

# Perfecting Holiness

by Allen Weakland

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*Perfecting holiness means living a life that is pleasing to God, according to His Word and plan, and avoiding unholy associations.*

**Duration:** 45:45

**Scripture:** 2 Corinthians 6:14

**Topics:** "Holiness", "Righteous Living"

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## Description

Allen Weakland emphasizes the necessity of perfecting holiness in our lives by aligning our actions and beliefs with God's Word, rather than allowing societal norms or the influence of unfaithful individuals to dictate our behavior. He warns against redefining sin to fit personal desires and stresses that true holiness requires a distinct lifestyle that reflects God's standards. Weakland draws on the example of the Corinthians, who struggled with foolishness and false teachings, urging believers to separate themselves from sin and to be guided by God's truth. He concludes by reminding us that perfecting holiness is a continuous process that involves a commitment to living righteously and pointing others to God.

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## Transcript

Where they're coming from. But you know, that statement is true not only in the aspect, in the arena if you would, of removing all doubt of someone's foolishness by what we say, but you know, I have personally done some things, some actions if you would, that have removed all doubt that there's some foolishness in my own life. And you know, if I can do it, I know anybody can do it, because if anybody else can do it, I can find myself doing it.

The fact is, we can not only prove to people that we lack something in our lives, wisdom-wise, concerning God by the things that we say, but friends, is it not also true that we can remove the doubt from others' minds by the actions that we involve ourselves in, because it's not in accordance to what God has said and what God has proclaimed. Just a little while ago, I think it was Sister Hunt who had received a note in a letter of a correspondence course asking, I don't know the exact question, but we'll kind of paraphrase it, was where does the church of Christ stand on certain issues, or what do they call sin. And we were sitting there talking back and forth, or they were talking back and forth, and talking about certain verses and passages of Scripture.

And we came down to the idea, and I'm sure they did as well, of if they just give Bible verses, they'll start understanding in the most simplistic way that what God has dictated determines what is right and what is

wrong. Friends, we live in a society where people redefine, when they find something that they are wrong, or a life that is in a direct opposition to what God says and does and commands, they redefine it to make their lives in accordance to what they think God is saying. What is that doing? It's not only making a mockery of God, it's making a mockery of the grace that is found in Christ, but it's also not perfecting holiness.

It's doing nothing more than perfecting our standard, which our standard will not lead us to heaven. So when we think about, as we get into our text here, are we perfecting holiness in our lives? Whether we are a member of the body of Christ, or whether we are outside the body of Christ, and we're trying to do it our own way. Jeremiah proclaimed very clearly in Jeremiah 10.23 that it is not in us to direct our steps.

Now, does that mean that we don't have the ability to choose what's right and wrong? No. But it's not in us to direct what is right and what is wrong. God has already done that for us.

And it's found in His Holy Word. To give you a little bit of a background concerning what we're about to embark upon in our text, the Christians in Corinth were acting very foolishly. If you go back and look, especially in the first book, what we call the first book, or 1 Corinthians, you see a lot of actions in each chapter that Paul had to bring to their attention of correcting in their own lives.

But also a part of that was that they were accepting some of the false teaching, some of the gossip, if you would, the slander that some of the religious, especially the Judaizing teachers, were bringing out about Paul. And you know, of all the people that they should have been turning to who had given them the Word of God to change their life, they were listening to that as if that's what they wanted to hear. Now, not only could you go with a lesson about gossip and slander, which we could preach on all night, but the fact was they were not perfecting holiness in doing such, whether it was being proclaimed or whether it was being listened to.

And that's what the Christians in Corinth were finding themselves in. And I say that for this reason. Look at 2 Corinthians 6, the very first verse.

As Paul confronts them about this scenario, he comes along and says, Receive the grace of God in vain. We know vain means empty, useless. Don't go along and receive such things because not only is it not perfecting holiness, but you're making the gift of Christ worthless in your life because you're not perfecting holiness.

To perfect holiness is the concept and the principle of doing what God has asked us and living as God has asked us because that's what we're to become. Not like the world. You know, there is a love that God hates, friends.

And that love is the love of this world and the wisdoms of this world. If you want a Scripture for that, go back to 1 John 2, verses 13 and following. John comes along and says, Now listen, don't love the things that God despises.

And if people love today to get the nitty-gritty stuff and they search and dig for unrighteousness, friends, we need to stay away from that because that is not perfecting holiness. And some of that was occurring as they were trying to downgrade the Apostle Paul. And so we find him coming along and asking the question, Are those who are talking and saying such things, should we have a proper relationship with them? Are they doing what's best for the cause of Christ? Are they doing righteousness? And that's why I

say this passive Scripture is taken out of context because as we read it, most people think that Paul is talking about Christians and non-Christians.

But in reality, he's talking about those Christians who are following the faith, paying attention to those who are of the body of Christ who are not living as they ought to live. For some reason, they were starting to dictate how the faithful should live rather than allowing God to dictate it. Let's go ahead and read our text.

Again, starting in chapter 6 of 2 Corinthians, starting with the 14th verse. Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what commune, young, hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Baal? And what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God.

As God has said, I will dwell in them and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. Wherefore, come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and will be a father unto you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. Notice chapter 7, verse 1. The word therefore brings attention right back to what he had just said.

Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. Perfecting holiness and proper respect, proper reverence toward your Creator, who gave you life, not only physical life, but as children of God, gave you life through the blood of Jesus Christ. There is a reason to perfect holiness.

There is a reason to show the proper reverence for the Almighty God, because of what He has done on our behalf. He made us alive. Ephesians 2, verses 1-10 tell us.

He made us alive. He took us from a sinful state and translated us, as Colossians 1, 2, and 3, unto the kingdom of His dear Son. From darkness unto light.

Paul said in Acts chapter 26, that he was proclaimed or charged to turn the people, not the people of God, but to turn people from darkness to light and from Satan unto God. How are we going to perfect holiness though? How are we going to fulfill this proclamation from the Apostle Paul as he was inspired by God? How are we going to do it? Well, that's our thrust tonight. Notice, as he begins our discussion, in verses 14 and 15, he says if we're going to perfect holiness, we need to realize that a holy life is not controlled by an unbeliever.

It's not controlled by a brother or a sister who is not faithful to the cause of Christ, who is not involved in what they need to, who is not totally dedicated to God and to His Lord. Too many times, the one who yells the loudest is the one who is farthest away from our Lord because they're not getting their way. Friends, that ought not to be.

How can someone direct people to do as God has said when they themselves aren't doing it? That's the hypocrisy that the Pharisees found themselves in, was it not? They were saying, do, do, do, but do as I say. Or no, do as I do. Do as I say, but don't follow my same example.

That's a terrible way to live. And yet, that happens way too often. In 1 Corinthians 15, verse 33, the Apostle Paul made it very clear, very, very clear, that evil communications corrupt good manners, or as the American Standard says, evil companions corrupt good morals.

Friends, if we're going to perfect holiness in our lives, whether we're inside the body of Christ, but especially if we're outside the body of Christ, how can we ever perfect that allowing those who are also unfaithful to direct our ways in what we do and how we think and what we say? We've got individuals, and I've run into them, where they really want to do what God wants. At least that's what they say. But you know, when Sunday morning comes, they're wanting to be with their football buddies gathered around the television worshipping that God, the football God.

Or they want to be on the golf course worshipping the golf God. Or they want to be on Lake whatever worshipping that God. And now, you know, the question I always ask is, who are you really wanting to serve? Who are you going to allow to dictate what is proper in your life that you can perfect holiness? Are you going to allow the unbeliever? Or are you going to allow God? Are you going to allow someone who is serious about God and striving to learn and study and become holy? 1 Peter 1, verses 14-16 As God has dictated and desires, are you going to allow someone who is more concerned about the things of this world, loving the things of this world, than what God has set forth? In Romans 6, verses 16-18 After He had commanded and set forth that shall we all continue in sin, that grace may abound, God forbid.

He says later on in verses 16-18 Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves ye shall have servants to obey? His servants ye are to whom you obey. Friends, there's only two people we can serve or two individuals. Either we're serving God or we're serving Satan.

And that's it. And if we think we're serving ourselves, in reality, we're serving Satan because Satan wants us to serve ourselves. He wants us to put ourselves first in anything and everything that we do.

He wants a parent to go ahead and buy the cigarettes and buy the alcohol and buy the lottery tickets rather than providing for the family because He wants us to serve ourselves. He wants us to go out. And I'm a hunter.

But hunting becomes a problem when we put more money into hunting than we do taking care of our children and paying our bills. I like to fish. I even like to golf.

But if my golf interferes with providing for my family, taking money away that is supposed to be there for that, then who am I serving? Myself. And thus, I've become my own God. Friends, to perfect holiness is to not allow a faithless individual to control our actions.

The phrase, be not, that's found there in verse 14, literally is an instruction to stop something that's already being involved or to never allow something to start in the first place. So He says, if you're allowing someone within the body of Christ who is not faithful to God to dictate and tell you how to live your life, you need to stop it. And if someone is trying to get that started in your life, don't even allow it to occur.

Be not. But the concept is enforced even more when He says, unequally yoked together. Simply meaning, this is not a proper match.

A round hole will not accept a square. Or vice versa. It doesn't go together.

You cannot take a horse and place it with a mule and have it pull the same way. As farmers, you understand that. As those who would raise crops, you don't place certain crops next to other crops because it doesn't work.

And when it comes to trying to perfect holiness, you do not take a faithful child of God and place a non-faithful child of God next to them and think it's going to work. In Amos 3, verse 3, this question is asked by our Lord through Amos. Can two walk except they be agreed? That is a question that has already been answered.

And the answer is no. You cannot do it. You can deceive yourself into thinking, oh, that's alright.

I think I can do it. I'm pretty strong. How many times does it end in tragedy? Now, let's go to that outside the body of Christ.

I was talking to a young man at our local congregation back in Missouri and he had come up to me and he said, Alan, why did God allow me? Notice, why did God allow me to fall in love with a non-Christian? And I said, now wait a minute. That had nothing to do with God. You chose it.

And your heart is breaking because she would not, in this case, would not see the truths that were found in God's will. He stopped attending services. I asked him, who's controlling your life? God or this woman you're thinking about marrying? She seemed on the outset very pleasant, very nice lady.

But I told him to seek the kingdom first. You cannot allow a non-Christian to start dictating to a Christian how they ought to live their lives. As we continue to think about this, this applies to any situation where an unbeliever is brought or a believer is brought under control by an unbeliever.

Let me read some passive Scripture that's found in the book of Proverbs, that book of wisdom. In Proverbs 1. Proverbs 1, verses 10 and following. Notice what Solomon proclaims.

He says, My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not. If they say, come with us, let us wait for blood. Let us lurk privately for the innocent without cause.

Let us swallow them up alive as the grave and whole as those that go down into the pit. We shall find all precious substance. We shall fill our houses with spoil.

Cast in thy lot among us. Let us all have one purse. My son, walk not thou in the way with them.

Refrain thy foot from their path. Pretty self-explanatory, isn't it? What about Proverbs 13? The 20th verse. He that walketh with wise men shall be wise, but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.

Again, pretty self-explanatory, isn't it? Philippians 2, verse 13 informs of something of great consequence when it says, For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure. Friends, realize that the things that we do, as we said this morning, are not created on our own account. We're doing them.

We're fulfilling the will of God, but the pattern was there and God, as He has made us fellow laborers with Christ, 1 Corinthians 3, verse 9, we fulfill those because Ephesians 2, verses 8 down through verse 10 says we were created to do those good works. Now, how can we fulfill doing those good works if we're allowing someone who doesn't believe in God or an unfaithful child of God to dictate and control our actions? How can we fulfill them? It's far from perfecting holiness, isn't it? You see, in order to perfect holiness as God has set forth, as Paul pleaded with them in 2 Corinthians 7, the first verse, he says you cannot allow yourself to be controlled by faithless people. Notice verse 16 though.

If we desire to perfect holiness in our lives, we cannot allow ourselves to be associated with sin. Perfecting holiness means you're staying away from that which will defile. You don't put a bad apple in a whole bunch of girls or however that song goes.

If you've got a bag of apples, you don't put a bad one in there, because what's that bad one going to do? It's going to affect all of them around it. And friends, when it gets right down to it, how can we allow a little leaven to leaven up the whole lump? Now, you might not think that I bake. Guess what? I don't.

But I know what yeast does. Many a time, my daddy would make apple strudel and different things like that. Apple turnover.

Just good stuff. But he always would make sure he had yeast to make that dough rise, whether he was making bread or making other things. Friends, why do we think that we can perfect holiness and yet allow a little bit of sin in our own lives? Oh, God's going to overlook that.

Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? You know the answer, don't you? Oh, God, I was going to overlook that. I can just turn my head and not see it. Oh, if I just put it in my background, it's going to be taken care of.

Luke 17 says you still need to repent and ask for forgiveness as a child of God. Repentance has always been demanded for forgiveness to occur. If we desire to perfect holiness, we cannot associate with sin.

We can't leave these doors and walk into our workplace and start saying the lewd jokes that are normal in the workplace. We can't sit there and belittle our wives or belittle our husbands at the workplace because God says that's not right. We can't be involved in a little bit of gossip over the phone.

Well, did you hear what such and such says? Friends, how is that perfecting holiness when gossip and slander and such actions are sinful? If a holy life is created by striving for that which is right, the agreement between a holy life and sin is not there. Notice in verse 16 that he makes the connection between the temple of God with idols. Friends, in Exodus 20, verses 3 down through verse 5, he says, Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image. Can you imagine, as we stop here for a moment, walking into the temple of God or even walking into the tabernacle and finding graven images? You think that would happen? They understood that there was a difference between serving God and serving these images. One was beneficial and one was not.

And yet, he makes this comparison to those of us today and those in Corinth. You're now the temple of God. Just as it was a physical temple, now your body is the temple of God.

You can look back at 1 Corinthians 6, verses 19 and following, in which he's talking about the individual Christian being the temple of God. Or 1 Corinthians 3, where he's talking about the whole church being the temple of God. He says, now, if you didn't see graven images in the physical temple of old or the tabernacle, why would you ever have an agreement of sin in the temple of God that is in your life? How could you ever consider that to be a proper agreement? Perfecting holiness demands that we do not associate with sin.

He then brings us to the concept of understanding that God desires our heart to be proper and set toward what God desires. In Romans 6, verse 12, we're told there, therefore, let not sin reign in your mortal

bodies. After he had said in Romans 6, verse 1, when he asked the question, shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Of course, we always say, God forbid.

There's also more to that verse where it says, how shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein? How could we ever have that agreement? Friends, if we ever desire to perfect holiness, whether we're talking about as a member of the body of Christ or those who are outside the body of Christ, that God says is separated from Him because of their sin, Isaiah 59, verses 1 and 2, those who are involved in such acts of the flesh, the lust of the flesh, that Paul describes in Galatians 5, 19 and following, shall not inherit the kingdom of God. And he says, you used to be like this. You used to be just like these individuals, but through Christ, you were made whole.

Again, going back to Ephesians chapter 2. Friends, if we desire to perfect holiness, we cannot associate with sin just as we cannot allow an unbeliever to control us and control what needs to be done. Verse 17 informs us of a third of five thoughts and that is a holy life. If we desire a holy life, to perfect holiness in our lives, we must make sure that our life is distinct in action.

Notice verse 17. Is distinct in action. God has always demanded distinctiveness.

God wants people to come along and say, you're different. I can see it the way you talk, the way you think, the kind of actions you're involved in. Just before preacher training school, back in 1991, I had an opportunity to work for Kelmar.

And Kelmar is a liquid plastic injection company. And they would make different products that were plastic as they would inject this plastic into molds. I was hired to wash floors, sweep floors, mop floors.

It was an exciting job. Actually, a pretty dirty job because those machines used a lot of hydraulic oil. Spray all over and you had to clean it up.

One day, one of the men was cursing as I was going around and I just had it. I walked away. I put my mop down and I just walked away and ended up going up to lunch.

In fact, lunch time was at that point. And I got up there in this little spot for our lunch and unbeknownst to me, the main head man, the supervisor was at an office up above our little lunch spot. And as I was sitting there eating, I said, I just wish people would stop cursing.

I wish they'd have enough courtesy toward others because to me, that is the most disgusting thing besides other things that can come from a human mind. I was saying this to myself, but I guess I was saying it loud enough that when this main man came through, he heard it. He immediately walked downstairs to the floor supervisor and called a meeting.

And I walked down there. Everyone had to go down. And it was at that point he said, the cursing stops now.

It's been going all too long and it's time to stop it now. Now my thought is, well, maybe he was on his way down there to see it and take care of that. But you know, he wasn't.

Someone had to be distinct. Had to show that there was a different way to do things. Now friends, if I can do it, so can you.

You can make a difference in where you work. You can make a difference in where you call your home. There's no reason why we cannot be distinct in our lives.

That is what it means to perfect holiness. We need to have the kind of mentality that we allow ourselves to show that there's a difference not only by our thoughts and not only by our words, but by our actions. There's a reason why Paul said in 1 Thessalonians 5, verse 21, prove all things hold fast to that which is good.

There is a difference. We can do it if we know what's right and we have no excuse not to know. In Ephesians 5, verse 1 and following, notice what he says, Be therefore followers of God as dear children and walk in love as Christ also hath loved us and given Himself for us an offering and sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling Savior.

But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not be once named among you as becometh the saints. Friends, there should be distinction. But why is it that we see brethren involved in such things? They're involved in acts of uncleanness and unrighteousness.

They're involved in covetousness. They're involved in foolish talking and jesting and on and on and on. And by the way, jesting is making these statements that have double meanings.

That's what it means. If you think about that, you look at many of the sitcoms today and that's exactly what they do. They make jesting a way of making money.

And these people are making millions of dollars over jesting because they say one thing, but people catch on in their crude ways of other things. Friends, that's not perfecting holiness. If we allow ourselves to watch such things, realize we're not perfecting holiness.

If we allow our children, don't be wondering later on why our children do the same thing when we allow them to watch it in our homes in the first place. Our daughter says, Daddy, why can't we watch this? Why can't I watch this program that other members' children watch? And so we sit down and talk with her about it. We don't take them over to that show and say, see, this is what's wrong.

We've already checked it out because we're the TV guy in our home and God has given that direct responsibility for me and my wife to be the parental guides. What about those outside the body of Christ? The same principles are there. If we're thinking about Christ, if we're thinking about making a change in our lives, friends, to perfect that holiness means we have to be distinct.

We might have to start giving up some of those things, all of those things that God says is like the world rather than being distinct like Him. I mentioned 1 Peter 1, verses 14 and following. You'll see there that He says, Be holy as God is holy.

The word be there literally means become. Become holy. Put that in your margin in your Bible.

Become holy as God is holy. There is a process that's involved in one's life. If we desire to be and have holiness in our lives, we have to be distinct in our actions.

Verse 18 then brings us to our forethought. The holy life that's pleasing unto God is a holy life that always points to God. Friends, everything we do say, touch, think about should always be pointing to God.

Always. That's what perfecting holiness is about. In a play entitled Tartuffe, T-A-R-T-U-F-F-E, Tartuffe.

A very funny play actually. I think there's actually a videotape if you go to maybe the video stores, they might have access to it to order it for you. But Tartuffe is a play.

It started off as a play. As a religious man, quote, the religious world, was trying to show the headmaster of the home, the head of the home, the man, how religious he was. And at that time, in the late 1700s, I think is where they placed it, maybe 1800s, they would, heads of the home, if they had enough money for their family, they would take in religious people.

And the way they thought about these religious people is they would go down the road and if they saw this person who was religious, they would beat themselves with coattails. Or they would wear shirts that had horse's hair trying to, quote, be religious. They were hurting the physical body and hoped to purge it spiritually.

Well, picture if you would, this is a play. Tartuffe is this individual who is trying to show the headmaster that he's real spiritual, and yet the whole time he's gone, he's chasing the daughter of the head of the house and the wife around the house trying to entice them as he could. He tried to steal and would try to steal and continue to try to do all he could, which was a direct opposite of what he was trying to show the head of the house.

When the head of the house came in through the door, boy, he was changing his old mentality. Friends, a holy life always points to God. Always.

Not part time. Not as preachers say and Bible school teachers say. Not just on Sunday.

Not just when you're around the preacher or around the elders or around other members, but all the time. Even when you're by yourself and you're driving down the road and someone cuts you off. You know that road rage, you know? People get angry because that person did something that offended me.

And so I allow my speech and my thoughts to become angry and full of wrath and maybe even say things that are unbecoming of a child of God. Not to be once named among the saints. Again, Ephesians 5. You see, one of the things that Paul told the church in Philippi was you make sure you obey God whether in my presence or in my absence.

And friends, God has asked all of us to perfect holiness because we are always in His presence, aren't we? Though we cannot physically touch Him, He's there. He wants us to know that everything is naked unto His eyes. The thoughts that we have, God knows them.

And if we desire to perfect a holy life before God, to become holy as He is holy, we have to do it 24-7, don't we? We have to put the things that are in our mind, that junk in, junk out for computers, we need to put the right things in. Philippians 4, verse 8. We need to think on that which is pure, righteous, and holy. There's good report, all that.

You need to put that in. Because then the mind is thinking on that which is of God, seeking the kingdom first. Matthew 6, verse 33.

And Matthew 7, verse 15. Christ says, Beware of false prophets which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are raving wolves. Friends, many have believed the false teachers in the world.

Whether you call them television evangelists or whatever, they try to come across as trying to tell you, oh, this is the way it needs to be done. But you know, the last time I knew, wolves ate sheep. They were not out for the good of the sheep.

They were out for their own good. Paul said they served their own bellies. Romans 16, verse 18.

If we desire in the body of Christ, or in this case, if we desire as those outside the body of Christ to become holy as God is holy, we need to start having God first and foremost in our lives every single moment of every single day. Satan looks for those times where he can mess with us, where he can cause a lot of heartache and hardship. But friends, we should never allow that as an excuse to do that which is unholy.

We should use it as an excuse to do that which is holy even more. If we are living as God proclaims, we don't need to boast about our own righteous living. We're simply doing as the Master has asked the servant.

We're simply doing our part. Friends, we're God's own possession. 1 Peter 2, verse 9. And if we're God's own possession, as we are the term in the King James of peculiar people, then we need to act like the one who owns us.

And if we desire to be a part of that, we have to, of course, put our Lord on in baptism. That's the only way to become a part of His peculiar people. Are you thinking about that? I hope you are.

Because that's the only way you'll start down the road of perfecting holiness. A final thought tonight, and I appreciate your astute, astute attention, is found again in chapter 7, verse 1 of 2 Corinthians, and that is a holy life is concerned with holiness. If we're thinking about God and having Him as our model, as our pattern, God is holy, and it automatically means we'll be striving for holiness as well.

In Hebrews 12, verse 2, after He had proclaimed in chapter 11 about the wonderful faith of Enoch and Abraham and Sarah, that hall of fame we call it of faith, He then turns to those who He was speaking to at that time in chapter 12, verse 2, and makes the statement very clear, wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witness, and that's talking about those He had just spoke of in chapter 11, let us lay aside every weight in the sin which doth so eat at us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God on high. Draw your attention, if you would, in verse 2, where it says that He is the author and finisher of our faith. The concept of an author is one who literally writes.

Here it is the concept of blazing the trail. It is He and He alone that blazed the trail for holiness to follow. And it was because He was holy Himself.

And He says, if you want to go down that same trail, fine. If you try to blaze your own trail, you're going to get nowhere because your faith of yourself cannot overcome. It is the faith in Christ that is able to overcome this world.

And if He is the author, friends, who else can be the finisher? A holy life, one who strives to perfect holiness, realizes that he needs to stay on the same trail that our Lord blazed and finished with His blood that allows you and I to have holiness in our own lives. Isn't that precious? That's the plan that is set forth in verse 2. A penitent man, if you're a child of God, a penitent man realizes and acknowledges that he

needs to rid himself of that which would affect his eternal destiny. If you go to Costa Rica, you can only take certain things.

They will rid you even more now of those things you cannot take. If you're going to make it to heaven, if you're going to perfect holiness in the sight of God, God has already put down what we need to rid ourselves from. Now it's up to us to enact it.

If you're a child of God, He says you need to repent and pray for forgiveness. Acts 8.22 If you're a non-child of God, He says you need to put your Lord on a baptism this very night. That's the only way you'll rid it.

In Romans 6, 3 and 4, He makes it very clear that the one who is baptized then at that point comes in contact with the blood of Christ. That's the only place they come in contact with the blood of Christ is in the watery grave of baptism. Friends, there's power in the blood which we'll talk about Tuesday night of the reasons why there's power in the blood.

But friends, if you want the benefits of the power of blood in your life, if you want to perfect holiness in your own life, it begins by your immersion in that watery grave. I have no idea what that was, but we're pretty close to being done. You know, I love Sunday nights.

You know why? Because that's when I preach normally the hardest, but I get longer to preach. I think David told me we get to go until 9 o'clock tonight. Isn't that right? Summer Complainant Day.

If one's desire is to be holy tonight, you've given the plan. Haven't you? Not by me, but the words of God that we've just looked at and that are set forth by the Apostle Paul. In verses 14 of chapter 6 of 2 Corinthians all the way down to chapter 7, verse 1. If you're a child of God tonight and this doesn't match up to the kind of life that you are living at this time, maybe you're allowing an unbeliever to dictate how you need to live your life.

Maybe you're not striving to perfect holiness in your life by allowing yourself to allow God to direct your steps. It's time to repent. And repentance needs to be done today.

Maybe you're a child of God that has not perfected holiness in your life because you're not concerned with holiness. You have no desire whatsoever to give up some of the things that God calls sin. Maybe you're not willing to give up and allow yourself to be distinct before unbelievers.

Tonight's the night you need to repent because we know not what tomorrow brings. Especially for those who are outside the body of Christ tonight. How can you ever expect to perform in a contextual way what God has dictated and set forth for the Christian to become as God is holy? If you haven't even entered into that race.

If you haven't even entered into that covenant because you've never put your Lord on a baptism. You know, I don't mind running, but I guarantee you they wouldn't let me on an Olympic racetrack. God is not going to allow you to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.

His family. Without going through His Son, the door. There's a painting I was telling Brother Dalton about out of John chapter 10 where it says that Christ is at the door.

And the picture was a door there and Christ was standing and the author or the painter asked some of his comrades to look at it and to critique it. Four of them came to critique it. One of them said, where's the door handle? And he said, Christ does not open the door.

You do. You do. He's there knocking.

He's there calling. 2 Thessalonians 2, 13 and 14. Through the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

That's the way it's proclaimed. How shall they believe? Unless the preacher preaches the Word. How can it be of any benefit to you unless you open the door? If I sent you an envelope by courier that had a million dollars, how is it going to be beneficial until you open the door to the courier? If I had a box that had a million dollars in it right now, what benefit is it going to be if I say it's yours unless you come up here? You have to come to me.

That's what Christ says. You've got to go to Him. And you take the box and open up the box.

That's the only way the benefits could be there. If you have that need to put our Lord on in baptism, to make the blood beneficial to your life, the waters are ready. There are those here to help.

Don't wait another moment. As together as we stand and as we sing, if you have a need, why won't you come?

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