

# (Radical Jesus) 18 Radical Holiness

by Glenn Meldrum

---

*To become holy, we must have a relationship with a holy God, which requires the work of the Holy Spirit and a life of practical holiness.*

**Duration:** 25:24

**Scripture:** Leviticus 20:26, Matthew 5:21-22, Matthew 5:27-28, Hebrews 12:14, 1 Peter 1:16

**Topics:** "Holiness"

---

## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the radical nature of the transformation that occurs when a person becomes a follower of Christ. He explains that this transformation is not a peaceful or comfortable process, but rather a violent crucifixion of the old sinful nature. The preacher uses an allegorical story to illustrate how people often resist the light of God's presence because it exposes their evil deeds. He also discusses the importance of conviction and the ministry of the Holy Spirit in bringing about true transformation. The sermon concludes with the reminder that true passion for Jesus is demonstrated not just through worship, but also through a life that is aligned with God's holiness.

---

## Transcript

This message by Glenn Meldrum was originally produced by In His Presence Ministries for the Radical Truth Podcast. You can listen and subscribe to the Radical Truth Podcast by going to [www.ihpministry.com](http://www.ihpministry.com) You are welcome to reproduce this message for free distribution. This message is part of a series entitled, The Radical Jesus.

Last week we began a new section on the radical nature of holiness in our study on the radical Jesus. We looked at why God's holiness is so radical and why we have such a difficult time understanding it. The divine holiness can cause us deep trauma where we feel like we are torn in two.

One part of us wants to flee from him while the other wants to cling to the Savior. The holiness of God is always good, pure and beautiful. It is our fallen condition that causes us all the trouble.

The cross is all about the Lord making the way that we could be made holy through Christ's atoning sacrifice and shed blood. The subject of holiness is extremely important because our salvation is directly tied into it. God is holy and the scripture tells us time and again and in multiple ways that only those that are holy can dwell with him.

Now if only the holy will make heaven their home, then the all important question is how do unholy people become holy and what does that holy life look like? So this is the direction today's lesson will take. I would like to begin by going back to one of the first podcasts of this series on the radical Jesus. In that podcast I told an original allegorical story about a remote village people that lived in a secluded valley.

Nobody from the outside world had discovered them, nor had any of the village people ventured beyond their secluded mountain valley. The primary physical characteristics that defined this people is that they were a race of hunchbacks and they also had a vast array of deformities. Because all that the village people ever knew was hunchbacks and deformities, they had come to believe that they were normal.

One day a child came into the world that did not have a hunchback or any deformity. The child was a perfectly formed child. Since they had never seen such a thing before, they thought the baby was an utter monstrosity.

The deformed child grew to be known as the deformed man and by the time he reached manhood, the village people thoroughly hated him. One day their hatred grew to a fevered pitch and they murdered the deformed man. They thought killing him would relieve their aching conscience, but it only made it worse.

The deformed man in my parable is actually Jesus, who was the only perfect person this world has ever known. The village people represent the human race that is a twisted mess of sin and rebellion. The problem is that we do not realize our sin is a gross perversion of what we were originally meant to be.

Just like the village people hated the deformed man, so mankind as a whole has hated Christ. When Jesus walked this planet, the hatred many people felt for him drove them to have Jesus crucified. What had the deformed man done to the village people that caused them to hate him so thoroughly that they killed him? His perfect life rebuked their twisted ones.

This is why men crucified Jesus. They hated him because he was perfect in holiness and they were the complete opposite. It is the nature of holiness that anything or anyone that is not holy will feel its strong reproof, disfavor, and ultimate judgment.

What happens when a bright light flashes on a very dark place filled with cockroaches? The little vermin begin to flee. So it is with divine holiness when it breaks upon a human being or upon a people. It exposes what has always been on the inside but was seemingly hid by the darkness.

Now isn't it strange that people get angry at God when he exposes what is on the inside of them, none of which was of God's making but of their own? When the perfect light of God's holy presence bursts into their lives, we will either flee from the light because it hurts us so deeply or we will run into the light that it will transform us. Jesus declared in John 3, verses 19-21, this is the verdict. Light has come into the world, but men love darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil.

Everyone who does evil hates the light and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God. Why do you think most people do not want any conviction in their lives? And why is it that people flock to churches that give motivational messages that are void of anything that would convict them of the practice of sin or of their lukewarm religion? Because conviction has to do with the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Oh my, did you just get that? Holy Spirit? That's a very good name for the third person of the Trinity because God is absolutely and infinitely holy and he is spirit. Because conviction has to do with the ministry of the Holy Spirit, those that do not want conviction in their lives will not welcome the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Before Christ's death, resurrection and ascension took place, Jesus told his disciples about this, though they did not grasp what he was saying.

He also told them that he needed to go to the Father so that he could send the Holy Spirit to them. They desperately needed the work of the Holy Spirit so they could accomplish the mission Jesus gave the church that would continue until his second coming. They were in such urgent need of the Spirit's power that Jesus told them to tarry in Jerusalem until they received the baptism in the Spirit, until they got real Holy Ghost power.

What Jesus was really telling those first disciples and is still speaking to the church today is that we should never attempt to do the work of ministry without the Pentecostal power of the Holy Spirit. Only after Jesus ascended would he send the Holy Spirit that would baptize believers in the Holy Spirit to empower them to do the work of ministry like Jesus did through the power of the Spirit. But there is infinitely more that goes with the coming of the Holy Spirit and Jesus told us one of those things in John chapter 16 verse 8. When he comes he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment.

Jesus was telling us that one of the primary works the Holy Spirit will perform is to expose the sin and guilt of people so they could obtain the gift of salvation. Now if people are just wanting to practice their sin without any interference from God or people then they are not going to be very happy with the ministry of the Holy Spirit because he will come to them and convict them of their sin. Whenever the Spirit is powerfully moving there will always be conviction because it is an integral part of his ministry here on earth.

Here is a very interesting point. What does it mean though if people are not feeling conviction? It certainly means that the Lord is not near because when he is near there will be conviction and the greater the outpouring of the Spirit the deeper the conviction will be. Of course God is not always convicting us not because we do not need it but because we cannot handle it.

He picks the battles that he must fight in our lives. If he exposed the complete extent of sin in our lives I think we would go mad. So the Lord takes us on a journey to transform our lives in an ever increasing way until finally we stand before him.

The absence of conviction may speak of a very serious problem that God may have turned us over to our sin like Paul told us in Romans 1. God is offensive to those who do not want to repent of their sin and it is irrelevant if they call themselves Christians or not. His holiness can produce in us an internal crisis as it exposes our unholiness. What we do with the Spirit's conviction will determine our eternal destiny.

We will either throw ourselves at the Savior's feet in sweet surrender or crucify him afresh in our hearts and minds. This Holy Jesus demands a response from us when he convicts us of sin so we must choose sides. There is no other option.

It is absolutely impossible for us to be a friend of God and a friend of the enemy at the same time. The astounding gift of salvation means that this Holy God calls unholy rebels into intimate fellowship. This cannot happen without a divine confrontation that includes conviction.

Salvation is 100% radical because only holy creatures can fellowship with a Holy God and since we are not naturally holy, there must be a spiritual revolution that takes place on the inside of us. Think of that for a moment. Does the idea of a revolution draw on our minds peaceful walks on a beach or lounging in your favorite setting? No.

Revolution always presents images of violence and death and that is exactly what a spiritual revolution is all about. It has nothing to do with the violence of this world, nor of hate, murder, or the overthrowing of governments of this world. A spiritual revolution is all about the overthrowing of the rule of self and the rule of hell in a person's heart and mind.

It is violent only in the fact that it crucifies the old sinful nature so that the life of Christ can transform the person. Those that do not want a spiritual revolution will fight with all that is within them against the Holy Spirit and against the agents the Spirit uses. Jesus Lord and anyone that refuses to submit to the rule of God in their lives become his enemy.

He was right when he stated in Matthew chapter 6 verse 24, no one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. Though Jesus was directly dealing in this statement with the subject of money, the principle is true with any idol of the heart.

Do you think that the radical change from being unholy to becoming holy comes without any difficulty or fight? Do you think that it is a peaceful affair and a comfortable transition? No, a thousand times no. Since neither men nor angels can be holy in and of themselves, God must impart his holiness to them. But for us willfully rebellious people, there must be a deep working of the Holy Spirit that exposes the ugly sinful deformities of our life and character, and this can be a very painful process.

It is not only painful in the life of a non-Christian that is coming to salvation, but for the Christian as well, because to advance in the kingdom of God, we must deal with the remnants of our sinful nature. Are we not commanded to crucify our sinful nature with his passions and lusts? Jesus and Paul used the image of crucifying on purpose to reveal that suffering can be involved in dying to our sinful nature. The only reason why there can be such a fierce battle on the inside of us is because we have this sin nature that fights against God and his will.

There is no way that we can become holy through our own effort. There is only one person from which that holiness is available and one road that will take you to the desired destination. I am burdened over the visible church because I think many of the people are not ready to die.

They are not right with God, and if they die in their sin, it will not go well with them at the judgment. This may seem like a silly statement, but you cannot go to Walmart and buy some holiness or purchase a get-out-of-hell card at the register. You will not find holiness for sale on Amazon, Craigslist, or eBay.

You may be able to find a book on the subject or some religious paraphernalia, but holiness itself is not a commodity that is for sale. Just for the fun of it, I did an Internet search for holiness and over 9 million results came up. If you find someone on the net selling holiness, I guarantee you that it is not the holiness that comes from God.

Only hell offers bootleg versions of holiness, but on Judgment Day they will not do you any good. There is only one way people can become holy, and it comes only through Jesus. Keep listening, because there is so much more to this story.

It is not just that holiness can only be obtained through Jesus, but that it comes only one way through him, and that is through direct fellowship with him. This means that if people do not like Jesus, they cannot be holy, because holiness is totally relational. Sentimental feelings are not enough.

To become holy, you must have a friendship with the one that is holy, and he has very stringent guidelines on its reception and use. There are a lot of people that call themselves Christians that do not like Jesus, and as a result they do not have an authentic relationship with him. What does it mean if you do not want to spend time with someone? Does it mean that you love them to pieces, or that you hate them? It certainly cannot mean that you have any good feelings for that individual.

So it is with God. If people do not want to spend time with him, it means that they do not like him. People that have no time for church find other things to do because they do not like being with Jesus.

Well, I have to admit that there are times when all the local churches are so dead that many people stop going altogether, but that is another subject for another podcast. I was ministering in Bangor, Maine, and a person told me that they could not find one Pentecostal or Charismatic church with an evening service in that whole community. Why? Because the people do not like Jesus enough to shut off their TVs and worship God on Sunday evening.

So if holiness is 100% relational, what happens to those people that do not want a relationship with Jesus? They will not receive the gift of salvation, or they will forfeit the gift that they once received. Since holiness is relational when fellowship with God is broken, then the man or angel is no longer holy. For any of my listeners that do not believe people can lose their salvation, then you will have a terrible time trying to explain where Satan and his devil horde came from.

If people cannot lose their salvation, then what do you do with the tremendous amount of Scripture that proves people can backslide, such as Ezekiel 3 and 18 and 33? And in the New Testament, how about verses like 2 Peter 2, verses 20 through 22 or Revelation 3, 5 that corresponds with verses like Exodus 32, verses 32 and 33? These are just the tip of the mountain of verses that speak on the subject. My point here is to show that holiness is totally relational, and the only way people can be holy is that they must be in active fellowship with Jesus. Now let me explain this idea of relational holiness a little bit better.

In the Old Testament, a building, altar, animal or person could be holy, but only according to its relationship with God. Solomon built a temple for the Lord and dedicated it to Him, which means it was set apart solely for the worship of the Lord. The temple then became a sacred place from which God could communicate to His people, and a place where His people could obtain atonement from sin and worship Him in a public setting.

When the dedication of the temple was taking place, the people were singing, He is good, His love endures forever. Then the temple of the Lord was filled with a cloud, and the priests could not perform their service because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled the temple of God. Notice why the temple was filled with the glory of God, because people were worshiping Him, and worship is all about relationship.

It's not a religious function. When it's a religious function, relationship has nothing to do with it. A similar thing happened when Solomon finished praying a dedication prayer over the temple and over the people.

Fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and sacrifices, and the glory of the Lord filled the temple. The priests could not enter the temple of the Lord because the glory of the Lord filled it. Here again, why was the temple filled with the glory of God? Because Solomon was praying and consecrating himself and the people to the Lord.

The temple was not holy of itself, but became holy when the Lord filled it with His presence. Why did the Lord fill it with His presence? Because people were entering into fellowship with Him. When you look at the sacrificial system, when an animal was used as a sin offering or a thank offering, the animal was holy because a person was offering it to God.

The sacrifice would only be a wholly acceptable sacrifice when the person offering it was doing so out of a heart wanting to be right with God or in thanksgiving for His goodness. So how do people become holy? By entering into fellowship with a holy God. How does that fellowship begin? Through the work of the Holy Spirit, who is the agent of divine grace.

The Holy Spirit draws people to Himself by convicting them of sin, and when they respond to the conviction with repentance, God has promised to forgive them. People are like Solomon's temple. When they are dedicated to the Lord, He enters into a human temple and makes it holy because a holy God dwells within.

Through the act of repentance, the Lord makes a judicial decree declaring the person is pardoned of his sins and crimes against God in heaven. This is an extremely important point because a holy God cannot and will not dwell in an unholy temple. The debt must be paid, the pardon given and received, or there can be no indwelling of the Spirit and no fellowship between God and man.

What makes a person holy, then, is that a holy God takes up residence in the life and as long as God dwells within the life, the person is holy. Now we come to some personal application. The Lord demands that everyone who would call themselves a follower of Jesus, that they pursue a life of practical holiness, which means that they live out a holy life.

A life of practical holiness cannot begin until the person becomes a holy temple where God dwells within. Until the person is accepted by God, there's nothing that he or she can do that is acceptable to God. This is why the Pharisees, though very religious people, were not right with God because they were not accepted by Him.

The Lord places great importance on the life and character of people, especially those that claim to belong to Him. The Lord declared in Leviticus 20, verse 26, You are to be holy to Me because I, the Lord, am holy, and I have set you apart from the nations to be My own. Over 20 times in the book of Leviticus alone, the Lord commands His people to be holy, so we must understand that this is a very important subject with the Lord.

By looking at the history of Israel, we can see that they predominantly did not understand what it meant to be holy or what the Lord commanded them to live out. Israel was offered a phenomenal gift. They could be God's own possession if they walked with Him in holy fellowship, and they would belong to the Lord, not to the world or to devils.

Now let's look at a few New Testament verses on the relational nature of holiness. In 1 Peter 1.16, he quotes the book of Leviticus. Be holy because I am holy.

By doing this, he was taking the Old Testament requirement that people must be holy to fellowship with a holy God and placed this criterion smack dab in the middle of the New Testament faith. What this does is take the Old Testament teaching on practical holiness and moves it into the New Testament. Then Paul in Hebrews 12.14 said, One of the points that we can glean from Paul's statement is that holiness with God is tied into the relationships we have with people.

John told us in many ways in his first epistle that if we do not love people, it is because we do not love God. We do not live on an island secluded from the mass of humanity. We are not called to live isolated from others, so the practical application of holiness is always going to involve how we treat and love other people.

When we come to Jesus and His teaching, it gets very serious. In the Sermon on the Mount, we see Jesus again and again take the Old Testament commands and teaching about practical holiness and move it into the New Testament faith. But here is the stickler.

Jesus took the Old Testament commands that dealt with the outward actions and moved them into the inward life. What do I mean by that? The Mosaic law said do not kill. Jesus said do not hate, for hate will be the equivalent of the crime of murder.

The law said do not commit adultery, but Jesus said do not lust, for if you lust, you committed adultery in your heart. The New Testament faith reaches into the heart and the motive of the person because until holiness gets into the person, it will not change the person. Our eternal fate hangs upon what we do with this truth about holiness, and only a fool would ignore it or think that it is of little value.

The temporal benefits of sin and compromise are not worth forfeiting one's eternal soul. Biblical Christianity teaches us that the radical nature of God's holiness must define His people. This is a non-negotiable aspect of salvation.

We cannot escape it. God is not going to negotiate with you over this subject or really any subject. He is God, and we are mere mortals that live in the world He created.

Whether we like it or not, God is right and we are wrong, so it is very important that we learn this truth and begin to agree with Him. When His holiness becomes our holiness, then we will begin to be radical like Jesus. I have seen people that could dance and jump in worship, but live like the devil.

I am not saying this because I have a problem with dynamic, exciting worship, because I don't. If worship is not alive, then something is wrong. But if the life is not right with God, then the worship is not acceptable to Him either.

Everyone that has a real passion for Jesus will prove that passion by how they live, not just by their worship alone. The practical application of holiness to our everyday lives is an integral part of New Testament Christianity. The more the holiness of God defines our lives, the more radical we will become.

My use of the word radical has nothing to do with bizarre actions or strange personalities, but with Christlikeness. It is Christlikeness that makes a person or people radical, and if that is not what defines the people, then all they may be is weird. And I have seen my share of weird people over the years.

True holiness comes from our relationship with God. It is not a legalistic set of do's and don'ts. Holiness is never legalism and legalism is never holiness.

Everyone who walks in real fellowship with the Savior will find obeying His commands a joy, not a means to salvation or to earn a divine favor. Legalism has nothing to do with relationship with God, because it is all about the personal effort to earn salvation through moral goodness or good works. Legalism has nothing to do with love for God, because it is all about the love of self.

A genuine passion for God will always, and I mean always, produce a passion for holiness and Christlikeness. A passion for God and a passion for holiness cannot be divorced from each other. They are not contrary to each other, but complement each other.

The deeper our love for God grows, the greater will be our desire for personal holiness. When we love God, we will love what He loves and hate what He hates. This is all about a wholehearted love for the radical Jesus.

How can we love Jesus and practice sin? It cannot be. Not because I say it cannot be done, but because Scripture clearly teaches that it cannot be done. Take, for example, what the Apostle John told us in 1 John 3, verse 10.

This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are. Anyone who does not do what is right is not a child of God, nor is anyone who does not love his brother. Those that love God will live like it, and their actions will prove this out, while those that do not love God will have a life that states that they do not love Him.

John the Baptist was preaching to the religious people one day and commanded them to produce fruit in keeping with repentance. This teaches us that there will always be the evidence of salvation in a person's life, and if there is no evidence of repentance, then there is no salvation in the life. What is the evidence of salvation? Holiness.

The practical application of holiness through the grace of God. We should live as adoring children to the God that purchased us with His own blood. He deserves the reward of His suffering, which is wholehearted, absolute devotion from His people.

When we have a longing desire to be with Jesus and to be like Him, then we will find that there is an endless supply of power available for us to live out the true faith that can turn this world upside down. Holiness and Christlikeness go hand in hand because we cannot have one without the other. A burning love for God will compel us to strive to be like Him in holiness and life, to think, talk, live, love, and sacrifice like Him.

We will want every thought, every word, and every deed to be an expression of His holiness. Then there will be no place for sin or compromise or the world in our lives. This is where we can be like Stephen of old, full of faith and full of the Holy Ghost.

---

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/28/SID28004.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/glenn-meldrum/radical-jesus-18-radical-holiness/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**