"Be Holy"

Have we lost sight of holiness and the need to be holy? Hello, I'm Phil Sanders, and this is a Bible study "In Search of the Lord's Way." And today we're exploring what is means to be holy.

Welcome to In SEARCH of the Lord's Way! We're here to search the Scriptures for God's will. The Bible reminds us of God and what's sacred. It opens our eyes to see our Creator and His Son who died for our sins so that we can live with Him forever. The Bible also warns us of God's judgment. God sees and knows everyone of us, and we need to know and love Him for all the good that He does in our lives. Thanks for studying with us today. We'd love to hear from you and we want to be a part of your life each week.

The idea of being holy is far removed from many in our secular society. Many today don't care how they speak or what they do. They have no boundaries and call nothing sacred. They despise anyone who makes judgments on their pursuit of total moral freedom. Since they don't care whether there is a God or whether He God exists, they feel free to be lawless. They don't care how they hurt others as long as they get their way. And such people have no respect for anything. However, the day will come when they'll have to give an account to God.

Hebrews 4:12 to 13 says, "For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." Now we can ignore God in this life, but we can't ignore Him in the Judgment to come. Jesus came to be our Savior, yes, but the Lord Jesus will come again to be our Judge. Are you prepared?

Now we offer this study, Be Holy, free! And if you'd like a printed copy and live in the United States, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or, call our toll-free telephone number. That number is 1-800-321-8633. For our viewers outside the United States, we have programs and free materials on our website, www.searchtv.org. You can also see us on YouTube.

We'll now worship in song, we'll read from 1 Peter 1:13 to 16, and consider what it means to be holy.

Our reading today comes from Peter's first epistle chapter 1 verses 13 to 16. And there he talks to them about being prepared to be holy for God.

Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; because it is written, "YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY."

That's a reading from God's holy word and we should take it seriously. Let's pray together. Heavenly Father we're thankful that You teach us what You will have us to do and that You call us to live holy lives that show our respect for You and for others. Father grow in our hearts the passion and love for other people and to be holy in Your sight. In Jesus name, Amen.

The word "holy "is found 677 times in the Bible. That word "holy" is an adjective and refers to being dedicated or consecrated to the service of God. A holy person is set apart and reserved for God and His work. The word "holy" describes God the Father, the Lord Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. It also is used, we also use that word today, that word holy to speak of the Holy Bible, or holy angels, or the Holy of Holies in the temple, and the holy ones.

We must also remember that those who are set apart in Christ are also “holy.” John the Baptizer is called holy in Mark 6 and verse 20; so are the apostles in Ephesians 3:5. When the word “holy” is used as a noun, the same Greek word is translated “saint.” Christians were called saints about 50 times in the New Testament. Whole churches were called saints in 1 Corinthians and Philippians. Biblically speaking, there is no special class called saints in the New Testament.

When we look at our flaws and sins, we wonder how we are called “saints.” How can we be made holy? Well, Hebrews 10 verse 10 reminds us “we have been sanctified (that is made holy) through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.”

Now Ananias told the apostle Paul in Acts 26:18 that he was appointed as a minister “to open their (that is the Gentiles) eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.” Now you cannot please God or be a holy person without faith. Hebrews 11 and verse 6 says, “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.”

The Lord Jesus values His church so greatly. Now the church is made up of people; and He values the people who have come to Him by faith. Ephesians 5:25 to 27 says, “Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless.” Now we’re sanctified when we obey the gospel, the word of God, and are washed in the water or baptized into Christ. Paul was told to be baptized and wash away his sins in Acts 22:16. When we’re baptized, we are baptized into the death of Christ (Romans 6 verse 3). That’s when the body and blood of Christ sanctifies us and makes us holy.

When the Lord Jesus saves us, He also sanctifies us or makes us holy. Paul told the church at Corinth in 1 Corinthians 6 and verse 9, “Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? (then he said) Do not be deceived.” You see when they were pagans and unbelievers, they were lost. He then names several sins that they committed in 1 Corinthians 6 and verse 10. But in verse 11 Paul tells what God has done for them even though they were sinners. He said, “Such were some of you; (that is you sinned all these ways) but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.” So it is God through the body and blood of Jesus that washes us and makes us holy.

And for this reason, as holy people, we should recognize that God in all, recognize God in all that we say and all that we do. We need to put Him first. We worship a holy God; we have a holy Savior; and the holy Scriptures come from the Holy Spirit. We must always worship with reverence and awe. We must never treat God as if He were common. Hebrews 12:28 to 29 says, “Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire.”

Now treating God as holy means listening to Him and obeying His commandments. We have no right to make up our own ways of worshiping Him; we must put His will first in our lives. In Leviticus chapters 8 and 9, Moses tells of the worship in the tabernacle of the high priests and his sons, Nadab and Abihu. Now ten times the text says that Aaron and his sons obeyed “just as the Lord had commanded Moses.” Now when we get to Leviticus 10, we find something different.

Leviticus 10:1 to 3 says: Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took their respective firepans, and after putting fire in them, placed incense on it and offered strange (that is unauthorized) fire before the LORD, which He had not commanded them. And fire came out from the presence of the

LORD and consumed them, and they died before the LORD. Then Moses said to Aaron, “It is what the LORD spoke, saying, ‘By those who come near Me I will be treated as holy, And before all the people I will be honored.’” When holy people worship, they recognize the holiness of God and honor Him. Their focus is on pleasing Him, not themselves.

Holy things are the opposite of something common or profane. Paul urged in 2 Timothy 2:19 to 22, “Nevertheless, the firm foundation of God stands, having this seal, ‘The Lord knows those who are His,’ and, ‘Everyone who names the name of the Lord is to abstain from wickedness.’ (and then he says) Now in a large house there are not only gold and silver vessels, but also vessels of wood and of earthenware, and some to honor and some to dishonor. Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from these things, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified, useful to the Master, prepared for every good work.”

1 Thessalonians 4:3 to 7 says, “For this is the will of God, your sanctification; (that is you making yourself holy) that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you know how to possess his own vessel (his body) in sanctification and honor, not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God; and that no man transgress and defraud his brother in the matter because the Lord is the avenger in all these things, just as we also told you before and solemnly warned you. For God has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but in sanctification (or holiness).” God calls us to be honorable and have holy lives, free from the lustful passions of the world. We’re not called to remain as we were in the world before we became Christians. You see repentance matters.

When we have a relationship with Christ as children of God, we will not remain in sin. Romans 6:1 and 2 says to Christians who were baptized into Christ, “What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it?” We must not go back into sin. Romans 8:12 to 13 tells brothers and sisters in Christ about the choices they make. “So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh— for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.”

Now what does a Christian do when he or she realizes they are children of God and heirs of heaven? Well 1 John 3:1 to 3 says, “See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. (but) We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is. And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.” Now a hope-filled Christian will purify himself. He will repent and put away his old sinful ways. He will turn to the Lord.

Corinth was a city filled with wicked, pagan people who didn’t know the Lord. And Paul taught them the gospel and how Jesus died for their sins (1 Corinthians 15:1 to 3). And he spoke of all the wonderful promises that we have in Christ. And he urged them in 2 Corinthians 6:17 to chapter 7 verse 1, “Therefore go out from their midst, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; then I will welcome you, and I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty.” Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God. Are you bringing your holiness to completion? Now that’s something that you must do!

God wants our whole lives to be devoted and consecrated to Him. Since we’re bought with a price, the blood of our holy Savior, we should honor God by living for Him every day. The Lord Jesus said to all people in Luke 9:23 to 25 that, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must (must) deny himself,

and take up his cross daily and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it. For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and loses or forfeits himself?"

Some folks are baptized and think they have done all that was necessary to please the Lord, never thinking about spending the rest of their lives serving Him. Well we do have a cross to carry as long as we live. We must be devoted for life. Paul urged the Romans who became Christians in Romans 12:1 to 2. This is from the New King James Version, he said, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." We are to make ourselves an ongoing, living sacrifice to holiness and being acceptable to God.

I speak to many people who tell me they are Christians but are no longer practicing their faith. They want to be known as Christians but have quit worshiping with the church. Now it's certainly difficult to maintain a holy life when people stop worshiping and associating with God's holy people in the church. When God's influence is missing, Satan's influence will take its place. Sin can rob you of your faith and it can harden the heart against what is good and right. I can see no value, no value, no value in saying that you're a Christian but not living it out in your life.

Now holy people hunger and thirst for other holy people and holy things. I recall in 2021 how lonely and weary people were of not being able to worship at church because of the pandemic. When the pandemic finally declined and people were able to worship at church again this led many to a happy reunion with other brothers and sisters in Christ. And being with them physically and worshiping together filled their souls with love and brought many tears of joy. We praised God and edified one another in songs and prayers and sermons. The Lord Supper with each other reminded us of our need for communion with the Lord and with brothers and sisters. I tell you what we do in worship at church is holy. It's the family of God expressing love, praise, honor, and thanksgiving to the One who created and saved us. In worship we draw close to a holy God. And I'm thankful for that.

Let's pray together. Heavenly Father we're thankful that each Lord's Day we can gather together and worship You with others who are of like mind. People who want to do what is right and good. Help us Heavenly Father always love You, to love one another and to live holy lives. In Jesus name, Amen.

Let's look at 1 Peter 1:13 to 16 again: Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."

Now since we have a holy God, a holy Savior Jesus, and the Holy Spirit, we should strive for holiness. Hebrews 12:14 says, "Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord." You can't go to heaven if you haven't been made holy by the blood of Jesus and aren't striving to live a holy life. You must become holy and live in holiness.

To become a child of God and be freed from sin, you must put your trust in the Lord Jesus who died for your sins and rose again from the grave. You must turn from sin to righteousness in repentance. You must be willing to confess Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and to be baptized into Christ. When you're baptized, God sanctifies, makes you holy, washes away your sin and frees you from guilt and the consequences of sin. Romans 6 and verse 4 says, "We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might

walk in newness of life." Now once we become free, we must strive to live faithfully and avoid the stain of sin. I hope you've become a Christian in that you have the promise of eternal life.

We hope our study, Be Holy, has caused you to think of your soul and then to turn to God. If you live in the United States and want a free printed copy, send your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or, call the Search office toll-free at 1-800-321-8633. Now for all of our viewers outside the United States, we have free programs and biblical materials on our website, www.searchtv.org. SEARCH is also on YouTube! Subscribe to our channel, "SearchTVMinistry" and be sure to like the programs. Well, we also offer free Bible Correspondence courses. Now don't worry, we're not asking for money. We're here to help you draw close to God.

We do ask that you show God your love by worshiping at church. My friend you need a church family. Now if you can attend, don't neglect worshiping at church. There's probably a church of Christ near you. And if you're looking for a healthy, Biblical church home, we'll gladly help you find one. We ask you to check out our church map on searchtv.org. We'll be back next week, Lord willing. So keep searching God's Word with us, tell a friend about the program. As always we say, God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord's Way.