



So Do You Think You're Holy?

Romans 12:1: (NASB) *Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.*

Did you ever stop and wonder what Christianity, in its truest sense, looks like? Is Christianity about getting or giving? Is it about living just like everyone else, or is it about living to a higher standard? Is it about the incessant chatter of everyday life or is it about a life-changing message? Is Christianity about learning to accept yourself as you are, or is it about offering who you are to God to become what he wants you to be? These are questions that can be answered if we understand how holiness fits into the picture. Stay with us as we look at our Christianity and what role "holiness" plays in it.

Our only question:

What does it mean to be holy?

(Source: www.preceptaustin.org) The Hebrew word for holiness is kadesh which means something which is cut off, separate or set apart. It describes that which is anti-secular (secular = of or relating to the worldly or temporal), in a category all its own. Kadesh describes something that is elevated out of the sphere of what is ordinary. The New Testament word hagios also means set apart, separate and so in a class by itself. It follows that for believers (saints or "holy ones") the call to be holy is a call to be separated from common use and set apart, or reserved, for special use. In both Old and New Testaments the term is applied to things, persons, and pre-eminently to God Himself.

Holiness means separate or set apart. It is taken out of the ordinary context in which it exists and reserved as special.

Psalms 43:1-2: (NRSV) ¹Vindicate me, O God, and defend my cause against an ungodly people; from those who are deceitful and unjust deliver me! ²For you are the God in whom I take refuge; why have you cast me off? Why must I walk about mournfully because of the oppression of the enemy?

Doesn't this seem like our typical life situation when we try to follow after Christ?

Psalms 43:3-4: (NRSV) ³O send out your light and your truth; let them lead me; let them bring me to your holy hill and to your dwelling. ⁴Then I will go to the altar of God, to God my exceeding joy; and I will praise you with the harp, O God, my God.

We need God's light and truth to be able to find God's dwelling and holiness.



Holiness requires a map, or a GPS -
a Godly Personal Standard -
not just a goodly one!



))) "Because I live you shall live," Sermon by Joel Osteen

Is this a Godly Personal Standard thought? Does this thought guide us towards holiness? Yes, it does.



"Because I live, you shall live also." (we will quote this text in full shortly...) How are we supposed to live?

It stands to reason - if I am a follower of Christ, then I should try to live like him, right? How do we do that? He lived a separate life - "holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners."



Hebrews 7:23-27: (NASB) ²³The former priests, on the one hand, existed in greater numbers because they were prevented by death from continuing, ²⁴but Jesus, on the other hand, because he continues forever, holds his priesthood permanently. ²⁵Therefore he is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them. ²⁶For it was fitting for us to have such a high priest, **holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners** and exalted above the heavens; ²⁷who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins and then for the sins of the people, because this he did once for all when he offered up Himself.

Here is a comparison between the Jewish priesthood and the priesthood that Jesus himself developed, the true priesthood. The Apostle Paul is comparing the two. The former kept dying and needed replacements. Jesus holds his priesthood permanently. Because he is executing his priesthood forever, he is able to save forever those who draw near to God and makes intercession for those followers. The holiness that the Jewish priesthood developed gave them a temporary fix in their lives. The holiness that Jesus gives us is a permanent development that puts things into a different perspective. Holiness for us at this point is a different experience.

How do we put ourselves in a position so that we are not only feeling different, but acting differently and living differently - not just when we are at church or around certain people, but all the time?

Let's take a look at the scripture on which Mr. Osteen is basing his comments:

John 14:18-24:(NASB) ¹⁸I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. ¹⁹After a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; **because I live, you will live also.** ²⁰In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. ²¹He who has my commandments and keeps them is the one who loves me; and he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and will disclose myself to him. ²²Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, Lord, what then has happened that you are going to disclose yourself to us and not to the world? ²³Jesus answered and said to him, If anyone loves me, he will keep my word; and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our abode with him. ²⁴He who does not love me does not keep my words; and the word which you hear is not mine, but the Father's who sent me.

Jesus is on his way to give his life in sacrifice. He is encouraging those around him, even though he is the one about to suffer and die.



Our GPS tells us: Keep Jesus' commandments and love him.

Back to Mr. Osteen's sermon:



"Jesus' sacrifice is our total victory," *Sermon by Joel Osteen*

- Includes a financial victory



Is this a Godly Personal Standard thought? Does this thought guide us towards holiness?

1 Peter 1:13-14: (NRSV) ¹³Therefore prepare your minds for action; discipline yourselves; set all your hope on the grace that Jesus Christ will bring you when he is revealed. ¹⁴Like obedient children, do not be conformed to the desires that you formerly had in ignorance.

So, our pursuit of holiness is NOT based in how we feel, rather it is based in a disciplined approach - following a map, our GPS, requires focus!

1 Peter 1:13-15-17: (NRSV) ¹⁵Instead, as he who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in all your conduct; ¹⁶for it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy." ¹⁷If you invoke as Father the one who judges all people impartially according to their deeds, live in reverent fear during the time of your exile.

Exile doesn't sound like living in abundance. Being holy is being separate - this scripture sounds like it is describing great difficulty, not great abundance.

1 Peter 1:18-20: (NRSV) ¹⁸You know that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your ancestors, not with perishable things like silver or gold, ¹⁹but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without defect or blemish. ²⁰He was destined before the foundation of the world, but was revealed at the end of the ages for your sake.

You were bought from your futile ways. People can live a nice life, but the calling of Christ, holiness, calls you up higher. You were given that introduction through the Lamb of God.

Philippians 4:19: (NASB) And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

Hmmm...what are "His riches" versus our riches? Do these scriptures show abundance?

Luke 11:9-12: (NASB) ⁹So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ¹⁰For everyone who asks, receives; and he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, it will be opened. ¹¹Now suppose one of you fathers is asked by his son for a fish; he will not give him a snake instead of a fish, will he? ¹²Or if he is asked for an egg, he will not give him a scorpion, will he?



Jesus hints towards great abundance in these Scriptures. A good father knows the difference between a good gift and a bad gift. Is our life now supposed to be of total victory, or is a Christian supposed to have "lack" in their lives in the pursuit of holiness?



Observations about holiness so far:

- Holiness means to be set apart, to be different;
- Jesus is our primary example of holiness;
- We need God's light and truth to bring us to holiness - we need a map, a Godly Personal Standard;
- Holiness can grow out of having and keeping Jesus' commandments;



- Holiness does not come from how we feel - rather it is developed through discipline;
- God wants us to be holy.

(continuing...) Luke 11:13: (NASB) *If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?*

So all of what Jesus was talking about wasn't about "stuff," it was about the Holy Spirit! It's not about things, but about the power and influence of God in your life. If you want to be holy, what more could you ask for than that?



The Levites were set apart and had no inheritance in the Land. They were treated differently.

Exodus 32:26: *Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the Lord's side? Let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together under him.*



Being holy is to live separately, set apart for service.

Ezra 10:11: *...separate yourselves from the people of the land.*



"Less is NOT more," *Sermon by Leroy Thompson*

- *It is spiritually legal to have abundance.*

Is this a Godly Personal Standard thought? Does this thought guide us towards holiness?

Mark 10:17-27: (NASB) ¹⁷As he was setting out on a journey, a man ran up to him and knelt before him, and asked him, Good Teacher, **what shall I do to inherit eternal life?** ¹⁸And Jesus said to him, Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone. ¹⁹You know the commandments, Do not murder, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Do not defraud, Honor your father and mother. ²⁰And he said to him, Teacher, I have kept all these things from my youth up. ²¹Looking at him, Jesus felt a love for him and said to him, One thing you lack: go and sell all you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me. ²²But at these words he was saddened, and he went away grieving, for he was one who owned much property. ²³And Jesus, looking around, said to his disciples, How hard it will be for those who are wealthy to enter the kingdom of God! ²⁴The disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus answered again and said to them, Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! ²⁵It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. ²⁶They were even more astonished and said to him, Then who can be saved? ²⁷Looking at them, Jesus said, With people it is impossible, but not with God; for all things are possible with God.

The man had the right heart condition, trying to follow the Law, living a goodly life. Jesus required that this man sell all he had, but yet he is not requiring that of us. Is looking for abundance the way to holiness?

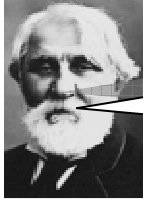
Luke 9:22-26: (NASB) ²²saying, The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed and be raised up on the third day. ²³And he was saying to them all, If anyone wishes to come after me, **he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow me.** ²⁴For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but



whoever loses his life for my sake, he is the one who will save it. ²⁵For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and loses or forfeits himself? ²⁶For whoever is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his glory, and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.

More observations about holiness:

- Holiness is not measured by riches;
- Holiness is absolutely not measured by a desire for riches.



"To desire and expect nothing for oneself and to have profound sympathy for others is genuine holiness." - Russian Novelist Ivan Turgenev

Regardless of our financial status, we should be content:

1 Timothy 6:5,6: (NIV) ⁵and constant friction between people of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain. ⁶But godliness with contentment is great gain.

(Source: Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI, H.G. Bosch) In the forests of northern Europe and Asia lives little animal called the ermine, known for his snow-white fur in winter. He instinctively protects his white coat against anything that would soil it. Fur hunters take advantage of this unusual trait of the ermine. They don't set a snare to catch him, but instead they find his home, which is usually a cleft in a rock or a hollow in an old tree. They smear the entrance and interior with grime. Then the hunters set their dogs loose to find and chase the ermine. The frightened animal flees toward home but doesn't enter because of the filth. Rather than soil his white coat, he is trapped by the dogs and captured while preserving his purity. For the ermine, purity is more precious than life.



"No cross to carry," Sermon by Joel Osteen

- Free from poverty and lack, see yourself the right way.

Is this a Godly Personal Standard thought? Does this thought guide us towards holiness? What does it mean to "deny yourself" and "take up your cross?"

1 Corinthians 4:6: (NASB) Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively applied to myself and Apollos for your sakes, so that in us you may learn not to exceed what is written, so that no one of you will become arrogant in behalf of one against the other.

Doesn't this sound like a warning?

- To be holy is to see and comply with the Word.

A Christian is supposed to be a good steward. A steward took care of the master's goods. He didn't own the goods but took care of them as if they were his own. That is part of the scriptural concept of what we are supposed to be. We use His goods in His service, not for our personal, fleshly interests.



1 Corinthians 4:7-8: (NASB) ⁷*For who regards you as superior? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?* ⁸*You are already filled, you have already become rich, you have become kings without us; and indeed, I wish that you had become kings so that we also might reign with you.*

The Apostle is warning that they took this concept of the Gospel and were puffed up, taking things for themselves.

- To be holy is to remember *why* we are as blessed as we are;
- To be holy is to shun arrogance and embrace humility.

So often when we think of the "total victory" approach, we aren't embracing humility or contentment. When Jesus died for our sins, he didn't release us from our responsibilities in life, and he didn't release us from poverty or difficulty either. Some of our greatest lessons and growth come out of difficulties.

1 Corinthians 4:9-10: (NASB) ⁹*For, I think, God has exhibited us apostles last of all, as men condemned to death; because we have become a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men.* ¹⁰*We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are prudent in Christ; we are weak, but you are strong; you are distinguished, but we are without honor.*

Don't look for accolades and attention. The Apostles experienced difficulties.


- To be holy is to be willing to suffer worldly embarrassment for Christ's sake.

1 Corinthians 4:11-13: (NASB) ¹¹*To this present hour we are both hungry and thirsty, and are poorly clothed, and are roughly treated, and are homeless;* ¹²*and we toil, working with our own hands; when we are reviled, we bless; when we are persecuted, we endure;* ¹³*when we are slandered, we try to conciliate; we have become as the scum of the world, the dregs of all things, even until now.*

- To be holy is to sacrifice earthly comfort for the sake of a Godly cause.

It's not about having, it's about giving.

The next clip is Benny Hinn's reaction to an interview Joel Osteen did on Larry King Live, in which Mr. Osteen was extremely non-committal about who can get to heaven.

 "I wanted to punch him out," *Sermon by Benny Hinn*

Is this a Godly Personal Standard thought? Does this thought guide us towards holiness?

Luke 9:51-56: (NASB) ⁵¹*When the days were approaching for his ascension, he was determined to go to Jerusalem;* ⁵²*and he sent messengers on ahead of him, and they went and entered a village of the Samaritans to make arrangements for him.* ⁵³*But they did not receive him, because he was traveling toward Jerusalem.* ⁵⁴*When his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?* ⁵⁵*But he turned and rebuked them, and said, You do not know what kind of spirit you are of;* ⁵⁶*for the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went on to another village.*

- Holiness is not manipulated by circumstances or emotions.



Don't be a Christian nominally, in name only. Nominalism is not holy and can't bring us to holiness. We need to rise above a sub-par standard.

Matthew 7:15-23: (NASB) ¹⁵*Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. ¹⁶You will know them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes nor figs from thistles, are they? ¹⁷So every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. ¹⁹Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰So then, you will know them by their fruits. ²¹Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven will enter. ²²Many will say to me on that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name cast out demons, and in your name perform many miracles? ²³And then I will declare to them, I never knew you; depart from me, you who practice lawlessness.*



Sometimes the only Bible people will ever read is our character.

1 Peter 1:14,15: *As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do;*

- Holiness is *not* a product of what we do and say on the outside;
- Holiness is a product of the fruit of our lives (our character) and based on our words and actions.

Theme Text: **Romans 12:1-2:** (NASB) ¹*Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. ²And do not be conformed to this world, but **be transformed** by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.*

- Holiness is the sacrifice of all of one's self to be transformed into a vessel of service to God.

Let's look at God's Holiness:

Isaiah 6:1-3: (NASB) ¹*In the year of King Uzziah's death I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple. ²Seraphim stood above Him, each having six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. ³And one called out to another and said, "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory."*

(Source: Joy Thompson) The repetition of the word holy suggests that God is infinitely holy, infinitely clean, pure, infinitely sanctified. His justice is incomparably set apart to create accountability. His love is incomparably set apart to create highest good and healing for all. His Wisdom is incomparable set apart to carry out the reconciliation and transformation process in the most effective way for all. His power is incomparably set apart to implement His purpose, with the ability to deal with every obstacle and force opposing highest blessing.



"I sowed a \$1,000.00 seed," Sermon by Mason Betha

- This morning I sowed a \$1,000 seed believing for a bunch of miracles to come to my wife.

Is this a Godly Personal Standard thought? Does this thought guide us towards holiness? Can we buy miracles?



We don't pay so that we can receive. But how can we give if we don't have a lot to begin with? Jesus focused us on taking up his cross and denying self. God doesn't want our money, he wants our hearts. That's where holiness comes from. We can give one another our prayers without ceasing. We can be a person who takes another's situations to heart and pray for God's will to be done - according to God's riches.

Here is the text that "seed" was based upon:

Psalms 115:11-15: (NASB) ¹¹You who fear the LORD, trust in the LORD; He is their help and their shield. ¹²The LORD has been mindful of us; He will bless us; He will bless the house of Israel; He will bless the house of Aaron. ¹³He will bless those who fear the LORD, The small together with the great. ¹⁴May the LORD give you increase, you and your children. ¹⁵May you be blessed of the LORD, maker of heaven and earth.

As "spiritual Israel," we should be looking for spiritual blessings.

- Holiness does not look for lots of stuff!

1 Peter 2:9: (NASB) *But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;*

- Holiness trades in earthly inheritances for the privilege of proclaiming God's plan.

1 Peter 2:10-11: (NASB) ¹⁰for you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. ¹¹Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul.

- Holiness has no home here, rather it longs for its spiritual home;
- Finally, true holiness has no will of its own.

Contentment is still working hard within the context we find ourselves - whether in abundance or if sparse.

2 Corinthians 10:3-5: (NASB) ³For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, ⁴for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. ⁵We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ...

Avoid being a nominal Christian - rise above!

*So do you think you're holy?
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!*