

# Lesson 8



## **LESSON OUTLINE:**

PRAY

READ

ENGAGE

ANSWER

CONNECT

HOMEWORK

## **READING:**

1 PETER 1

## **STUDY TEXT:**

1 PETER 1:15-16

## **THEME:**

THE CALL TO  
HOLINESS (PT.2)

## **STUDY METHOD:**

Attributes of God  
Promises of God  
Principles for Life  
Lessons to Learn  
Examples to Follow

## **FURTHER STUDY:**

ISAIAH 6

1 THESS 4:1-8

## **MEMORY VERSE:**

1 PETER 1:15

## **PRAYER & PRAISE:**

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## **THE CALL TO HOLINESS**

To be “called by God” is to have been chosen for a purpose. In the case of 1 Peter 1:15, the “calling” is to salvation and the subsequent life of holiness. Ephesians 1:4 reminds us that *“he chose us in Him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and blameless before Him.”* In Romans 12:1, Paul appeals to the believers to *“present their bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God...”*

The term “holiness” is largely misunderstood and misrepresented today. John White wonderfully summarises the way people think about holiness with the following word pictures: thinness, hollow-eyed gauntness, beards, sandals, long robes, stone cells, no sex, no jokes, hair shirts [sackcloth], frequent cold baths, fasting, hours of prayer, wild rocky deserts, getting up at 4 A.M., clean fingernails, stained glass, and self-humiliation.

Is that the mental picture you get when you think of holiness? Most do. It is almost as though holiness is the private preserve of an austere group of monks, missionaries, mystics and martyrs. But nothing could be further from the truth!

John Brown rightly says, *“Holiness does not consist in mystic speculations, enthusiastic fervors, or uncommanded austerities; it consists in thinking as God thinks and willing as God wills.”*

In other words, holiness is to think like God, act like God, and conform to His character. This is only possible for the Christian because it is the work of the Holy Spirit to make us like Jesus.<sup>1</sup> Oswald Chambers wrote, *“Holiness, not happiness, is the chief end of man.”* This is the complete opposite of what is seen in our culture today. The world is concerned with self-satisfaction and personal fulfilment. The great paradox is that the Christian who pursues holiness is the most fulfilled person in all world because they are realising their ultimate identity in Christ.

Sadly many Christians view the pursuit of holiness as a form of legalism (rigid rule-keeping). However, true holiness springs from a heart of love. Jesus said, *“If you love me, you will keep my commandments.”*<sup>2</sup>

Holiness is not something that just happens- it requires time, energy, work, and focus. John Longhurst wrote, *“Take time to be holy, the world rushes on; Spend much time in secret, with Jesus alone. By looking to Jesus, like Him thou shalt be; Thy friends in thy conduct His likeness shall see.”*

<sup>1</sup> Romans 8:29

<sup>2</sup> John 14:15

The old adage rings true, *“what you concentrate on you will conform to.”* It should be the believer’s greatest aim to be like his God. Holiness is not simply a command to be obeyed, it is a privilege to be enjoyed.

### **SUMMARY**

Do not pursue holiness only because it is commanded, but rather because it is your passion to be like the One who saved you. Do not be concerned about following the rules because it is right, but because you love the rule-maker. Charles Spurgeon said, *“If you think you can walk in holiness without keeping up perpetual fellowship with Christ, you have made a great mistake. If you would be holy, you must live close to Jesus.”*

### **REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS**

1. Discuss your “picture” of holiness with the group. In what ways has your perspective on holiness been incorrect?

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2. Read Romans 12:1-2. What should be the motive for pursuing holiness in these verses, and what are the outcomes seen in life?

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3. According to Isaiah 6, how will focussing on the holiness of God have an impact on us? \_\_\_\_\_

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4. 2 Corinthians 7:1-2 commands the believer to be cleansed and bring holiness to completion because of some promises made in the previous chapter. List these promises and discuss how they motivate us to live a life of holiness. \_\_\_\_\_

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### **LIST ANY QUESTIONS FOR THE PASTOR BELOW**

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