

## Striving for Holiness – why does growing in Christ matter?

*“Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God.” (2 Corinthians 7:1)*

### 1. Holiness has to do with sanctification

In Christ...

Positionally, we have been sanctified; set apart; made holy (declared righteous)

Practically, therefore, we are to live holy lives (practice righteousness)

Our **practice** ought to match our **position**

Our position is a result of the gift of God, alone. It speaks of God’s love for us.

Our practice is working out the results (a new heart) of that gift (faith). It speaks of our love for God.

When we come to faith in Christ, our sins and our guilt are removed. “...our hearts are sprinkled clean” and we are cleansed “from an evil conscience.” At the same time, the Holy Spirit begins to change us on the inside... His Spirit cleanses our hearts...the innermost thoughts are desires...

### 2. Holiness has to do with faithfulness and obedience – to be like our Lord Jesus Christ

Holiness is commanded (1 Peter 1:15-16); It is the will of God (1 Thess 4:30; Jn 17:17)

...to be “conformed to the image of His Son” (Romans 8:29) (Mt 5:20)

“Whatever you do... You are serving the Lord Christ.” (Colossians 4:23-24)

### 3. Holiness has to do with worship                      Romans 12:1-2

Holiness is the purpose for which Christ came (Eph 5:25-26; 2 Cor 5:15; Titus 2:14)

### 4. Holiness has to do with the growth of the Body... a progressive work; an imperfect work

### 5. Holiness has to do with our witness                      - evidence                      Hebrews 12:14

Christlikeness is our greatest possible testimony to the world (John 13:35)

True holiness is a reality; it is something in a person that can be seen. It carries weight and influence

Holiness is sound evidence that we have a true faith in Christ (James 2:14-17; Jn 14:15,21,23; 15:14)

True holiness does not consist merely of believing and feeling, but of doing and bearing, and a practical exhibition of active and passive grace. Our tongues, our tempers, our natural passions and inclinations—our conduct as parents & children, masters & servants, husbands & wives, rulers & subjects—our dress, our employment of time, our behavior in business, our demeanor in sickness and health, in riches and in poverty—all, all these are matters which are fully [addressed in the scriptures]. JC Ryle, *Holiness*, 1877.

### 6. For next week, read 1 Pet 4:10-11; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21