

Walking in Holiness

by Luis Palau

Luis Palau's sermon emphasizes the importance of walking in holiness through humility, confession, and presenting ourselves as living sacrifices to God.

Duration: 29:38

Scripture: John 13:1, Romans 12:1, Hebrews 9:14, Hebrews 10:17, 1 John 1:7

Topics: "Christian Holiness", "Spiritual Cleansing"

Description

Holiness is described as walking in the light with God, maintaining a transparent conscience, and ensuring there is nothing between you and your heavenly Father. The sermon delves into the powerful scene of Jesus washing the disciples' feet, highlighting Peter's initial resistance, the need for humility, and the cleansing power of Jesus' act. It emphasizes the importance of confessing sins, seeking forgiveness, and presenting one's body as a living sacrifice to God for a transformed and obedient lifestyle.

Transcript

Holiness means walking in the light with God. Holiness means a transparent conscience. Holiness means there is nothing that you know of between you and your heavenly Father.

That's holiness. It's the last night before Jesus was betrayed. They're having the Lord's Supper, the first Holy Communion.

The Master himself in physical presence is there. He broke the bread, he passed the cup. But before the meal begins, something dramatic takes place.

The Master, if he was dressed in western garb, takes off his coat, rolls up his sleeves, takes a towel and wraps it around his middle here. He gets a basin of water. And in those days, you remember how they ate? Maybe you don't remember because you weren't there, but let me tell you.

They ate on the floor. They put some cushions type of thing. So everybody would take off their sandals.

They didn't wear socks in those days. They would take off their sandals, cross their legs, or put them in the back like this. There'd be a bowl on a sort of a pillow type of thing.

And they would all sit around this thing, and then they'd dip into the bowl with a piece of bread and eat it like this. So if you had dirty feet, it was kind of disgusting, because in today's western world, you put your

feet under a table. But in those days, if your feet were dirty, they were right at the table.

And therefore, decent people had the habit that a slave or a servant would be at the door when guests would come for a special meal. And as they came in from the dust, because there was no cement in the streets in those days, they were all dusty even if they'd taken a shower and a bath, and they would take off their sandals at the door. The slave would wash their feet, dry them with a towel, and then they'd move to this cushion and begin to eat with clean feet.

But that day, all the disciples came with Jesus, and no one had thought about bringing a towel and water to wash their feet. Only Jesus thought about it, because like he said, the Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve and to give his life a ransom for many. Now, Jesus then begins to wash the twelve disciples' feet.

He goes to one of them. He's on his knees. The Master himself--listen to this, it's dramatic--the Master himself gets on his knees.

The Savior, the Son of God, the Creator of heaven and earth, he is at the feet of his disciples, washing their feet and drying them with a towel. And one after another, and suddenly the focus comes on Peter, and suddenly the sparks start flying. Peter says, Lord, you wash my feet? If he was an American today, he'd say, no way you're going to wash my feet.

All the other disciples were humble enough to let Jesus do it. They were paralyzed, astonished. The Master took the place of a slave.

Peter, with his big mouth, he wouldn't let him do it. He says, Lord, you'll never wash my feet. Suddenly, you can imagine the tension in the upper room.

Now, notice first of all, all of them came into the room with polluted feet. Even if they'd taken a bath for the Last Supper, nevertheless, just walking the streets of dusty Jerusalem, with no cement, no paved roads, all their feet were contaminated. All of their feet were polluted.

Secondly, you see in Peter a man with a defiant heart, a defiant heart. You notice what he says in verse 13? He says, he came to verse 6, excuse me. He says, Simon Peter, Lord, are you going to wash my feet? You don't understand it? You'll understand.

No, you will never wash my feet. Notice, all of them had polluted feet. Only Peter didn't want to admit it, didn't want to accept the fact that yes, between his house and the upper room, in arrogance and in pride, Peter said, never are you going to wash my feet.

With anger, with resentment practically, he turns to Jesus, the creator of heaven and earth, and he has the audacity to say, you'll never wash my feet. But boy, did Jesus give him the shock treatment. He said, all right, Peter boy, you don't want me to wash your feet? Fine.

But if I don't wash your feet, boy, you have no part with me. Now, that was the shock treatment. Now, thirdly, you see here a man with a desperate cry.

Did you notice when Jesus said to Peter, Peter, fine, fine, fine, fine. You don't want me to wash you? Fine, Peter. But if I don't wash you, you have no part with me.

Suddenly, Peter can't take it. He says, master, not my feet only. Wash my hands, wash my hair, do the job.

Suddenly, he's desperate. And Peter, the Lord says, no, no, no, don't get overexcited now. You've already had a spiritual bath the day you were converted.

He who is bathed only needs to wash his feet because you're clean, but your feet are dirty. You see, when we became Christians, all our sins were forgiven. That is the spiritual bath through the blood of Jesus Christ.

But as we walk through the streets of this world, we pick up pollution in our feet, and therefore we need to sit humbly. And Jesus, what an amazing sight, the Son of God sitting on the floor, washing the disciples' feet. And brothers and sisters, to every one of us here tonight, if you could imagine the Master is here.

He's calling for you. He's seated at your feet. Think of it.

This is reality. The Master, Jesus, is seated, so to speak, at your feet right now and saying to you, woman, take off your shoes. Let me wash your feet.

You're polluted. You've said things you shouldn't have said. You've been daydreaming things you shouldn't have daydreamed.

You've been arrogant. You've been above it all. You've been cynical.

Man, I'm at your feet to wash your feet. Let me wash you. Now, you know, in a crowd like this one, I'm sure that some of you have got pretty gross things that are on your memory and on your conscience.

Some of you may have said things about your pastor absolutely devastating. You may have said things about your pastor's wife that are absolutely wicked. I mean wicked.

I remember once in California. I wasn't going to tell you this, but I'm going to tell you. My boss in the mission sent me to a church that was having troubles.

And I remember I went to a so-called church meeting. I hate those so-called church meetings. A business meeting.

And there was a poor pastor. You could see it coming, and his wife. He also had a teenage daughter.

And I tell you, I was a kid myself. I must have been, well, 26. I felt like a kid.

Just married. And someone got up and said, I feel that our pastor, and she laid it out. And a man got up and said, I agree with Mrs. So-and-so.

He has done this, and that. It wasn't any sin. It was petty baloney.

But they made a big thing out of it. And suddenly, I'll never forget the teenage daughter of the pastor. Wow.

I don't know if I can tell you. She was in the back. And she got up and she started to cry.

And she said, why do you say this about my daddy? He's a wonderful man. He loves you all. He prays for you.

Why do you say this about my daddy? And I thought, how wicked Christians can be. The things we can say about men and women who, of course, make mistakes. Don't you ever make mistakes? Have you done wicked things about your church? Oh, brothers and sisters, cry before the Lord.

And maybe, maybe if you repent, the master will say, let me wash you, man. And then go and make restitution with the person you have offended. You know, you'll never walk in the light until you are clear before God, washed by the master.

And then you clear it with people. You say, Luis, I have done one of the big ones. I mean a big, big one.

Will he cleanse me from that? Yes. But the secret is, if, the big if is, if we confess our sins. Now, what is confession? Confession is simply to repeat what you've done.

You confess it when the policeman is investigating you. Fortunately, I've never had it done. But I think you have to say, yes, I stole the goods.

Yes, I killed the man. Yes, I pulled the trigger. Yes, I ran the light and I bumped into the old lady's car.

I did it. That's confession. If you begin to say, well, you've got to understand I was playing with a gun.

I, ha, ha, ha, ha. Yes. You begin to make excuses for yourself.

Confession is the truth, things as they really are. Now, let's all bow our heads for a moment. And brothers and sisters, come with me to the foot of the cross right now.

And together, for we all get polluted feet every day, together right now, say quietly in your soul, Master, you are here. You are calling me. You are seated at my feet to wash me.

I can hardly believe it, Master, but please wash me from the pollutions of my sin. I'm going to lead you in a prayer of confession and cleansing. I'm going to lead you so that we'll all pray out loud in unison, asking the Master to cleanse us and wash us and purify us.

But I'm going to ask that quietly as you are with your heads bowed, those of you who feel that you would like to be a part of this moment of confession, would you just quietly stand where you are? Don't say a word, just stand. You pray out loud in unison with me. If you feel it in your soul, men and women, boys and girls, pray with me.

Thank you, Lord Jesus. Thank you for your blessed death on the cross. I come tonight, dear Lord.

You are humbly at my feet. Please wash me tonight. I have done things I should not have done.

And I have left undone things I should have done. I've sinned against you. I'm unworthy of your forgiveness.

But thank you for the blood of the cross. It cleanses from all sin. And as I've confessed my sins to you, I believe you've cleansed me, Lord Jesus.

Hallelujah. Thank you, Jesus. Thank you with all my heart.

Thank you, Lord. I am clean. I am free.

It's all buried at the feet of the cross. Help me to make restitution, to ask for forgiveness. Give me grace with the people I talk to that they will forgive me.

I want to be clear, free, joyful, filled with the Holy Spirit. And I am filled with the Holy Spirit. Hallelujah.

Amen. Please sit down. You know what Jesus said? He said, He who comes to me, remember, I will no way cast out.

You've come to Jesus. He's washed you. Now, don't you ever, ever bring up the old sins again.

Except if you have to clear the decks with someone, go as quickly as you can. But you know what the Bible says? He's taken our sins and cast them in the bottom of the sea. You remember that? And like Corrie ten Boom, the old Dutch evangelist woman said, after he cast them at the bottom of the sea, he puts a sign that says, no fishing allowed.

No fishing allowed. That's right. And the Lord says, listen, Hebrews 10, 17.

Your sins and iniquities, I will remember what? No more. Your sins and iniquities, I will remember no more. You say, Luis, I've been to confession sessions before.

I've admitted my sins before. I've praised the Lord for the blood of Christ before. Something hasn't quite clicked yet.

Maybe it's this third step. Romans 12, verse 1. Look at what it says. This is important because it's a command.

It isn't a suggestion. He says, therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer, listen to this, offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, which is your spiritual worship. Don't be conformed any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

Then you'll be able to test and approve what is God's will, His good and pleasing and perfect will. Now, the first step was admitting your sins and failures. You've done that.

I hope you have. Otherwise, God help you, or better put, God will not help you. You're on your own.

Second, you've confessed and you've been cleansed. But there's a third step, and it's a step, I'm going to put it this way, of presenting your body as a living sacrifice on the altar of Jesus Christ. Presenting your body.

You notice it says, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy. You see, He showed you mercy tonight. He sat at your feet.

He said, let me wash you, woman. Let me wash you, man. And you said, please wash me, master.

And He says, you're forgiven. Now, in view of God's mercy, He says, I urge you to offer your bodies as living sacrifices. Holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable or spiritual service.

Now, this is the step, and it's very simple, but it has to be taken. If you've never taken it, young fellows, young women, older ones. If you've never taken it, men, do it tonight.

Don't let another day go by. This is your opportunity to know what real revival is all about. You must personally, so to speak, pick yourself up, so to speak, and bring yourself up to the cross, so to speak, and say, Lord, Master, here is my body.

Please accept my body as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to you. You say, why the body? I mean, the body's going to the grave. Worms are going to eat it up one of these days, unless we happen to be alive when Jesus returns.

It's no good. I mean, the body is the least important. Body, soul, and spirit.

The body, you know. I thought about that, and I think one reason is this. The body is the most tangible thing that we puny little human beings know about.

I mean, let's face it. Most of us spend much more time looking at ourselves in the mirror for the body than we look at this mirror for the soul. I mean, let's be honest.

We understand the body. The soul is a bit ethereal. The spirit is very, very, you know, un-understandable to most.

But the body is very simple. So the Lord says, look, I want you to present your body as a living sacrifice, as a symbol of your total personality. Don't you think that's what He means? He says, I want you to present your body as a living sacrifice, wholly acceptable to God.

Because we are so basic, we human beings, that if we finally present our bodies, the soul and the spirit follow quickly. But if you say, like many people say, they don't put it into words, but they think, I'm glad my soul is saved by the blood, and I'm going to heaven. But the body, you know, I mean, sheesh, you know.

In about 30 years, I'll dedicate it to the Lord when I've, you know, given it a little chance to express itself. But right now, I'm glad the soul is saved, and my spirit, you know, I'm going to heaven. But meanwhile, a little coochie-coochie, you know, a little, you know, just minor fooling around.

I mean, I don't want to do it all, but you know, the Lord knows that, and our minds are wicked. Hey, listen, I was brought up like these little boys and girls, or rather boys, because I wasn't a girl. But as a boy, I was brought up in church.

I thought every thought that has ever been thought, good and bad. I've looked at every ugly thing come and go, and every nice thing come in and going. I thought of everything, every argument.

I'm a nasty person, and I'm just like you, because we're all alike. The only difference is the color of eyes, skin, and hair shape. But inside, we're all alike.

I know you, because I know me. And I can talk openly about these things, because I know what's going on in here. Now, the Lord says, I urge you, present your bodies a living sacrifice.

I feel that one of the best things, it's not the final solution, but it's very valuable. If you as a man have never done it, if you as a woman have never done it, young or old, tonight, I would like you to join me in a third step towards an overflowing cup, towards the fullness of the Spirit, and that is to consecrate and dedicate your body as a symbol of your total personality to the living Christ. You teenagers, you little ones, you young couples, you know that if you respond to this call, and you say, I present Lord Jesus my body as a living sacrifice, you're going to have conflict with the world.

Because in presenting your body as a living sacrifice, you're going to have to cut out certain kinds of talk, you're going to have to cut out certain kinds of activities, you're going to have to cut out certain worldly things out of your life that will make you look like an idiot before the world. Not always, but often. And the non-Christians that you know are going to say, Hey, what's the matter with Joe? He's lost his mind.

He's become a nut. Now suddenly he doesn't want to do this, and he doesn't want to do that. Now suddenly when we start telling stories, he acts like he's a holy Joe.

What does he think he is? Superior to us? Hey Joe, what's the matter with you? And you've got to stand fast, and you don't know how to respond. And you can't say, Well, I presented my body a living sacrifice. That's why.

So you say, How do I explain it to these guys? It's all over. The Lord will have to give you the words. But the moment you say seriously, Lord Jesus, you've asked me for my body.

Here it is. You're going to be in conflict with the world. And that decision is a tough one for many people who are enchanted by the world.

The funny thing is the world don't care nothing about you. But we cater to the world. Oh, we jippy-juppy for them, you know.

We are so eager to please the unbelievers. We'll put on a song and dance. And when things are not going right, where are they? Nowhere to be found.

The world couldn't care less for anything but themselves. And we're foolish enough to think that we've got to please them, and dance to their tune, and play along with them. They're lost.

Poor fellows, they're going to hell if they don't turn to Jesus. And we play little dances for them. But we've all done it.

You know why I'm talking this way? Because I had done it. Otherwise, how would I know? But, if you want to be filled with the Holy Spirit, if you've had it walking in the flesh, if you're up to here trying to live up to the world, if you're not filled with the Holy Spirit, and you see other people rejoicing, and free in the Spirit, and obviously walking in holiness, and you say to yourself, I am not walking in holiness. What's the matter with me? I notice these people that I resent so much, they're happy.

I can see it. And maybe you know somebody who used to be as miserable as you, and now they're free, and there's a joy. And you say, he's got it, and I don't.

How long are you going to hold out? You must take the next step. You cannot bypass it. Brothers, sisters, preachers, preacher's wives, preacher's kids, missionaries, deacons, elders, theological professors, whatever you may be, if you've never taken this step of presenting your body, what an opportunity the Blessed Spirit gives you tonight.

Amen? Serious business, see? We're not fooling around. We're not having a pep rally. We're talking about the cross, and the cross is not fun, but it's necessary.

It is the most liberating thing in the world. As you know by now, the purpose of this series of ministry meetings and messages is that every one of us should live a revived life, that every one of us should enjoy a normal Christian life. A normal Christian life is a victorious, triumphant life.

A normal Christian life is a holy life. A normal Christian life is a total lifestyle filled with God Himself. And then the question is, why then aren't Christians enjoying this kind of a life when they profess to be believers in Jesus? First, the steps to enjoying the fullness of Christ.

One, you have to admit your sins and your failures before the Lord, confess them, and deal with sin. Secondly, you confess and you accept the forgiveness that comes from the Lord. First John 1-7, if we walk in the light as God is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanses us from all sin.

And on the first step, you remember, we talked about filling out a sheet with all the list of sins and failures and guilt and bitterness and memories that need to be dealt with. If you follow through on that, and if you wrote on that sheet every sin and every ugliness that the Holy Spirit brought to mind, now what you need to do then is write 1 John 1-7 across it, and Hebrews 9-14, the blood of Christ will cleanse your conscience from evil works so that you can serve the living and true God. Write it across all the sins and say, thank you, Lord Jesus, by your blood I am clean.

Then I suggested that you tear up that sheet, throw it down the bathroom and flush it away, because that's what God has done with your sins. On the cross, He flushed them away. He buried them forever.

And the symbolic act of writing the words of Scripture across it, tearing it up, and sending it down the pipes, is symbolic that it's all gone and gone forever. But there was a third step, and that step you should be taking right now. If you didn't do it while you were listening to the message, this is your moment.

You must personally present your body to the Lord Jesus Christ. You must personally say, Lord Jesus, here is my body. I present it.

First, a living sacrifice, not a dead sacrifice. Secondly, holy, separate it unto you. And thirdly, living, holy, and then he says, which is your reasonable service.

In other words, you present your body to the Lord as a living sacrifice. Holy, yes. Acceptable to God, yes.

Why? Because it's my reasonable service. You have made that decision. If you've never done it, you should do it.

Otherwise, you'll skip on a vital step. What it means when you present your body is this. It's a crucified lifestyle.

In other words, where not your will but God's will is done. Secondly, it's a radical life of obedience, where you're not playing games with God. You're not just taking in the good things of Christianity and ignoring the flesh, the world, the devil, and fallen creation.

No. You face the enemy. You've presented your body a living sacrifice.

Now you're going to live a crucified lifestyle, a radically obedient lifestyle. Believe me, that step is fundamental. Have you taken that step? If you haven't, why don't we pray together? Wherever you are right now, seated in a church service, alone in your living room, a Sunday school class, or with a crowd around you, let's bow our heads in prayer.

And you say to the Lord Jesus, Lord Jesus, I present my body to you. Pray with me this prayer. Sincerely, seriously, pray with me.

Oh God, here is my body. I present it to you, oh Lord, as a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to you, which is my reasonable service. Dear Lord, take my body as a symbol of your, my personality.

Take me all the way, Lord, and use me for the glory of your name. And I will live a crucified lifestyle. I will live a life of radical obedience through this body for the glory of your name.

In Jesus' name, amen. Now if you prayed that prayer, and you took that step, then what it means is that you have taken the third step towards a spirit-filled life, a normal Christian life, a life filled with God himself. The next message will deal with the next step you must take if you're going to enjoy this kind of living.

God bless you.

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