

The Six Actions of Holiness to Change Your Life

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[0 : 00] All right, good morning. If you're new or visiting, it's a long weekend. We tend to get a few new people rolling in. And no, we don't ask you to hold your hands up or anything like that.

But welcome to our time of worship. My name is B.K. Smith. I have the pleasure of being one of the pastors here. You're kind of joining us in the middle of our summer series. We're doing this summer series kind of on the basic truths of the Christian faith.

You can call it spiritual boot camp. You could call it Christianity 101. Does not matter. But we are on what I believe are some of the fundamental areas, although basic, we constantly need to be reminded of.

The first sermon I did in this series was, I entitled it The New Life. That to be a Christian, when Jesus calls us to be one in him, he's not doing a renovation.

He's not adding some reinforcements. God is not making us a better version of ourselves. He's actually creating us a new version of ourselves.

[1 : 13] We are new creations under God. And if you do any readings, there's a lot of older type books, the Puritans, perhaps you've heard them. But what kind of inspired this sermon series for me is a man by the name of Horatius Bonar, who was a Presbyterian pastor back in Scotland who lived in the 1800s.

And I just took note that so many of these pastors had written at this time, talk about just the basics of Christian faith. And the reason is, because a lot of times we're struggling to understand these basics.

And these basics form the foundation for how we are to live in Jesus Christ. Amen? So when Horatius Bonar calls us to this new life, he says, it is something deeper.

It is something truer. It's where our affinities are with the things above. Its sympathies are divine. It is a life that sides with God in everything.

And this new life came at the cost of a life, and that life was the life of Jesus Christ. It was purchased for us at the cross of Calvary.

[2 : 33] The second sermon is about how our lives are intertwined both with Jesus and the Holy Spirit. The Christian life starts with Jesus, but after we have become saved, the Holy Spirit makes his home in our lives.

John 14, 23 says, Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them.

Pretty powerful, right? When we commit our lives to Jesus Christ, he's promising to send a part of the Trinity to make his home with us.

Verse 26 says, But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring you to your remembrance all that I have said to you.

So now we know we have this new life. We have this power of God that lives with us. The next question is, how do we live this life? Please turn in your Bibles to Philippians 2.

[3 : 39] Philippians 2. We're going to actually show some of the verses here, so if you don't have a Bible. But this is the overall question that we're dealing with in this series.

It is in verse 12, Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence, but much more in my absence, and get this, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

Notice there is a command that God is calling for us to work out our salvation. And then he kind of drops line 13, For it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

There's this wonderful tension. And if you were to ask me, BK, how does this happen? Tell me how this works perfectly. I'm going to say, you got me. I can't tell you exactly how it works.

But we do know there is a command given to us by God to work out our salvation. And yet, at the same time, God is working in us.

[4 : 55] Verse 14, he says, Do all things without grumbling or disputing, that you may be blameless and innocent children of God, without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world.

Let's just put us in this verse now. We live in crazy town now, right? It's a crazy place out there. And look what God's calling us to. To shine as lights in the world. He's not telling us to hide. He's not telling us to fight everything that's in the world.

But he's telling us to shine as lights in the world. How? Holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ, I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain.

What Paul's saying, hey, if you do these things, make the work that I have done in your midst be of value. So we've got this aspect.

[6 : 07] How do we live this Christian life? Well, this morning we're getting into what I would say is the absolutely Christian truth to our walk with Christ.

It's called holiness. Now, when I say holiness, some people may have the wrong idea by what is meant by this word. Perhaps you've been in the secular workplace and someone's saying, man, you're so holy.

What they're referring to is that you're so perfect, right? You think you're better than everyone else. That you're trying to be morally perfect.

The fact of the matter is holiness, when it is being used in our context, that human beings does not talk about perfection. Because I'm going to tell you right now, we'd be setting up, if God's call was for us to be perfectly holy, like God is holy, guess what?

We're failing every day and twice on Tuesdays, right? This life is a struggle. That would be an impossible standard for us to meet.

[7 : 16] Holiness is also not, as one author calls, the offspring of terror. And some of you who have given your lives, whether you're there now, or you did at some time in your life, identified as a legalist, you lived in terror of offending God, right?

You know, I don't go to movies because Christians don't go to movies, and I don't want to, I don't want to offend the great and holy God. The movie could be Bambi, doesn't matter, right? Just all movies are bad.

You know, I'm not going to, I'm not going to play cards with you, can't you see? There's that jack with a sword in his head. I can't use those deck of cards. What would God think, right?

We get caught up in these silly things. And we tend to live in terror. We don't know. We start questioning. We start judging. Because we're living in this fear that God, rather than wanting to desire his poor and lavish his love on us, we believe that God is just waiting to pour out his fury on us.

Horatio Bonar gives us this definition. He says, His holiness is the root planted in the soil of God's love.

[8 : 42] It is the root, meaning our Christian life, living in holiness, is the life of a believer planted in the soil of God's love.

So that's where we're getting into this morning. Let me tell you something here. If you were a Christian, you've ever felt like you were missing something in your Christian life.

Perhaps you look over at someone else, another Christian family, and you see they have this peace, this wonderment, and you're wondering, why can't I experience that in my family like that family?

Or have you ever wondered why you struggle with sin over and over? You don't want that sin, but it's there over and over. And because of that sin, you feel distant from God.

God, well, I'm here to tell you today that this message is for you. That God wants you to hear this message. This morning, you can look at the title written in the bulletin.

[9 : 49] I'm not going to use that title. You can scratch it out. The title for today's sermons is The Six Actions of Holiness to Change Your Life. The Six Actions of Holiness that is meant to change your life.

For those of you who take notes, you're going to know that every single point is going to spell the word action. A-C-T-I-O-N. Pretty simple, right?

That's the gift of AI helping a pastor take his point of view and making it into something that you guys can remember. It's not my blessing thought, but it helped me, right?

So anyway, the first action point to living a Christian life is you need to acknowledge the foundation of our faith, and that is we have peace with God.

All right? That passage that Dave read to you this morning is an amazing truth and understanding of explaining to us that we were alienated from God.

[10:56] And once we become Christians, we're now in the family of God and we experience this love of God. Let me make this clear right from the start.

You can't be holy without being at peace with God. You cannot be holy until you are at peace with God. Romans 5.1 tells us, therefore, since we have been justified by faith, that means God has saved us by his work on the cross, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen? That's big. That's momentous. This peace is not something we earn. There's nothing that you and I can do to accomplish this peace.

This peace is a gift. It is what God gives to us through the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a result of God's grace, of God's favor.

You see, now some people here think that holiness is about following rules and I got to be good.

And we have a checklist, right? We know what good and bad is. We got that checklist, right?

[12:11] We got things we got to do. Obviously, you guys are on the good side. Doesn't matter if it's a long weekend. We still come to church, right? You got that part right, right? But let me tell you, right here, holiness is not about that.

Holiness is about being in a right relationship with God. And that relationship begins with peace.

You see, the root of holiness is a peace with God and the soil in which that root grows is in the free love of God found only in Jesus Christ.

Without this foundation, without this soil, any attempt at holiness is like building a house on the sand. It will not stand.

Think about it. When you know you're at peace with God, it changes everything, right? Some of you, I know, you lived as a legalist.

I lived as a legalist. It's stressful to be a legalist because you're stressed about any conversation you might have, something I might see, anything that I might do.

[13:29] And if you're wondering if you were a legalist, well, I wasn't a legalist, but you're sitting there judging other people about how they live their Christian life, guess what? You're probably a legalist. Right?

There's a standard there that you are judging them by. And that standard's your standard. Now, your list might seem all well and good, but if you think you are earning God's favor by following the do's and don'ts on that list, you're mistaking because you're actually trying to earn your favor with God.

And if you're trying to earn, you live in fear. I remember there's a friend of mine just recently, I'd say in the last 10 years, he says, hey man, I converted from legalism. And I said, what are you doing? He goes, I don't know what to do with my time anymore because I used to be so worried about everything I did, everything I would do that I might be somehow corrupting my faith that stressed me out.

And now, I just live in this love that Jesus Christ offers me. I know I'm at peace that God's desire is to lavish me with love, not to fire down his fury on me.

It's changed everything. You don't have to wonder if you're good enough. You don't have to ask the questions, did I do enough works?

[14:47] And the reason is because God has already done the work for you. He's justified you.

And that's the reason why if you know Isaiah 6, he's this man, he has this vision before God, he's entered into the great throne room.

And the angels are out there crying, holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God almighty. And he trembles in fear. And he's hiding as any rightful person would do.

And an angel comes over with this coal. coal. And it touches his tongue. And it removes his sin and iniquity. That coal, by the way, is the rock that was heated at the foot of the cross of Gethsemane.

Because of that coal and what Jesus Christ did, he can now come out and look at God and have no fear because God has, looking at him with love that he is, the love that Jesus, that God has for his son, Jesus Christ, is now seen on Isaiah is the same love God looks upon in us.

Amen? It's called the great exchange. We give our sin to Jesus, Jesus gives us his righteousness. So that's the first action point for holiness.

[16:13] You need to acknowledge the foundation. All right? The C in action, point two, is we need to cultivate the soil. We need to cultivate the soil.

The second action point is to cultivate the soil in which holiness grows. Bonar said, if peace with God is the root, then love and grace are the soil.

Ephesians 3.17 says that we are rooted and grounded in love. This love is not the warm, fuzzy feeling that gives us the goose bumps type of love.

Do you guys remember when we used to get goose bumps? Who are those who are married, right? Being around my, your spouse? I still remember my first date with my wife when she, well, the first time she held my hand. Goose bumps all day long.

Man, I was taken in. Right? God's love is a little bit different. It's actually deeper than goose bumps. I love my wife, but God's love is so much more.

[17:18] It's deeper. And let me tell you four ways that why God's love is so much better than our love. One, God is love. That's what the Bible tells us. That is the nature of his existence.

It is the very essence of his nature. Two, God's love is that he sent Jesus, his only son, to die for us on the cross. I don't know you all, but I'm probably thinking no one else has done that for anybody here.

Two, God's love forgives sins. God's love forgives sins. How slow we are to forgive, don't we? How forgetful we are to go and forgive others.

And for God's love is what invites us to have a relationship with us. Now, let me ask you a simple question.

How often do you meditate on God's love for you? Like, do you just sit back and journal about it? How often do you think about it?

[18:28] How often do we let it sink into our hearts and transform us? And I'm not talking, you might be sitting here today, yeah, man, God's love is great.

But are you going to walk from here and maybe just go sit in your back patio with your Bible today and start thinking about what God's love has done for you?

Try it. Just write out ten points. I'm going to write out ten points how I have experienced and know God's love for me. And maybe just after, write thank you.

Thank you, Lord. Thank you, Lord. Thank you, Lord. And I'm going to tell you right now, I know for some of you, Satan is whispering in some of your ears that you do not deserve God's love.

You do not deserve God's love. Satan's going to tell you, you've been too wicked. You've been too dishonoring.

[19:35] Could be anything. Could be, you know what, you miserable oaf, you cheated on your wife. You cheated on your taxes. You abused your kids. Could be any type of things.

And he wants you to accept that. Satan wants you to believe that you're the exception to the rule that Christ died for all.

He wants you to believe that you're the exception. That's pride. That's rooted in pride. That you do not deserve the free gift of grace.

If you're one of those people, I'm going to give you some advice today. I'm a preacher. I'm paid to give advice. So I'm going to do it today. This is what you say, right? This is what you say to Satan. You're right. I don't deserve it. I don't deserve God's love. I don't deserve God's grace. And then you quote them Ephesians 2.4.

[20:39] This is what you say to Satan, right? If there's a passage, if you're struggling in believing that God loves you all the time, you need to take this verse and commit it to memory.

Ephesians 2.4 It says, but God, being rich in mercy, why? Because of the great love which he loved us.

It is a great love. He didn't love you because you were a little lovable and cute as little kids are, right? No, no. It says that God loved us with great love even when we were dead in our trespasses. That means when we were enemies of God, when we hated God. What does it say here? No, because of the great love which God, which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, God made us alive together with Christ by grace you have been saved.

Amen? Okay, I need you to get Baptist on me here, guys. There's a lot of people visiting. I know we got some Alliance friends. We, you know, we got other people in here.

[21 : 48] You got to let them know this is a Baptist church, right? So God made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. Amen. Thank you. Satan, take your lives back to hell with you.

You see, holiness is not about sternness. It's not about severity. It's not about gloom. It's not about walking around in fear. Holiness is not about walking around with a long face and a list of rules. Holiness is about living with joy, peace, and the love of God overflowing in our hearts. That's what gives us the power to love others.

Even our kids, when they're getting us, impatient, grinding us down, when our neighbors, he's letting that fruit tree hang over your fence a little bit, and fruit falls on your lawn, and then we have this squamish, unique problem of bears coming to live with us, right?

Just the way it works. Holiness is about being so filled with God loves, it spills out into everything we do.

[23 : 03] Now let's talk about grace. Grace is God's unmerited favor. That means you do not deserve that favor.

It's God's unmerited favor towards us even when we don't deserve it. It says it's by grace that we have been saved and it's by grace that we are sanctified.

What that means is to be holy. Titus 3.8 says the grace of God has appeared bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age.

You want a power to affect this world, this crazy culture that we live to? Commit Titus 3.8 train us to renounce ungodliness, worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, godly lives in the present age.

It's grace that empowers us to live holy lives, not our own strength and effort. So the question is, how do we cultivate this soil of love and grace? Spend time with God and his word, right?

[24 : 21] We meditate on his eternal truths. We meditate on his promises. Ephesians 2.4, what I read to you, it's a statement of truth. We need to hold on to that truth when the father of lies comes against us.

We need to be connected to God through both prayer and worship. So when we immerse ourselves in God's love, we create an environment where holiness can thrive, right?

My wife's the gardener. Some of you guys have experienced her raspberries. she's out there every day making sure that soil is rich and it can bring up the nutrients to produce so many raspberries that I'm sick of them.

But anyway, so the first action of holiness is to acknowledge the foundation, to acknowledge that we are at peace with God. Two, we need to cultivate the soil.

The third action point is we need to turn to the cross. Turn to the cross, which is the pathway to holiness. The fact of the matter is the cross is not just a symbol of our salvation, it is the pathway to holiness.

[25 : 33] It's at the cross that we see the depth of our sin and the greatness of God's love. It's at the cross that we find forgiveness and the power to live this new life.

too many people think that once they've accepted Christ, they can just kind of move on and do their own thing. The fact of the matter is the cross is not the starting line, it's the race itself.

Amen? It's the place where we daily come to die to ourselves and live for Christ. Galatians 2.20 says, I have been crucified with Christ.

It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. In the life, I now live in the flesh. I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me.

Your life is not your own. Whether you like it or not, your life is not your own. It was purchased by the life of Jesus Christ.

[26 : 47] This means that holiness isn't about trying harder or doing better. It's about surrendering to Christ and let him live through us.

Let's be honest. When we're fighting sin, and you know what personal sins you're dealing with, you don't need to say that's bad.

You already know it's bad. but there's this part in your heart that accepts it, but you want that sin, and sin, and we talked about this before, temptation is temptation because it looks good, right?

It's like that fruit that Eve took probably looked very nutritious, right? Golden red apple. It didn't look like a kumquat or some other ugly type of fruit.

It looked pleasing to the eye. That's what temptation is. Looks pleasing to the eye, but it's filled with poison. And we're like, God, I know I shouldn't do this, or I shouldn't go down that road, and the first place you need to begin is I just, you know, it's not my will, it's your will.

[27 : 57] I don't understand this path, but I need to trust you that this path is going to be better for me. It's about recognizing that we can't do it on our own, and that we need his power and his spirit to live this holy life.

So how do we get that power? One, we come to the cross. Two, we confess our sins. Three, we receive his forgiveness.

And four, we walk in his grace. We come to the cross. We confess our sins.

We receive his forgiveness. And we walk in his grace. The fact of the matter is, when you've been through that process, you know how wonderful it is to be forgiven.

Amen? You ever do something? You ever hurt someone so bad? That you're ashamed to go bad and make it up, right? And then you go over, and they say, I forgive you.

[29 : 16] Just give me a hug, right? They're like, hey, I forgive you, but I don't want to talk to you anymore. No, no, no, no. True forgiveness, when we experience, is like the chains are off, the prison door is open.

sin. The cross reminds us that holiness is not just about avoiding sin, but it's also about pursuing righteousness. If you're familiar with Colossians 3, it's kind of an impactful chapter.

Paul describes this life as like clothes. We need to take off this world. We need to take off our sin, and we need to put on Jesus. If you spend any time with Dave, or if you've ever gotten counseling, true counseling isn't about turning from the bad things, it's about turning to the good things.

Amen? We have to use that energy. We've been going this way, we need something to turn. Well, what do I do? All right, we're going to go for God's righteousness. God's called us to live a life that reflects the character of Christ, a life that is set apart for God's purposes.

And the only way to do that, the author of Hebrews tells us in Hebrews 12, by keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus, the perfecter of our faith.

[30 : 41] So, we've had action point one, acknowledge the foundation. Action point two, cultivate the soil. Number three is turn to the cross. Number four is we need to invest in spiritual growth.

We need to invest in spiritual growth. We know that holiness is not a one-time event. It is a lifelong process. It's called sanctification.

And it's the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Philippians 1, 6 says, and this is a great verse to memorize as well. It says, I'm sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

Anybody need that verse for today? Right? You're struggling with something. Am I going to make it? Here's this promise. I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the end of the day.

Listen, if you're struggling, feeling defeated, wondering if you're ever going to get some traction in this Christian life, you need to commit to memorizing passages of scripture like this.

[32 : 02] See, here's the thing about sanctification. It's not always easy. I'm not going to lie to you, some days it's hard. It's tough. It feels like a grind.

And I'll tell you why. Because I have to die to my old self. All those old habits, even though I've been created new, there's still this flesh that's attached to me.

And if you've been living under the power of Satan and in this world all those years, and then you get saved, say at 35, you've got 35 years of these habits you need to overcome.

It's hard. And to think that you're going to overcome them all on day one, I'm going to tell you. That's a lot. Be easy on yourself.

That's why God gives us these verses. Because you're thinking, you know, I can't quit swearing. Can't quit speeding or gossiping.

[33 : 01] It's hard. But it's about dying to the old self, letting go of sinful habits, and it's about embracing new ones. Just like anybody will tell you, we're just talking today, right?

I might want to work out and bench 300 pounds. I might like really want it a lot. Okay? But if I don't get in the gym, I don't eat right, right?

I don't, if I get rid of chips, stay away from my chocolate bars, no more Joanna Cairns cake, I might get to that point of being fit enough.

But it starts with this idea of discipline, perseverance, and it starts with a willingness to be changed. You want to be like Jesus Christ, it starts with the willingness to go there.

But here's the good news, you don't do it alone. We've already read the verse that the Holy Spirit is our helper, our comforter, our guide. That he gives us the power to overcome sin and to live obedience to God's word.

[34 : 04] He's the one who brings scripture to mind when we are in the battle. That's why I'm calling you to memorize scripture. You memorize that, you're undergoing that temptation, you have God's truth, God's promises to recall right away.

So, question is, how do we invest in our spiritual growth? One, we do so by engaging in spiritual disciplines. Right? Like, reading our Bibles, prayer, fasting, fellowship with other believers.

And I know some of you guys, like, BK, you say that all the time, like that's a cure-all for a lot of problems. Guess what? It is! For most of the problems that we run into in the counseling room, there is lack of memorization of scripture, lack of knowledge of God, lack of prayer, lack of commitment to being under God's word.

And the other thing is lack of fellowship. fellowship. The Christian life is hard, but it is simple.

The other way that we invest in our spiritual growth is we commit to being part of a local church.

Listen, if you're struggling with prayer, reading and understanding God's word, you just feel like you can't hold out, then I'm going to tell you the last thing you need to give up on is giving up on church.

[35 : 32] A lot of people, man, I'm struggling, I don't deserve to be in church. None of us deserve to be in church. Get that out of your head. It's not about deserving, it's about needing. Because you never want to be alone in your struggle.

Because if you've noticed, if you've been struggling, and none of those spiritual disciplines have been practiced, you know what you've gone over here today? You've prayed together, we've read God's word together, we've been committed under God's word, under the preaching, we're going to experience fellowship, and we're going to experience a chance to serve one another.

Amen? So even in those darkest times, still come. Say hi to someone. Let someone say hi to you.

You see, what we're doing here is we're worshiping God. You're not here attending a lecture, we're worshiping God together. That's powerful.

A few weeks ago we had a membership class, and we talked about what is it to be a member, and how it is a powerful thing to be a member. It's not just a commitment to do those things together, but it's being committed to work discipleship, and it's being committed to do the work of the Spirit.

[36 : 50] here at our church. That's what it is. That's what membership is. It's like, hey, God's given me these gifts. These are the people I want to share them with. I want to be committed to walking with them.

I want to be committed to walking through those people's struggles, because I went through that too. It's a commitment to the kingdom that God, the kingdom building that God is doing in our midst. Here's a great quote I read on what it means to invest in our spiritual growth. It said, it is the intention to walk with God by setting aside time each day to seek his face.

I love that. It's like I'm not reading scripture just to read scripture. scripture. I'm reading scripture because I need to experience the countenance of God.

I need to see his face. It's what Moses required, right? He was serving God. He said, God, I just need to see your glory. The reason some of you are waffling in your Christian faith and you can't seem to get any traction despite even doing some of these spiritual disciplines is because you don't even accept correction.

[38 : 08] You don't accept correction, right? You believe that you and a few out of context verses gives you the authority to resist anybody who lovingly tries to correct you.

The reality is we need correction from rightly understood God's word, our elders, our friends, and those who lead us in our various ministries.

We need each other for holiness. Amen? I need you. You need me. So the fifth action point.

The fifth action point to pursuing holiness is that we need to learn to overcome obstacles. We need to learn to overcome obstacles. I'm not going to lie to you, there are challenges to holiness.

Let's be real, living a holy life is not a walk in the park. In fact, the Bible tells us that we have three real enemies that work against us day and night to trip us up in our pursuit of holiness.

[39 : 22] We face challenges, we face temptations, we face opposition. The reality is the enemy wants us to live lives that have so little impact in this world that no one would even know that we've

been renewed by the Son of God.

And the fact of the matter is Satan will do everything in his power to distract, discourage, and derail us. So, ready? First obstacle that we need to battle with is sin.

We know this, right? It is the biggest obstacle to holiness is our sin. Sin is like the weed that chokes the life out of our spiritual growth. And you know, I don't need to tell you what sin does, right?

It separates us from God, it hinders our prayers, and it quenches the work of the Spirit in our lives.

That's why we need to take sin seriously.

It's why the Bible tells us over and over, confess, repent, and turn away. So that's the first one. You guys are aware of this one.

[40 : 33] The second one, and the biggest obstacle, second biggest obstacle to our pursuit of holiness, is the world, right? The world is constantly pulling us away from God, enticing us with its pleasures and distractions.

Now, this is my experience. Most people who struggle with their walk with God, the reason they struggle is because they treat the world more like a hindrance than an obstacle.

And I'll explain this. Anybody ever been on a cruise? Ever been on a cruise? All right. You don't need to be shamed that you went on a cruise, guys. You can lift your hands. It's not a sin to go on a cruise, you bunch of legalists.

Anyway, one of the tricks cruise lines always do, right? First thing, you see that price. Whoa, \$800. I can, I don't know, cruise to the Caribbean. I like that. Well, it's an interior cabin.

You know, you're not going to be feeling the breath of the ocean breeze on your face. So you can get a balcony. But when you look at this balcony, you find out there's three different types of balcony. And you guys know this, right?

[41 : 38] For a couple hundred bucks, you can buy a balcony with a hindrance, right? The balcony with the hindrance, it might be a pole, right? You know, there's this pole on your balcony, you know, you kind of have to work around it.

But then there's this other one. And my wife and I went to Alaska a couple years ago. And we thought, well, let's just grab this, this one. Man, look, it's got a balcony. It is so much cheaper. The reason why there's a lifeboat on the balcony.

All right? There's no seeing or smelling anything from that balcony. We're outside, yay, looking at a balcony. The problem we have is we treat the hint this world like it's that little post that's a workaround.

But it's really this big life boat which is blocking us totally from seeing God work. Do you know what I'm talking about? We live in Squamish.

How many other things are we called to do? It'll make you healthier. Think about what it does for your family life.

[42 : 44] Those are the hindrances. They're actually obstacles. They stop you from growing. So when you're asking yourself, why do I just feel like I'm in the same place? The fact of the matter is it's not the sin that I fear for you guys.

It's not like I worry, you know, Dustin's not here today. I don't worry that he's out robbing a bank or Joey might be out running some illegal gambling ring or something like that.

I don't think about those things for you guys. I worry that you're having too much fun. that you fail to commit to the people that are here.

That you're so busy doing whatever that you fail to give the call to the brother or sister in Christ that you know needs help. That you're too far away to hold our hands.

Romans 12.2 says, Do not be conformed to the world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

[43 : 58] Notice he didn't say fun. You see, we need to renew our minds with God's word to see the world through his eyes and to live for his glory, not our own.

The third obstacle that we know is the flesh, right? Our own sinful nature is still alive and kicking and it fights against the spirit. Galatians 5.17, Paul tells them, For the desires of the flesh are against the spirit.

And the desires of the spirit are against the flesh. For these are opposed to each other to keep you from doing the things you want to do. You see, we need to put to death the deeds of the flesh to deny ourselves and we need to take up our cross daily and to follow Jesus.

So, how do I overcome these obstacles? Four quick ways. Stay close to Jesus. Abide with Jesus. That means you're not even close to him, but you're listening to him too. Being filled with the Holy Spirit and by putting on the full armor of God.

Ephesians 6.10, Finally, be strong in the Lord in the strength of his might. Paul says this throughout the New Testament. 1 Corinthians 6.16.13 says, Be watchful.

[45 : 17] Stand firm in the faith. Because we have these obstacles, this world, this sin, this flesh coming against us. 2 Thessalonians 5.

Sorry. 1 Thessalonians 5.6, he says, So then let us not sleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. And then finally, 1 Peter 5.8, Be sober-minded, be watchful.

Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion. Got to be alert, right? If we're going to overcome the obstacles, we need to know the obstacles are.

Okay. So we acknowledge the foundation. A. I. Action. C. Cultivate the soil. T. Turn to the cross. I. Invest in spiritual growth.

O. Overcome obstacles. And the sixth point is navigate the adventure. Navigate the adventure. What that means is persevere in holiness. Persevere in holiness.

[46 : 22] holiness. The fact of the matter is, like I said, holiness is not the end of the story. It's not the destination. Hebrews 12 tells us it's a marathon, not a sprint.

But it's a daily walk with God, a constant pursuit of his presence, and a constant, continuous pursuit to be grown in the likeness of him.

Hebrews 12.1.2 says, Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

We need endurance. We need perseverance. James 1.12 says, Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial.

My friends, the adventure of holiness may be hard, but the reward is well worth it. Want me to tell you what the rewards are? One, we will see God face to face.

[47 : 44] We will see God face to face. Two, we will be made like him. We will have no sin. 1 Corinthians 14 talks about we will have perfect knowledge.

Three, we will reign with him. And even if those things weren't true, we will enjoy his presence forever.

Amen. So let's keep pressing on. Let's keep fighting the good faith. Let's keep running the race. Let's keep growing in holiness.

And let's do it all for the glory of God. Let's pray. Dear Holy Heavenly Father, we just thank you for your word, your grace, your mercy, your love.

Father, we just thank you for the steadfastness that you have towards us. Father, I know there are people here that are continuing to struggle with their sin. They're asking, what do I do?

[48 : 48] How can I make it? I pray that they first start committing to memory these verses that we went over. However, we do need to confront the evil one with words of truth, promises that we believe in.

And we believe them because you said them. Father, I pray that you continue to cultivate in us soft hearts that can receive rebuke, correction.

Father, I don't know the stories that are here today. But I pray that maybe one point of this action sermon would speak to a reality or truth in their life that they're either questioning, struggling, maybe having a hard time putting to death with, or maybe just not even knowing what to do.

I pray just this sermon through your word would speak to their individual reality. And I pray that they make it known to their friend, their spouse, or whoever invited them here, or they come speak with me or Pastor Dave.

Maybe even to one of the men or Melanie up here singing in worship. Father, let questions be known.

[50 : 19] Let us not be ashamed to ask questions. Let us not be ashamed to seek to understand. So Father, I pray for your tender mercies on every soul that is here.

I pray that they experience the love of God. And most of all, I just pray that they can know that through the power of Jesus Christ, they can have peace with God. No more fight, no more battling,

no more enemy, no more contentious relationship.

Just an acceptance to the life and to the will of God the Father who loves them and cares for them more than they can ever imagine. We thank you for these words that you give us, O Father, in your most holy and precious name.

Amen.