means identification
- Second, holiness means separation
- Third, holiness means connection

We read in Leviticus 20:26

Leviticus 20:26 (NKJV)

²⁶ And you shall be holy to Me, for I the LORD *am* holy, and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be Mine.



First we see the holiness means identification

- In psychology, IDENTIFICATION is an interesting concept
- BY WAY OF DEFINITION... Identification is a psychological process whereby a person assimilates an aspect, quality or attribute of another and is transformed wholly or partially to be like the one they identify with
- In other words... you become like the one you identify with
- IDENTIFICATION leads to TRANSFORMATION

Listen to what God says to the people...He says... you shall be holy to Me, for I the Lord am holy

- In other words, you are no longer part of the rest of the world
- You are identified by your relationship with me and
- Because I am holy – you are also holy

Peter echoes this command in 1 Peter 1:15-16

1 Peter 1:15–16 (NKJV)

¹⁵ but as He who called you *is* holy, you also be holy in all *your* conduct, ¹⁶ because it is written, “*Be holy, for I am holy.*”

Paul says it like this...

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV)

²¹ For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

The world tries to identify you based on your behavior...

- You're an alcoholic, you're a drug addict
- Or even on a positive note... you're a plumber, you're an accountant
- God doesn't identify you based on what you do
- God identifies you based on your relationship to Christ and if you are in Christ then he says... you are the righteousness of God
- I think it's important to note that holiness doesn't start with me – it starts with God
- Holiness isn't based on my behavior, but it's also important to note that your behavior will begin to reflect the one the you identify with
- God is holy AND
- He invites us into a relationship with Him that is so profound that it fundamentally changes us from the inside out AND
- We become like Him... WE ARE CHANGED, TRANSFORMED



- In fact so fundamentally profound is this change that happens in our life that the Bible equates it to becoming a new creation – something that never existed before

That's what Paul means when He says...

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NKJV)

¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

- Now our point of IDENTIFICATION is not our old nature, it's not our sin, it's not our addictions, it's not our brokenness
- Our point of IDENTIFICATION is Jesus Himself
- He now defines us and His definition of us is not based on my goodness or badness – but on His righteousness
- God says... YOU ARE MINE, I AM HOLY... SO
- BE HOLY BECAUSE THAT IS WHO YOU ARE
- That's why you feel guilty when you sin – that's not who you are

Secondly, Holiness means Separation

- In Leviticus 20:26 God says I have separated you from the nations
- The Hebrew word for holiness is kadesh – which means something which is cut off, separate or set apart
- Kadesh describes something that is elevated out of the sphere of what is ordinary... it is now extra-ordinary.
- The Greek word for holiness is Hagios which means to set apart, to separate and to put into a class by itself
- Holiness carries with it the idea that something is being set apart to be used in a distinctly special way
- The cooking utensils in the Temple were holy – but if you were to look at them you would say... looks like a fork to me... nothing special about it
- What made it special wasn't what it looked like, but how it was used

That is what God means when He says I've separated you out from all the other nations

- I have separated you from common use, you're not like the world
- I've set you apart for special use... to reflect the beauty and brilliance of God to a dark and dying world
- What does that mean in every day life? Does that mean I can't go to the movies or have fun with my friends?



- Let me ask you this question, how would you feel if Jesus tagged along?
- Lord, cover your eyes at this part – you might not like it
- Lord, cover your ears while I tell this joke because it might offend you
- We often forget... Because Jesus lives in us as Christians, He goes everywhere you go, listens to everything you listen to and sees everything you see
- And He says... I made you for so much more – I made you for myself

Paul gives us this perspective...

Philippians 3:7–8, 12 (NKJV)

⁷ But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. ⁸ Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ

¹² I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me.

- Notice the focus of Paul's life – I want to lay hold of that for which Christ laid hold of me... everything else is garbage
- Are you laying hold of that for which Christ Jesus has laid hold of you?
- Are you grabbing it? Are you pursuing it? Are you running after it?

Francis Chan in his book Crazy loves writes this...

“[Y]ou have to stop loving and pursuing Christ in order to sin. When you are pursuing love, running toward Christ, you do not have opportunity to wonder, *Am I doing this right?* or *Did I serve enough this week?* When you are running toward Christ, you are freed up to serve, love, and give thanks without guilt, worry or fear. As long as you are running, you're safe.”

As a believer, I'm not running from sin – I'm running to Jesus

- I'm not running from the flesh – I'm running to Jesus
- I'm not running from darkness – I'm running to Jesus
- And now I am focused on laying hold of that for which Christ Jesus has laid hold of me.

This is what Peter was addressing when he wrote...

1 Peter 2:9–10 (NKJV)



⁹ But you *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; ¹⁰ who once *were* not a people but *are* now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

- Because you've experienced His mercy, you're not like the rest of the world – you are different, distinct, special
- God has set you apart by touching your life, setting you free from death
- This is what God means when He says – BE HOLY, FOR I HAVE SEPARATED YOU FROM THE REST OF THE NATIONS.
- You are distinct, separate, different, set apart – BE WHO YOU ARE

Finally, Holiness means connection

- God says... I've separated you from the peoples that you should be Mine – this speaks of an intimate friendship with God
- As men we are so concerned that others know who we are... do you know who I am?
- God isn't really interested in who you are, but whose you are

Paul understood this reality in Acts 27

Acts 27:22–25 (NKJV)

²² And now I urge you to take heart, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship. ²³ For there stood by me this night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve

- If you are a follower of Jesus then your life belongs to God
- Only a follower of Jesus Christ can have the confidence that Paul demonstrated in the midst of a life threatening crisis
- I'm about to loose my house... really? Who do you belong to?
- I'm about to loose my job... really? Who do you belong to?
- If it's all up to you... then I agree... you're messed up dude.
- But if you belong to God... then you can say confidently I belong to God

Philippians 4:19 (NKJV)

¹⁹ And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.



EX: There have been times in my life when I would come up short. I'd look at the bills and I'd look at how much money I had and it was clear I didn't have enough to make it to the end of the month. I remember a time when I was literally short over 1000.00. My paycheck was only enough to cover my costs and we had some car issues that threw us over the line. The weight of it all was incredible. Then I remembered. I am not my own. I've been bought with a price. I belong to God. God will take care of me. So I prayed. Lord, I work for you. You know what I need. I need you to pay my bills. That afternoon, I walked to the mailbox and a check was sitting in my mailbox for nearly \$ 2000.00. God provided. The next day, some people that owed me money settled up with me and I received another \$ 2000.00. God blessed.

King Solomon wrote...

Song of Solomon 6:3 (NKJV)

³ I *am* my beloved's, And my beloved *is* mine.

- Over and over in scripture we see the analogy of being in relationship with God and it's compared to that of a bride to a husband with whom she is deeply in love
- We are given the analogy of sheep belonging to a shepherd
- John tells us that Jesus is the Good Shepherd
- NOW... It's hard to be proud about being compared to a sheep
- They are basically defenseless, vulnerable, stupid animals
- But when under the care of a loving shepherd, they are safe and content
- We are given the analogy of a child to his father

Romans 8:15 tells us...

Romans 8:15 (NKJV)

¹⁵ For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father."

We are told that we are His purchased possession

Ephesians 1:13–14 (NKJV)

¹³ In Him you also *trusted*, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.



- UNDERSTAND: You and I belong to God – we are connected
- That connection sets you above everything and everyone else
- Because you have this CONNECTION GOD SAYS...
- WALK IN THE HOLINESS THAT YOU HAVE BEEN GIVEN BECAUSE YOU'RE CONNECTED TO ME AND BECAUSE YOU'RE CONNECTED TO ME I WILL TAKE CARE OF YOU BECAUSE I TAKE GOOD CARE OF EVERYTHING AND EVERYONE THAT BELONGS TO ME

NOTICE: We've talked exclusively about what God has done for you to make you holy.

- We've not talked about how I can practically live this out in my life
- Lately what I've been discovering is FRIENDSHIP with GOD is the PATHWAY to HOLY LIVING
- We've been studying the life of Moses as we've gone through Leviticus, Exodus and Numbers in our midweek study

What I've been meditating on is Exodus 33:11 that says...

Exodus 33:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ So the LORD spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend.

Moses would go into the tent of meeting and speak to the Lord

- The Hebrew word for speaking suggests that they talked with each other, laughed together and even sang together
- It wasn't a one sided – I speak and you write... they were talking like friends do
- I could imagine walking by the tent and hearing times of intense of conversation, other times the sound of laughter, other times singing
- I don't know about you, but I want that kind of relationship with God
- But when I came to Christ, I came to Christ as a dirty, messed up person
- Though the blood of Jesus Christ washed away all my sins and my guilt
- I still struggled with memory history and human vulnerability
- Out of no where, thoughts and pictures and feelings would come into my mind – dirty little thoughts that I loved and I hated
- So I did what every good Christian does – I tried to push all those memories and feelings down
- That was my first mistake
- Until a moment of weakness would come and them – boom they were back... with power



And then I would make my second mistake – I would give into those memories and feelings... and I would get defiled by them

- KIND OF LIKE THIS... No Lord, I shouldn't look... it's wrong... please... I'm not going to look at that... please... don't... stop... don't... stop... don't... stop... don't stop... don't stop... give me that... awwww
- And then you feel defiled, humiliated and you crawl your way back to God and you feel totally defeated and ashamed
- But there is a better way... whenever these dirty little thoughts pop up – the kind you love and you hate... rather than suppress them, why not admit them and submit them to God

2 Corinthians 10:5 (NKJV)

⁵ casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,

- LIKE THIS... Look at what I'm thinking God, I love it and I want it... but I want you more. I am Your friend... HELP ME.
- This thing calls my name and wants to be my master... but You called my name and You're my friend... HELP ME.
- This thing calls for my allegiance and wants me to bow down to it... but I'm Your friend and my allegiance is to You... HELP ME.
- And as you call on His name – something wonderful happens
- His Presence becomes real to you and you begin to experience His peace, His joy, His love and you discover that nothing else satisfies
- You begin to fall in love with Him and your desires change from the inside out
- You stop wanting to do things that break His heart because you want to please Him MORE.
- It's like that old hymn that says... 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.

To Summarize... what does it mean to be holy?

Leviticus 20:26 (NKJV)

²⁶ And you shall be holy to Me, for I the LORD *am* holy, and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be Mine.



- To be holy means to find your **IDENTITY** in **GOD** alone and to be like **HIM** because that is who you are
- To be holy means to live a life that **REFLECTS** the **BEAUTY** and **BRILLIANCE** of **GOD** because you are special to **HIM**
- To be holy means to live a life of **INTIMATE FRIENDSHIP** with **GOD** because you **BELONG** to **HIM**

Some of you have been struggling and you've been fighting a losing battle
Guys... when you're losing a battle, sometimes the best thing to do is to
send up the white flag and surrender... **SURRENDER TO GOD**