

No Holiness - No Heaven

by John Greer

The sermon emphasizes the critical importance of holiness in the life of a believer as a prerequisite for seeing the Lord in heaven.

Duration: 1:00:22

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, John 3:3, Hebrews 12:1-2, Hebrews 12:14, Hebrews 12:17, Hebrews 12:28

Topics: "Personal Holiness", "Salvation Through Christ"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the seriousness of the business of preaching the word of God. He prays for the congregation to be convicted of their sinfulness and to seek salvation through Christ. The preacher highlights the power of sin and the inability of individuals to overcome it on their own. He references Isaiah 6 and Revelation 4 to show that both passages speak of Christ and His glory. The sermon concludes with a warning that without holiness, no one can see or be with the Lord, emphasizing the importance of personal holiness and a relationship with Christ.

Transcript

Let's turn please to Hebrews 12, the 12th chapter of Hebrews, and we will read together from the first verse of the chapter, Hebrews chapter 12, verse number 1. Hebrews 12 and the verse 1, let us hear God's precious Word. Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us. Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking on to 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.

For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin. And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children.

My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him. For whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons.

For what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons. Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence. Shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of

spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure, but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.

Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous. Nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. Wherefore, lift up the hands which hang down on the feeble knees, and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way, but let it rather be healed.

Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. Looking diligently, lest any man fail of the grace of God, lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled, lest there be any fornicator or profane person as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected.

For he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears. And we know that God will add his blessing to the reading of this, his own word, for his own glory and for his name's sake. Well, come and bow together, and again we will just lift up our hearts to the Lord in prayer, looking to him for his blessing and his help this evening, as we turn to the Scriptures and to the Lord's message for this occasion.

Let's all unite our hearts and let us all pray. Our gracious God and our heavenly Father, we lift up our hearts to Thee now, and we draw near to the throne of grace. In the name of Thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and we pray, O God, that it will please Thee to meet with us here this evening and to bless our hearts as we consider the word that Thou hast given on this occasion.

We pray, Lord, that Thou wilt be pleased to speak to us and to move among us in a most powerful way. O Lord, remember those who need a Savior. Deal with them, we ask, and bring to their hearts with great forcefulness and great clarity the truth as it is in Christ, the need of the human soul, the only remedy that there is for sin.

O Lord, may these matters be clear and plain to sinners in this gathering now. Bless Thine own children. O Lord, speak to one and all, and may Christ be exalted even now as we continue on in Thy presence, for we pray this in Jesus' name and for His glory.

Amen and amen. Turning, please, to Hebrews chapter 12, and our text is found in that fourteenth verse, and I want in particular to draw to your attention these words from this verse, follow holiness without which no man shall see the Lord. Follow holiness without which no man shall see the Lord.

As I thought about these words when God laid them on my heart this week, it came to me that in a very real sense there are no more solemn words than these in all of Scripture, because they underline in a most emphatic fashion the fact that where there is no true holiness, there is absolutely no hope of ever being with the Lord in heaven. Follow holiness without which no man shall see the Lord. With our understanding of those words, of that kind and that nature, we are therefore able to see in them really other truths, other statements and warnings throughout the Scriptures.

For example, these words underline the truth of the Lord's teaching in John chapter 3 on the necessity of the new birth, in declaring that unless a man is born again, he will never see or enter into the kingdom of God, or the kingdom of heaven. The Lord is essentially saying the very same thing, that without holiness no man shall see the Lord, because it is in the new birth that there is the beginning of real holiness and

true purity before the Lord. Or if we take Christ's question in Mark 8 verse 36, what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? The Lord again is saying there that without holiness no man shall see the Lord, because in order to gain the world, a man abandons holiness.

A man knows nothing of this indispensable holiness, and therefore if a man does seek to gain the whole world, well he does not know holiness, and therefore he shall not see the Lord, and he will instead lose his own soul, his precious and his never-dying soul. So in that way, and from those few examples, we are able to see that these are the most solemn words in all of the Bible, follow holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. Now the word for holiness in this verse is often translated sanctification, and therefore the Apostle Paul is speaking here of that real and that practical holiness that is displayed in the lives of those who know God, who are truly saved, who are his people.

I must underline that that Paul here is talking about practical godliness, about sanctification, that work that God does in the lives of those whom he saves. And I say I must emphasize this because of an erroneous and a fatal teaching on this verse, which is this, that the Apostle Paul here is not talking about that kind of holiness that is the visible, tangible appearance of real godliness in the life of the child of God, conformity to God's will and to Christ's image and turning away from sin and walking with the Lord. There are those who say that's not what Paul is teaching here, but he is teaching rather that there's a legal transaction of Christ's holiness to the account of an individual, and when that happens, then that person has got this holiness of Jesus Christ imputed to his account, and then he can do what he wants, and he can live as he pleases.

That is a great error. It is a deception. It is indeed, my dear friend, an unscriptural and a dangerous dogma and one that will destroy the soul.

It is a denial of the very meaning of the word holiness or, as they say, the word sanctification that also could be the translation here. That word sanctification or holiness is a most interesting word. When you look at it and you start to trace its origin, I mean taking the biblical word and the Greek language, you'll find that it's a word that literally means no earth.

No earth. And therefore, it's a word, this word sanctification or holiness, which indicates that the things of this earth are dealt with and they're overcome in the life and in the experience of the child of God. They are purged away.

They are cleansed from that person's life. And the issue of purging or cleansing is therefore fundamental to the very meaning of the word holiness or sanctification. It is a word that signifies a cleansing and a washing and a purging of the life of one who truly is a child of God.

And that's fundamental to the very basic understanding of the concept of holiness and godliness or sanctification as it's revealed to us in the Word of God. Any honest study of this word, therefore, will show that it points to a life in which there is a visible, a real, a practical, and a tangible turning away from sin and the displaying and the manifesting of a life of obedience and real godliness and conformity to the very image of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. That's what Paul means here by holiness.

And with that understanding of the word holiness briefly explained and emphasized too, I trust, to our hearts and minds, we want to come now and examine this solemn exhortation that's found here in this verse. It is an exhortation. It is a command.

It lies in a section of Scripture in which there are many such commands given to those who profess the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. And therefore, here are words that have application to those who, first of all, profess to be the people of God. It's very obvious that the Holy Spirit intends this command, follow holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord, to be a means of self-examination for the simple but solemn reason that there are those within the visible church.

There are those who are claiming to be the people of God who fall within this circle in which there is no holiness. There's none of the true holiness of which the Lord speaks here. And therefore, these words are applicable, and mark how I put it, to many who profess to be within the church of Jesus Christ.

And then there are words that are applicable as well to those who make no profession of faith, who do not claim to be saved, and who are not saved, and who know that they are not saved. The words are applicable to them as well, because the words say, follow holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. Now get it clear tonight.

You may be one who professes to be saved, but in your heart, in your life, in your experience, there is no holiness as we see it dealt with here by the apostle. The Lord tells you tonight that you should take heed, you should take warning. And He says, follow holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.

You are not saved, some of you. You know it. You claim not to be a child of God.

As far as that goes, it's all very clear, but you remember this, follow holiness, because without it, you will never see the Lord. They are solemn words. They are serious words.

The theme is holiness. We come therefore to look at it from three angles. First of all, the pattern of holiness.

The true pattern of holiness or model of holiness is the Lord Himself. Since Paul says that without holiness, no man shall see the Lord, he is therefore, in a very real sense, pointing to the Lord as the pattern of holiness. Men need holiness.

That's clear, isn't it? Without holiness, no man shall see the Lord. Men need holiness, and our text shows that they must attain it. And therefore, it's essential to know something at least of what real holiness actually is, and there's no better pattern of holiness than the Lord Himself.

The Holy Spirit here does not point us to a man, to any individual who might stand out in church history or even in the Bible as a man of God, a man of holiness, a man of true godliness, but rather He points us to the Lord Himself. He says, follow holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. And as I say, the inference is the Lord is the pattern, the model of all true holiness.

Now, when you start to think about that, you must keep in mind that God is holy, and in two ways that is true. There is what is called God's moral purity. There's also what's called God's majestic position.

His moral purity, there are various statements in the Bible that underline that God is morally pure, which means that God is personally holy. He's utterly without sin in His entire being. This is a very, very important thing to understand when you come to study God, study Christ, study the triune God.

God is holy. He is morally pure. Now, there are verses that spell this out.

I want you to go now to Leviticus chapter 11. Leviticus 11, to me, is one of the most interesting chapters in the Word of God, even in relation to the subject of true holiness. Leviticus chapter 11, and just two verses at this point, verses 44 and 45, where the Lord speaks, and He says, For I am the Lord your God, ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy, for I am holy.

Verse 45, For I am the Lord that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt to be your God, ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy. And you may know that the apostle Peter takes those very words and he incorporates them in what he writes in 1 Peter 1, and he says there in verse 16, it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy. But staying here in Leviticus 11 for a moment, it's very interesting that this statement that is made here, I am holy, God is holy, is made in the context of focusing on the behavior of the Lord's people.

Those who profess His name, and the need for them to live a life of holiness and godliness. It's very important that that's the emphasis right here in Leviticus chapter 11. As I said a while ago, Leviticus 11 is a marvelous chapter.

It's an amazing chapter. When you read through it first, you might say to yourself, well, what's this all about? Because when you start to read it, you read about creatures on the earth, in the sky, or the heavens, in the waters, and God says you're to eat some of them and not eat the other ones, and then He starts to give distinguishing marks. For example, creatures in the earth or on the earth that both chew the cud and have a cloven hoof, you can eat them.

But other creatures that maybe chew the cud and don't have a cloven hoof, or have a cloven hoof and don't chew the cud, don't eat them. What's it all about? Then He says something about fowls that fly in the heaven and creatures that live in the waters, and He makes all these distinctions. What is the Lord teaching? He's teaching this, men and women, we live in a sinful world.

No matter where you go, on the land, in the air, and in the sea even, there is the corruption of sin. And God taught Israel in those days long ago in this interesting way. A man would go out into the field, he would see a hare, and the hare chews the cud but doesn't have a cloven hoof, and he would be reminded right away, this is an unclean world.

He would look into the heavens and he would see the bird of prey, the scavenger, and he would say to himself, I live in a world where the very atmosphere around me is defiled by sin. That's what Leviticus 11 is all about. That's how God taught His people in those days.

And therefore, when He came to the end of the whole chapter here, as we would say, in the verses to which I brought your attention, and He says to these people, be ye holy for I am holy, He's telling them, you live in a sinful world, you are sinful, you are corrupt, you are vile, but you need to be holy because I am holy. And when the Lord says, I am holy, He's stressing His own moral purity. He's stressing His perfectly sinless nature.

He's showing that in Him there is no sin at all. God says, I am holy. God is morally pure.

Now, in that context, God is absolutely holy. That's hard for us to understand because even the best among the Lord's people, taking those who are truly saved, even the best among the saints of God still have much imperfection. God, however, is morally pure and in the sense that He's absolutely holy.

Have you ever thought of the words in 1 John 1 verse 5, God is light? That doesn't stop there. When the Bible says, as it does there, God is light, it means God is pure and God is absolutely holy. But it doesn't

stop there.

It says, God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. Just to make it clear that He in His moral purity is absolutely holy. God is light, and when you say God is light, you're saying that God is morally pure, but the Bible emphasizes that He's absolutely so by adding on these words, and in Him is no darkness at all.

Darkness is the opposite of light, and in the Bible darkness is a symbol of sin and corruption and unholiness, but in God there is no darkness at all. He is without sin absolutely and completely and therefore He's absolutely pure, and that is why God hates sin, for He does hate sin. As Habakkuk says, thou art of pure eyes and to behold evil and canst not look on iniquity.

God hates sin, God abhors sin, God despises sin, and oh my dear friend, God will judge the sinner because God being morally pure is absolutely holy, but then He's transcendentally holy, which simply means that, well, that's how Hannah puts it in 1 Samuel 2 verse 2, it means this, in her words, there is none holy as the Lord. I'm seeking to get across to you tonight something of the terrible holiness of God, something of this absolute purity of God. He is absolutely holy.

He is transcendentally holy. There is none holy as the Lord. You see, God's holiness is not measured by taking another standard.

You take the angels, take the angels that He has created, and the angels are pure. I mean the angels that didn't sin, they are pure, they are holy, they never sinned. This is a thing that, again, to us is incomprehensible.

The angels never sinned. They don't know what it is. They've never felt its power, never felt its terrible corrupting effect.

They are without sin, and yet the holy angels are far beneath the God who made them when it comes to holiness. You see, the reason is this. The angels' holiness is created.

When God made the angels, He created them holy. His holiness is uncreated. That's why it's transcendent.

That's why there's nothing like it. Nothing like it among the angels, those blessedly pure creatures, who, as Isaiah 6 tells us, in the very presence of the Lord, they veil their faces. They are holy.

They are pure. But they cannot look on God because His holiness is, as I put it in this word, transcendent. It's far above anything, infinitely so, that the very angels of God know and experience and have within themselves.

Now, in the light of God's moral purity, therefore, there is set forth in these issues I've shown you just now, your need for a holiness that is going to meet His approval. Do you see what I'm saying? The Lord says, follow holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. And we're looking here at the pattern of holiness.

God is absolutely holy, pure, transcendentally so. And He's telling you, you need a holiness that will meet His approval. And He's also showing you, therefore, the heinousness of your sin.

Sin is a terrible thing, but it is seen to be that nowhere more clearly than when it's measured alongside the awful holiness of God. How poor a view people have of God, and especially the holiness of God. The world's view of God, of course, is utterly corrupt.

It's a perverted, twisted thing. There's nothing of truth about it or in it. If the world, the ungodly around us, speak of God at all or say they believe in God at all, their concept of God is so far removed from this book that the God they say they believe is utterly without any resemblance.

When we look at the one who's revealed in this book, completely and absolutely there's no resemblance between the God of whom the world speaks and the God of this book. And the reason why is because they do not see God's holiness. God's holiness is the essential part of His being that dominates His whole person, His whole character, everything about Him, every other attribute, every other quality.

If you take His power, God's power is a holy power. God's knowledge is a holy knowledge. God's wisdom is a holy wisdom.

Holiness is over it all because God is holy beyond our minds to grasp Him. But it lets you see, as I've said, you need a holiness that will meet His approval and lets you see how sinful you are. But then, as I also said, you only have God's moral purity of God's majestic position.

In other words, when the Bible speaks in terms of the holiness of God, it very often will do so in the context of that majestic position that He occupies. Now turn to Isaiah 6 and look with me at Isaiah 6, verse 3. This marvelous statement here about the Lord and His holiness. But notice how it is delivered to us in this kind of a setting.

God's majestic position in relation to His holiness. Isaiah 6, and it says in verse 1, In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and His train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphim, each one had six wings, with twenty covered his face, and with twenty covered his feet, and with twenty did fly.

And one cried unto another and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts. The whole earth is full of His glory. Notice here that the cry of the seraphim in the worship of the Lord in His majestic position is couched in terms of His awful holiness.

They see the Lord high and lifted up. His train fills the temple. He's the majesty.

He's the King. He is the Lord of glory. And as it is seen, the angels, the seraphim cry in relation to that majestic position, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God of hosts.

The same is said, not turn to it now for time's sake, but the same is said in Revelation 4, verse 8. Another great chapter that focuses on the throne of heaven and views the One seated on that throne, and the same cry goes up there in verse 8 of chapter 4 of Revelation, Holy, holy, holy. Let me say this to you. This is so important.

Those two passages, Isaiah 6 and Revelation 4 are both speaking of Christ. How do I know that? Turn to John 12. John 12.

Look with me in John 12 at verse 41. And there it says, these things said Isaiah when he saw His glory and spake of Him. John 12, 41.

I cannot read other verses here at this moment, I don't need to, but that particular verse is simply referring to our Lord Jesus Christ when He was in this earth and on this earth, and He was dealing with men and working His miracles, and people were rejecting Him. And because they rejected Him, the Lord blinded

their hearts, as it says there in verse 40. And those words are quoted from Isaiah 6 as well.

And then this comment is made concerning Isaiah 6. These things said Isaiah, the things in verse 40, He has blinded their eyes, hardened their heart that they should not see. These things said Isaiah when He saw His glory. Whose glory? The glory of Christ.

You see, there's a cardinal rule in Scripture. No man hath seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him or revealed Him.

And that's always true. Nobody has ever seen God. But when you go back into the Old Testament, well, people saw God.

They saw Him, as it says in Isaiah 6. But who did they see? They saw Christ. Because Christ is the revelation of Almighty God, the triune God, because Christ is God. And there in Isaiah 6, when Isaiah saw that tremendous vision of the glory of the God of heaven, the triune God, He, according to the Holy Spirit in John 12, 41, saw the glory of Christ.

He saw the holiness of Christ. He saw the Savior revealed there in that vision that He had as is recorded for us in that marvelous passage. Now, what is the outcome of all that as we think about this God's majestic position as well as His moral purity? And it's simply this.

When you think about the fact that God is morally pure and majestically pure and holy and above everything else, out of that there flows His justice. And again, John 12 makes that clear. Because in that very passage, you will notice it with me right now if you turn back there, John chapter 12, and move on down in the verse after verse 41.

Go on down that passage and notice with me what it says in verse 48. Here is the one speaking of whom it is said in verse 41, Isaiah saw His glory. And what does it say in verse 48? You see, the pattern of holiness is the Lord.

The Lord is morally pure. There you see His holiness in His own being, in His majestic position you see His holiness. And the whole outcome is this.

He must judge sin. Now, I want that to sink in. Judgment, there's no debate about it.

It's not some kind of an optional thing. God may judge or may not judge. That doesn't even come into it.

That is a lie. That is not biblical. God, Christ judges sin because Christ is holy.

And therefore, out of His own nature, out of His own being, He will deal with sin. He will deal with sin and He will deal with the sinner. He will bring judgment.

He will bring wrath. He'll bring men down into everlasting hell. And therefore, sinners need to find deliverance and cleansing from their sin because the pattern of holiness, the Lord Himself being such as He is, makes it essential that He must judge you and cast you down to everlasting hell.

Get it straight in your heart, dear sinner. There is no way that you can escape the wrath to come. As we look at the one who has the pattern of all true holiness, there's no way to escape the wrath to come.

Therefore, that leads us on to this, the pursuit of holiness. Because the text says, follow holiness. And that word follow means pursue.

And that means therefore that men need to pursue this matter of finding a holiness before God that's going to meet the standard and is going to have them delivered from their state of condemnation. It's something that you need to pursue. May I put it to you this way? There is absolutely no reason, no basis, no foundation for any person that's meeting tonight who's not saved, sitting there and saying to himself or herself, it doesn't really matter whether I seek the Lord or not.

And tonight, you may be saying to yourself, I have no intention of seeking the Lord this evening. I have no intention of facing up to my sin and dealing with it and repenting of it and fleeing from it. That may be the thing that's farthest from your mind right now.

But let me tell you, friend, it should be the one thing that grips your mind and your soul and consumes your every thought. How can I be rid of my sin? How can I be saved from my sin? How can I find this holiness without which no man will ever see the Lord? That should be the one burning desire within your heart tonight, recognizing the seriousness of this and by God's direction and command, entering into the power and experience that is set before us here. In these words, following or pursuing holiness is to seek for the defeat of and the deliverance from the power and presence of sin in your life.

Otherwise, that sin will take you on down until you arrive in the caverns of the lost. So you must seek holiness. You must pursue it.

Let me say this to you. That means you must know where it's found. You should be asking yourselves tonight, where will I find this holiness without which no man shall see the Lord? What is the source of it? Well, my dear friend, the source of it is Christ.

The Bible says Christ is our holiness. Christ is our sanctification. Look with me at Titus chapter 2 and verse 14, a tremendous statement of this very matter of holiness and having the possession of holiness in your heart and in your life.

Titus chapter 2 verse 14, and it says, we'll read verse 13 as well, looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ who gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto Himself a peculiar people zealous of good works. Do you see that verse? A tremendous statement of the truth that the Lord Jesus Christ is the source of sanctification and He is the source of it in terms of His death and the redemption in His own blood because therein is found the cleansing and the purging that holiness or sanctification deal with. It's found in the death of Christ.

That's it. In other words, the Lord has died to make men holy. He has died, we're told here, to redeem them from all iniquity.

The word redeem means to set free, to release. That's freedom from sin. He has died to purify them.

And the word purify is this very word that deals with sanctification and the creation of a holiness within a person's life, a principle of holiness in a person's soul that the Lord implants there and that He develops, that He carries on, and one day He brings to perfection and even to completion. My friend, the Bible makes it clear that there is only one power that cleanses the soul in relation to Christ. It is His precious blood, the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son cleanseth us from all sin.

What I'm saying is this. Everything you need for the conquest of sin in your life, in your heart first of all, then in your life and your whole behavior, changing you, making you a new creature, purging you, purifying you, cleansing you, it's all found in Christ. It's not something that you can work up or manufacture or bring about.

You'll never be holy by you saying to yourself, I'll turn away from this and I'll not do the other thing. In other words, you're trying to work it out yourself when you say that. You're resorting to your own efforts, your own attempts.

But what you've got to see is that this sanctification, this holiness, is found in Christ, and especially in terms of the death of our Lord Jesus Christ. It's in the death of Christ that holiness is found. That's a fundamental truth.

Why is that? Why is Christ's death the source of holiness? For this simple reason. Whenever Jesus died for sinners, do you know what He did? He pleased, He satisfied that holiness of God that I've tried to describe for you tonight. He satisfied it completely and absolutely.

And in satisfying the holiness of God, therefore, God freely gives to men all the benefits of that satisfaction, one of which, and there are many of them, but one of which is this holiness that you need. As I say, there are many of them, justification. That's won by Christ in His death as He satisfies God's holiness, which simply means that Christ has procured for men that righteousness that justifies them before this same holy God.

But He has also procured for men this sanctification, this holiness. And you know, in a real sense, that's where sinners have the great battle, isn't it? Some sit here tonight and sin has an awful power in your life. It holds you, it binds you.

It's got a feathering grip. No matter what you do or what you try, sin holds you. It drags you down, leads you back into its old ways.

You've turned over the new leaf, but just as quickly, you're back to the old ways, back to the swine troughs. No matter how hard you try, you can't break the power of sin. You can't deal with its influence.

You can't overcome its awful force within you and in your life. And let me tell you, you never will. But there's someone who is able to deal with the power of sin, break its grip, set you free, make you a new creature, and that is the Lord Jesus Christ.

And that means this. Since Christ is the source of the sanctification which you are to pursue, pursue holiness. Since He's the source of it, then you must pursue Christ by faith.

We are sanctified, we become holy by faith in Jesus Christ. Acts 26, verse 18, you have these words, sanctified by faith that is in me. Now get this well, my friend.

Get this clear tonight. The Lord Jesus Christ is the object of all true faith. And therefore, if you will come to Christ, you're coming to the one who's the source of sanctification.

You're coming to one who has bought sanctification or holiness for sinners, and by faith in Jesus Christ, you'll draw out of Christ or you'll receive from Christ this holiness that the Lord tells you to pursue. You see, pursuing holiness has a starting point, and it starts when you come to the cross. It starts when you

come to Christ, when you come to the Savior, when you come to the fountain open for sin and uncleanness, and by faith you receive the Lord Jesus.

Do you see it? Do you feel it? Do you understand it tonight? When a man receives Christ, he receives all that's in Christ, including this holiness. From that moment on, the Lord starts to impart that holiness to that person. It operates in his heart.

It works in his life. It begins to change him. And to turn to 1 Corinthians 6, look with me at 1 Corinthians 6, and I want God's people to see this, and I want the unsaved to see this, and I want those, as I said at the outset tonight, who profess the name of the Lord, but there may be no real earnest desire for holiness in your life, and if there isn't, my friend, you need to sit up and listen and take stock of yourself, because the Bible teaches nowhere that a man who is truly saved doesn't have holiness in his life.

It doesn't teach that anywhere. It always teaches holiness. So, if you're just drifting along, and all you have is a profession, and there's no real godliness, and there's no pursuit of holiness, you need to stop, because I'm showing you right here that where there is a work of grace, there is the implanting of holiness.

Look at it, 1 Corinthians 6 verse 9, Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? That's an all-embracing word, the unrighteous, and he goes on to amplify it and give some examples of what he means by the unrighteous, be not deceived. Fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, effeminate, abusers of themselves with mankind, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, extortioners, none of them will inherit the kingdom. Isn't that very clear? We've heard so much talk over the last week about sodomy.

We read the comments in the paper from these people who write and say, I'm a Christian, and I'm a sodomite. They don't put it that way, but that's what they're saying they are. My dear friend, let me tell you something.

God saves sodomites, but when He saves them, they're no longer sodomites. And for these people to say what you may have read in the paper, heard in the news, is actually blasphemy, utter blasphemy, a denial of the book, a denial of Christ, a denial of what these verses say, because God the Holy Ghost says that the unrighteous, and in that He includes the sodomite, for that's what's meant when He talks about abusers of themselves with mankind and the effeminate. They're all in there, the perverts, the sodomites, the lesbians, they're all there.

He says they will never inherit the kingdom of God. But look what Paul says farther down in verse 11, and such were some of you. I'm sure whenever the Corinthians heard this letter been read, some of them must have cringed with those words, such were some.

It meant that people listening to the first reading of this letter when it arrived in Corinth were people who had been adulterers and fornicators and sodomites and thieves and drunkards and extortioners and revilers, and the Lord only knows what else. If that kind of a letter were read, and you were there, just imagine how you would feel. Such were some of you.

Listen, but, but you're washed, but you're sanctified, justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God. What are we showing you here? We're looking at this matter of the pursuit of holiness. The source of this holiness is Christ Himself, pursue Christ, but pursue Christ by faith.

Come and trust Christ for the purifying of your life from your sin, and as you trust Christ, the Holy Ghost will apply to your soul, your life, your being, the merits of the blood of the Lamb and the victory of the

cross. He'll wash you, He'll cleanse you, and He will start to sanctify you, and He'll never stop until He has brought you home to glory. Now, brothers and sisters, that's the gospel, and that's the pursuit of holiness.

It's in Christ. It's found by faith. I don't know what your sin might be, and as I always say, it's none of my business, but I will say this.

You cannot have your sin and go to heaven. You can't. You cannot remain in whatever it might be and go to heaven.

That's the theme. No holiness, no heaven. Follow holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.

Get it straight tonight. No holiness, no heaven. But then there's the prospect that's given to us here concerning this holiness.

Paul warns that where there's no holiness, then the Lord will not be seen. But the inference is, the prospect therefore is, that where there's a beginning of a true work of grace and of God, there's the glorious prospect of seeing the Lord. Follow holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.

But if God gives you holiness, here's the glorious prospect of holiness, to see the Lord. That means it starts right now in this life because this is a double meaning, seeing the Lord. It means that when the Lord starts the work on a sinner's heart, that person then starts to fellowship with the Lord and walk with the Lord and see the Lord in that sense, in that saving relationship with Him that's marked by prayer and walking with the Lord and Bible study and all these things.

But it's more than that. In the ultimate sense, seeing the Lord is going to be with the Lord, to see Him in His glory. Now, remember what I said earlier, Isaiah saw the Lord high and lifted up.

He saw Christ. John saw Christ, as you read the book of Revelation. And now those men are with Christ, and the Christ they saw when they were here on earth and those deific visions and those marvelous revelations that God gave them of His own dear Son.

That Christ they saw then, they are now with Him, and they see the King now in all His beauty. They're in His presence. They're before Him.

They're singing His praise. They see the Lord, and they see the Lord because they were made holy. God started the work.

God finished the work. God brought them home to heaven. Do you have this prospect? Not unless you have Christ.

The prospect that's before you is not that of seeing the Lord and being with the Lord and being like the Lord completely. The prospect is eternal darkness, despair, ruin, damnation, the judgment of God, your sin being paid for by you, and the full extent of divine judgment endlessly, unceasingly, without remission. No prospect such as is given to the child of God, because without holiness, no man shall see the Lord, shall be with the Lord, shall be in the presence of the Lord.

Oh, my friend, I come right around to where I started. There are no more solemn words than these in the Bible. There's no greater issue than the issue of personal holiness, knowing the Lord, a work of grace in your soul, in your life, with the ultimate objective of being with Christ forever.

That's serious business. That's the business that requires your attention this very Sabbath evening. Let us bow in prayer.

Let our hearts together in the Lord's presence before His face. I pray that God will write these things upon your soul tonight, that He will cause you to feel and see and sense the corruption of your being, the wickedness of your heart, the vileness of your whole nature, and that this night you will flee to the Lord, to the Christ of God to save you and to make you a new creature. I am here to help anyone who is troubled and who is anxious about these matters and who this very night will come and will seek the Lord.

I'll be here afterwards. I will be glad to talk with you and meet with you when others have gone. Maybe someone here who has suddenly realized, well, I may have a profession of faith in my life in the past, but I don't have holiness.

And sin holds me and binds me and dominates me, and I'm in trouble. Well, yes, you are in trouble, and you need the Lord. You need to seek Him.

Or some here who know they're not saved and know that sin holds them and realize the awful truth of these words that without holiness, no man shall see the Lord. My dear friend, come to Christ. Do not just drift out another Sunday night in the middle of the crowd.

And you who are Christians need to be solemn when you're leaving a meeting. Don't ever be guilty of chattering idly, foolishly, to be unsaved with you to distract their minds from the things of Christ. It's a solemn time.

May God search your heart. May God, by His Spirit, challenge your soul. May you come tonight.

Heavenly Father, answer prayer. Do Thine own gracious work, we pray. May the Holy Spirit take this word of Thine and apply it.

And may He use it. May He cause it to enter deeply into the soul, and may there be a work of grace done for the glory of God and the honor of Christ. Lord, answer prayer.

Part us now with Thy blessing. And may the grace of our Lord Jesus, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Spirit be with every child of God, both tonight and then forever. In the Savior's name we pray.

Amen.

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