

Introduction:

- How many of you want to see the Lord? Well, here is how it is done: *"In every relationship be swift to choose peace over competition, and run swiftly toward holiness, for those who are not holy will not see the Lord."* (Hebrews 12:14, TPT) Another translation says, *"Pursue holiness without which no one will see the Lord."*
- Last week:
 - The holiness of God is; Terrifying, threatening, scary-wonderful, captivating and humbling.
 - God is holy and He wants us to be holy.
 - Holiness is not a list of dos and don'ts. It is us simply being in the presence of a holy God...and 'freaking out' over how holy He is and how unholy we are!
- A little boy excitedly told his mom that he had just MEASURED HIMSELF and he was six feet tall! The mom smiled at his insight and she asked him to measure himself again while she watched. She discovered the problem when the boy took out not a 12-inch, but a 6-inch ruler. He had calculated well: he was six-ruler-heights tall - he just had the wrong ruler, the wrong standard of measure.
 - When it comes to holiness, many in the body of Christ have the wrong tool of measurement. And they are not sure which one to use. The Pharisees of scripture were like that little boy.
 - Of all the things about God that are hard for us to focus on perhaps the most difficult is His holiness. Holiness is one of those uncomfortable attributes because it reminds us how much unlike God we are.
- This morning I want to help you to use the right 'tools' of measurement when it come to holiness. If you do not use the right tool of measurement you can become very defeated, spiritually dry, and destructive in your faith. I want us to look at the call to holiness, the starting place of holiness and the practical measures of holiness.

I. The Call To Holiness

- A. Our heavenly Father, in the scriptures, call us to holiness. As we saw last week, He calls us to holiness because it is important to Him. And it is important to us if we want to see God, Heb 12:14. God does not suggest that we be holy...God commands us to be holy. Being holy is no small subject in the Word of God.
1. *"So set yourselves apart to be holy, for I am the Lord your God."* (Leviticus 20:7, NLT) The priests had to be holy. They were set apart from the rest of the tribes. They had to be even 'more holy' in their expression so that all Israel would remember who they are.
 2. *"For I am the Lord your God. You must consecrate yourselves and be holy, because I am holy..."* (Leviticus 11:44, NLT) Being holy is a choice.

3. *"But now you must be holy in everything you do, just as God who chose you is holy."* (1 Peter 1:15, NLT) Chose: means to be summoned! Summoned to be holy!
 4. *"Even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes."* (Ephesians 1:4, NLT)
 5. *"You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."* (Matthew 5:48, ESV)
- B. What you are called to shapes your life. It sets the trajectory for your life. And the more focused you become, the ever closer to the mark of His calling you find yourself.
1. IE. Some of you sitting here were called to be engineers. Kelly was called to be a nurse. It started with a desire. The desire brought about planning. The desire and planning took her into learning and preparation for nursing; which into the field of nursing, and from there, into Critical Care Nursing.
 2. What you are called to shapes your life. When you were born again, Jesus became Lord of your life and you began hearing Him call you to be holy. There were some things you had to leave behind in your former life. The call to be holy like Jesus is holy, began to be a part of your thought processes.
- C. Holiness is important to God. It is who He is—Holy.
1. And everything associated with Him must be holy. If you have chosen Christ and became a believer you are now called to be holy. Ie. Abihu, Nadab, Ananias & Sapphira.
 2. I know that statement makes some of you nervous. But, it should cause us all to celebrate! This is the direction that we all are going as members of His body. We are on the same team! Called to be holy.
 3. What you are called to shapes your life.
 - a) Old Hymn: Called Unto Holiness

*"Called unto holiness," church of our God,
Purchase of Jesus, redeemed by His blood;
Called from the world and its idols to flee,
Called from the bondage of sin to be free.*

*Refrain: "Holiness unto the Lord" is our watchword and song
"Holiness unto the Lord" as we're marching along;
Sing it, shout it, loud and long,
"Holiness unto the Lord," now and forever.*
 - b) This is not a sad song! It is a happily sung song by a happy, holy people!
 4. Our living holy makes His heart happy. IE. Joseph and Mary lived holy.

II. The Starting Place of Holiness—Is To Be Made Holy. *How can I measure how holy I am or have become?*

- A. The starting place of the measurement of holiness begins with the work of God, in salvation. There is nothing you can do to start the walk of holiness outside of Christ.
1. In Exodus three, when God said to Moses you are standing on holy ground. Take your shoes off! "Was that special ground?" I mean, Moses brought the sheep across that ground yesterday. All you had to do was look around at all the little sheep pellets.
 - a) What made the ground holy?
 - b) God was there! That is what made the ground holy. It could not be holy without God abiding on that ground.
 2. What made Mt. Sinai holy? God was there! Moses set boundaries around it.
 3. What made God's chosen people, the Jews, holy? He chose them as His own.
 - a) They were holy, not because they were morally pure, not because they were perfect but because they belonged to God. Because they belonged to God, they were holy. A man gets born again. He is holy even though he may have a few visible sheep pellets.
- B. The starting place of the measurement of holiness in the believers life is belonging to God. We call it salvation, born again, saved! Cleansed by the blood of the Lamb - made holy!
1. *"So now Jesus and the ones he makes holy have the same Father. That is why Jesus is not ashamed to call them his brothers and sisters." (Hebrews 2:11, NLT)*
 2. *"For God's will was for us to be made holy by the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ, once for all time." (Hebrews 10:10, NLT)*
 3. *"For **God saved us and called us to live a holy life.** He did this, not because we deserved it, but because that was his plan from before the beginning of time—to show us his grace through Christ Jesus." (2 Timothy 1:9, NLT)*
 4. *"without fault in his eyes."* (Ephesians 1:4, NLT) without fault in His eyes can only be accomplished by faith in Christ. By faith we bear the righteousness of Christ.
 5. When we get saved, God now occupies our hearts! We are new creations with God abiding on our inside and because of that we are called holy, set apart to Him.
- C. The next measurement of holiness is found in the Baptism with the Holy Spirit.
1. In Acts, the disciples believed, were baptized in water and next they received the Holy Spirit went everywhere preaching. There was a fire and a zeal to be a witness...in word, deed, and character. Representatives/ambassadors of Christ.
 2. Mt 3:11 To be baptized with the Holy Spirit and fire is a second work of God where the believer is immersed into the Holy Spirit and fire of God. It is a work that Jesus does.

3. Both salvation and baptism in the Holy Spirit are works of God. You can only get salvation and cleansing by faith in what Christ has done. He becomes Lord and this lead us to...

III. Living Out Holiness A holy life comes out of a holy heart not a holy list. Actions that express the heart. Our actions become measurable before God.

- A. We want to live holy before God, not according to a list of behaviors but according the Presence of God in a changed heart. Having the presence of God abiding in us, the Temple of the Holy Spirit, should altar the way we live simply by having Him in our heart.
 1. The Pharisees were considered holy men but compared to Jesus they were nothing.
 2. What accounts for the difference? Why was Jesus holy and the Pharisees unclean?
 3. It came down to being a heart issue. Jesus loved like no other person could love. The Pharisees failed at this over and over. So having a heart that is made new with the presence is how can I measure how I am doing in living holy before God.
- B. Number one: Do the two commands of God very well. Love God and Love people.
 1. Love well and you live the sum of the law and prophets and you will be an amazing expression of holiness.
 2. *"Jesus answered him, ' Love the Lord your God with every passion of your heart, with all the energy of your being, and with every thought that is within you.' This is the great and supreme commandment. And the second is like it in importance: You must love your friend in the same way you love yourself.' Contained within these commandments to love you will find all the meaning of the Law and the Prophets."* (Matthew 22:37-40, TPT)
 3. Don't hate is good but love you enemies is better. Mt 5:43-44
- C. Number two: Think like God by pursuing the Word.
 1. *"Beloved friends, what should be our proper response to God's marvelous mercies? (having been saved) I encourage you to surrender yourselves to God to be his sacred, living sacrifices. And live in holiness, experiencing all that delights his heart. For this becomes your genuine expression of worship. Stop imitating the ideals and opinions of the culture around you, but be inwardly transformed by the Holy Spirit through a total reformation of how you think. This will empower you to discern God's will as you live a beautiful life, satisfying and perfect in his eyes."* (Romans 12:1-2, TPT)
 2. The Word is where we are to get out do's and don'ts. The Word of God is holy therefore when we read it we are confronted with and conformed to His holiness.
- D. Number three: Work at being holy.

1. *"If you keep yourself pure, you will be a special utensil for honorable use. Your life will be clean, and you will be ready for the Master to use you for every good work."* (2 Timothy 2:21, NLT)
2. *"And all who have this eager expectation will keep themselves pure, just as he is pure."* (1 John 3:3, NLT)
3. *"Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord."* (Hebrews 12:14, ESV) Strive - Gr. διωκο -to follow zealously, to run after, to attach ones self to...peace and holiness. In other words put effort into being holy.
4. Check the lists in God's word. Get rid of the things that He says get rid of and embrace the things He says to run after.
 - a) Ten commands
 - b) Eph 4:31-5:13
 - c) Col 3:5-ff
 - d) Gal 5:22-23 Fruit of the Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit is limitless.
5. Make no provision/excuses/ opportunities for the flesh. *"But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires."* (Romans 13:14, ESV)

Conclusion:

- We are called to be holy. And living holy means using a right measure to start with.
 - Have you answered the call to be holy?
 - Do you need to be more intentional about living holy.
 - Those who pursue holiness will see God. It is worth the effort.
- *"Now may the God of peace make you holy in every way, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ comes again."* (1 Thessalonians 5:23, NLT)