

What Is True Holiness?

Much is said about holiness in certain religious circles.

But what is holiness?

Do you really know?

Hebrews 12:14 [New King James] *“Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord:”*

Holiness is important to our Creator God and so it should be to us, because without it we will never see God.

Before we can understand the teaching in the Christian Bible about holiness we need to understand what the word means.

The Greek word is “*hagiasmōs*” meaning to belong to or associated with a divine power, or to be set apart to the service of the Creator God.

In other words, that which is holy belongs to the Holy Creator God.

The person or object is “set apart for a holy use or purpose.”

A holy God can make an item or person holy when He claims it, or **He owns the person.**

When an individual devotes or gives an object to God, the ownership passes to God and, since He is now the owner, the object or person becomes holy.

Why does God make an object or person holy?

God makes the object or person holy so that He may use that object or person to achieve His divine purpose, fulfil a specific function or accomplish some task.

Whatever is holy is not only set apart by and for God, but God will not **use** it or the person if they do **not** meet the standards He sets.

God selects the tools that can fulfil His purpose, and if they do **not**, He will select another tool instead, [**Revelation 3:11, 13**].

The great Creator God of the universe expects the very best for His use.

The sacrifices commanded under the Levitical priesthood were to be without blemish.

When anyone gave an inferior gift to God it was not acceptable, [**Malachi 1:13-14**].

All these physical items pictured the spiritual perfection that would come later under the New Covenant.

This spiritual perfection should be evident when we realise that one of the synonyms for holiness is godliness.

How can people become holy?

Leviticus 11:45 [New King James] *“For I am the LORD who brings you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God. You shall therefore be holy, for I am holy.”*

God commanded ancient Israel to be holy and He expects Christians to be holy, [**1 Peter 1:15**].

This implies more than just being set apart, in the context of both **Leviticus** and **1 Peter**, it includes **living a special way that is different from the rest of the world.**

Hebrews 12:10 [New King James] *“For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness.”*

To live this special way we need to be and can be *“partakers of God’s holiness.”*

Christians should be more like the Creator God from day to day and then in the first resurrection be His created children, having the same character as our Creator God, [1 John 3:1-3].

John 17:14-16 [New King James] *“I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.”*

God has selected His servants in each generation to come out of this world, to be different and separate from the rest of the world.

John 6:44 [New King James] *“No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.”*

God is at this time selecting certain people to become Christians, the rest of humanity will have their chance in a future resurrection back to physical life, [**Revelation 20:4-5, 11-13**].

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 [New King James] *“Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, **and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.**”*

That price, Christ’s sacrifice on the cross, makes it possible for our unholy sins of the past to be forgiven and for us to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, [Acts 2:38].

Romans 8:9 [New King James] *“But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. **Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.**”*

If a person does **not** have an active presence of the Holy Spirit in them they are **not** a Christian, not called by God.

Acts 5:32 [New King James] *“And we are His witnesses to these things, and so also is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him.”*

God will only give the Holy Spirit to those who obey Him. That is, we quit sinning by transgressing the spiritual laws.

Matthew 22:35-40 [New King James] *“Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, ‘Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?’ Jesus said to him, “**You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.**” This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: **“You shall love your neighbour as yourself.”** On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”*

This law of love towards the Creator God and other human beings fulfil all the Old Covenant laws, [Romans 13:8-10].

Is love all we need?

Some believe that all they need is love to be pleasing the Creator God.

That is true, but only if we understand what kind of love is involved.

The love required is much more than affection or fondness for others.

Love is more than worship of the Creator God.

Mark 7:6-7 [New King James] *“He answered and said to them, ‘Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: “This people honours Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.”’”*

Christ said that many worship Him in vain, by teaching and following the commandments of men, rather than the commandments of God.

1 John 5:3 [New King James] *“For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.”*

The right kind of love includes obedience to God and His commandments.

When God calls us, we are 100 percent carnal, unconverted and imperfect.

Matthew 5:48 [New King James] *“Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.”*

God is seeking perfection in His people.

Ephesians 5:27 [New King James] *“that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.”*

God is looking for a glorious Church, holy and without blemish.

God wants us to live holy lives, that means a new way of living, which is every day more like the life that Jesus Christ lived on earth.

2 Corinthians 6:14-17 [New King James] *“Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: ‘I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people.’ Therefore ‘Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you.’”*

Living a life of holiness, coming out of this world and being separate from the world involves every aspect of our day-to-day life.

Philippians 4:8-9 [New King James] *“Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy, meditate on these things. The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.”*

Instead of being immersed in the lawless and sinful ways of the world we should meditate on better things that are expressing love and compassion for other human beings.

This scripture should clarify what we should **avoid**, as well as what we should concentrate our thoughts on, for our thoughts lead to the actions and decisions we make in our lives.

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 [New King James] *“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,”*

Every Christian lives in a war zone, a conflict that is taking place in our thoughts as our enemy is Satan and his demons, all spirit beings who have deceived the whole world, [**Revelation 12:7-12**].

Live a life of holiness

2 Corinthians 7:1 [New King James] *“Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”*

The promises are listed in **2 Corinthians 6:17-18**.

Christians need to say **no** to sin, evil and any wrongdoing.

We will continue to be holy as long as we live a life of holiness.

There are some things that were part of a holy life in the past but are no longer holy today, because of humans' failure to measure up to God's standards.

Ancient Israel was chosen to be a holy nation, but as their history, recorded in the Old Testament of the Christian Bible tells us, they rebelled against God, turning to idolatry and sin. God cut them off, and they are now **not** His chosen and holy people.

1 Peter 2:9-10 [New King James] *“But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light; who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.”*

The Christian Church is now called out by God to be His holy nation.

The Levites were holy, but they failed in what God assigned them to do, so they are no longer holy and have been replaced by the priesthood of Melchizedek, [**Hebrews 7:11-22**].

The Temple at Jerusalem was holy, but Israel and Judah polluted it by their sins and wickedness. It no longer exists and has been replaced by a new and holy spiritual temple, which is the Christian Church, [**1 Corinthians 3:16-17**].

Other Biblical examples show what was holy in the past is **still** holy today.

The tithe was and is still holy, it belongs to God and He has never made it unholy, [**Malachi 3:8-12**]. Malachi was writing to God's people everywhere and is a bridge between the Old Testament and the New Testament, pointing all Christians towards Jesus Christ's Second Coming.

The weekly Sabbath was and still is holy to the Creator God.

It is holy time and we should keep it that way.

[Please download and study our articles on the 'Sabbath' listed under the sub-heading 'Covenants'.]

From the scriptures we have studied it should be plain that holiness is **not** a sentiment or a feeling. It is **not** following the religious traditions of men.

To walk in holiness, a person must first be called by God, set apart from this world, repent of past sins, be baptised and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Following this a person must be obedient to the commandments and ways of the Holy Almighty God.

Then, and only then, do they begin to fulfil the holy use for which the Holy God has called them.

What is a saint?

The Christian Bible mentions saints many times, but there are misconceptions about what saints are.

The Christian Bible **nowhere** says or even implies that a saint is a good religious person who died many years ago and who is now canonised by the Roman Catholic Church.

It is **not** a person who is depicted with the sun-god halo around their head.

If any of this was true, God's Word, the Christian Bible, would have said so.

A saint is a person who is holy to God.

A saint is a person who is sanctified or set apart by God and lives a life of holiness.

In the New Testament the Greek word for "saint" is the same word that is translated "holy," the word "hagiōs."

In the Old Testament it is the word "qôdesh" or a derivative of that word.

Romans 1:7 [New King James] *"To all who are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."*

All who are called by God to be Christians are called saints.

1 Corinthians 1:2 [New King James] *"To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, **called to be saints**, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:"*

All who are sanctified by the blood of Jesus Christ but not yet perfected [**Ephesians 4:12**] are **called to be saints**.

Revelation 14:12 [New King James] *"Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus."*

Those who keep the commandments of Jesus Christ are called saints, as well as all who have the faith of Jesus Christ, that has the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ, [**Romans 8:9**].

Reward of the saints

The saints have been set apart for God's holy use and purpose, which all Christians should be fulfilling.

If we do we will meet Jesus Christ in the clouds at His Second Coming, [**1 Thessalonians 4:14-17**].

Then the saints will return with Jesus Christ to the earth, [**Zechariah 14:4**].

At this time the saints will be part of the Kingdom of God, the created family of God, and rule this world, [**Revelation 5:10**].

Revelation 20:4-6 [New King James] *“And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.”*

This is the beginning of the glorious future that awaits the saint who is truly sanctified, made holy and walks in holiness.

It should now be evident that there is a lot more to holiness than most people realise, including those who may talk a lot about being holy.

Don't have a counterfeit “holiness,” seek the real thing.

Romans 12:1-2 [NIV] *“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is, his good, pleasing and perfect will.”*

To show your gratitude towards God for our being sanctified by the sacrificial blood of Jesus Christ, offer your whole life, body, mind and human spirit [**Job 32:8**] to God as a “living sacrifice.”

Then allow God to renew our minds, making then our lives reflect the very holiness of God.

This renewal will be accomplished by the active indwelling of the Holy Spirit who will generate, through our intimate relationship with Him, the very holy characteristics of the Holy Creator God.

Galatian 5:22-25 [New King James] *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.”*

Such “fruits” are the proof of living a life of true holiness.