

“You Shall Be Holy, For I Am Holy”
“How to Be More Like Jesus”
(Romans 13:14)

I. Introduction.

A. Orientation.

We’ve been looking at the subject of holiness.

So far we’ve seen,

What holiness is:

It’s separation from common use to God’s exclusive use.

When you came to Jesus –

When, by His grace, you turned from your sins;

When you looked to Him to be your personal Savior,

When you surrendered to Him as your personal Lord –

Your life no longer belonged to you.

Really, it never did to begin with.

You’ve always belonged to God,

Though you may not have realized it.

You may have lived –

As William Earnest Henley expressed in his poem *Invictus* –

As the master of your fate,

And the captain of your soul –

But you had no right to do so.

When the Lord opened your eyes,

You began to see things are they really are.

You also began to see that as His child,

He calls you to separate yourself from sin –

To be holy, as He is holy.

You are God's Temple;

He lives in you by His Spirit;

And so you need to be careful how you live.

Paul writes, "Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body" (1 Cor. 6:19-20).

Because you have His Spirit,

This is how you want to live.

But we saw, secondly, that God has given you more

Than just the desire to be holy –

Though that desire is very important

Because without it, it wouldn't matter what else He did –

He has also given you certain incentives.

He promises to make you secure:

To take care of you throughout your entire life.

To give you everything you need –

Food, clothing, protection –

If you will put His interests first –

Jesus says, “But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you” (Matt. 6:33).

He will not only keep you in this world,

But also in the world to come.

Jesus says regarding His people,

“And I give eternal life to them, and they shall never perish” (John 10:28).

If you’re trusting Jesus –

Which you can know if you’re pursuing holiness –

You have eternal life and He will make sure you never perish.

He promises certain privileges:

To adopt you into His family,

To give you all the rights and privileges of children,

Not the least of which is an eternal inheritance in heaven.

He promises to transform you by His Spirit

So that you really become like Him.

And He gives you the privilege

Of bringing His good news to others –

So that they can escape hell

By trusting His Son.

In addition to all this,

He promises to reward you

For everything you do for Him –
 A reward you can keep forever,
 The only thing you'll ever be able to take out of this world.

B. Preview.

Having seen what holiness is,
 And understanding something of the benefits of holiness,
 This morning,
 Let's consider how to be holy –
 How to be like Jesus.

We'll look at two things from our passage
 That you must do, if you are to be holy:

The first is you must put on Jesus Christ,
 And the second is you must not leave any room in your life for sin.

II. Sermon.

A. First, you must put on Jesus Christ.

What does Paul mean by this?

Grow a beard; throw on a robe and sandals?

No. Paul isn't telling you to dress like Jesus externally,

But to be like Him internally.

To "put on" something means to clothe yourself with that thing.

To clothe yourself with Jesus

Means to put on His character –

To have His heart.

Paul says in Ephesians 4:22-24,

“That in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self, which in *the likeness of God* has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.”

It means to behave as Jesus would behave,

From the heart,

Because that’s what you really want to do –

And notice this is something you have to do:

It doesn’t happen automatically.

How did Jesus live?

He lived every moment in His Father’s presence –

He knew,

That the Father *saw everything* He did,

Heard every word He spoke,

Understood every thought,

Knew everything that was in His heart –

Why He did what He did,

What He was really after.

And knowing that the Father saw and understood all these things,

Jesus lived to please Him:

His whole life was a continual act of absolute devotion to Him.

He says in John 8:29, “And He who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him.”

When we ask the question,

How can you be more like Jesus?

The first answer is,

You must follow the example He gave you.

When you’re faced with a choice –

And you are faced with thousands of choices every day.

You’re faced with choices now:

Whether to listen to what the Lord says here or to tune out,

Whether to act on it or keep going the direction you’re going –

Whatever the choice,

You need to make a conscious decision

To do what you know He wants.

How can you know what He wants?

He tells you in His Word –

Particularly in His commandments.

When you speak, make sure

What you say is pleasing to Him.

The Holy Spirit says through Paul,

“Let no unwholesome (i.e., unedifying, unprofitable) word proceed from your mouth, but only such *a word* as is good for edification according to the need *of the moment*, so that it will give grace to those who hear” (Eph. 4:29).

He says, “Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma. But immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints; and *there must be no* filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience” (Eph. 5:1-6).

You also need to make sure your thoughts and desires

Are also what God can approve.

Take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ (2 Cor. 10:5).

Let every desire be for His glory.

Again, how can you know?

God’s Word can help you here as well.

The author to the Hebrews writes,

“For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do” (Heb. 4:12-13).

Act, speak, think and desire

As Jesus would if He were living your life.

B. Second, you must leave no room in your life for sin.

Not only are you to follow Jesus’ example,

You must not allow anything to the contrary.

Paul writes, “But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to *its* lusts” (Rom. 13:14).

What he is literally telling you

Is to stop planning to sin.

Do we ever do that?

Far too often, I'm afraid.

Sometimes we sin spontaneously –

With very little thought,

When we're suddenly tempted.

Sometimes, we know something's wrong,

But we do it anyway.

We excuse ourselves by saying,

It doesn't really matter;

God's not that picky;

He understands my weakness;

He will forgive me.

Sometimes, we even plan to sin.

We feel a subtle temptation to do something.

We begin to argue with ourselves that it's wrong.

But then maybe it isn't so bad.

Maybe it's actually a good thing.

And before we know it, we've fallen into it.

Paul says, you need to fortify yourself against sin –

You need to plug these holes.

“Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and *make no provision for the flesh* in regard to its lusts” (Rom. 13:14).

Of course, there are many good reasons you should do this –

As we’ve been considering in the evening service –

Not the least of which,

Your Lord commands it for your good.

How can you be more like Jesus?

How should you pursue holiness?

First, clothe yourself with Jesus –

Chose what He would choose,

Talk as He would talk,

Think His thoughts,

Want what He wants –

And do not leave any room in your life for sin.

C. Finally,

How can you put on Jesus Christ,

And leave no room in your life for sin?

You can only do this with Jesus’ help.

You can’t do it on your own.

That’s one reason there’s a Gospel –

Why God sent His Son into the world:

Not only to free you from guilt –

But also from the power – of sin,

So that you could be holy.

So, if you want to be holy

This is where you have to begin:

You must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

The message is very simple –

Turn from your sins,

And trust Him to save you.

And you've heard it many times.

But it won't do you any good

Unless you actually trust Him.

If you don't, you won't be saved.

If you don't, you run the risk

Of becoming hardened to the Gospel –

Of its not having any impact in your life,

Of its no longer having any effect.

Each time you hear and don't respond

You become a little bit harder.

God says to you, "Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts" (Heb. 4:7).

But once you have trusted Jesus,
The work isn't over – there's more you must do.
Paul here commands you to put on Jesus Christ
And to put off sin.
Growing into the image of Jesus
Requires your work on your part –
It doesn't happen automatically.

You need to use the tools He's given you:
Read your Bibles –
Try to understand what God wants from you.
Don't just read it, apply what you read to your life.
Seek God in prayer.
Spend time praising and worshiping Him.
Fellowship/pray with other believers,
And avoid those relationships
You know weaken your resolve to follow the Lord.
Repent of every sin you're aware of.

If you do these things,
You will grow in holiness.
You will become more like Jesus.
If you don't, you will go through life spiritually weak
And largely indifferent to spiritual things.

I hope you see this morning,

The Lord doesn't leave you with that option.

He says to you, "Put on Jesus Christ and make no provision for your flesh with regard to its lusts" (Rom. 13:14). Amen.

<http://www.gcmodesto.org>