

The Power of Holiness - how can we be holy this side of Heaven?

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[0:00] We're going to go to the Word of God now. I'm talking on a theme of holiness tonight. I think it's an important subject to grapple with. It's obviously a very biblical subject, a very deep subject. What does the Bible say about holiness? Is holiness possible this side of heaven? And how can we be holy? The Bible talks about how we can be holy, how we can know a holiness. And we do know for sure that we are living in an unholy world. Amen? This is an unholy world. It's a world where there's a lack of absolute truth, or at least they deny it, the absolute truth that we do have. There's a lack of Christ-centered churches. And that can make it hard when many care little for the things of God. But God's Spirit can enable us to live clean in an unclean world. To live clean in a dirty world. And we see this truth of holiness. And I'd like to just unpack that together and look at what the Bible tells us about such a subject. What is holiness? Now some would think of holiness as robes and cathedrals and the worship of a God who feels very far, far away and distant. Holiness for some means to focus on all the things that you are not to do. Others think of holiness as an incredibly high standard. Something that really is beyond reach. It's something judgmental, maybe legalistic.

The holiness of God. So many people grapple with it and got different thoughts about it. It's certainly a very profound truth. And the Word of God calls the tabernacle holy. It calls the temple holy. It calls the items inside the temple and the tabernacle holy. God's name is holy. God's Spirit is called the Holy Spirit. And the Bible is called holy. Holy Scriptures.

And guess what? God's people are called holy. That's you and me. That's what we're called. The word saints means holy ones. And you are saints. You don't have to wait for the Pope to declare you one because God declares you a saint. And he's the only one who can make you a saint. And so you are the holy ones. The holy people of God. The holy nation. What does holiness mean then? What does it say about holiness in the Word of God? Holiness, the word holiness, it means separation.

To separate means to set apart. To disconnect. Like cut. It's, as someone has put the definition, I like this one, holiness is a conformity of the heart and the life unto God. It's conforming the heart and the life unto God. I think that's an old Puritan said that. Our Lord lived the perfect and holy life, didn't he? We see our Lord is the ultimate example to conform to Christ.

[2:59] Christ. We're called to be like him. We think of the Holy One who is Christ, our Saviour. The Holy Child Jesus. The Holy God in flesh incarnate. Christ. God manifest in the flesh.

He's the ultimate model, isn't he? Of the perfect holy life. If we want someone to aspire to be like, if we want to copy someone who is perfectly holy, then it's conforming to Christ, isn't it? That is the ultimate. And so holiness is, I put to you, not something weird or off-putting. Now some people have got the idea it's something unattainable or something that's a bit strange. But holiness is not weird or off-putting in the Bible. It's actually called beautiful. There's something good about holiness. We see that, for example, in this scripture and there's other occasions where it talks about the beauty of holiness. It says, Psalm 29, verse 2, give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name. Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness. So there's a beauty, there's a beautifulness about holiness. And holiness is something that's praiseworthy. It's something that glorifies God. It's something that we should seek after. It's something we should want. It's something that we want to do to please God,

to honour him ultimately, isn't it? And what is the key?

I put to you tonight, really the fundamental in the call to holiness is that it's relational. The call to be holy is the call to know God. It's the call to love him. It's the call to follow him.

It's relationship with God. And sometimes we miss that in all the trappings of what we think is holiness, that we miss the fundamental, which is knowing our saviour, isn't it? It's knowing Christ. It's knowing him. It's loving him. It's being conformed to Christ. It's relationship with God. It's not really a list of rules, although the rules can help us, but it's not that. It's relationship.

[5:06] It's our relationship with God. It's our connection with him. And he's not calling you really to do something. He's calling you to come unto him. He says, come unto me. He says, come, come and drink.

He says, come and receive. He's calling you to himself. He's calling you to come unto him. And he walks with us, doesn't he? Through life's journey. And the more that we come unto him, as we draw near to God, guess what? He draws near to us, doesn't he? And we get that closeness, and that closeness becomes ever closer. Is holiness possible this side of heaven? Yes, it is. Yes, it is.

Believer, believer tonight, it is possible to be holy. Yes, it is. The Bible says we can be sanctified 100%. Now, I'm not saying, I'm not teaching sinless perfection, which is an error, a heresy. But we'll unpack that. The Bible says we can be sanctified 100%.

Because here's a scripture that tells us just that. It says we're perfected forever. Think of that.

Hebrews 10.14, it reads, for by one offering, by Christ on the cross, Christ crucified, it says, by one offering, one offering he hath perfected forever, forever them that are sanctified.

That's you and me. So the perfecting work of God has been done really back 2,000 years ago at the cross, hasn't it? Where our salvation was purchased, where our sanctification really comes from.

It's all about the work of Christ, isn't it? And as far as holiness, so there's the truth of, and there's really a twofold side to this. We could call it positional sanctification.

[6:58] So our position is that we are sanctified. We are called holy.

Really, it's, you could say, it's who I am in Christ Jesus. And it happens the moment that we get saved. Paul said in Colossians 3, verse 3, for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. So when you're saved, your life is in Christ. You are in Christ, and Christ is in God. And you can say, I am a child of God. I am hid with Christ in God. I am his, and he is mine. And I am forever saved. Positionally, I am in Christ. Now, of course, it's very important to be clear that you're not thinking that you're saved when you're not, or hoping that you're saved when you're not, but that you are trusting the biblical way to be saved, which is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, to trust him for your salvation, to trust, Jesus died for my sin on the cross. He rose again. I trust him as my substitute, as my saviour, for his payment made on my part, that my sin can be forgiven. I can have cleansing and the heart made right with God. I can be in Christ. And if we are in Christ, we are forever in Christ. We're forever saved. There's a wonderful assurance that you can know that, that you have, present tense, eternal life.

You're passed from death unto life. So there's that wonderful joy that you can know of salvation. And so positionally, I am in Christ. I've got positional sanctification. That's my position. That's my standing. And we see in 2 Corinthians 5, verse 21, it tells about this transfer as an exchange. It says, for he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. So our Lord is the spotless lamb of God, is the sinless, perfect man, as well as the perfect God. He was made to be sinless, for us. And we read in one of Peter's letters, it says that our sin was carried on his body, on the tree. So our sin was nailed to that cross. In effect, the penalty of it, the just payment of our sin, the death penalty, he paid it. And he has made Christ to be sin for us. The perfect one was made our sin, so that we could be made his righteousness. It's kind of mind-boggling, isn't it? Think of that transfer, that exchange, the exchanged life. So he transfers his holiness to us, like his, he credits it to our account, his

righteousness, and he becomes our righteousness.

The word of God shows us that sanctification is a reality that we can have in the now. It's mind-boggling to think of it, that such as we, or such as me, unworthy, can be the righteousness of God in Christ. It's a staggering reality that that's what the scripture tells us, that we are the righteousness of God in Christ. And the word of God shows us that we can have it in the now. And we can be holy in the present tense.

Also, we see that sanctification is a kind of transformative process that we grow in it. So, at salvation we have everything, yet there is a discipleship. There's a growing, there's a going forward. And I know there's some big fans of discipleship here that we've been talking about. If someone is contemplating getting baptised, we might restart the discipleship training, because it's good to get grounding. There's lots to get our head around when we first get saved. And it's good just to set some of that foundation so we clear on some of these essentials.

And so, but we're always growing. You might have done the discipleship class 20 years ago. We're still growing, amen? Every one of us, we've still got lots to learn. Everyone. Even though we might have all kinds of theological training, there's always more to learn about the word, about our Lord. And it's the same with sanctification, that it's a process. There's an ongoing learning, a growing, a transforming. It begins the moment we surrender, we trust Christ, we come under his Lordship. And when God starts something, he finishes it. It says, here that's begun a good work, he's going to complete it. He'll see it through. So, at salvation we come into that relationship with God. And I trust we get passionate about the things of God. Our Lord's calling us to come unto him, to come to the place where he is, and we can walk with him in sweet fellowship. And then we see our sanctification is, as we trust the blood of Christ was shed for us. We see that in the next scripture there, Hebrews 13. It talks about how our Lord Jesus, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, he suffered without the gain. When we think about the price of holiness, this was our Lord's precious blood. Our holiness is by his work, by his blood. It's not really a work of our own doing. The price was paid at the cross. And God affects his holiness in us also by his Holy Spirit.

[12:41] We see that in this verse here. We see that God's Spirit dwells in believers. And by the work of God's Spirit, we're sanctified or made holy over time. And of course, in the context, it talks about all kinds of sin in 1 Corinthians 6. And 1 Corinthians 6 verse 11, it says, So, there's a great encouragement in the Word of God that no matter how deep and dastardly our sin, that we can be washed, that we can be cleansed, we can have a brand new heart, a brand new start, we can be born again. And all of that baggage that was our sinful former self is taken away.

As it reads that, If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things are passed away. Behold, all things have become new. And that's true for you, believer today, that you can know that washing, that sanctifying. And we see it's by the name of the Lord Jesus, it's by the Spirit of our God.

Thank God it's not by our own effort. It's by his Spirit. It's by the Holy Spirit. And of course, we know the Holy Spirit convicts believers of sin. He guides us into righteousness. He empowers us to live according to God's will. And this sanctification is like a journey that goes on.

Until glory, really. And then there's another stage, the glorification. But we see the sanctification is that journey of our lives. It's as we become more and more like our Lord. As we grow in that. And we get that sense we set apart for his purposes. So we set apart from and we set apart unto. There's that truth as well that not only are we set apart from the world and sin and that old way, but we set apart unto. To set apart unto his service. To be his. Set apart for his purposes.

[14:58] And so there's all of that. We could unpack much of this. I'm really just scratching the surface. It's such a big subject, really. But in a nutshell, he bestows his holiness to us.

He bestows his holiness upon us. He was made sin for us that we could be made righteous in him. And it's the Spirit of God that affects that.

Will we let God do that work in us as a believer, as a Christian? That you just let the Holy Spirit empower you to live as would accord with his will.

To realise you're on that journey. Every one of us is on that journey. To be more like him. To grow in holiness. And he bestows that on us. It's like, as the Bible talks about the armour of God, the breastplate of righteousness.

And when you think about it, in Ephesians 6, the armour of God, really nothing in all of that spiritual armour is what we can do or obtain on our own. He gives it to you.

[16:12] So you just stand there. I know when I joined the army reserves and they fit you out for a uniform. They measure you all up and they give you the uniform.

You know, it's the same in Christianity, isn't it? We get the spiritual armour. We report for duty and he gives us the spiritual armour. All of those pieces of the armour. And one of those pieces is the very breastplate of righteousness.

It's his righteousness. So really nothing in the spiritual armour that he gives to us is anything we can obtain on our own. We receive it. We simply receive it. When you think about holiness, there's lots of different definitions or ideas.

People can take pains but never find true holiness. There's some people that have all kinds of religious observances and go through all kinds of rituals and rites and pilgrimages and you name it. But holiness is not religious observance. It's not about knowledge. It's not about morality or externalism. It's not about outward respectability.

[17:18] It's not a list of rules. It's certainly not self-righteousness. It's not isolationism. It's not performance-based. As if some might think it's based on human efforts.

That they strive to be holy. Of their own making. But they miss the mark. Because the holiness is the work of God. True holiness is the work of God, isn't it? Our holiness is Christ.

It's Christ. Receiving Christ. We see in 2 Peter 1 it talks about the exceeding great and precious promises that were given. And it says, By these he might be partakers of the divine nature.

Partakers of the divine nature. To think of that, that we can be partakers of his nature. So think of it, friends, tonight.

Do we know him? Do we honour him? Here's another scripture that talks about where our sanctification is found. Truly it's Christ. 1 Corinthians 1 verse 30 it says, Paul addresses the Corinthian saints and he says, But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us, Talking about Christ, Is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification, holiness in other words, and redemption.

[18:37] So it's saying that in Christ, he has made unto us all of these things. He has made our sanctification. Sanctification. So it's Christ who is your holiness.

So positionally we are sanctified. Now let's look at the other side of the coin. It's practically. Of course positionally we're saved, we're sanctified, we're redeemed, we're God's possession. Then practically there's also the outworking of it in our lives. There's things that God would point out to us by his spirit. What he wants us to get out of our lives.

And what he wants us to put into our lives. This is the other side. We talked about positional sanctification. The position. You're sanctified. You're a saint. Now we're going to look at practically, practical sanctification.

How does that work in practice? In the actions of our lives. We see that for example, in 1 Thessalonians 4, 3-4. It says, This is the will of God, even your sanctification.

[19:39] That you should abstain from fornication. That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel. In sanctification and honour. So here's the practical aspect here.

That you should abstain. Obviously from immorality here. That you should know how to be living as a holy vessel. That you be living for the honour and glory of God.

And that's really the daily work, isn't it? Where the Holy Spirit prompts us and helps us to clean out and clean up our lives. So that ultimately our lives honour our Lord.

They honour God. We see the aspect here of self-control. Of temperance. Of deciding the decisions of our life with respect to the will of God.

That God wants you to live righteously. We see that holiness is God's will here. He calls us to it.

[20:37] To be that set apart people. And we see, for example, in 1 Peter, it talks about the extent of this holiness. He says, But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.

Which is really all manner of the conduct of your life. And because it is written, be ye holy, for I am holy. So there's very strong words here, isn't it? God calls you to be holy as he is holy. Now that's just an unfathomable standard. To be holy as God is holy. And holiness is a decision of your will.

It's talking about the conversation, the conduct of our lives. How we choose to live. Do we have that mindset that the choices of life that we make, Actually, I want to do what would please him.

What would honour my Lord. Because he wants that for me. And that's the best for me. We see Paul, when he talks to Titus, says this. Of the grace of God.

[21:39] It says that the grace of God teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts. That we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. Of course, looking for the blessed hope.

It's talking about ungodliness, worldly lusts, denying that. And rather living on the positive, soberly, righteously and godly. So, we're beckoned to that, we're called to that.

The good news is that holiness is not something that you're supposed to achieve on your own. He enables that. He empowers you. Because friends, let's be honest here.

We can't make ourselves holy. It comes from God. It's his. He gifts it to us, doesn't he? Like salvation. He gives us holiness. He gives us sanctification.

He gives us salvation. It comes from God. He imparts it. He makes us a holy people. He imputes it such that it's his righteousness. It's gifted.

[22:37] We see the truth of the new man and the old man. And the Bible talks about how the old man with the old ways and desires and lusts is put to death.

And then it says how the new man is that righteousness. And it says that the new man after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. So, it's that born again picture there too, that the old is gone but the new has come.

And God's created us in righteousness and true holiness. It's hard sometimes to fully fathom the truth of this, isn't it?

The depth of this, that our holiness is in Christ. God does the work. He's created us. He's created the new man.

He wants us to be that new man, that new creation. And he enables us to walk with him and live with him. It's a wonder that he does that all by his grace.

[23:44] So, we've got a new man. And as part of the new man, we've got a new mind. It talks about the mind of Christ. A desire to do his will. To think how he would think. Paul says, I delight in the law of God after the inward man.

In the context though, he talks about struggles. He talks about where the rubber hits the road. And how there's the struggle on the inward side of the flesh and the spirit.

But he does say he delights in the law of God after the inward man. So, he's got that inward desire, that delighting, that wanting to do God's will.

Sometimes it doesn't always translate into action, does it? We can all have that struggle. But our desire, our delighting should be, our aim should be to walk as he would walk. And so, again, I put to you that holiness is Christ in you.

It's his holiness. We're called to have the mind of Christ. And to be like him. I love this next scripture here that talks about how he that saith he abideth in Christ ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.

[24:55] So, there's a truth here that if we say that we abide in Christ, it should translate into the walk that we walk.

The way that we walk, how we walk, to walk humbly with our God, to walk in love, to walk in the light, to love and forgive as he would. Our aim should be to walk as he would walk.

Amen? And so, when we think about it, holiness is being more like Christ. It's being like him. It's wanting to be like him. It's wanting to do what he would want to do. It's having the mind of Christ. It's having the walk of Christ. We see another scripture like that. In 1 Peter 2, it talks about, even here unto where you call, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that you should follow his steps.

There's a truth here where we should see where his steps lead and put our footsteps into those footprints. Amen? That we should place our feet into his footprints.

[25:53] That we should follow his steps. Walk after him. And as the saying goes, you know, the bracelet some people wear, what would Jesus do? There's a truth to that.

When we think about life and how we live, and we've got a decision to make, what would Jesus do? What would Jesus say? What would Jesus, what action would Jesus take in, faced with that decision that we're faced with?

How would Jesus treat other people? How would Jesus treat the circumstance that we're faced with? And we know the truth of the fruit of the Spirit, as we talked earlier today.

God wants us to be walking in his steps. To be like Christ. To have the fruit of the Spirit. To be a faithful servant. We see in 1 Timothy 4.12, Paul exhorts young Timothy.

He says, Let no man despise thy youth, but be thou an example of the believers. In word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

[27:00] So Paul's telling Timothy, Don't worry about what others are saying. You just be an example. You just be an example. Be a godly example.

In the words that you speak. In the conduct of your life. In the love that you show in your spirit. Let it be right. In your faith. In purity. When you think about that, how does that translate into our lives? Into our shoe leather? Can we aim to be good husbands? To be good wives? Good neighbours? Good friends? Good subjects? Good citizens? Good in private?

Good in public? Good in the place of business? And good at home? So that we're fair dinker. Good. But there's no fakeness that we live 24-7 as believers.

Amen? And that can be hard when you're getting scrutinised by, I know, in workplaces you can get picked on. That's normal, isn't it? And especially as a Christian.

[28:02] We've got to measure up to others' measurements of us. But what matters is that we're faithfully God helping us. We're living the life that he's called us to live.

We're living as he would want us to live. We're being a testimony. 24 by 7. And holiness really, when you boil it all down, holiness is becoming more like our Lord, isn't it?

Holiness is becoming more like Christ. Having that spiritual mindset of setting our affection on things above. It talks about, you know, being separate, touching not the unclean thing.

He says, I will be a father unto you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. If we set our affection on things above, then our affection, our love, will be to our father, won't it?

If we truly love our Lord, we love the father, our father God, then we want to be sons and daughters that he's pleased with. And so we want to leave those questionable things.

[29:08] Touch not the unclean thing. Don't even touch things that might be of question. Determine to glorify God with your life. And we're meant to be shining lights.

And this world is dark. It's a dark, dark world. And it's getting darker. And Philippians 2.15, I love this one. It talks about blameless, harmless. Again, that's aspects of holiness.

It says that you've been blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom you shine as lights in the world. You know, this world needs our light to shine.

Our little light needs to shine, doesn't it? We're strangers and pilgrims here. We're laying up treasure in heaven. Really, we're passing through as a talk this morning of just the concept of time and eternity.

What matters is eternity. That's what matters. And our joy is the word of God and prayer, of fellowship. We value that. We want to shine as lights. We want to be a testimony.

[30:09] We want to cultivate holiness in the inner life of prayer, of fasting, of studying his word, of fellowship, of our walk with God.

And, of course, we find a great resource in his very word. Our Lord says in John 17, 17, sanctify them. Of the disciples, he says, sanctify them.

Through thy truth, thy word is truth. So we see the great resource we have is the word of God. And we can come under the authority of the word. And true holiness is our spiritual life.

And he is our life, isn't he? And so sometimes we can miss the mark, and I've made that mistake at times. Because holiness is not conformity to a code.

It's not based on not doing certain things. Holiness is conformity to Christ, essentially. That's what we need. But when we have conformity to Christ, then we will want to have a conduct that's becoming, won't we?

[31:15] If Christ is our model, then we'll want to please him. We'll want to honour him. We'll want to be more like him. And so we'll let go of that which is not of him. Or that which is not appropriate or fitting.

Because as we become more like him, we'll become less like the world. And we'll be transformed into his image. We're going to go from glory to glory. It talks about Christ being formed in us.

So there's a kind of sense where we've got to be that clay that he shapes. That Christ be formed in you, was Paul's prayer for the Galatians. So we think of holiness as conformity, not to a code, but conformity to Christ.

That's a higher standard, isn't it? Conformity to Christ. It's conformity to the will of God. And it's a cleansing too. There's many scriptures, I can give you references, of cleansing, of clean hands, of a clean heart, of a clean conscience, of a clean mind.

There's a purifying. As we conform to Christ, that cleansing happens. And it talks about, as 1 John 3 relates, of, as when he shall appear, one day he shall.

[32:29] It says, when he shall appear, we shall be like him. For we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

So we think of that, that in the prospect of his appearing, one day we shall be like him. Ultimately, we're moving towards that. And that we will be purified, even as he is pure.

That's a high standard, isn't it? That's a higher standard than any man-made standard, that we would conform to Christ. And what matters most of all is our relationship with God.

To get that right, then the other things will fall into place. And when you think about it, if that right relationship with God matters to you, if there's something that comes between you and him, then you know that that's something you have to get that right.

If there's something that's blocking that relationship with him, that's hindering your service, that's hindering your effectiveness, your usefulness, then you want to get that right.

[33:33] You want to get that right. Fundamentally, holiness is our relationship with God. Now, the fact is, relationships can get damaged. And that can happen with our relationship with God too.

We know cases of that, you know, through life. You see people that seemed strong, now they're weak as water. We see some that were fired up and now they've just fizzled out and there's nothing to see.

And our relationship with God can be damaged. Sometimes God may use chastening to help us get right. We know situations of believers in sin.

There's a chastening that's happening for them. Hebrews 12.10, it talks about how some are chastened. That we're chastened. It talks about that we might be partakers of his holiness.

So there's a sense where if we're not right, if we're not in right accord with him, there's some chastening. In other words, the discipline of God. You know, we'll feel out of sorts.

[34:40] We won't feel right. Our relationship is damaged. It's broken. There's something hindering my walk with God. And you know that. There's sin there. That you want to get that right. You want to get that right.

And there's a chastening. It's even just that cloud that you live under when you know you're not in the will of God. And so we see the real help for us today as believers here tonight.

Hopefully there's some kernels of truth. Some little nuggets of truth you can pick out of what I'm saying here tonight. That there is that personal practical holiness that he calls us to.

And really when you think of that practical holiness, I put to you, it's really the crucified life. It's the crucified life. As we know, as Paul talks about, it's no longer I that lives, but Christ who lives in me.

And the life that I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God. It talks about in Galatians 6 that the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world.

[35:48] There's a real truth here in terms of this practical sanctification of learning to crucify the flesh. Of the ungodly affections. Learning to die to self, to die to the world.

And we think of the martyrs and missionaries, the revivalists and reformers of old. They went to great lengths and some to their very deaths, to persecution, to torture and suffering. They went to the extent of that. And what about us? Are we willing to crucify the flesh, to die to self, to die to the world and the things of the world?

Well, some of us put together a list of things. How we are crucified to the world. And some of us listed some nine things. How are we crucified to the world?

We're crucified to the world and its sin. The world and its wisdom. The world and its friendship. The world and its pollutions. The world and its elements.

[36:52] The world and its contamination. The world and its corruption. The world and its filth. The world and its spirit. These are all things that the world has got that we're crucified to that.

In other words, we're not of that anymore. We're citizens of another kingdom now, that we don't belong to this world.

Of course, the reality is we've still got mortgages or rent or there's bills to pay, there's life to live, there's loved ones to support. There's the necessary livelihood we have to make on this planet. But as far as the world and its ways, the world and its spirit, the world and its ethos, its morals, its values so-called, we're crucified to that.

We're different. We're set apart. There's a good setting apart. And there's also the truth that for every one of us, we've got the old man and the new man.

[37:56] Which one are we going to feed? We want to feed the new man. Amen. We want to starve the old man to death. All right. So we see that there in Colossians 3. Again, talking about the old man and the new man.

And it's talking about really the unsaved man, our old lost self. And then it's talking about the new man, the born again believer, the new creation, the believer in Christ, the born again one, the new man.

And it's saying here in Colossians 3, verses 8 through 10, that there's things to put off. It's got the picture, really. This putting off is like taking off a garment, you know, taking it off.

That you take off this clothing, this dress. You're taking off. It says putting off all of these things. Anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

Lie not one to another. Seeing that you've put off the old man with his deeds. So it's talking about putting off as a garment, taking off that clothing, that dress, taking it off the old man with his deeds.

[39:05] And then instead of the old man to put on, to be clothed with, the new man to put it on as a clothing, as a garment. A new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him.

So there's kind of a deliberate intent here. As you're crucified to the world, you're putting off the old man, you're putting on the new man. There's an intention there.

It's practical sanctification, isn't it? You're putting it into practice that you love God. So to kind of bring it to a close, to sum it up, holiness is about relationship with God.

It's not about conformity to measurements of men. It's not a conformity to a code, but it's a conformity to Christ. That's a higher standard.

That's the highest standard. That we want to be like him. And one day we shall be like him. And for the meantime, we're purifying ourselves such that one day we'll be as pure as he is pure.

[40:05] There'll be that growing in holiness, that growing to be like him, that following in his steps, that relationship with God. The question is, how is that relationship?

How can we deepen it, strengthen it? Friends, tonight I trust you can be encouraged to think about holiness. Think about holiness today. That's really about your vibrant relationship with God.

How is it? Has that relationship grown dim? Has it grown cold? Look, I can have times like that. I can be weak and failing.

I think humanly it's in all of us to sometimes let that relationship slide, slip. We're not where God wants us to be.

We don't think of his will. It's not always front and centre in our decision making. Sometimes we put it on the shelf. We don't always contemplate when we're making decisions.

[41:04] Do we seek him? Do we wait on him? Do we want what he wants for us? Do we find a clear direction and follow that? That his will matters the most, most of all, in every consideration.

That holiness should encompass every aspect of our lives. So that how we conduct ourselves, we're not one thing here and another thing somewhere else. So when people see you at the workplace, at the school place, at the home place, in the community place, when you're interacting with others, that you're not pretending or something different when you're not in church, for example.

That you're not talking different somewhere else. That you're a Christian wherever you go. Every footstep, every footstep that you take. That God helping you in every area of your life, that you'll honour God and live out his holiness.

And friends, I'm not meaning to put you under a yoke here tonight either. That holiness is some irksome, loathsome thing that's a duty and a burden.

But really, it's a liberation. Because it's the best way to be. It's the best way to live. The best way to live is to honour our great Lord and Saviour. It's to have a mind and affection.

[42:33] To set their affection on things above. That really, it's the ultimate and best way to live. It's that we honour him. And we conform to Christ. Not to a code.

Not to our own code. Because our own code will not be enough. But to be conformed to Christ. That's the ultimate. And so I urge you tonight to know that great truth of sanctification in the positional sense.

That I trust as you are a saved believer here. Listening or you can be by faith as you trust him. Simply trust him. And know his salvation for you. Know your sins carried on the Saviour.

The burden of your sin, your guilt. Know his forgiveness. Grants it by faith as you trust him. Know that salvation. And know that sanctification happens at the same point really.

And yet there could be second blessings and third blessings and fourth blessings. I mean, we can all have moments where we might get closer to God. And need to get closer and closer time and time again.

[43:38] There's blessings abundant. Such that sanctification is a transformative thing that happens through our walk with him. But through every aspect of our life, we'll want to be conscious of what would please him.

And what would honour him. And to surrender our life to his will. God helping us to find it. And here's the place to find it. It's in his word, isn't it? To find his will there and to fulfil it. And to keep your mind focused on what is godly. And ask God to help you to bless your world too. So that your words will bless and build up others.

So you can be a testimony. Especially as we think of this darkened world we're meant to shine as lights. God helping you, you can be such a light. You can be a shining light.

I think of John the Baptist, he was a burning and shining light, wasn't he? To be such a man. To be such a woman. For the glory of God. Let us pray. Our holy God, we thank you.

[44:43] Holy Father for your holy word. For your holy salvation. For the holy work of the finished work of the cross. That we can trust you and know you. Unholy as we are inclined to be.

As we are by nature. Yet, Lord, you can grant even your holiness to such as we. Lord, we pray for anyone that's here present. Others that might be perhaps watching.

Lord, that each one can know that great truth. That we are positionally sanctified. In other words, we have that standing before you. That you've declared us holy. Because Christ is our very holiness.

Our sanctification. And Lord, help us in the practical side. To not neglect. To separate from that which is wrong. To know your will to do it.

To not take a questionable choice. But rather to be minded to do your will. Lord, to have an affection.

[45:46] That's minded on things above. On heavenly truths. And help us to open your word. And search it. To find that model that you are to us, Lord.

That we would be like you. In all our interactions with others. That we'll be more and more like you. Until we see your face. And we will be purified. Even as you are pure.

Lord, we thank you. For the meantime. Help us in the practicalities of life. Forgive us, Lord, when we fail. To live that crucified life. Help us to take deliberate intent.

To crucify the flesh. To die to self. To die daily. Lord, to be a living sacrifice. To be conformed to your image.

And Lord, we thank you for all these things. That it's only by your grace. That we can ever come closer to who you are. It's only by your work. It's only by your spirit.

[46:48] That we can be such a people. We thank you, Lord. That by your empowerment. We can be that people. And help us to live like it. Through this week ahead. Such that we'll be lights that shine.

And shine ever brighter. We pray for your glory. In Jesus' name. Amen.