

DNA of a Christ Follower

Small Group Resources

Lesson 3: Holy

Opener:

Did you ever see yourself as different from others when you were younger? If so, how?
or

In what ways are you the same as or different from your parents?

Open in prayer.

You can ask someone else to open in prayer if you know they are comfortable doing so. Ideally ask them ahead of time.

Read 1 Peter 1.13-16

Verse 13 talks about Jesus' return; 14-16 talk about holiness.

What relationship is there between focusing on Jesus' return and personal holiness?

What is your current understanding of the meaning of "holy" or "holiness"?

What would it mean to "be holy in all you do"?

What is the reason given for us to be holy in verses 15-16?

Is that a compelling reason? Why or why not?

The first aspect of holiness was described in this way: When we receive Jesus Christ as our saviour, God sets us apart to and for himself.

What exactly has God set you apart for? (biblically)

[Have people share a bit, then go to Ephesians 1.3-14 and read it if necessary to round out the list of what God has set us apart for.]

How does the truth that from the point of your salvation God has set you apart for his purposes begin to affect your actual conduct? Your plans? Your dreams?

The second aspect of holiness was described this way: **When we offer ourselves to God for his service, we are endorsing his declaration of our holiness and setting ourselves apart to and for him.**

Read Romans 12.1-2

What does it mean to offer your body as a living sacrifice?

Note: This is written to Christians, the implication being some of have not.

The research cited in the sermon said 80% of Christians have not done this.

Does that sound accurate to you? Explain.

[If you want to put your group on the spot ask: Have you done that?]

[Or ask, if you have done that, please share your experience of coming to that place.]

The third aspect of holiness is described in this way:

When my behaviour increasingly reflects my set apartness, I am growing in holiness.

In what visible, concrete ways have you grown in holiness since coming to faith in Jesus?

- What if any changes did he make in you immediately when you were saved?
- What are some things that seem to be taking some time?

[Leaders: You can move to close here, or you can delve into this temptation section first, which is below.]

Prayer:

Invite people to share needs in relation holiness, whether offering themselves unreservedly to God as in Romans 12, or in overcoming specific areas of unholiness.

Part of growing in holiness is learning to recognize and overcome temptation.

For progress and growth in practical holiness, in our conduct, we need to understand that a big part of that growth comes from growth in victory over temptation and sin. And to gain that victory, in addition to tapping the holiness and power of Christ himself thru the Holy Spirit, it is helpful to understand out personal temptation and sin patterns.

This has been a revolutionary concept for me (Daren).

(With thanks to Bruce Wilkinson, Personal Holiness in Times of Temptation)

Every Christian has an area or areas where they must fight the fight for holiness in an ongoing way. Some things God delivers us from instantly, but there are other specific temptations that seem to stick around. It has nothing to do with spiritual maturity- even Jesus was tempted.

If you think about it, you will discover that there is a very clear pattern to the recurring temptations you face. And when you reverse engineer the patterns of temptation that you face, especially temptations that lead you to sin, you actually uncover Satan's strategy to take you out.

And once you know the enemy's strategy you can take counter measures.

Write down or mentally note your answers to these questions:

- What is the primary area of struggle for you in personal holiness? I.e.: what is the temptation you face that most often leads you to sin?
- Is there a day of the week in which you most often are tempted in that way and then give into that temptation?
- Is there a time of day in which you are most often tempted in that way and then give into temptation?
- When you commit that sin are you alone or with someone else?
- When you commit that sin, where are you?
- Just before you sin, how do you feel? What is the lack in your heart, what is the need you are trying to fill with that sin? (egs: loneliness, emptiness, boredom, fatigue, down, depressed)

Do you see how the enemy is tripping you up? Once you see the pattern you can break the pattern, you can take counter measures.

One of the things you can do to break the pattern is let someone else know. A common trait of those who break free and gain victory from recurring sin is confession and accountability.

James 5.16

Fasting and prayer about that sin is another powerful countermeasure.

Changing your personal patterns to keep you from those places and contexts and inner states where you sin will also do wonders. > like Joseph are you prepared to drop everything and run?

As Martin Luther supposedly said "Those whose heads are made of butter shouldn't sit close to the fire."

We also need to wake up and understand that we will never gain victory by ourselves; we need both the Spirit of God and the body of Christ. The oldest military strategy in the world is divide and conquer so you can bet the enemy of your soul employs it often and successfully. And if you are floundering in unholy living, recurring sin, my guess is he has used it, is using it on you.