

SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

LESSON 1



IS HOLINESS NECESSARY?

SCRIPTURE TEXTS: *1 Peter 1:15-16; 1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 2 Timothy 2:19; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; Revelation 20:6; Hebrews 12:14*

In the time of the Law, God commanded the high priest to wear on his forehead a golden plate bearing the words, **HOLINESS TO THE LORD**. Holiness is the offering God desired from His people. He still desires and requires it. His church is made up of holy people.

Some differ with teachers of holiness because they are really opposed to the doctrine, others because of misunderstanding of the term. Holiness is sinlessness, we say. Yes, but it is more. Negatively, it is sinlessness, or the absence of sin. Positively, it is the presence of godliness – of the nature of God. God is holy. Holiness is God-likeness. This quarter we study Bible teachings on holiness.

MEMORY VERSE: *Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.—1 Peter 1:16*

God's Temple Must Be Holy

1 Peter 1:15-16 God is holy. Holiness is His very nature. He made us for Himself, for His praise and glory (**Isaiah 43:7; Isaiah 43:21**). He made us like Himself, **in his own image (Genesis 1:27)**. This being true, there is but one possible condition for pleasing Him – that we be holy also. God does not just ask for holiness; He demands it. God always gave His plan for man to build in such a way that it would stand the test. He gave Noah the plan for the ark. He gave Solomon the plan for the tabernacle. He gave Jesus the plan for His church. God would not allow sin in the Garden of Eden. He would not allow sin in the ark. He would not allow sin in the tabernacle. He does not allow sin in His temple – those who make up His church.

1 Corinthians 3:16-17 **Ye are the temple of God.** God made man to be His temple. His purpose is to live in every person's heart, to actually be there in person – in the Person of the Holy Spirit. But sin defiles the temple. This shuts Him out. **The temple of God is holy.** To those who defile the temple – themselves – there is but one end, to be destroyed. For God to permit sin in the lives of His people, the church, His nature and outlook toward sin would have to change. This cannot be possible. Time does not change God's attitude toward sin.

Many things defile the temple of one's body. Evil is waxing worse and worse. We are exposed to temptations on every hand. There needs to be careful, vigilant home training from earliest years to combat what we meet each day. There seems to be no limit to Satan's inventions to lead one from the path of clean, healthy, useful, righteous living. Can God live in a temple whose body is polluted and whose mind is twisted by alcohol, tobacco, drugs, immorality, homosexuality, and so on?

The Foundation of God

2 Timothy 2:19 The certainty of the permanence of God's kingdom is dependent upon two facts (a double seal): (1) The Lord knows His people. He holds the membership in His hands. (2) Every member of His body knows the Lord. Everyone taking Christ's name must depart from iniquity.

1 Corinthians 6:9-10 **The unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God.** These are the unholy, the sinners. God is not their father (**John 8:38-44**), so, they cannot inherit His property. They are not born of God, are not holy, for **whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin (1 John 3:9)**.

The people of Jerusalem missed their greatest opportunity by not realizing its worth. Jesus said, weeping, **If thou hadst known ... the things which belong unto thy peace! (Luke 19:42)**. The privileges and riches God offers are not seen by the natural eye like material things are seen. To see them, our spiritual eye must be opened by the Spirit of God. **The things of God ... are spiritually discerned (1 Corinthians 2:11-14)**. Many a one has

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read the promises, heard them taught, associated with Spirit-filled ones, and still remained blind and ignorant of what God could do for him. Why is this spiritual blindness? He allows the opportunity to be holy to pass him by, never to present itself again.

The Holy Escape of the Second Death

Revelation 20:6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection. Resurrection is a coming to life from the dead. The first one takes place when one is saved from sin and made a child of God. Jesus said (**John 5:24**) that such a one is **passed from death unto life**. Those who experience this resurrection are **holy**. On them the **second death has no power**. This second death is **the lake of fire**, or hell (**Revelation 20:14**). Holy ones will escape it and be taken to Heaven where no defilement can come. The first death is that brought when sin separates the soul and body from God – spiritual death. (**Genesis 2:17**).

Holiness is a Must

Hebrews 12:14 Is holiness necessary? This question has been answered by God's command and the clear Scriptures of this lesson. Now look at a direct statement. **Follow...holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.** To live with God, we must be like Him, have His nature, and partake of Him. This is sinlessness, but more. It is the possession of godliness. Holiness is this positive quality as well as the negative sinlessness.

When Jesus delivers the kingdom of God, when He presents His bride to the Father, He will **present her holy and unblameable ... in his sight**. (Refer to **Colossians 1:22; Ephesians 5:27; 2 Peter 3:14; Matthew 5:8**). He suffered to make her so. It is necessary that we be so in this life. He that is able to present you faultless before the presence of His glory will not be satisfied with anything less. We dare not offer anything less than holiness.

We must not too lightly value this great treasure of holiness. We can be partially ignorant of its great worth.

JUST A THOUGHT

“One cannot live wrong and die right!”

This lesson is adapted from a lesson by Mary Lehmann.
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