

8. HOLINESS IS YOUR BEAUTY

COMMENTS ON THE LESSON

This lesson is designed to point out that a follower of Jesus should live a holy life. The lesson is also an attempt to describe what holiness is like and to show how beautiful a holy life can be.

EXPLANATION OF TERMS

FOLLOWER OF JESUS: someone who loves Jesus and who tries to follow His example.

HOLINESS: the way God is.

JAMES: a letter in the New Testament that was written by a disciple named James.

PHARISEES: a religious sect of the Jews.

SCRIBES: people who studied the Old Testament in the Hebrew language and who wrote copies of the Old Testament by hand.

SYNAGOGUES: houses in which the Jews read the ancient Hebrew scriptures and prayed.

HOLINESS IS YOUR BEAUTY

What is a holy person like? He is like Jesus, who was the most holy person that ever lived.

THE HOLINESS OF JESUS

Jesus' holiness was genuine, not artificial. He wore no special clothing to indicate that He was a holy person. He knew that special clothing does not make a person holy, for He knew that holiness is a matter of the heart. For that reason, Jesus wanted people to be clean on the inside so that everything they said and did would be holy. Jesus had harsh words for the scribes and Pharisees of His day. He said,

“Blind guides, who strain out a gnat
and swallow a camel!
Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees,
hypocrites!
For you cleanse
the outside of the cup and dish,
but inside they are full of
extortion and self-indulgence.
Blind Pharisee,
first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish,
that the outside of them may be clean also.”
Matthew 23:24-26

Jesus observed people standing on the street corners and praying in public. They appeared to be holy, but Jesus knew that they were praying only so that people would see

them and admire them. Perhaps, you have observed people who say prayers in public so that people will think they are holy. Such outward display of piety is not what Jesus desires. Concerning this Jesus said,

“And when you pray,
you shall not be like the hypocrites.
For they love to pray
standing in the synagogues
and on the corners of the streets,
that they may be seen by men.
Assuredly, I say to you,
they have their reward.”

Matthew 6:5

Jesus' holiness was as natural to Him as was His breathing. His holiness did not seem to be a burden to Him. He was not sad, except in those last few hours when He was facing death. He did not disfigure His face or mutilate His body.

Jesus was not a recluse. He did not go away to be by Himself, other than for a few hours at a time. He associated with people, so He could help them and teach them.

WHAT HAPPENS TO A PERSON THAT COMES
UNDER JESUS' INFLUENCE?

Let us look at some of the changes that take place in the life of a person that comes under the influence of Jesus.

HE DOES NOT WORRY

God does not want anyone to be worried about what he is going to eat or drink, or about what he is going to wear (Matthew 6:25). Instead of worrying, God wants everyone to pray to Him and to ask for things he needs (Matthew 7:7-8). When a person does this, he shows that he trusts God.

If a person trusts God, he will not feel compelled to lay up a treasure on earth (Matthew 6:26-32). He knows that, come what may, His Father will provide.

HE SPEAKS DIFFERENTLY

One of the first things people notice about a person that comes under the influence of Jesus is a change in the way that person speaks. He speaks differently, because his heart has been changed (Matthew 12:34). He does not get angry as easily as he did before. He does not use abusive words like he previously did. No longer does he make harsh judgments against people (Matthew 5:22). His speech has become more palatable (Colossians 4:6). He speaks words which build people up rather than words that tear people down (Ephesians 4:29). This change is so dramatic that his friends and family notice it right away.

HE HIGHLY ESTEEMS MARRIAGE

A true Christian holds marriage to be holy (Hebrews 13:4). When he gets married, it is for life (Matthew 19:6). He knows that God hates divorce (Malachi 2:16). A follower of Christ will choose a marriage partner who is also a believer (1 Corinthians 7:39), because he knows that this will increase the likelihood that his marriage will work well. He also knows that he will be more successful at living the Christian life if his partner is a believer, than if his partner is not (2 Corinthians 6:14).

HE PRACTICES SEXUAL PURITY

A person that falls under the influence of Jesus will practice sexual purity. The sexual sins that he may have committed before becoming a Christian will stop (Ephesians 5:3). He will try to keep his body holy, because his body is a temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19). God wants His people to be holy (1 Thessalonians 4:3-4), because He is holy (1 Peter 1:15-16).

Therefore, a Christians should not live like other people live, who do not know God (1 Thessalonians 4:5); for unless sexual sins are forgiven a person, God will avenge them (1 Thessalonians 4:6).

HE VALUES WORK

Jesus had the kind of physical health that comes from hard work. Work is both necessary and honorable (1 Thessalonians 4:9-12) and God wants His people to work. Jesus may have been a carpenter (Mark 6:3). Trusting in

God does not excuse a person from working (2 Thessalonians 3:6-10). Work does not lower a person in God's eyes, laziness does. A holy life is not a life of inactivity. Honest labor is compatible with holiness.

God wants His people to work so that they will not become a burden to other people (Galatians 6:5) and so they will have something to give to needy people (Ephesians 4:28). God expects His people, not only to keep themselves unspotted from the world, but also to look after orphans and widows (James 1:27). How beautiful it is when someone gives to others secretly (Matthew 6:2-4)!

HE DOES ALL THE GOOD HE CAN

A Christian tries to do good to everyone with whom he comes in contact (Galatians 6:10). He treats others as he would like to be treated himself (Luke 6:31). He even does good things to those that hate him (Luke 6:27 and Romans 12:20).

HE DOES NOT AVENGE HIMSELF

A Christian agrees with his adversaries quickly (Matthew 5:25). He does not resist people that do bad things to him (Matthew 5:39). He leaves it to God to punish people that do wrong (Romans 12:19). He forgives offenses that are done against him personally (Luke 17:3-4), and he seeks peace (Matthew 5:9).

HE IS HONEST IN BUSINESS

A true Christian deals honestly with all men (Romans 12:17). He is reliable in business. He does not take advantage of others (Philippians 2:4). He does not cheat, steal (Ephesians 4:28), or take bribes. He pays his taxes (Romans 13:6-7) and obeys the laws of the land in which he lives (1 Peter 2:13-14).

HE BECOMES A BETTER MEMBER OF SOCIETY

Being holy does not take a person out of society. Rather, it makes him a more valuable member of society. A holy person is like salt: His presence adds flavor to society (Matthew 5:13).

HE BECOMES A MORE LOVING PERSON

One of the most endearing attributes of a Christian is his ability to love. His love is one of the fruits which the Holy Spirit bears in his heart (Galatians 5:22).

A Christian loves his family. He also loves his friends. He even loves his enemies (Matthew 5:44), and he will never stop loving (1 Corinthians 13:8).

The love that a Christian has in his heart helps him to behave properly (1 Corinthians 13:5). He does not seek his own advantage, he is not easily provoked, nor does he think evil of others (1 Corinthians 13:5). He does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth (1 Corinthians 13:6). He conducts himself in this way, because God is a loving God (1 John 4:8). If God did not love, His holiness might seem harsh and unapproachable. As it is, His love is attractive

and warming. He loves His people and wants them to love others.

PEOPLE ARE WATCHING

People are always watching a Christian to see if he is living up to what he professes. People know that Jesus' moral standards are very high. They are also not sure that anyone can live up to them. If, however, a Christian shows that it is possible, with God's help, to do what Jesus taught, he makes Jesus' teaching more attractive. Thus, he adorns the doctrine (Titus 2:10).

A follower of Jesus is the light of the world (Matthew 5:16). If he walks as a child of the light (Ephesians 5:8), he will find favor, not only in the eyes of God but also in the eyes of people (Acts 2:47).

WORKSHEETS

After you have read this lesson and have looked up all the references in the Bible, please read the following sentences. As you read, please pay attention to whether or not these statements are true. If you decide a particular statement is true, please write “T” before it. If you decide a statement is false, please write “F” before it.

- _____1. People could tell that Jesus was a holy person by the clothes He wore.
- _____2. Jesus spent most of His time on a mountain by Himself.
- _____3. God will avenge sexual sins, if people do not repent of them and leave them.
- _____4. God hates divorce.
- _____5. God wants you to worry about what you are going to eat, drink, and wear.
- _____6. The more holy a person is, the less work he does.
- _____7. A Christian should obey the laws of the land in which he lives.
- _____8. Jesus taught us to treat others, as we ourselves would prefer to be treated.
- _____9. It is permissible to hate our enemies, as long as

we love our friends.

____ 10. When we live up to Jesus' teaching about morals,
we make His teaching more attractive to others.

Please, complete the following scriptures with the help
of the New King James Version of the Bible.

Matthew 6:25

“Therefore I say to you, do not _____ about your life,
what you will _____ or what you will _____; nor about
your body, what you will _____. Is not life more than
_____ and the body more than _____?”

Luke 6:27-29

“But I say to you who hear: Love your _____, do
good to those who _____ you, _____ those who curse
you, and _____ for those who spitefully use you.
To him who strikes you on the one cheek, _____ the
other also. And from him who takes away your cloak, do
not _____ your _____ either.”

Ephesians 4:29

“Let no _____ proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary _____, that it may impart _____ to the _____.”

James 1:27

“Pure and undefiled _____ before God and the Father is this: to visit _____ and _____ in their trouble, and to keep oneself _____ from the world.”

THOUGHT QUESTIONS: Please, think about the following questions and write a short paragraph about each of them.

1. Why do you think God wants people to live holy lives?
2. What seems to you to be the most beautiful aspect of the Christian life?
3. Would you like to live a holy life? Why?