

Purity

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I. Holiness. (Ephesians 4)

A. A description of the culture - a continual lust for more. (Ephesians 4:19)

1. Similar to what we have today.
2. When the court has to choose between morality and freedom and expression, morality loses out.

B. Paul's insistence on holiness.

1. When this is said, business is meant.
2. Paul wants them to live in another way.
3. Holiness is not an option for the Christians.
 - a. Ephesians was written to ordinary Christians.
 - b. Holiness is to permeate everything that we do.
 - c. Most Christians note that the world is failing and that in comparison they are doing pretty well - this is an improper attitude.
 - d. God wants us to be holy as He is holy.

C. There is a fundamental bedrock change in the life of the one who becomes a Christian.

1. The Ephesians did not come to know Christ in the way they were living.

E. A description and definition of holiness.

1. A putting away of the old way of life.
 - a. The example of a radical culture change.
 - b. There has been a fundamental change in our lives, but we have brought with us in the new kingdom old habits.
 - c. Sin and temptation are deceitful.
2. Being made new in our attitudes.
 - a. We begin to see sin as God does and turn from it.
 - 1) Being saved from sin.

2) Changing our attitude toward sin.

3) Breaking from sin in habit.

b. We may only be made new in the attitude of our minds through the Word of God.

F. Putting on the traits of the new self.

1. It is not enough that we simply put off the old characteristics.

2. God wants us to be like Him.

3. The fruit of the Spirit.

a. We often get so preoccupied with dealing with particular sin that we forget to put on the new self.

4. Holiness is conformity to the character of God. (1 John)

a. God is light.

1) There is not an external standard to which we conform to holiness.

2) God Himself is the standard.

3) Something is holy because it is like God.

b. God is love.

G. Practical application of Paul.

1. Holiness in its outworking is very practical.

a. Stop lying.

b. Stop stealing.

c. Do not let your anger come from a self-motive.

2. Holiness affects our relationships with other people.

a. True holiness will make us a better person in every relationship.

3. Holiness covers every aspect of our lives.

a. We not only to put off sin, but to put on righteousness.

1) From stealing to giving.

2) From unwholesome talk to building others up.

a) You must maintain the joy.

3) From malice to kindness and forgiveness.

4. Holiness results in absolute moral purity.

a. There is not to be even a hint of any kind of impurity.

1) The words are absolute.

2) The only specific sin that is contrasted to holiness is immorality or impurity. (1 Thessalonians 4:3, 7)

a) More than just adultery between a man and a woman.

b) Has to do with lust of the eyes, of the heart, etc.

c) Memorize Job 31:1.

i. Job made a covenant with his eyes.

ii. The tendency was not a sin in itself—he did something about it.

d) 1 Timothy 2:9.

i. God holds girls accountable for their dress.

II. Achieving holiness.

A. Activity in the Word of God.

B. A commitment to holiness. (Hebrews 12:14)

1. Pursue holiness.

a. “Press on.” (Philippians 3:11-12)

b. Athletic imagery.

c. Commitment is written across the face of those verses.

2. We will never pursue holiness without commitment.

C. Avoid the two extremes of self-effort and no effort.

1. In the pursuit of holiness it is important to know what our part is and what God’s part is.

2. You work because God is at work in you. (Philippians 2:12-13)

- a. The fruit of your salvation expressed.
- b. Not self effort but personal responsibility and dependence upon the Spirit of God to enable us.

3. The Christian life is a struggle. (Colossians 1:29)

- a. Paul was conscious of the struggle and of the power of God.
- b. We should not have a problem in joining human responsibility and divine enablement.
- c. The Spirit of God works on us and in us, but almost always with our involvement. We are to be involved in the Christian life.

Application questions.

1. Why is it simply not enough to put off the “old self” as described by the speaker?

2. The speaker says that holiness results in absolute moral purity. Explain this.

3. In order to achieve holiness we are to avoid the two extremes of self-effort and no effort. What does this look like in real life? How will you apply this principle to your own life? Explain.
