



## HOLINESS

**Finally, Holiness — Twenty-two accessible points, that may well require twenty-two individual days of personal reflection.**

**1. Holiness begins with God, not human effort.**

Holiness is first about who God is: utterly pure, utterly loving, utterly consistent. All Christian holiness is a response to His character. We pursue holiness because discipleship involves continually pursuing Him. Jeremiah 29:13

**2. Holiness is both a *gift* and *calling*.**

In Christ we are already “saints”—set apart (1 Peter 2:9). Yet Scripture also urges us to “be holy.” Holiness is received in justification, increasingly expressed through sanctification, and completed in glorification. Holiness is nurtured by allowing the Holy Spirit to work within us. John 14:15-18

**3. Holiness flows from intimacy, not legalism.**

Rules can restrain, but only relationship transforms. The more we behold Jesus, the more we become like Him (2 Corinthians 3:18). The Spirit changes us from the inside out, not from the outside in.

**4. Holiness is not perfectionism.**

Pursuing perfectionism leads to shame, failure and disillusionment; pursuing holiness leads to freedom and increased faith. Biblical holiness is a steady direction, not a flawless performance. It’s walking in the Light, confessing quickly, and getting up again. 1 John 1:7

**5. Holiness is practical, embodied everyday life.**

It shapes how we speak, treat others, use money, rest, work, and forgive. Holiness is seen most clearly in our everyday patterns of faithfulness, humility, and self-control.

**6. Holiness is empowered by the Holy Spirit.**

The Holy Spirit produces the fruit of holiness—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Holiness is not a self-manufactured character; it is Spirit-formed Christlikeness. Galatians 5:22-25

**7. Holiness is impossible without new desires.**

God doesn’t just tell us to avoid sin; He gives us new appetites. Transformation happens when

the Spirit changes what we love, not just what we avoid. Re-examine Psalm 37:4, to see how God is changing the content of your heart rather than answering its every whim. Philippians 4:8

**8. Holiness is a community project.**

No one becomes holy in total isolation. We need accountability, encouragement, correction, and example. Holiness is nurtured in church relationships, disciplines, worship, and mission. Hebrews 10:24-25

**9. Holiness contains both purity and power.**

Paul's instructions to Timothy to fan into flame, love, power and self-restraint (2 Timothy 1:6-7). Biblical spirituality reminds us that holiness is not merely moral restraint but a purity in our spiritual authority. A holy life carries weight—the credibility to speak, pray, and minister with integrity. Acts 19:13-16

**10. Holiness protects the anointing.**

The Spirit's gifts (*charismata*, coming from 'grace') can operate through anyone, whereas holiness determines long-term fruitfulness. Character sustains what gifting initiates. Without holiness, gifting becomes dangerous rather than life-giving.

**11. Holiness includes our inner world.**

Thought life, motives, hidden attitudes, secret choices—holiness starts where no one sees. The Spirit searches our hearts, not to condemn, but to heal. Psalm 51:10-12

**12. Holiness produces compassion, not superiority.**

The truly holy person becomes more patient with others, not harsher. Holiness makes us gracious, gentle, and approachable, not judgmental. Matthew 9:36

**13. Holiness loves what God loves.**

It is not merely avoiding sin but pursuing goodness. Holiness finds joy in obedience, beauty in truth, and delight in righteousness. Psalm 19:7-14

**14. Holiness includes repentance<sup>1</sup> as a lifestyle.**

Repentance is not a one-off event but a continuous turning toward God with the renewing of our mind. Quick repentance keeps the heart soft and the conscience clear.

**15. Holiness is joyful, not dour.**

There is nothing more liberating than a clean conscience and a heart aligned with God. Holiness leads to joy, confidence, and peace – not misery or self-condemnation.

**16. Holiness grows through spiritual rhythms.**

Scripture, prayer, fasting, Sabbath<sup>2</sup>, worship, confession, and community all form us. These practices train desire, strengthen self-control, and keep us attuned to the Spirit.

**17. Holiness stands firm in spiritual battle.**

The enemy's aim is always to erode holiness. The armour of God—truth, righteousness, faith, salvation, God's Spirit-inspired words, prayer – protects and fortifies the soul. Ephesians 6:10-18

**18. Holiness requires boundaries.**

Healthy limits around relationships, habits, and environments safeguard purity. Wise boundaries are not legalism; they are Spirit-infused common-sense.

**19. Holiness is countercultural.**

Following Jesus means resisting the shaping pressures of the age. Holiness is sometimes costly—socially, relationally, vocationally – but always worth it. Romans 12:2

**20. Holiness reveals Jesus to the world.**

A holy life shines. It makes the gospel believable. It demonstrates the reality of God's transforming power. Holiness is mission. 1 Peter 2:12 and Colossians 4:6.

**21. Holiness is the Spirit's lifelong work.**

No shortcuts. No instant results. It's the key difference in Paul's metaphor between gifts (graciously given) and the fruit (that needs cultivating) of God's character. Holiness involves steady and radiant transformation (2 Corinthians 3:18). The Spirit forms Christ in us – slowly, deeply, beautifully.

**22. Holiness is the believer's greatest freedom.**

Far from being restrictive, it liberates us to be fully alive, fully human, and fully aligned with the purpose God intended. Holiness is not a burden – it is the Spirit's gift of becoming who we were created to be. Galatians 5:1

**Further Reading**

The call of holiness has led many Christian authors to contribute to the subject. I'm not going to offer any recommendations, as these books can easily (though often unintentionally) make the reader slip into despondency and acts of religiosity. Therefore, as a Christian, deliberately choose holiness and the pursuit of God over and above life's distractions. Meditate on Hebrews 12:1-3, embracing *every* aspect of the writer's encouragements and instructions.

<sup>1</sup> The concept of repentance has almost become exclusively a piece of Christian jargon regarding saying sorry for our moral failings. Though there's nothing wrong with that! The actual word carries the sense of changing your mind (Romans 12:2). Therefore, pragmatically, re-thinking through your sin, its origins, the (demonic) deception you're being held captive to, will produce far more effective results in regard to true repentance, than saying, "Oops, I've done it again, sorry."

<sup>2</sup> 'fasting, Sabbath', the Sabbath rest is one of the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20), though the concept first appears in Genesis 2:2 as part of the positive conclusion to the creation narrative and is re-visited in more spiritual terms in Hebrews 4. Modern believers interpret the sabbath in a number of creative ways, either literally applied to a Sunday, or some alternative day of the week, or less legally as a heavily guarded family time or the weekly culmination of frequent shorter intervals based around prayer and meditations. Modern forms of fasting seek to remove a daily routine in order to invest more time in God's direct presence. This can always include meals, though increasingly in the 21<sup>st</sup> century involves reducing screen time and limiting or removing yourself from social media.