

Name: _____

Date: _____

Christian Leadership

How to influence the ideas, opinions and actions of others for Jesus Christ.

Lesson 12: The Leader's Fire of Holiness (Day One) Holy is the LORD

I am the LORD your God; consecrate yourselves and be holy, because I am holy. Do not make yourselves unclean by any creature that moves about on the ground.⁴⁵ I am the LORD who brought you up out of Egypt to be your God; therefore be holy, because I am holy.

^{NIV} Leviticus 11:44-45

Read Leviticus 11:44-45 and answer questions 1-3.

1. Why did the LORD tell the Israelites to consecrate (set apart) themselves and to be holy?

2. How many times does God instruct the Israelites "be holy, because I am holy?" _____

3. What is meant by the word clean and unclean in our everyday language? _____

Physically speaking, if a person is unclean, he or she is dirty. If that person washes away all the dirt or muck, he or she is clean. These words also indicate behaviors that are clean and upright from those that are unclean and sinful. Think about the mind that actually governs those behaviors. Yes, attitudes and motivations can also be clean and unclean.

Cleanness was basic to God's plan for teaching and preserving holiness in His people. He established laws concerning their actions, their diet and their hygiene. In Leviticus 11:44, God is saying that the Israelites are not to eat creatures like the rat, the weasel or the lizard (Leviticus 11:29-33). Although scholars have long debated the reasons behind the regulations, there is not a definitive answer.¹ It was, however, God's plan to reveal the sinner's need for cleanness.²

For from within, out of men's hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery,²² greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly.²³ All these evils come from inside and make a man 'unclean.'" ^{NIV} Mark 7:21-23

Read Mark 7:21-23 and answer the questions 4-6.

¹ Three possible reasons are: 1. Designed to avoid pagan practices. 2. Separation of Israelites in food, ethical and religious matters. 3. Preventing disease and keeping Israelites eating healthy. Butler, 268.

² Trent C. Butler, *Holman Bible Dictionary*. (Nashville: Holman Bible Publishers, 1991), 268-269.

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4. According to Jesus, what makes a person “unclean”? _____

5. Explain in your own words the point or concept that Jesus is making to his disciples?

Jesus is expanding the concept of cleanness to a person’s inward attitudes and motivations. He wants his disciples to realize that following God’s rules in a mechanical and thoughtless way does not make a person clean. He is also laying the foundation for the New Covenant of grace which is found in His work on the cross. He is the fulfillment of the law with its regulations and rules. Cleanness or holiness comes through Jesus, the Lamb of God taking away our sins.

We continue in holiness with the Spirit’s breathing clean and righteous thoughts through our minds. The dietary laws no longer apply to Christians. In other words, everything God made is good and now can be eaten without defilement (Acts 10:9-16).

6. Notice that murder and slander (character assassination) both defile. How will this change the way you talk about others? _____

But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do;¹⁶ for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.”^{NIV} 1 Peter 1:15-16

Read 1 Peter 1:15-16 and answer questions 7-9.

7. The apostle Peter quoted God from Leviticus 11:45-46. Peter wrote, *for it is written: “Be _____, because _____ am _____*

8. Who issued the call for your salvation? _____

9. In what activities are you called to be holy? _____

God calls you specifically to be a **holy** leader! It isn’t a part time pursuit; it is full time, all the time. You are to lead, serve, work, play, eat, drink, think, live and exist in a holy state. Since you have been called to the LORD, you have the desire to be holy within you. You have the desire to be like Jesus and take on the character of God.

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of his robe filled the temple.² Above him were seraphs, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying.³ And they were calling to one another: “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory.”^{NIV} Isaiah 6:1-3

Read Isaiah 6:1-3 and answer questions 10–11.

10. Who did Isaiah see? (Read John 4:24, 12:41, Revelation 1:13) _____

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Isaiah had a vision of the preincarnate King of glory, Christ our Lord. That is, he saw Jesus before He took on flesh and walked the earth. He saw God and Christ as one; he makes no distinction between Father and Son.

11. What were the heavenly beings³ calling out to one another? _____

In Hebrew the adjective used to describe YHWH is qadosh (קָדוֹשׁ). It means holy and sacred. God is set apart on His heavenly throne and set apart from sin. He casts a vision of divine brilliance and majesty. He is pure. He is perfect. He is exalted above all.

At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke.⁵ "Woe to me!" I cried. "I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty."⁶ Then one of the seraphs flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar.⁷ With it he touched my mouth and said, "See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for."⁸ Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!"^{NIV} Isaiah 6:4-8

Read Isaiah 6:4-8 and answer question 12–16.

12. What did Isaiah exclaim in verse 5? “_____ to _____!” “_____ am _____!” For I am a man of _____ lips, and I live among a people of _____ lips

13. Write in your own words why Isaiah cried out in fear. _____

When God’s light shines into our dark souls, we are overcome with our own lack of holiness (Luke 5:8). His perfection brings us to our knees in worship and fear (Revelation 1:17). We fear because we can see the truth in His presence. The fire of His holiness burns through our weak and pitiful flesh. We know He is God, worthy of all praise and allegiance.

14. How did God take away Isaiah’s sin and guilt? _____

Isaiah was purified and made holy by a red, hot coal from the altar. The prophet’s sin was covered and God’s holy wrath was turned aside (Leviticus 16:11-13). God is righteous and just; sin must be punished. Think about a burning coal touching your own lips. We might think twice about what we say and do if a live coal awaited our own sinful lips or any offending body part for that matter.

³ The plural, masculine, noun seraphim is only mentioned here in Isaiah. However, winged heavenly beings called cherubim are mentioned in Genesis 3:24, Ezekiel 10:3-22, Exodus, 1&2 Samuel, etc. BibleWorks Software 6

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15. Right after Isaiah’s guilt was taken away and his sin atoned for, what did he hear the Lord saying? _____

16. What was Isaiah’s reply? _____

17. What is your reply? _____

Personal Application: Meditate on God’s holiness (Numbers 27:13-14, Leviticus 20:1-3, Joshua 24:19-20, Matthew 3:11, Mark 1:24, John 6:68-69, and Revelation 4:8, 16:5).

How does or how will your personal relationship with God include a reverence for His holiness?

Lesson 12: The Leader’s Fire of Holiness (Day Two) Fire of Fear

"Do not come any closer," God said. "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground."⁶ Then he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.^{NIV} Exodus 3:5-6

1. Read Exodus 3:5-6. What was Moses’ response when God revealed Himself?

Both Moses and Isaiah had visible manifestations of God. The theological (study of God) term for God showing or revealing Himself to man is called a theophany. God appeared in a variety of ways in the Bible but the greatest theophany is found in the incarnation of Christ (John 1:18).⁴

Moses saw the burning bush and started walking towards it. The fire caught his attention. He was curious but not afraid. Even when Moses was told to take off his sandals he didn’t seem too disturbed. But as soon as God called to him from within the bush and announced that He was the one true living God, he hid his face in fear.

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding."^{NIV} Proverbs 9:10

2. According to Proverbs 9:10, what is the beginning of wisdom? _____

⁴ James D. Hernando, *Dictionary of Hermeneutics*. (Springfield: Gospel Publishing House, 1995), 168.

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and knowledge of the _____ One is _____

There are several Hebrew words used for fear in the Old Testament. In both verses above, the Hebrew word for fear is yare (יָרֵא). It is used to express Moses' response to God and instruction in wisdom and understanding. It means: **1.** *fear, be afraid, be afraid of* **2.** *stand in awe of* **3.** *fear, reverence, honor, e.g. parents, things, 3. inspire reverence, godly fear and awe.*⁵

Jonathan Edwards⁶ (1703-1758), an American revivalist wrote and delivered a sermon entitled "Sinners in the hands of an angry God." In this particular sermon he emphasized the just wrath of God. Almighty God will punish sinners and in the end the evil doers will be cast into hell for eternity. This should strike real fear in everyone's heart.

Edwards balanced his preaching on the wrath of God against sin by contrasting it with the provision of God for salvation. Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom for it brings the wise to Christ. The only way a sinner can stand before God is through the blood of Christ. But even in the blood of Jesus, we stand in awe of a holy God!

Awe is respect combined with fear or wonder.⁷ This really captures the right response to a holy God. We are to both fear and reverence God. As we grow in our love relationship with God our fear changes from debilitating (incapacitating) fright to enabling fear. In other words the believer is enabled to serve God in righteousness and develops a healthy fear of offending God. The wise leader gains knowledge of God and how He desires to be served in holiness.

3. Why do you think God revealed Himself to Moses and Isaiah? _____

God wants His leaders to recognize His holiness. In fact, the fire of God's holiness should ignite a spark in us to recognize God's purity and desire to serve Him in purity. Both Moses and Isaiah were God's chosen leaders for tasks that He wanted carried out on earth.

4. Have you caught the spark of God's holiness? Yes No (Circle one) Why or Why not?

5. Did Moses and Isaiah teach those they led about God's holiness? Yes No (Circle one)

⁵ BibleWorks Software 6

⁶ Jonathan Edwards is widely acknowledged to be America's most important and original philosophical theologian. His work as a whole is an expression of two themes -- the absolute sovereignty of God and the beauty of God's holiness. The most notable events of his tenure were the revivals of 1734 and 1740-41, the latter of which came to be known as the Great Awakening. Edwards' defense of the revivals and criticisms of its excesses culminated in his first major treatise, the *Religious Affections* (1746). Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy *First published Tue Jan 15, 2002; substantive revision Tue Nov 7, 2006.*

⁷ Oxford American Dictionary

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How do you know? _____

God revealed Himself to Moses and Isaiah to fit them for service. They could not teach without knowledge themselves. They did teach about God's holiness and how His holiness instills fear.⁸

The LORD commanded us to obey all these decrees and to fear the LORD our God, so that we might always prosper and be kept alive, as is the case today.²⁵ And if we are careful to obey all this law before the LORD our God, as he has commanded us, that will be our righteousness."
NIV Deuteronomy 6:24

6. According to what Moses wrote in Deuteronomy 6:25, what will be the Israelites righteousness? _____

Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.
NIV Romans 10:4

7. For the Christians that you lead, what is their righteousness? _____

8. Does that mean that we no longer have to fear the LORD our God? Yes No (Circle one)

We are still commanded to fear God (1 Peter 2:17). The Greek word used for fear is phobeomai (φοβέομαι) which means to fear, be afraid of; fear, be afraid (to do something); fear, worship, reverence (God). The Greek captures the same meaning as the Hebrew. Christians are still admonished (warned) to fear and reverence the Holy Triune God.

How much more severely do you think a man deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God under foot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified him, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace?^{NIV} Hebrews 10:29

9. Read Hebrews 10:29. How do you think God views Christians who are slack (loose, relaxed) in their purity? _____

Then the church throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria enjoyed a time of peace. It was strengthened; and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it grew in numbers, living in the fear of the Lord.^{NIV} Acts 9:31

10. According to Acts 9:31 the church was strengthened and encouraged by the _____ Spirit. It _____ in _____, living in the _____ of the _____

11. How are your people or 'sheep' being strengthened and encouraged by the Holy Spirit?

⁸ Moses wrote Genesis-Deuteronomy and Isaiah wrote the book of Isaiah.

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Personal Application:

Have you ever noticed that there is a holy tension in the Bible? That is, there seems to be teachings or verses that are pulling against each other in their meaning. One verse appears to say one thing while another something entirely different or contradictory. A Christian leader must understand and live with the tension knowing God’s word is always true. Many times it is just a matter of additional prayer and study to understand the whole counsel of God. Other times things may remain in that holy tension until we reach heaven itself.

We have briefly studied holiness and fear. How does the apostle John’s teaching of no fear in love fit within the context of a holy and righteous God. Reference other verses in your Bible to make your point.

In this way, love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment, because in this world we are like him.¹⁸ There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.^{NIV} 1 John 4:17

Lesson 12: The Leader’s Fire of Holiness (Day Three) Effort and Grace

Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.¹⁵ See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many.^{NIV} Hebrews 12:14-15

Read Hebrews 12:14-15 and answer questions 1-5.

1. The author of Hebrews tells the Jewish believers to _____ every _____ to live in peace with all men and to be _____; without _____ no one will see the Lord. See to it that no one _____ the _____ of God and that no _____ root grows up to cause _____ and _____ many.

The Greek verb that the NIV translates “make every effort” is diokete (διώκετε). The verb is a second person, plural, imperative. The believers were commanded to pursue, chase, seek after,

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strive for and practice holiness. Yet in the very next sentence the author of Hebrews says to see to it that no one misses or falls short of grace.

2. How do you think pursuing holiness and accepting God's grace work together?

Grace is defined as “undeserved acceptance and love received from another, especially the characteristic attitude of God in providing salvation for sinners.”⁹ “For Christians, the word “grace” is virtually synonymous with the gospel of God’s gift of unmerited salvation in Jesus Christ.”¹⁰

Although there isn’t a particular word for grace in the Old Testament that conveys the same meaning as in the New Testament, God’s grace or favor is revealed throughout Scripture.¹¹ God is described as gracious. He is merciful and loving. He gives help in time of need. He shows favor to those who don’t deserve it. He is steadfast in His promises. He continually delivered His people from their enemies and provided the sacrificial system for taking away sins. The Old Testament is not only a record of God’s grace but a promise of His even greater grace which was to come through Jesus Christ.

In the New Testament, the writers used the Greek word charis (χάρις) to express a believer’s unmerited salvation in Christ. Previously there had not been a specific word to describe God’s plan of salvation because it was unknown. The actual plan of salvation in Christ was hidden from mankind until the proper time when God revealed it (Romans 16:25-26, Ephesians 3:4-6).

Grace (charis) was an actual, secular (not religious) word in use at the time. It had the “idea of a favor or kindness done to another or of a gift which brought pleasure to another. Viewed from the standpoint of the recipient (receiver), it was used to refer to the thankfulness felt for a gift or favor.”¹² Writers of the New Testament have also used grace (charis), in its secular meanings. For example, even today we say grace (give thanks) before a meal (1 Corinthians 10:30).

Since grace is used in a variety of ways in the Bible, pray for discernment. It is always helpful to read more of the passage or chapter where the verse occurs (context). Read Hebrews chapters 2 and 12 to understand the context of 12:14-15.

3. How do you think the word grace is being used in Hebrews 12:15? _____

4. Review your answer to question #2. Share any new or additional thoughts that you have now?

⁹ Butler, 573.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ The Hebrew word chen (חֵן) is perhaps closest to the Greek word charis (χάρις). When speaking of God it can mean the bestowal of redemption from enemies, evils and sins. BibleWorks 6.

¹² Butler, 573.

The book of Hebrews is about Jesus, *the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of His being, sustaining all things by His powerful word* (Hebrews 1:3). Jesus, who is supreme and all sufficient, brought salvation to mankind according to the Father's plan. He makes men and women holy (Hebrews 2:11). In addition, because He himself suffered when He was tempted, He is able to help those who are being tempted (Hebrews 2:18).

Therefore, the grace in Hebrews 12:15 must refer to God's gift of salvation in Christ. The inspired author is saying: **take hold of Jesus**. Don't miss what He has done for you. He has made you holy by His blood and will continue to help you through all your temptations. You cannot be holy on your own. In fact, if you seek righteousness in yourself then you will only succeed in causing trouble and corrupting others.

On the other hand, God did not take away your free will and your ability to sin. He expects Christians to pursue a godly life. We have a duty to discipline our minds and bodies. We have a responsibility to choose holy living and holy ways. Grace or God's gift of Jesus is to be cherished and applied with all diligence, reverence and care.

5. How would you describe the relationship between God's grace and human effort in seeking holiness? _____

Grace and effort are in partnership for you to be holy. It isn't an equal partnership but it is still a partnership. Your purity is birthed through the senior partner, grace. No one can have the slightest goodness apart from Christ. But as you are 'born again' through God's grace, He expects you to learn to crawl, to walk and to talk in ever increasing devotion to righteousness. He will always help you and doesn't expect you to strive alone. Nevertheless, you must take the steps to learn and to discipline yourself so that you mature in purity and holy living.

6. How does your life typify the right partnership between grace and effort? _____

As God's fellow workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain. ^{NIV} 2 Corinthians 6:1

7. Read 2 Corinthians 6:1. Explain in your own words what Paul is telling the Corinthians?

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Jesus Christ's death on the cross for our sins is a free gift. Nevertheless, Paul is saying that you can receive the gift to no purpose and without result. Although we should live for Christ, we can still live for ourselves (5:15), and that will ultimately prove fruitless and of no benefit to anyone.

Personal Application: Read Hebrews 5:12-14, Philippians 2:12-13, 3:12-14, 2 Peter 1:5-7 and Matthew 25:14. Read the following statement and answer the question:

The higher the call to leadership the higher the call to holiness. The higher the call to holiness the harder you must discipline yourself to root out the evil in your life.

Do you think that is a true statement? Yes No (Circle one) Explain your answer:

Lesson 12: The Leader's Fire of Holiness (Day Four) The Struggle

Holiness seems to be to be elusive for many Christians. Either they don't understand the call to be pure or they understand it and choose to escape or avoid it. As a leader, you are called to lead a pure life and to lovingly teach, explain and model holiness to others.

Now purity does not come easily for anyone, especially leaders. Satan attacks and tempts God's righteous leaders in various ways (Job 1-2, Matthew 4:1-11, Luke 22:31). We will look more at Satan and how to overcome his tactics in our next Lesson on Spiritual Warfare. But for now we are focusing on our responsibility. For when you and I stand before God (1 Peter 1:17-19), you and I alone will be held accountable for how we lived our life. The truth is: the devil is not an excuse for sloppy and impure living.

In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.
^{NIV} Hebrews 12:4

Read Hebrews 12:4 and answer questions 1-2.

1. Do Christians struggle against sin? Yes No (Circle one)

Yes, the Bible says in your struggle, not if you struggle. All Christians have to fight back against some kind of sin. Weaknesses vary from person to person but everyone will have to resist with great effort the extreme desire to satisfy the self. He is a hungry and insatiable tyrant.

2. How stringently (rigorously) should you fight back against sin in your life?

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By saying “shedding your blood” the author of Hebrews is saying that we are to resist sin to the point of death. Remember that believers at this time were being severely persecuted and life was difficult. They were told not to give in to the worldly way of life but to fight back, even to death.

Their Leadership Model and ours, the Lord Jesus, fought back against sin to death. His struggle, with tears and blood in the Garden of Gethsemane was real (Matthew 26:38-39). Jesus, the eternal victor, won the fight and died on the cross rather than turn from His sacred responsibility.

As a leader it is important to understand why Christians have not lost the inclination to sin and how much of a struggle it can be. You will not only be fighting your own battles with sin but helping others to fight theirs. Knowing the truth of Scripture will keep you and others from feeling fatally flawed i.e. “what is wrong with me?”

After we are born again in Christ we are a new creation. Our sins are forgiven and we have God’s Spirit to lead us in all righteousness. We clearly have the ability to do what is right (Romans 6:11-14) but we do sin (1 John 1:8).

God does not take away our human nature and our ability to choose between good and evil (Romans 6:19). We still have free will and we still have Satan and his followers who prowl around looking for someone to devour (1 Peter 5:8). In our natural body, we will always be tempted to put ourselves, our comfort and our own satisfaction above others. Plus we continue to live in a fallen and corrupted world which can cause havoc (chaos) in our journey with Christ.

Jesus, by His Spirit lives within believers and helps us resist temptation like He did (Matthew 4:1-11). We need to allow Jesus to take over and work through us (Philippians 4:13). Once we are saved we should begin the process called sanctification. It means that we begin to grow in holiness and purity (Hebrews 12:14-15, 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8). We become more and more like Christ, taking on the very character of God.

*Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind.
² Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation,
³ now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.* ^{NIV} 1 Peter 2:1-3

3. From 1 Peter 2:1-3 list some ways that you can show God that you appreciate your salvation?

*As you come to him, the living Stone-- rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him--
⁵ you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood,
offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.* ^{NIV} 1 Peter 2:4-5

Read 1 Peter 2:4-5 and answer questions 4-6.

4. What kind of priesthood do you belong to? _____

5. What spiritual sacrifices will you offer to God through Jesus Christ? _____

6. What are some ways that you will help your 'sheep' become a holy priesthood offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ? _____

The apostle Peter told us in 1 Peter 2:2 that we need to grow up in our salvation. In order to grow up in our salvation Christians must choose habits for holy living. The way of pure living is in the Bible. As a leader, encouraging others to be engaged by God's Word is essential.

Now growing up means starting on the small things (Matthew 25:21). If we indulge ourselves on seemingly minor things, we won't be able to handle the larger issues that come our way. I was sharing the salvation message with someone who professed to believe in Christ. He said I would die for Jesus. But he had never given his life to Christ. When I asked him why he wouldn't make this profession of faith he told me that he was living with a girlfriend. He knew it was wrong but said he wouldn't give this up for God. If this sinner will not give up his sexual activity for God, he most certainly won't shed his blood for the King.

Personal Application: Think about some of your personal habits such as eating, drinking, reading, daydreaming, listening and looking. For example, is your eating habit one of over-indulgence or moderate-nourishment for your body? Pray and ask God to help you purify these habits so that your living and leading are synonymous (identical). Remember, make every effort to get rid of all impurities.

(This is a personal exercise and does not call for written answers. However, if you need prayer for a certain stronghold, please make a note and your 'letter minister' will pray for you.)

Lesson 12: The Leader's Fire of Holiness (Day Five) Turn, Fix and Focus

Author and Composer, Helen H. Lemmel, 1864-1961 relates that one day, in 1918, a missionary friend gave her a tract entitled *Focused*. The pamphlet contained these words: "So then, turn your eyes upon Him, look full into His face and you will find that the things of earth will acquire a strange new dimness."

These words made a deep impression upon Helen. She could not dismiss them from her mind. She recalls this experience following the reading of that tract: "Suddenly, as if commanded to stop and listen, I stood still, and singing in my soul and spirit was the chorus, with not one conscious moment of putting word to word to make rhyme, or note to note to make melody. The verses were written the same week, after the usual manner of composition, but none the less dictated by the Holy Spirit."

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Born in Wardle, England, Helen was the daughter of a Wesleyan Methodist pastor, and she came to this country with her family at the age of twelve. In addition to being known as a brilliant singer and musician, Mrs. Lemmel was also widely recognized as a woman with remarkable literary ability. She wrote more than five hundred hymns and poems. She remained active for God in her musical and literary pursuits, until her home-going at the age of ninety-seven.¹³

Personal Application:

Read or sing the following hymn by Helen. (If you don't know the melody to this worship song, research to hear it; it is worth the effort.) Think about the words and what meaning they have for you in pursuing holiness.

Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

O soul, are you weary and troubled?
No light in the darkness you see?
There's a light for a look at the Savior,
And life more abundant and free!

Refrain

*Turn your eyes upon Jesus,
Look full in His wonderful face,
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim,
In the light of His glory and grace.*

Through death into life everlasting
He passed, and we follow Him there;
Over us sin no more hath dominion—
For more than conquerors we are!

Refrain

His Word shall not fail you—He promised;
Believe Him, and all will be well:
Then go to a world that is dying,
His perfect salvation to tell!

Refrain

How does this hymn encourage your pursuit of holy living? _____

¹³ The Old Time Gospel Ministry website, 1999.

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How does this hymn encourage you to lead others in pure actions? _____

Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.³ Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.^{NIV} Hebrews 12:2-3

Some of the best and timeless hymns are those that repeat the words of Scripture. When you read Hebrews 12:2-3, you can't help but think of turning your eyes upon Jesus and looking full in His wonderful face and knowing that the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace. Read Hebrews 12:2-3 and answer the following questions:

1. What does fix your eyes on Jesus mean to you? _____

2. Do you fix your eyes upon Jesus? Yes No Sometimes (Circle One) Why or Why Not?

3. What are some ways that you can help others to fix their eyes upon Jesus? _____

Among its various meanings, The Oxford American Dictionary defines fix as to fasten firmly and to direct (the eyes or attention) steadily toward something. This is the meaning of the Greek word aphorao (ἀφοράω), translated fix. It means to direct one's attention without distraction.¹⁴

Striving for holiness in an unholy world can be wearisome. Not only can you grow weary of doing good yourself, but you may grow weary of seeing your 'sheep' live impure lives. You may put time and effort into others only to see them make poor choices or stray altogether.

Jesus had the same problem with His disciples. They were not perfect and were often slow to understand (Matthew 20:24-28, Luke 24:25 Matthew 16:6-9). Judas, one of the original twelve, betrayed Jesus altogether after an intense three year program of love and compassion. But Jesus persevered and made the remaining eleven disciples champions in God's Kingdom. Be encouraged, He will do the same for you and those He has entrusted to you.

If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you.²⁰ Remember the words I spoke to you: 'No servant is greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will

¹⁴ Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed., edited Frederick William Danker (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000).

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persecute you also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also.²¹ They will treat you this way because of my name, for they do not know the One who sent me.^{NIV} John 15:19-21

4. According to John 15:19-21, will the world honor you for your pure life and devotion to good works in Christ? Yes No Maybe (Circle One) Why or why not? _____

5. Humanly speaking, is it easier to join with sinners and be one of the gang, or separate yourself and stand with Christ (& persecution)? _____

Why? _____

Don't ever let anyone fool you into thinking that following Christ and striving for holiness is a weak condition. There is nothing that reveals strength like that of standing with God in the face of ridicule, shame and the threat of physical harm. That is one of the reasons that early Christianity won over scores of their persecutors. They were amazed at men, women and youth standing firmly in the arena waiting for the lions or some other dangerous creature to enter and consume them.

These martyrs never saw the earthly results of their devotion to Christ, but they most certainly will at the judgment seat. They followed their Leader into death. Christ died on the cross in strength and power, the strength and power to face evil and overcome it. *And when the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus, heard his cry and saw how he died, he said, "Surely this man was the Son of God!"*^{NIV} Mark 15:39

The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified."⁶ He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay.⁷ Then go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you."⁸ So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples.⁹ Suddenly Jesus met them. "Greetings," he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him."^{NIV} Matthew 28:5-9

6. Read Matthew 28:5-9. After Jesus died on the cross, did He remain dead in the grave?

Jesus was raised from the dead proving He is God's holy, powerful and living Son. We serve a living God who made us in His image. His image is holy. We have a responsibility to understand God's holiness and to make sure that our lives fully reflect His sacred image.

Next: Lesson 13: Spiritual Warfare

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