

God's Holiness Applied

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[0:00] 1 Peter 1, I'll begin reading in verse 13, and read through chapter 2 and verse 3. For it is written, Be holy, because I am holy.

Since you call on a Father who judges each man's work impartially, live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear. For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a Lamb without blemish or defect.

He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake. Through him you believe in God who raised him from the dead and glorified him, and so your faith and hope are in God.

Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply from the heart. For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.

For all men are like grass, and their glory is like the flowers of the field. The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of the Lord stands forever. And this is the word that was preached to you.

[1:42] Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation.

Now that you have tasted that the Lord is good. I have a meeting with God one day. And I'm going to meet him face to face with my creator, the one that made me.

And by the way, you do too. You have an appointment, a meeting with God. And therefore, the word of God is kind to say to us, prepare to meet your God.

And part of being prepared for an important meeting is to know something about the person you're going to be talking to. And so for the past six months, we've been seeking to answer the question, what is God like?

If I'm going to stand before him and meet him, I would do well to know what he's like. And we're not left to guess. He rather has told us what he is like.

[2:57] And so we've been studying from his own word what he's like. We've been studying the different attributes of God. And we've come last week to the attribute of his holiness. That in the first place means his otherness, that he's not like us.

That there's this chasm, this infinite distance between God and man. Who is like him? There's none like him. And there's none like him as to his moral purity.

His holiness. God is pure. And that creates a problem for us who are sinful. God is too pure to dwell with sinners.

And so we ask that question. What's the answer to that problem? How can the holy God live with us sinful people? And of course, we were led to the gospel, to the Lord Jesus himself, who makes men fit for God.

Cleansing us from sin. Making us holy. And therefore able to live with God. Now this week, we come to application of God's holiness.

[4:08] You know, there's not any characteristic of God that does not have a corresponding response from men. If this is how God is, then this is how we ought to be.

And we've been seeking in our study not just to have a mental study of God's attributes and to line them all up in our mind. But to ask ourselves, if God is like that, what should I be like?

And so we bring that same question again this morning. If God is holy, what difference should it make in my life? And in two words, God answers this.

Be holy. Be holy yourself. Now, in the Old Testament, the nation of Israel was called to be God's holy people.

His people set apart. Exodus 22, 31. He said to the Israelites at Mount Sinai as he entered into a covenant with them as a nation. You are to be my holy people.

[5:14] Leviticus 20, 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.

There again, we see the basic idea of holiness is that God is set apart from all else. And therefore, his people are set apart from all others.

There were all the nations in the Old Testament. And out of them, God came and selected one nation, Israel, the descendants of Abraham.

And he set them apart from all the rest and said, now you are to live for me. You are to do what I say. You are to live in a way that honors and pleases me.

You are holy and are to be holy to me. Leviticus 20 and verses 7 and 8. Consecrate yourselves and be holy because I, the Lord, your God.

[6:14] Because I am the Lord, your God. Keep my decrees and follow them. I am the Lord who makes you holy. Now that was the Old Testament.

And believers in the New Testament, you are God's holy people. You are God's called out ones.

Out of all the people in the world, he has now called you out of the world to be his holy people.

To live unto him. To obey him. Paul addresses the believers in Colossae. As God's chosen people.

Holy and dearly loved. Jews and Gentiles in the church at Colossae. They were God's holy people.

His chosen ones. Set apart to be his own.

Those are the, perhaps the most common words that Paul uses to describe the believers whenever he wrote them a letter. And so as you begin the letter to the Romans, chapter 1 and verse 7.

[7:18] To all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints. That is holy. That's the word there. Saints. Holy ones.

1 Corinthians 1, 2. To the church of God in Corinth. To those sanctified. That is set apart in Christ Jesus. Called to be holy. 2 Corinthians 1, 1.

To the church of God in Corinth. Together with all the saints. And so on. To the saints in Ephesus.

To the saints at Philippi. To the holy ones. At Colossae. That's the title given to New Testament believers.

We are the holy ones now. The holy people of God. And so if you've got your Bibles open to 1 Peter.

Look at chapter 2. As Peter is writing to believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. He says in chapter 2 and verse 5.

[8:16] You also like living stones. Are being built up into a spiritual house. To be a holy priesthood. Offering up sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

The Old Testament had its own priests. Who were holy. Set apart to serve God in the temple.

Believers you are now those priests. You are that holy priesthood.

Not to offer bloody sacrifices. But to offer the sacrifices of praise and worship. And to not forget to do good.

And to share with others. Because with such sacrifices. God is pleased. You are the holy priesthood. And then 1 Peter 2.

9. You are a chosen people. A royal priesthood. A holy nation. That's you. You are the holy nation in the new covenant. A people declaring.

[9:17] A people belonging to God. That you may declare the praises of him. Who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people.

But now you are. The people of God. Once you had not received mercy. But now you have received mercy. And it is the receiving of mercy from God in Jesus Christ.

That makes you the people. The holy people of God. Now this holy God. Has words for his holy people.

And it's found in chapter 1. But we find it the first time we run across it in Leviticus. chapter 11 and verse 44.

And a half a dozen other places in the book of Leviticus and Exodus. Where God says. Be holy. Because I am holy. That's the words of the holy God to his holy people.

[10:12] You be holy. Because I am holy. You say. Well that's the Old Testament. That was addressed to Israelites. Yes. But the apostle Peter. Uses those very words. And applies them to New Testament believers.

Chapter 1. Verses 15 and 16. He says. But just as he who called you is holy. There's the holiness of God. So be holy.

In all you do. For it is written. Be holy. Because I am holy. It's one of the most all encompassing commandments in the Bible.

Be holy. Matthew Henry calls it the great and fundamental law of Christianity. The great and fundamental law. Be holy. Be holy.

Now notice the reason we're to be holy. Be holy because I am holy. You see we're in the realm of application here. This is holiness of God applied. Since I'm holy.

[11:12] What should you do? You should be holy. Holy. The holy. The holy God is to have a holy people. The God of absolute moral purity is to have a people of moral purity in their lives.

There to reflect his holiness in this unholy world. If you're a Christian. Did you know that that's the reason God called you? Did you know that that's the reason that before the creation of the world God chose you?

Ephesians 1 and verse 4. For he chose us in him, in Christ, before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.

He didn't choose us because we were holy and blameless. He chose us in order that we might be holy and blameless. That's the end in view. That's the goal. Why he chose you and set you apart from the world.

Why he didn't just leave you with the rest of sinners to go on your way to hell. Why did he pull you out of that mass of lost humanity and put you on the road to that you might be holy and blameless?

[12:19] Second Timothy 1.9. Who has saved us and called us to a holy life. Not because of anything we have done. But because of his own purpose and grace.

He didn't save us because we were living holy lives. He saved us because of his own purpose and grace. That we might live holy lives. I wonder if the reason God saved you is that you might live a holy life.

How much does that reason weigh in on your minds on Monday morning as you're going off to work? I live. I'm a Christian today in order to be holy.

How zealously are you pursuing the very reason for which God saved you? Is it your passion? Is it the thing that defines your life? Is the main thing with you, the main thing for which God saved you?

To be holy. That's the reason. Because God is holy. Notice next the extent of this command. Being holy is not just something we do on Sunday.

[13:35] We go to church. That's being holy, we think. Perhaps. It all depends on the heart and mind you bring with your body, isn't it? Whether or not you're being holy right now.

We may think that reading our Bible and praying is being holy. And again, that may be the case. Maybe not. It all depends on our attitude and motivations for doing so.

Being holy is not just a few religious things we do. Notice how Peter takes this command to be holy and he stretches it. And he stretches it over the whole of our lives.

Verse 15. But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do. 24-7 as we say.

Be holy. Be holy in your work. Be holy in your recreation. In your sports. Be holy in your eating and drinking. Be holy in your shopping and spending of money.

[14:45] Be holy in your driving. Be holy in your sleeping. Be holy in the way you dress. Be holy in the way you talk. Be holy in the way you think.

Be holy in the way you obey your parents. Be holy in the way you treat your spouse. Be holy in the way you treat your neighbor. Your brothers and sisters in Christ.

Your enemies. Be holy on your dates. Be holy on the internet. Be holy on the telephone.

Be holy in the way you look at a woman. Be holy in the way that you choose a husband. Be holy in your plans for next week.

For next year. Be holy on what you do today. And what you do Monday. Through Saturday. Be holy in all you do.

[15:45] You see it? It's a command that stretches literally around everything that you do. J.C.

Ryle says holiness is the sap. Is to be the sap running through every leaf and twig in the tree.

There you are. You're the tree. And holiness is to be sap running through every twig and leaf. Holy in all you do. The high priest Aaron. Had a turban.

And on the turban that he wore. He was to have a gold plate. Engraved. And on that plate was to be holy to the Lord.

And so upon everything that you do in life. Is to be engraved. Holy to the Lord. Lived unto him. Lived according to his holiness. His word. So we've seen the reason to be holy. He is holy. The extent of holiness. In all that you do. Notice the pursuit.

[16 : 46] Next. The pursuit of holiness. I've just tried to tease out a little bit. What it means to be holy in all you do. And if we're. If we begin to think down that track.

We begin to see. Well that means I've got a. This idea of being holy. He's got to have more front and center attention in my life. I've got to be thinking about that. It isn't just something that I do when I come into church.

Wow. That's that's something that. That hits me in this category. In that category of my life. I must be asking. Am I holy? Am I living as one set apart to God? As one who is pure.

Like God. Extensive holiness calls for all out effort in my life. Turn to Hebrews chapter 12.

And verse 14. Hebrews 12 and verse 14. Make every effort to live in peace with all men.

[17 : 46] And to be holy. Without holiness. No man will see the Lord. Now that's a. That's an important verse.

It says a lot. But notice first of all. There's two things to be pursued. To be run after. With all diligence. What two things are you to be running after? Peace with all men.

And holiness. And it's not something you're to dawdle in. It's something that you are to expend great effort in. Make every effort.

Like one running in order to get something. Whether it's to catch the dog that got out of the house.

Or whether it's to. To win the prize. You're running on a mission.

You have an object. And so you're running hard. You're putting all your effort in it. Because you want to obtain it. That's what the. This word here means. To make every effort. To pursue it.

[18 : 41] It was even the word that's used to translate persecute. And you can just picture Saul of Tarsus. Persecuting the Christians. Running hard after them. Even going to Damascus to persecute them.

He was pursuing them. He was running. He was making every effort. We are to do the same for holiness. Holiness. And one of the reasons.

Given here. To spare no pains. In making every effort. After holiness. Is because without holiness. No man will see the Lord. No holiness.

No heaven. It's not an option. The narrow road to heaven. Is the highway of holiness. And only those who travel on it.

Reach the city of God. Without holiness. No man. Will see. The Lord. You know. That's just the negative side. The negative way of putting. What Jesus said.

[19 : 39] In a positive way. Blessed are the pure. In heart. The holy. For they. Will see. God. The holy ones.

The pure of heart ones. They're blessed. They're happy bunch. They. Because they will see God. And Hebrews 12. Just. Says it. A different way. Without holiness.

No one. Will see. The Lord. Last week. We saw the problem. Of the holiness of God. That it creates. A problem. For sinful men.

He's too pure. To live with us. And here. We see it again. In Hebrews 12. 14. It's all over our Bibles. This problem. That. That we need to realize. Is our greatest problem.

In life. Holiness. Is the essential requirement. If we would live. With this God. Who is so pure. Revelation 21. 27. Says. Nothing impure.

[20 : 37] Will ever enter. Into the holy city. Of God. There is God's dwelling place. Who can enter in. He says. In. In Revelation 21. 27. Nothing impure. Will ever enter in.

Nor will anyone. Who does what is shameful. Or deceitful. Blessed are those. Who wash their robes.

That they may have the right. To the tree of life. And may go through. The gates. Into. The city. Who can go on in. And dwell with God. Those who have washed their robes.

And made them white. In the blood. Of the lamb. So only God's holy people. Will make it into heaven. At last. So. Let us.

Make every effort. To be holy. In all we do. To be holy. Like he is holy. Now if that's all we said. This morning.

[21 : 32] I'm afraid we go home. Dragging. Wouldn't we? When we realize. The assignment. That this holy God gives us. And the ramifications. Of being holy. And not being holy. It would sink us.

In discouragement. But you know. God doesn't just come along. And say be holy. And I'll see you. I'm leaving. And you get on with it. And I'll check up with you.
On the day of judgment. No he doesn't. It would be like our. Our country. Declaring war in a nation. And saying okay. Armed forces. Go get them.
But you won't get anything from us. Don't expect food. And ammunition. And guns. And support. You just go do it. Go win the war. God's not like that.
He doesn't just say. Go be holy. And not provide us. With the very means. For doing so. So I'd like for us to think.
[22 : 28] Of the power. For holiness. And the. How does this. Duty. Ever come to be fulfilled. In my life. Leviticus 20. And verse 8.

Is our text. For this point. The holy one. Says to his people. I am the Lord. Who makes. You. Holy. Be holy.
Without holiness. No one will see the Lord. I am the Lord. Who makes you. Holy. Now this is of tremendous. Encouragement. To the believing.
People of God. These are words. Of good news. I make. You. Holy. That's the unique. Feature. Of Christianity. That's what sets. Christianity apart. From every other.
Religious scheme. And system. We do not make. Ourselves. Holy. By things. That we do. He takes. The initiative. He does. The decisive.
[23 : 21] Work. In making us. Holy. I'm called. Into action. In the. In this pursuit. But I am. Not left. To myself. To cleanse. Myself. I am. The Lord.

Who makes you. Holy. I want us. To think. With the time. Remaining. Of the two ways. That God. The Lord. Makes us. Holy. How does he. Make us. Holy. First of all. He cleanses. My record. In heaven. Through the blood. Of Jesus Christ. And then he cleanses. My heart. And life. Here on earth. Through the working. Of his Holy Spirit. In me.
So we'll look at those. Two ways. That God. Makes his people. Holy. Justification. Declaring us. To be holy. In the courtroom. Of heaven. Sanctification.
In which he makes us. Holy. Here on earth. And he never does one. Without doing. The others. These are. Both parts of that. So great.
[24 : 14] Salvation. Of God. Saving his people. And making them. Fit to live with him. Forever and ever. The Holy One. Makes.

You holy. So let's take. First of all. My record in heaven. Is cleansed. Through the blood of Jesus. God is keeping track.
Of sin. Did you know that? That. The day of judgment. The books. Will be open. Is the way that he puts it. That we might understand. That it's the same way. That an accountant.
Keeps track. Of every expenditure. Of the business. There it goes. It's something. A debt. It's there. It's on the books. So in heaven. Every time we sin. There is a. A record of our sin. And it stands there.
Against us. There's a page. With John Heaney on it. And my sin. Is there. On the books. My record in heaven. Is. Is. Besmirched. It's filled. With.
[25 : 08] With my sin. And. There's no way. That I can get those. Bad marks off of there.

You can't do. Extra credit. Because I was already. Expected to be holy. And if I. If I am holy. That's not doing extra credit. That's just being. That's just doing my duty.
There's no extra merit in that. There's no way. That I can. Do some good things. To take off my bad things there. My record in heaven. Is full. Of sin. And guilty.
And the best. I can do. To try to clean it up. Is like. A boy. Who got caught. Eating chocolate. That he wasn't supposed to. And his hands are full of it.
And he sees. He's got some on his shirt. And he's trying to clean it up. With his dirty hands. That's the best you and I can do. Our very attempts. To cleanse ourselves. Are polluted.
[26 : 04] And further. Besmire the record in heaven. Against us. Only one thing. Can cleanse my record in heaven. What can wash away my sin?

Nothing. Nothing. But the blood of Jesus. The blood of Jesus. God's son cleanses from every sin. Every sin. It washes it clean.
The book of Hebrews presents the Lord Jesus. As the one who makes unclean men holy. How? We have been made holy. Through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ.

Once for all. Hebrews 10. 10. Jesus also suffered outside the city gate. To make the people holy. Through his own blood.

You see. It's the blood of Jesus. That can take away my sin in heaven. That record can be washed clean. So that I am clean before my God.

[27 : 03] And how does that happen? Well Christ died for the sin. Christ took all the punishment that my sin deserved. So every one of my blotches on my record in heaven. Has been paid in full.

The punishment has already gone forth. Christ has suffered it in my behalf. And so now the sin is gone. It's like a debt that's paid in full. It's erased. It's blotted out. It's removed.

So that when you look on my IOU up in heaven. There's nothing there. There's only the blood of Jesus. His righteousness has covered my sin. And so when God sees me. He sees me as holy in Jesus.

That only happens to those who put their faith in him. It's by faith that all of his holiness comes to my account. Just by coming to him and saying I don't have holiness.

But I trust in Jesus. To make me holy by his blood. In the heart of Ireland there's a gravestone. Of a woman that reads.

[28 : 00] I traded my sin. For his righteousness. For God made him who had no sin.

To be sin for us. So that in him. We might become the righteousness of God. Second Corinthians 5:21. All our sins put to his account.

And he bore them to the cross. And paid them in full. And all his holiness put to my account. So that I am declared righteous. In the courtroom of heaven. I'm accepted in the beloved.

I am to God as holy as Jesus is holy. Because it is his holiness that covers me. Behold him there. The risen lamb. My perfect spotless righteousness.

Is your righteousness in heaven. This morning. Is Jesus your holiness? Have you traded your sin. For his holiness?

[28 : 57] That's the response that's required of you. Come. Come to the Savior. And trust in him. He has reconciled you by Christ's physical body.

Through death. To present you holy in his sight. Without blemish and free from accusation.

Colossians 1:22. Husbands love your wives.

Just as Christ loved the church. And gave himself up for her. To make her holy. Jesus gave himself up for his bride. To make her holy.

John Flavel says. Jesus Christ is so in love with holiness. That he will buy it for us. With his own blood. He doesn't just say.

Be holy. I'll see you. He says. Holiness is so precious. That I will buy it for you. With my own blood.

[29 : 57] Because. Of his perfect obedience and blood. My holiness in heaven is perfect. So God is the one who makes. Us holy. Through the blood of his son.

Who clears the record book. Of all my sin. Now that's something that takes place in heaven. We haven't said anything yet. About my heart. And that's the second part.

Of how God cleanses me. Because here on earth. Things are otherwise. Okay. We've talked about my problem in heaven. I've got a problem on earth. That is. I have a nature. A heart. That. That doesn't like holiness.

I am born with a love for unholiness. And God's holiness doesn't appeal to me. As I come into this world. I have a sinful heart. That wants to go my way.

Not God's way. God is holy. I want. The way of unholiness. I don't like the highway of holiness. It's too. Cramping of my style. To go that way.

[30 : 57] That's my problem here on earth. That has to be taken care of too. And so what does God do? I am the Lord who makes you holy. How does he make us holy?

Not only by his son. Bearing our sins to the cross. And taking our sin away. And clearing our record in heaven. But he actually puts his Holy Spirit. The third person of the Trinity.

In our hearts. To make us holy. Remember his name is the Holy Spirit. And he comes to make us holy. God is so determined.

To cleanse your heart and life. That he sends you his Holy Spirit. And his Holy Spirit gives you a new heart.

Changes the very desires. And the way that you think. And your affections. And your will. So that now you want what is holy. Whereas once you hated what is holy. You have a new disposition.

[32:00] A new heart. To want what is holy. You needed to be born again. And that's what the Holy Spirit does. He brings. To new birth.

Brings us alive unto God. With a new heart. That we might be made fit. For fellowship with the Holy One. Listen to 1 John chapter 3. And verse 9. No one who is born of God.

That is to be born by the Spirit of God. Will continue to sin. That's the opposite of holiness. No one who is born of God. Will continue to sin. Because God's seed remains in him.

He cannot go on sinning. Because he's been born of God. John is saying. A Christian lives differently. Once he's been born of God. He was once without God.

Without Christ. And he was going his own way. But when one is born again. He doesn't just keep right on going. Down the road of sin. No. He goes a different way. The road of holiness. Why?

[32:58] He tells us why. Because God's seed. Remains in him. We're born again.

We have a seed planted in our hearts. The seed of holiness is planted in our hearts. A new nature. And that new holy nature. Is patterned after God's nature.

Ephesians 4.24. This new self is created to be like God. In true righteousness and holiness.

Holiness. And so with a new heart. We have desires after holiness.

And sin. The antithesis of holiness. Is now something that we want to be done with. Kids. You ever looked at an acorn? And then looked at the tree that it fell from?

Did you know there's a tree in every acorn? That tree is in the acorn. And you put it in the ground. And you'll see this tree.

[33:58] You may not even live long enough to see it. Be this huge tree. And it's all in the seed.

Did you know that holiness. Is in the seed of the new birth.

This new nature that God plants in you. It doesn't look like much now. But it will develop and grow under the watering. And fertilizing of the Holy Spirit.

And that seed within you will keep you from going on in sin. And will cause you to become more and more holy. Our whole holiness is in the new birth.

It's in the work of God's spirit in our hearts. Romans 8 and verse 4. Tells us that what the law could not do.

And that it was weak through our sinful natures. God did by sending his own son in the likeness of sinful man. To be a sin offering.

[34:58] And so he condemns sin and sinful man. In order that the righteous requirements of the law. Might be fully met in us. Who do not live according to the sinful nature.

But according to the spirit. God puts his spirit in our hearts. So that we live according to the requirements of God's law. That's the work of the spirit of God. That's the work of his planting of a new nature in our hearts.

And so he makes us willing in the day of his power. To live a holy life. The Old Testament prophets said that that's how God would make his people holy.

Back in Ezekiel 36 and verse 25. The prophets had promised that God would make his people holy. In the new covenant that was coming under Messiah.

The sovereign Lord says, I will cleanse you. There it is. I will cleanse you from all your impurities.

And from all your idols. How will you do that, Lord? Verse 26 and 27 of Ezekiel 36.

[36:04] Well, I will give you a new heart. And I will put a new spirit within you. I will remove from you your heart of stone. And I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit in you.

And move you to follow my decrees. And be careful to keep my laws. Now, following God's decrees. And being careful to keep his laws. Is the essence of a holy life.

We'll see more of that in the future. But what God does is puts his Holy Spirit in you. To move you to follow his decrees. And to make you careful to keep his laws.

I am the Lord who makes you holy. And he works in us. He moves us. Some of you mothers know how to move your child out of bed in the morning.

You maybe put the food, bacon smells. Move him out of bed. Maybe it's a poke. Maybe it's some words. But you know how to move him. How to get him going. The Holy Spirit knows how to move his people.

[37:05] To be careful to keep his laws. To follow his decrees. He has many ways of moving us to follow his decrees. But the point is that he moves them.

He moves us. The spirit that he puts within us. Moves us to follow his decrees. Maybe by a melting view of God's mercies to us in Christ. Romans 12.

And in light of those mercies. We offer up our bodies as a holy sacrifice to him. Maybe it's shedding abroad the love of God in our hearts.

And we're melted. That he would love us first. And so we want to love him and live and walk obediently to him. Maybe it's showing us the beauty of holiness in our Lord Jesus. And we see his holiness.

And we want to be like him. Maybe it's showing us the benefits of a holy life. That in the keeping of his commands there's a great reward. But his commands are not burdensome.

[38:01] They come with so many benefits. They are the ways of pleasantness. And all their paths are peace. Maybe it's by awakening us with a warning.

Maybe that's how he moves us. Without holiness no man will see the Lord. And he's moving us to follow his decrees. All of these and other ways are ways he moves us to be killing our sin.

And loving and obeying our Savior. Pursuing holiness. Another way he moves us to holy living is by his fatherly chastisements. His discipline.

The painful trials that he sends our way. He says in Hebrews 12 and verse 7. Endure these hardships as discipline. God is treating you as sons.

Sons that he loves. He wants to discipline you and make you more than what you are right now. So he's disciplining you. And he says later in verse 10. God disciplines us for our good.

[39:01] That we may share in his holiness. Have you made the connection between your present trial? And the aim of God's discipline.

Which is to have you sharing more and more. In his holiness. That's what he's after. That's what he wants. He wants you more holy than what you are now.

He wants you to participate. To be fuller participants in his holiness. He wants you to share in that holiness that is his. Don't miss the aim of his discipline.

Don't miss what he's bringing about in that painful trial. No discipline seems pleasant at the time. But painful. Later on however.

Down the road of peace. It produces a harvest of righteousness. Harvest of holiness. You share in his holiness.

[39:59] Holiness. You see. These are just some of the ways. There are no shortages of ways. By which God makes his people holy. But he does it.

And that's the encouragement. He will do whatever he needs to do. To produce holiness in us. And I wonder if we're aware of that agenda. That we have a father who is holy. And he wants his children holy.

And he's out to make us holy. And he is more interested in our holiness. Than he is in our present happiness. And he may make it hurt for you.

Indeed there is no such thing as fatherly discipline. That doesn't hurt he says. But he's doing it. That you might share in his holiness. And holiness will lead to your everlasting happiness.

Does the aim of holiness color the way you're responding to present trials. And difficulties in your life.

[40:58] Oh that we would be aware that God is after holiness. Is he that serious about the holiness of his children. Then let us be as serious in our pursuit. Of it.

Let us make every effort. Let us trust in the spirit of God. To make us holy. Well we're in the midst of this.

It's a work that was begun. In our new birth. When we were born again. The seed of God's nature planted in us. The acorn. It's progressing now.

He's making us holy. Sending us discipline. He's feeding us his word. He's doing all sorts of things. Showing us Christ. He's making us holy. And one day he will finish the work.

For we will see him as he is. And we will be like him. And everyone who has this hope in him. Purifies himself. Just as he is pure. So we're on no fool's errand here.

[42:00] When we receive the command to be holy. And we make every effort after holiness. And some days we feel like we're going backwards. Rather than forwards. You need to take heart. God finishes what he begins.

Being confident of this. That he who began the good work in you. Will continue it until the day of Christ Jesus. And then. In the day of Christ. When he returns. At the last trump.

We will all be changed. And we will see him as he is. And be made like him. So what have we seen this morning? We've seen that.

God's holiness demands that we be holy. In all that we do. But we've also seen that God is the one who makes us holy. He doesn't just send us on our own. But he calls us into action. And then he says. I will make you holy. And he does so by the blood of his son. Cleansing our record in heaven. And by the Holy Spirit in our hearts. Moving us to follow his decrees. [43:01] And to be careful to keep his laws. So that means that every victory and holiness that you enjoy. Every.

Victory and holiness. We sing in that hymn. The battles lost or scarcely won. Even those battles scarcely won. You have God to thank for it.

Every. Bit of our holiness is. His work in us. I am the God who makes you holy. And therefore he is to receive all the praise. Take courage.

He's committed to your holiness. He's predestined you to become like his son. When God would encourage. His people.

He. He points us to this fact. That he's the one who makes us holy. He doesn't just give us the duty. First Thessalonians 5. Here at the end of the letter. After all the commands are given.

[44:02] In the pursuit of holiness. Paul closes the letter with this prayer. First Thessalonians 5. 23 and 24. May God himself. The God of peace. Sanctify you.

Through and through. May he make you holy. Through and through. May your whole spirit. Soul and body. Be kept blameless. At the coming of our Lord Jesus. The one who calls you is faithful. And he will do it. The grace of the Lord Jesus. Be with you. And so. Since he's the one who does it. That's why in heaven. You find the saints.

Casting their crowns. At his feet. Revelation 4. And verse 10 and 11. The 24 elders. And there they are. As representatives of the church.

Of the Old Testament. And the New Testament. The people. The holy people of God. They fall down before him. Who sits on the throne. And they worship him. Who lives forever and ever. And they lay their crowns.

[44:59] Before the throne. And say. You are worthy. Our Lord. And God. To receive glory. And honor. And power. And we see them.

Casting their crowns. At his feet. Perhaps a metaphor. Taken from the Roman generals. Who. When returning home. After being victorious in war.

Would be wearing the laurel. Of victory. Some twigs. Of branches. And leaves. Woven into a crown. And they're coming back. Into the capital city of Rome.

With all the cheering. Citizens. Of the victories. That they have. They have had. And they take those crowns. Right into the temples. Of their gods. And they hang them there.

Before their gods. Acknowledging their power. That gave them strength. To win the victory. And so in heaven.

[45:55] The saints are casting. Their crowns. At the feet. Of the one who makes. Us holy. Through the blood of his son. Through the work of his spirit.

And by casting our crowns. We're saying. To you be the glory. It belongs to you. You are the one. Who sent your son. You are the one. Who sent your spirit.

All glory to you. Let's take our hymnal. And sing number 460. Which we ask the Lord. To finish his new creation. He's begun a new work in you. Ask him to finish it.

Pure and spotless. Let us be. Till we cast our crowns. Before thee. Lost in wonder. Love and praise. Let's pray together. Our holy God.

We bow in your presence. With great thankfulness. That you've not just said to us. Be holy. But that you would send your holy son. To shed his holy blood. To make us holy.

[46:55] In the books of heaven. And then to cleanse our hearts. By the washing of water. By the spirit. To give us a new principle within. To plant the seed.

Of the new creation. Of the new nature. And we ask you now. To finish that new creation. That you've begun. And we'll give you all praise. Recognizing that you are the one.

Who makes us holy. We pray in Christ's name. Amen.