

Fill in the blank spaces in the statements below. All of the answers are found in the above paragraphs. You will find the correct words to fill the blanks underlined in the text.

1. God wants us to live a _____ life.
2. _____ is the foundation upon which a holy life is built.
3. For persons trying to live a holy life, _____ of _____ is the highest authority in governing their decisions.
4. One of the major activities of the Holy Spirit is to _____.
5. In holy living the center of life is shifted from _____ to _____.
6. Man was created for _____.
7. In holy living our actions will always be motivated by _____.
8. Holy living can make a person _____ when a stand is taken against evil.
9. Holiness meets its most severe test in the area of _____.
10. Name some areas of potential growth in holy living. _____
11. Holy living was the design of a _____ for those He created.
12. A life that is free from sinful vices and abuses of the body is _____.
13. Holy living avoids feeding on the moral garbage of _____ and _____.
14. Holiness for the spirit of man is what _____ is for the human body.
15. Parents with _____ are better equipped to raise their children.
16. Whatever helps holy living should be _____; whatever hinders it should be _____.
17. Name at least three things that holy living makes better: _____

Lesson Five Living a Holy Life

Can you describe with one word the kind of life you are trying to live? Many different answers are given to that question. But, from a biblical perspective there is only one word that describes the kind of life God wants us to live—holy! “You ought to live holy and godly lives” (2 Pet. 3:11). “For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life” (1 Thes. 4:7).

The Starting Point

A holy heart is the foundation upon which a holy life is built. Until the Holy Spirit does His work of cleansing the human heart that we talked about in the last lesson, trying to live a holy life ends in frustration. Spiritual life must flow from the inside out. A holy heart does not result from doing good things, but from a work of God that transforms human nature.

Characteristics of a Holy Life

Conformity to God’s Laws: A holy heart will do everything possible to avoid disobedience (sin) to God. The Word of God (the Bible) becomes our highest authority. Wherever the Bible speaks clearly on a matter of conduct, there is no further discussion. God’s laws are what define right and wrong for us. Obeying them leads to holy living. Holy living is also right (righteous) living.

Lived Under Divine Guidance: One of the major activities of the Holy Spirit is to guide us. Being sensitive to the guidance of the Spirit is the only way God can guide us to His will and can use us for His purposes. He can only do it when we put Him in control and follow His leading.

Lived in Communion with God: Man was created for fellowship with God. When we share in God’s nature there is harmony between us. His presence becomes a reality in our lives. We are comfortable in His presence because there is no conflict. We enjoy Him and He enjoys us.

A Spirit of Humility: Selfish or sinful pride must go (the “old self” must die) before the Holy Spirit can complete His work. The center of life is shifted from self to Christ. God gets the credit for what He does through us.

Motivated by Love: A holy heart does not guarantee good judgment or exemption from errors, but it does mean that our actions will always be

motivated by love. God is more concerned about our intentions for our actions than He is about the results of them.

Will Encounter Opposition: Holiness goes against the current of a sinful world. Jesus said that "... the world has hated them, for they are not of the world" (Jn. 17:14). Living a holy life can make a person unpopular when a stand is taken against evil. However, we are promised the grace and strength to be "more than conquerors" (Rom. 8:37).

More than Negative Goodness: A holy life is not defined only by the things we do *not* do. Holiness does not result from good works, but it does produce good actions. Both the negative and positive are equally important. There must be a balance between the negative things we seek to avoid and the good things we actively seek to do.

Tested in the Area of Human Relationships: Life is lived out in a complex network of relationships. This is where holiness meets its most severe test. Discord, jealousy, selfish ambitions, dissension, etc., are acts of the sinful nature (Gal. 5:19-20). Holiness will manifest itself in a spirit of humility, sensitivity to the feelings of others, kindness and courtesy to all men (including enemies) (Lk. 6:27-28; Mt. 5:44).

A Growing Experience: There is no growth in purity for purity is not a matter of degree. For example, water, when tested, must be declared to be either pure or impure. However, there are many ways in which there can be progress and growth in a holy life. Here are some areas in which growth can occur throughout life: knowledge, wisdom, maturity, the intimacy of our fellowship with God, the development of our gifts and capacities to serve God, and our enjoyment of worshipping God.

A Holy Life is Good for You

Holy living was the design of a loving Creator for those He created (Eph. 1:4). It is the kind of living that is the best way to live. It never restrains, or restricts, or takes away anything that is good for us. It only strives to eliminate that which would be harmful to us. Even apart from our eternal destiny, there is no better way to live in this present world. Consider, for example:

Holy Living Is Good for You Physically: A life that is free from sinful vices and abuses of the body is healthier. When the body is understood to be the temple of the Holy Spirit it will be cared for better. Holiness promotes health!

Holy Living Is Better for You Mentally: Holiness means positive thinking. It means focusing the mind on things that are true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, and praiseworthy (Phil. 4:8). It avoids feeding on the moral garbage of lust and violence. It is good mental hygiene.

Holy Living Is Good for the Human Spirit: Holiness for the spirit of man is what health is for the human body. Sin is moral sickness, and is abnormal. Like the body, the human spirit does not function well when it is *sick*.

Holy Living Is Good for the Family: Parents with holy hearts are better equipped to raise their children. A home where the fruit of the Spirit is demonstrated has a peaceful and secure atmosphere. Holiness promotes kindness, courtesy, and respect.

Holy Living Simplifies Life: When holy living becomes the supreme objective of life it results in singleness of purpose. It does away with divided loyalties and the frustrations that result from them. Decisions regarding right conduct are simplified. Whatever helps holy living is sought; whatever hinders it is avoided. A holy heart stays as far from sin as possible.

Holy Living Beautifies Life: Holiness itself is beautiful, and it beautifies everything it touches. The Psalmist spoke of the "splendor of His holiness" (Psa. 96:9). It gives dignity, meaning, and value to life. All human experience is better: human relationships, love, marriage, health, sex, the family, and even finance.

Keeping the Body Holy

The Bible not only sets the standard of a holy heart for the human spirit, but also says, "It is God's will ... that each of you should learn to control his own *body* in a way that is *holy*" (1 Thes. 4:4). Our consecration is to include both "body and spirit" (1 Thes. 5:23).

The Body Must Be Holy Because:

It is the temple of the Holy Spirit. (1 Cor. 6:19)

It is the means through which we honor God. (1 Cor. 6:20)

Our bodies are members of Christ. (1 Cor. 6:15)

The life of Jesus is revealed in our bodies. (2 Cor. 4:10)

The use of our bodies is evidence of our devotion to Christ. (Rom. 12:1)

How Can the Body Be Kept Holy?

By keeping it under the control of your spirit. (Rom. 6:12)

By using it for holy purposes. (Rom. 6:13)

By submitting it to discipline. (1 Cor. 9:27)

By avoiding excessive attention to its adornment. (1 Pet. 3:3)

By keeping sex within the framework of God's plan for it. (1 Thes. 4:3)

Lesson Review