



## **2 Corinthians 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.

## **Romans 6:22**

But now being made free from sin,  
and become servants to God,  
ye have your fruit unto holiness,  
and the end everlasting life.



## Do Not Offend God!

Psalm 99:3

**Be ye holy for I the LORD your God am holy.** This Old Testament command is repeated in the New Testament in I Peter 1:15,16. Have you ever thought of that statement in depth? It is easy to think of it as God simply giving us a command that we are to obey. But HE is telling us to be holy because HE is holy. The implication is that as **LORD**, HE is the sovereign of the universe. By the way, many speak of the sovereignty of God and seek to apply long chapters of definition. They apply it to the predestined to hell. But that is not the sovereignty of God. The sovereignty of God has a simple definition, yet its depth is worthy of great thought. The sovereignty of God is God's right to do what HE wants with that which is HIS. All things are HIS. HE, therefore, has the right to do whatever HE wants with all the universe. HE is not only LORD, HE is God. God speaks of HIS position as Creator of the universe and all that is therein. It is hard to comprehend that HE knows every star and has named all of them. Even those we've yet to discover or see. This then speaks of HIS omniscience (all knowing) and HIS omnipotence (all powerful). HE has all authority. HE is all glorious. Now with these beginning thoughts in mind, think of this verse, Psalm 125:17 ***The LORD is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.*** The importance of holiness is number one on God's list of principles and priorities. For a man, especially a Christian, to be unholy is an offense to God.

**JAB**

## What Does Holiness Mean?

I Peter 1:14-16

The most common Greek word for **holy** in the Bible is the Greek word *hagios*. This word and its derivatives are translated in the New Testament as *sanctify, hallow, holy, etc.*. The definitions, as given in the Greek lexicon (dictionary), are as follows: *set apart, sanctified, consecrated, holy. Its fundamental ideas are pure, chaste, separation, and dedication unto God.* One cannot be dedicated unto God and not be separated from the world. Holiness must begin in the heart, but it must also spread to the entire man. Romans 12:1 says: **I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.** Notice this verse involves the body. Focus in on the last word of verse one. It is from the Greek word *latreia*. It is not important that you remember the Greek word, but it is important that you understand that it is the root word for *worship*. Speaking of your bodies, it is reasonable worship to *present your body* a living sacrifice, holy, (that is your body set apart for God's use in whatever manner HE chooses). Some folks decide what **they** want to do for the Lord. That is religion. When Jesus Christ is Lord in your life, you enter an area of holiness in which HE makes the choices for your life. The first step in holiness means God makes the choice for me. But, a living sacrifice? I thought sacrifices were dead. This pictures for us an ox. It can be a dead ox on an altar, or a living ox whose life is a living sacrifice, pulling the plow for his master.

**JAB**

## Is My Body Acceptable Unto God?

Romans

**12:1,2** Yesterday's devotional sought to establish an understanding of holiness. We gave you a definition of it. (Reread it to refresh your memory). Since God is holy and HE has commanded us to be holy, **we must seek to understand how holiness is applied.** Habakkuk 1:13 states: ***Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity...*** In the first lesson we said that God is omnipotent. HE is not limited in HIS power, only in HIS person. HIS person is Holy and will not sin. But HIS holiness is more powerful than all the forces of evil combined. The fact HIS eyes are so pure HE will not behold evil, nor look on iniquity, we begin to understand about our bodies being presented holy and acceptable. To whom is the body to be acceptable? God! It is not worship (with our life) if men cannot see that our life is a reflection of the holiness of God. *Be careful little eyes what you see*, i.e. tv, internet, etc. Worldliness takes us from holiness. James 4:4 ***Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.*** If you are a carnal Christian, you cannot be holy. You also will be a friend of the world, especially since you provide it an excuse for not wanting what you profess to have. The body is what men see. At this point it is not addressing the inner man but the outward appearance, what men see. Jesus told us we could tell a tree by its fruit. Can others see your body is a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God? **JAB**

## Is It Acceptable?

Romans 12:1

Our verses on day two included I Peter 1:14, ***As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance:*** If we are a friend of worldliness, we are not holy. I John 2:15; ***Love not the world, neither the things that are In the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*** Men can say they love God all they want, but when they seek to apply liberty to the flesh, instead of being free from the power of the world's allurements, then they do not really love God. If they think they do love God, but are worldly, then they obviously have no idea of that level of love. ***Fashion yourself according to the former lusts,*** is to emulate the world's sound, talk or look, but add the name of Jesus to it with a few Bible verses. One will notice that the **primary** appeal is to the flesh. But the religious part makes my conscience feel good about it. When ladies dress immodestly, and men with their pants down to their knees, (both sexes trying to dress in a way that the world thinks is "with it,") they are not trying to help others see a holy Christ, rather a hip Jesus. If your car has a strong beat when others come to the traffic light, they may think you're listening to some filthy rock station, but you are listening to a local contemporary Christian music station. This shows your body is not a holy, living sacrifice unto God. Sensuality and emotion are not signs of walking in the Spirit, nor are they signs of a body that is holy and acceptable unto God. If one lacks knowledge of the holy, they will not understand these things.

JAB

## Acceptable

Romans 12:1

Sometimes, it is easy to overlook the word **acceptable** in Romans 12:1. To understand this word, we take a peek at Proverbs, 21:3, **To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice.** In breaking down this verse, consider first the word “so.” It has from its Hebrew root the connotation of ethical obligation, i.e. (obedience). “Justice” in this context has the idea of *faithfulness to what is right as established by God, via His Word.* It particularly applies to our personal relationship to others, as well as to God, in virtue and love. “Judgment” *is carrying out the right action toward another, regardless of personal relationship.* That could involve a foe, a friend, or even your family. Acting in the power of the Spirit and walking according to HIS Word, one will rebuke a Peter when he is wrong, and speak of the good things when he is right. There is not one standard for friends or family, and another for all the rest. Now we see the word “acceptable” in Proverbs 21. It means tested and passing the test of God’s muster or judgment. Sacrifices were very important in the Old Testament because they pointed to the work of Christ. There is no question that a right kind of sacrifice is acceptable to the Lord, but doing justice and judgment is more acceptable. The New Testament equivalent in our text is defined from the Greek, *well pleasing and agreeable with what God wills and recognizes.* On your own, read Philippians 4:8; 1 John 2:15. These serve as good tests to see if what we do in our body is **holy and acceptable unto God.**

JAB

## But How?

Romans 12:1,2

As one can plainly see, we are called unto holiness. God expects our body to be holy and acceptable unto HIM, yea a living sacrifice. In I Peter 1:14-16; we are told the Lord commands us to be holy because I the Lord your God am holy. It is reasonable then to see that HE will make holiness an issue at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Notice we are told it is our reasonable service to present our bodies holy and acceptable unto HIM. Hold that thought in mind while we take you back to Matthew 4:10 ***Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt Worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.*** The worship of God, we pointed out on day two, is presenting yourself holy unto God. This shows both the importance of holiness and the fact that being holy is to worship God. But how do I become holy acceptable unto God? That is where Romans 12:2 enters the picture; ***And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*** The word *conformed* reminds us of I Peter 1:14 and ***not fashioning yourselves***. They come from the same Greek word. It is referring to that outward thing which is appealing; ***For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.*** (I John 2:16). The desires of the flesh, the eyes, or our pride, leads us to play both sides of the fence, trying to be religious and yet fulfil those desires. Revelation 3:16, God calls it lukewarmness and He spews that person out. **JAB**

## **Awesomely Holy**

**I Peter 1:15,16**

One of the great tragedies of our time is the local church, and particularly the individuals of the local church who are faithful and involved, are either ignorant of, or indifferent to, the apostasy and corruption in the world, the church, and individual Christians, yea even in our fundamental churches. But think of these passages: Rev. 4:2b-5 ***a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne, 3 and he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald. 4 and round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold. 5 and out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.*** Now consider Eze.1:26-28 ***And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it 27 and I saw as the colour of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it, from the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about.*** Between now and tomorrow's devotional, think of the fearful and awesome sight of the throne of God, keeping in mind that our God is a consuming fire, Hebrews 12:29.

**JAB**



## Shamefully Unholy

## Revelation 20:11-

**15** The text for today needs to be understood in relationship to yesterday's picture of the throne of god. How awesome is it? Think on this passage from I Tim 6:15, 16 ***Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; 16 Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen.*** Only Potentate means Jesus is the only true pope. There are no others, for potentate means **absolute ruler**. We know by Prov. 21:1 ***The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.*** That is why the Anti-Christ and all the kings of the world are not a threat to HIM. Ps 2:2-7; illustrates this perfectly: ***The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, 3 Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. 4 He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. 5 Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. 6 Yet have I sat my king upon my holy hill of Zion. 7 I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.*** Our text speaks of the "White Throne" Judgment when all the unsaved are cast into the eternal lake of fire. The awesome holiness of God will be revealed to show that no man in this mortal flesh can approach unto HIM? How should this affect Christians?

**JAB**

## Shamefully Unholy Saved People

Ezekiel 33:8

The first two days we saw our Great God's throne and HIS great white throne. The unsaved, great and small, rich and poor, free and bond, and all without Christ, cast into the fiery lake. But who else is there? It may be the saints of all ages, if you are saved, that includes you. Imagine a man making a futile plea with God as he makes this statement, Ps. 142:4 ***I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man care for my soul.*** It is someone we know. Perhaps we worked with them. God had laid that person upon our heart to witness to them. Why? Ezekiel 33:11 ***Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die...*** There is no pleasure whatever for God that the wicked die in their sin and go to hell. Instead, we see the heart of the one who so loved the world in I Tim.2:3,4 ***For this is good and acceptable is the sight of God our Savior; 4 Who will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.*** Coup[e that with I Peter 3:9 ***...not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*** As in our text above (Eze33:8), with each drop dripping off our hand crying out "Why?" (as the blood of Abel cried out against Cain from the ground). Perhaps we hear the voice of our own mind speaking in arrogance, fear, or apathy as we rejected the Holy Spirit's urging to witness to that person. What an unholy shame for a saved person in that hour.

JAB

## What Is An Unholy Testimony?

I Peter 2:9

In regard to yesterday's devotion, we continue that thought with today's text in mind which states: ***But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an HOLY nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light:*** We are called out of darkness into marvelous light. Therefore we should be a holy priesthood. We left yesterday's devotional thinking on the blood of the lost man to whom the Spirit had impressed upon us to witness. II Corinthians 5 addresses our cleansing from sin and being new creatures. That is from darkness to marvelous light. As new creatures we are to be ambassadors for Christ calling a lost world to salvation. Our salvation teaches us in Titus 2:11-12 ***For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men. 12 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world;*** Our call and command to holiness was also emphasized in romans 12:1 to be holy in body in such a way that it is acceptable unto God. It should be such that the world sees we are different, i.e. ***a peculiar people***. Our pride that makes us reject holiness in living and personal standards as well as preventing us from witnessing, is the same pride that will give an earned declaration for all of heaven to witness in which our pride is then totally humbled, is ***saved so as by fire***, (I Cor. 3:15). That brethren is what is called "an unholy testimony". Let us provoke one another unto love and good works to shew forth HIS praises.

JAB

## Misplaced Priorities

Jeremiah

### 6:16

If you did not look up our text (as you should all the references in this devotional), it reads as follows: ***Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein.*** We live in a day of technology. One of our dear senior saints, **Bro. George MacLean**, wrote me of his decision concerning this issue. He stated in a Facebook post the following: I need to spend much more time in detailed in depth Bible study and prayer. I will also make better use of my Bible computer software. Although I have used Facebook to witness from time to time, it has been an interference. I feel I have neglected my in depth Bible study and prayer over the last year. It is so easy to allow things and activities, **even if they're worthwhile**, to interfere with our spiritual life, and I feel myself drifting away from my Lord. After making reference to the many good Bible study books in his library, Bro. MacLean added, mostly, I need to draw closer to Jesus Christ through HIS Word. Pray that the Lord will open HIS Word to me. Something need not be evil to draw us away from time in God's Word and prayer. Personally, I've found I must agree with the man who made the statement, **My biggest failures are prayer failures.** May I add Bible study and meditation failure to that. Yes, even good things can become ***misplaced priorities*** when they take us from good quality time in God's Word each day.

**JAB**

## **Misplaced Faith**

**Jeremiah 6:16**

The problem we face today is the same problem in principle that was faced in Jeremiah's day. The tools are different, but the principles are the same. We have placed our confidence in technological marketing methods and external organization leaving the old paths. It is good to do all things decently and in order (I Cor.14:40), but the church house and the Christian life is not a business. The order it is to have is the order God has given it. Each saved person is a priest of God, and has a duty to witness the gospel where they are, as well as to get it to all the world via missions. Technology can be used, it is not wrong nor is organization. But it does not take the place of God's Holy Spirit, nor HIS Holy Word! Our job is to call a lost and dying world to repentance. We name sin with the hopes of leading lost souls to a loving holy god who paid the penalty for their sins. We help them to see Jesus Christ will forgive, and cleanse them from those sins. (I Cor.6:9-11). As John the Baptist in the wilderness, we are to be a voice of one crying in the wilderness to prepare the way of the Lord via repentance and faith in MIM! We need to be less concerned about marketing and methods, and more concerned about the souls of men. Dan. 12:3 (read it) speaks of shining as the stars forever, those who turn many to righteousness. (It does not mean they get saved but they are turned by you to the one who will save them. They must decide to receive or reject HIM.) We cannot be holy as we ought if we are not witnessing for HIM.

**JAB**

## Temples Of God

## I Thessalonians 4:1-12

Many who read our text above may be reminded of the verses which are not listed. Those verses are 4:13-18. They are verses that take us to our future hope, while at the same time giving us comfort when a loved one has gone on to be with the Lord. Make sure you read today's text. Notice planted in a middle verse, **7, For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.** When we speak of holiness, we are not speaking of sinless perfection; however, holiness is a matter of sinning less. We are reminded of the testimony aspect we mentioned in the first week of presenting our bodies a living sacrifice unto God. Our bodies are what man sees. I Corinthians 3:16,17 ***Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? 17 If any man DEFILE the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.*** I Corinthians 6:19,20 also emphasizes this fact: ***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.*** Every saved person who truly loves the Lord must see him or herself as a temple of the very Holy Spirit. We should also see ourselves as set aside for the work of God. The local church and the individual Christian must see self as a place set aside inwardly and outwardly as a holy place set up for glory of God.

JAB

## **We Have A Call**

I Thessalonians 4:1-12

I call your attention to v7, ***For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.*** If you are saved, you have a very specific verse here showing you are called to holiness. We saw in I Peter 1:15,16 it is a command. Our salvation teaches us, Titus 2:11-14 ***For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, 12 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and GODLY, in this present world; 13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ; 14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.*** A godly person is a Christ-like person which is a holy person. This is the direction the Holy Spirit leads everyone who is truly saved, from the moment they are saved. If we don't grow in holiness, then we grieve and quench the Holy Spirit, and we cannot present our bodies holy unto the Lord. Notice these snippets from today's text: V1, ***how ye ought to walk and to please God...***v3 states: ***For this is the will of God, even your sanctification...*** Sanctification uses the same Greek word that could have been translated *Holiness*. It is the will of God, we are told, which goes along with what our salvation teaches us, what we are commanded, and to which we are called if we are indeed saved. Then in Vv 4-5 the sins of fornication and concupiscence (desire of sinful pleasure) should not be part of us, fornication carried out in the body, while concupiscence is in the desires and mind. **JAB**

## **We Have A Call**

## **I Thessalonians 4:1-**

**12**

Yesterday we left off with what keeps us from holiness, which is the call God has on every Christian's life. As we continue to look at the verses surrounding v7, we see v6 places within this context ***That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter...*** We are told the Lord avenges for that brother when we do. Having said all this as it pertains to holiness in the first 6 verses notice v8: ***He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his Holy Spirit.*** Sometimes you will hear a preacher name sin that some Christians do not want called sin, i.e. contemporary rock and rap religious music. This verse is letting you know it is not the preacher you despise, it is HIS Word and therefore it is God. Psalm 138:2 ***I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy loving kindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.*** Don't lose sight that verses 1-12 make up one paragraph in Greek, according to the arrangement of most fundamental Greek scholars. Vv9 & 10 deal with brotherly love. Not only to love the brethren, but to increase in our love of brethren. Vv11 & 12 then warn us about personal conduct that we mind our own business and not be critical of how others conduct theirs. What we need to see in this is that God is showing us how we ought to live daily and all these things are connected to holiness. This is a call of God upon each Christian for which we will give an account.

**JAB**



## Not Ashamed Of Holiness

Romans

**7:14-25** A part of our holiness is seen in what we stand against when we stand for the Lord Jesus Christ. Romans 1:16-32 starts out by stating in v16-18: ***For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. 17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith. 18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;*** After this, the rest of the passage goes into a list of vile sins. It is showing us the difference between holiness and unholiness. Not ashamed of the gospel of Christ means we unashamedly proclaim it. Then v17 shows the tie in with the righteousness of God. V18 in which we see God's wrath mentioned, it is not only against all ungodliness (unholiness since God is holy), but also it is against men who hold the truth in unrighteousness. They know they are sinners, unholy, and headed for hell. They know that Jesus Christ is the only way of salvation. But they both, do not accept it, nor will they allow it to interfere with their personal depravity. There are saved people who do not hold the truth in unrighteousness on the one hand, but on the other hand, they do not witness the gospel. They are ashamed of it! Why? We are more concerned about what man will think than what God will think. We've lost sight of our accountability.

**JAB**

## Against The Grain

Romans 7:14-25

What we need to see in our text is that holiness is something that goes **against the grain** in the Christian life. That's one reason we don't witness nor separate from sin. When we got saved, the old nature remained in us. The reading of our text shows the Apostle Paul had to wrestle this as we do. He even cried out, ***O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*** It is one reason he says that to be with Christ is far better, Phil 1:23. It's also why in II Cor.5:1 he desired to be clothed with his house not made with hands, i.e. a glorified body without sin. This tells us an important fact: **Holiness is not natural nor desirable in any way to our old nature.** Holiness is repulsive to our old nature. That is why we must be careful to walk in the Spirit, having done all to stand, Eph.6. We have already pointed out in this series on holiness that separation is included in its makeup. Titus 2:10 ***That they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things.*** *Adorn* comes from the same Greek word from which we get our word cosmetics. Holiness is the makeup God our Savior desires to see upon HIS bride. Many times in our personal life, our home, or in the church, someone has a quest for power, wealth, or the pursuit of pleasure. They desire all that is pleasing to the flesh, yet not equal to the debauchery of homosexuality, abortion, drunkenness, and other such sins. Therefore, our old nature justifies sin within us, while at the same time fighting a vicious fight against the conviction afforded by the new nature.

JAB

## Against The Grain

Romans 7:14-25

In Hebrews 11:24,25 we read this: ***By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; 25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;*** Sin does have pleasure, but only for a season. Its wages are not worth the pleasure, for they continue to pay long after the joy is gone. All of us are hedonists within our old nature. A hedonist is one whose life has as an ultimate aim its own pleasure. It is the fight especially of these last days, II Timothy 3:4 ***...lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;*** For most of us who are Christians, the truth of the matter is: holiness is abstract, intangible, elusive, and unattainable. The old nature, however, fully understands the pleasures of sin, so it works feverishly to convince us that various things are not wrong. To have personal standards, etc., when others who name the name of Christ do not, finds your old nature telling you not to be legalistic. In addition, the desire to be liked and accepted by the respectable public, makes us not want to; but, ***having done all to stand, stand therefore...*** Our old nature will naturally entice us to gravitate to false teachings concerning grace. We end up ***tuning the grace of God into lasciviousness*** (no restraints), as Jude 4 teaches of the last days, and Satan takes us at his will. Every saved person needs to understand that holiness must work within the confines of the new nature God gave us at salvation. Only then as we walk in the Spirit can we go against the grain of Satan, the world, and self.

**JAB**

## First Things First

Proverbs 9:10; Job 28:28

On the pathway to the will of God, which is rooted and grounded in holiness, we must do first things first. Christians understand that people must see they are sinners before they can be saved. A street preacher in California named Roy Comfort has made live videos of interviewing people on the street. He goes through the Ten Commandments. Most think they are pretty good people. If there is a heaven they think they will make it. He will then ask them about the Ten Commandments. He will say to them, *Have you ever taken anything that does not belong to you?* They will answer *yes*. He will then point out **thou shalt not steal**. He also asks if they've ever coveted something that someone else has? He does the same with telling a lie. Before it is over, he has helped people to see they've broken about all the Ten Commandments. Then he shares with them the gospel of salvation. The point is this: a person must see he is a sinner and needs a Savior. Jesus Christ is that Savior. (Read Acts 4:12; and John 6:37). As a Bible believer, I see plainly that repentance, as well as faith, is needed in getting saved. However, the work of paying the debt of sin was paid by Jesus Christ when HE shed HIS sinless pure blood for our sins (I Peter 2:24; I John 2:2). Repentance does not mean we stop sinning by our own power and are now worthy of salvation. That's penance. Repentance realizes, I can't stop sinning, nor can I take my sin sway. But repentance and faith takes God at HIS Word and is fully willing for Christ to cleanse him of his sin.

**JAB**

## First Things First

Proverbs 9:10; Job 28:28

Yesterday, we established that the first thing in getting saved is that one must realize he is a sinner. The first step in holiness for a Christian is to deal with sin in his life. Psalms show us this in Ps. 139:23,24 when it states: ***Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thought: 24 and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*** This attitude is one that realizes that a holy God cannot look on iniquity. Ps.19:12 ***Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults.*** This is the person who realizes that there are sins he commits and yet he has no desire to do so, as we read of the Apostle Paul in Romans 7:14-25. Ps. 90:8 states: ***Thor hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance.*** Yes, we have things that we did not know are sin. When we don't know something is sin and do it, it is still sin. It becomes transgression against God as well as sin when we know it is sin and do it. Romans 7:7-9 ***What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. 8 But sin, taking occasion by the commandment wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. 9 For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.*** We have such a *lack of the knowledge of the holy*, we do not know of the sin that stands between us and *fellowship* with God.

JAB

## First Things First

Proverbs 9:10; Job 28:28

This week we have seen that the first issue with which we must deal in order to have fellowship with God and lead a holy life, is the issue of sin. We considered Psalm 19:12, 90:8, 139:23,24. The point is, we often have things in our life that are sin, but we don't know they're sin. One who loves God wants to rid himself of anything that would interfere with his fellowship with God, and also that would offend God. Two more passages need to be considered. Heb.4:12,13; ***For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. 13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.*** We find out the Word of God is the measure of what is and is not sin. That is why the law is the strength of sin. For it reveals what sin is. A second passage is seen in I Cor.4:5; ***Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.*** Not only will the Lord use HIS Word to judge, but since the Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path, its light will shine to reveal the hidden things of darkness (our sins of which no one knows), and it will make manifest the counsels of the heart. How will we have praise of God then? We will realize how great HIS grace is!

JAB

## First Things First

Proverbs 9:10; Job 28:28

Are you wondering why I've used the same title and text verses each day this week, yet we have not dealt with the text? It is because we are trying to establish first things first in order to understand these texts. Let us consider them:

Pro.9:10 ***The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.*** The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. That is great if you know what the fear of the Lord actually is. It was defined in Pro.8:13 as: ***The fear of the LORD is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the forward mouth, do I hate.*** Do you see the beginning of wisdom also starts with turning from sin? The fear of the Lord includes hating evil; pride (which affects most all of us at different times); arrogance (which is a terrible trait for anyone; yet, I have found it too often in preacher brethren); and the forward, hard, harsh, evil, mouth). This shows each of us may have some areas on which we must work. We may not see these sins as that bad, but just think, Christ died for them as well. If HE had not, we would go to hell for all eternity. Although we don't see it as "that bad," the judge of all the universe does. But what about knowledge of the holy being understanding? Job 28:28 ***And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.*** When a Christian truly grows in the knowledge of the holy, he will depart from any form of evil, because he will deal with first thing first.

JAB

## The Approach Unto God

Exodus 3:5; Isaiah

**57:15** Exodus 3:5 states: *And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.* This is the story of Moses who was on the back side of the desert tending his father-in-law's sheep. He sees a bush burning, but it is not consumed by the fire. He goes to see this strange phenomenon. As Moses approaches the bush, God speaks to him from the midst of the burning bush. HE tells him to take his shoes off because he is on **holy ground**. When one thinks of shoes, he thinks of the reasons we wear them. For example, they protect our feet from dirt; from things in the ground that may pierce the foot, i.e. thorns, etc. A preacher told the story of a lady years ago who made sure that anyone who came into her house, took off their shoes at the door. She had a beautiful and expensive light colored carpet. She wanted nothing of which a shoe may touch that would stain or ruin her carpet. It was not the person she refused. It was the dirt and filth of the shoes, road tar, mud, and other unappealing things that could stick to the bottom of the shoes and rub off on a carpet. But the person himself was always welcome. So too, God wants our approach unto HIM to be without the filth of the world from our walk in this world. Remember the priest of the tabernacle in the wilderness? An animal was sacrificed for the sins of the people. The sacrificed lamb represented the shed blood of Christ for our sin. Yet the priest would wash his hands before entering the tabernacle as a sign showing our approach unto God must be in holiness. **JAB**



## The Throne Of God

Exodus 3:5; Isaiah 57:15

Today, we want to consider Isaiah 57:15; ***For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.*** I like what the late Dr. Henry Morris stated about this verse. *God, the Creator of time, is beyond time; HE inhabits eternity. Those of truly contrite and humble spirit can actually dwell there with HIM. HIS name is Holy.* Think of the high and holy place where HE dwells. Rev.3:21 ***To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.*** Sitting with HIM in that throne because we overcame. But how did we overcome? Through a humble and contrite heart. Think of the word **humble**. Isn't that the opposite of the heart of the one in Prov.8:13 **...pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the forward mouth...?** What about the contrite spirit? **Contrite** is to be broken and bruised over our own sin. A true turning of the soul to God is usually followed by both the joy of forgiveness; but also, sorrow because we have offended our holy God. Hence, we have lost time in which good might have been done. The good news is, it is natural for the God of holy love to have mercy upon the repentant soul. I sit with HIM in HIS throne? Oh the unspeakable joy and blessing God has for truly repentant believers.

**JAB**

## The Next Step In Holiness

I Peter 1:14-16

We have established that we are to be holy in body and spirit. That is why we confess sin. Psalm 66:18 **If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me:** "Sin lieth at the door" was the statement which God made to Cain concerning the fact HE would not accept his sacrifice. We are to cleanse ourselves as I Cor.7:1 states: ***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.*** Holiness of the flesh and spirit includes its perfecting in the fear of God, which Prov.8:13 told us was to hate evil. Holiness pleases God and it is the truest way in which we can worship HIM. Jude 20,21 states: ***But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, 21 Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.*** Holiness results from building ourselves up on the most holy faith. *Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.* Rom.10.17 states: Time spent in the study of God's Word with a heart to know it, and obey it, leads to our growth in holiness. This growth will then lead us into a right prayer life as we pray in the Holy Ghost. Notice the Apostle Paul's prayers in Ephesians 1:16-23; 3:14-21; Colossians 1:9-13. Is this similar to how we pray for others? If we do pray this way, notice Jude 21, in which we see this helps to build us up in the love God. By the way, this also gives us a better understanding of the why of I John 2:15-17. The next step in holiness is drawing closer to God.

**JAB**

## The Next Step In Holiness

## Psalm 29

Psalm 29:2 states: **Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.** Holiness of life allows us to enter the beauty of holiness. It is the way in which we can give the glory that is due unto HIS name. Read the entire Psalm if you have not done so already. Notice the power of the voiced of the Lord in verses 3-9. If you would share this Psalm with your loved ones, ask them if they understand the power of the voice of God to do these things. Notice what Hebrews 1:3 states about the use of HIS voice, or word; ***Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and UPHOLDING ALL THINGS BY THE WORD OF HIS POWER, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high;*** The one who spoke the worlds into existence i.e. "Let there be light, let there be fruit bearing trees, etc., HE spoke it into existence. HE not only spoke it into existence, HE continually upholds it by the Word of HIS power. Now go back to Ps. 29:11 ***The LORD will give strength unto his people; the LORD will bless his people with peace.*** HE that created the heaven and the earth has the power to carry out his promise for those who are HIS. Holiness of life leads to God giving HIS strength unto HIS people, and regardless of the circumstances or trials, it gives continual joy and peace to their heart. Day one this week shows holiness leads to answered prayer. Today shows strength, peace and HIS upholding.

**JAB**

## The Next Step In Holiness

Psalm 48:1-3

Our text for today reads as follows: ***Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness. 2 Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King. 3 God is known in her palaces for a refuge.*** TRUE HOLINESS, Ephesians 4:24, blesses the Christian in joy, peace, answered prayer, the strength of God regardless of the trial and circumstances, HIS upholding, and now we see HE is our refuge. *When my mother and father forsake me, then the Lord will take me up*, Psalm 27:10 teaches. You see, God is a refuge. If we will walk according to HIS Word and will, HE will be our refuge. Notice Psalm 62:5-8; ***My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him. 6 He only is my rock and my salvation: he is my defense; I shall not be moved. 7 In God is my salvation and my glory: the rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God. 8 Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us. Selah.*** Sometimes we hit the **suddenly's** of life. A tragic accident; the loss of a job; and a host of other things that hit us unexpectedly. We turn to others and they may tell us they care, but they can do very little. The words of man, the hands of man are limited in that they cannot touch the strings of the heart. However, God is our refuge. You can pour out your heart to HIM as to no other and get exactly the help you need if you trust in HIM and lean not unto your own understanding. Holiness leads to having access to our greatest refuge; GOD!

**JAB**

## Conditional

## Psalm 50:23

Aside from the many blessings that come from God as a result of walking in holiness, we see that those blessings are conditional. Our text states: ***Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I show the salvation of God.*** Praise from a holy heart is honoring unto God. We see also if we order our manner of life (conversation) aright, HE will show us the salvation of God. This refers not only to the salvation of the soul from sin but it refers also to deliverance in our trials. As Hebrews 4:16 states it: ***Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*** I am not a scholar by any sense of the imagination. However, those who are, teach that this is referring to the fact that even at the very last moment, as Peter in prison in Acts 12, he was delivered. Don't pass over ***ordereth his conversation aright***, too quickly. We need to have a Biblical reason for the way we live, the standards we have, and what we do with our life. It should point to holiness. I have a hand written list that I do not know if it came from my study of Psalm 119 or a book I read, or a sermon I heard. It gives me a list of seven "musts" if I'm going to be a holy man. 1) I must hate sin; 2) I must hate self-exaltation; 3) I must hate the shelf, I Cor. 9:27; 4) I must discipline my mind, Phil.4:8, 5) I must discipline my body. Romans 12:1 6) I must discipline my emotions Eph.4:14; 7) I must discipline my will, Gal.2:20. May we all order our conversation aright. JAB

## **Time To Take Inventory**

**Proverbs 28:13; II Cor.**

**13:5** The two texts for today calls us to take inventory in the matter of holiness. Businesses will take inventory at different times. If an inventory comes up short, then the business will do more inventories through the year until things are right. In like manner, we should take inventory of the soul. Sometimes, as a result of being separated from worldliness and faithfully attending church, we begin to think we are in good shape. I remember working for a company that had a bad inventory. We implemented some things which we felt would turn it around. The next inventory proved that notion wrong. We felt everything was going well because of the numbers in our sales and the precautions we took in our inventory. This called for the company to look deeper within to find the problem. Sometimes, people will fast when facing a daunting situation in which they know they're in need of help. But the problem is, the fast is primarily in the body and emotions, not in the spirit. That type of fasting is of little value. When a man examines himself concerning his faith as it regards to holiness and obedience to God, if he is honest he will have a contrite heart for the areas of failure. As we follow the request of Psalm 139:23,24, we will have a change of heart and a change in our walk with God. The heart and walk will be more holy. True sorrow within will have the positive affect of holy changes within. Therefore, Romans 12;2 renewing of your mind, leads to an outward body (walk) that is holy and acceptable unto God. It is time for all God's people to take inventory.

**JAB**

## Be Ye Holy

I Peter 1:15,16

The last five weeks should have shown by God's Word HIS expectations of us to be holy. We see it is the top priority of heaven. You should see that HE has never compromised HIS holiness in order to save a soul. Notice Hebrews 12:14, ***Follow peace with all men, and HOLINESS, without which no man shall see the Lord:***

When a Christian is turning to the Lord to be more holy, he is not tuning from one religion to another, nor from one idol to another, and not from one evil to a lesser evil. The bottom line is this: We are tuning to God with our whole heart! We actually need the strength and power to turn from those things the inventory has shown to be wrong. Proverbs 20:27, ***The spirit of man is the candle of the LORD, searching all the inward parts of the belly.*** To make that turn, we need God's enabling grace and power, for we cannot turn in our own authority and power.

This inability does not lessen our obligation to turn to holiness, rather it is the impetus that beckons us all the more to turn to HIM. Col.3:1-3 ***If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God 2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. 3 For ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God.*** When our heart, with all its affections and desires, returns to its rightful owner, it will then discover the joy unspeakable God has always wanted it to have regardless of earthly circumstance We need many more weeks to cover this subject, but, perhaps God has given you foundation by these meditations in which you can grow through your own pursuit of God

JAB