

*“This is why I remind you to fan into flames the spiritual gift God gave you when I laid my hands on you.”*

*(2 Timothy 1:6, NLT)*

You and I are called to constantly “*stir up*” (NKJV) the embers and fuel the fire so we will remain a blazing inferno for Jesus

The fact is that when the fuel of any sort is depleted, fire will eventually go out

The biblical pattern of the book of Acts also reveals that we are going to see the results the early Church in the book of Acts experienced we must be...

***People of the Word***

***Steadfast in Prayer***

***Embrace the Movement of the Holy Spirit***

***We Must Burn for Souls***

### **Burning with Praise and Worship**

*“speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,” (Ephesians 5:19–20, NKJV)*

*“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.” (Colossians 3:16, NKJV)*

Since this is commanded in Scripture, we must make it our aim to include every one of these forms of worship in our private and corporate adoration of God

## Burning for Holiness

*“Then Moses said, “I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush does not burn.” So when the LORD saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush and said, “Moses, Moses!” And he said, “Here I am.” Then He said, “Do not draw near this place. Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground.”*

**(Exodus 3:3–5, NKJV)**

- Moses was tending his father-in-law's sheep
- He saw a burning bush that was not consumed by the fire
- He turned aside and he saw a “*great sight*”
- Something that stunned and amazed him

In this hallowed moment, Moses crossed the threshold that separated the natural realm from the realm that God called “*holy*”

- It was so sacred to God that He commanded Moses to take off his shoes
- “*Holy*” – the word used to denote the holiness of God or the holy presence of God
- So holy that no worldly contamination was permitted there

## What is Holiness?

In both the OT and NT the words that are translated holy are some of the most important words in the entire Bible

We need to understand exactly what the word holy means

It can describe something that, even though it was once common, it has now become separated, consecrated, holy, and sacred

- Never again to be used in a common way
- “*Holy*” is in a category that is separate and sacred from other things

*“To all who are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” (Romans 1:7, NKJV)*

- “*Saints*” is a form of the same word for “*Holy*”
- Holy, consecrated, sanctified, and set apart for special use
- Before they came to Christ they were just like any other human being

When the blood of Jesus cleansed them, and the Holy Spirit moved into their hearts, that divine presence set them apart and made them different

- God immediately saw them, as well as you and I in a special, holy light
- Different from unsaved people

When Paul used the word, “*saints*” he was saying that they were called to be holy, called to be different, called to be sanctified, or separate from the rest of the world

*“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.”*

*“For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”*

*(2 Corinthians 5:17, 21 NKJV)*

We as believers may look like other human beings, but we are not like everybody else

Just as the presence of God came down on Mt. Horeb and made it holy, the blood of Jesus and the Holy Spirit have separated and consecrated you and I

- God has set us apart for Himself
- We are the home of the Holy Spirit
- As such, we are holy

We should no longer think or act like the rest of the world

- We are no longer who we once were
- We are new, different, and holy
- We must think differently, talk differently, and act differently

We are declared righteous; we are justified by faith; we are made holy

Now as believers, we must learn to live in a way that reflects who we really are

*“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” (Romans 12:1–2, NKJV)*

When the Roman empire rebuilt the city of Corinth Julius Caesar dedicated it to Aphrodite, the goddess of sex

- The city mushroomed with a thriving sex industry
- There was a constant influx of soldiers and sailors that fueled the prostitution business
- Prostitution became the largest source of income in the city
- Sexual immorality infested every nook and cranny of the city
- Sex was offered everywhere from sporting events to bakeries
- There was no sense of guilt or shame
- It's just the way it was in the pagan world
- Alcohol and mind-altering substances were used in idol worship as a tool to commune with the spirit realm
- Every type of vice was regularly available
- Drugs, sex, alcohol, and idol worship were ramped
- People could do what they pleased with almost no restrictions

Foul language, gross immorality, abundant alcohol, as well as gambling, extortion, and swindling were commonplace

Right smack dab in the middle of all that immorality, the church in Corinth was birthed

In a split second, God deemed former pagans as “*holy*”, instantaneously transferring them into a category that set them apart from everybody else in the city

*“Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.” (1 Corinthians 6:9–11, NKJV)*

## **Fornicators**

- From the Greek word porneia
- Describes all sexual activity outside of marriage
- Including adultery, sex between two single people, and homosexuality
- Can be committed both by someone married or single
- It is from the same Greek word for prostitute
- There is no such thing as a sweet and innocent fling
- In God’s eyes, any sexual activity outside of marriage is an act of prostitution
- Pornography comes from the same word
- This includes meditating on pornographic, writings, graphics, or photos
- God sees this as mental prostitution

And yes, the first century had various forms of pornographic illustrations that would be considered lewd even today

When Paul used this word this is exactly what he had in mind

## **Idolators**

The western world today doesn't generally bow down and worship physical idols; nonetheless, we still deal with idolatry on a multitude of levels

In God's view, anything we give our attention, devotion, and love to above Him is an idol in our lives

Anything that preoccupies our thoughts more than God does, it is an idol, and we have entered into the sin of idolatry

## **Adulterers**

This word specifically refers to people who violate their marital covenant by having sexual relations outside of marriage

In the Roman world, husbands were allowed, even expected, to engage in sexual activity with slaves, prostitutes, and concubines

- The act of adultery, especially for men, was so prevalent that most people didn't even think it was a sin
- New believers regularly violated their marriage vows
- Paul had to tell them that this was no longer acceptable for them

As saints of God, made holy and set apart for His purposes, we need to take a firm stance against adultery, regardless of society's stamp of approval on it

## **Effeminate**

This term specifically describes male prostitutes

- Men who were used by other men for sexual services
- They would often present themselves as women in their dress and affections
- Homosexuality was common among soldiers
- It seemed normal to them

Male prostitution was common practice in ancient Greek and Roman cities and was believed to be acceptable

## **Abusers of Themselves With Mankind**

This term means, “*man lovers*” and pictures “*two men in bed together*”

- The Greek and Roman world did not have a concept for heterosexuals or homosexuals as we do today
- Paul used this word to describe homosexuality that was raging in Greek cities like Corinth

## **Thieves and Covetous**

This word depicts a person who habitually steals or takes financial advantage of others

- A pickpocket or scammer
- Also, describes someone with insatiable greed
- They never seem to get enough
- Many thieves lived in Corinth who were covetous and driven by greed
- Many of them became believers



## **Drunkards**

People who consume large amounts of alcohol for the sake of getting drunk

- A premeditated plan to become completely intoxicated
- When you are inebriated you make careless and often destructive decisions
- You say things and do things you normally wouldn't do
- Often say hurtful or perverted words or do destructive things they later wish they could take back – but they cant

## **Revilers and Extortioners**

- Revilers – individuals who use foul, dirty, uncultured language
- Extortioners – (To seize) a scam artist who would do everything imaginable to seize what belonged to other people – sophisticated thievery

What a list!

The congregation in the church at Corinth is a good sample of the people who attend church every week even today

- We live in a world saturated with sexual sin and other vices that are proliferating all around us

*“in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.*

*But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),”*  
(Ephesians 2:2–5, NKJV)

- God has lavished His mercy and grace upon us in Christ Jesus
- He willingly came to earth to lay down His life to make us righteous
- Moving us out of our former state
- Placing us in a new category, calling us holy
- He sees who we are “*In Christ*”

*“And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.”* (1 Corinthians 6:11, NKJV)

- Washed – to wash thoroughly and completely
- At the moment of redemption, we have been thoroughly and completely washed in the blood of Jesus

Paul then goes on to say that we are “*sanctified*”

By using this word that we have already examined, Paul was saying, “*You may look just like everyone else around you, but you are emphatically not like everyone else. When God washed you, He separated you from your old life, He set you apart. He marked you off for Himself. As a result, you unequivocally are not who you used to be! God has made you Holy.*”

## It's Time to Live up to Our New Status

*“Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body.” (1 Corinthians 6:18, NKJV)*

- Flee – “to run, to flee, or to take flight”
- It means to move your feet as fast as you can to get away from something
- Because of the tense used it conveys the idea of habitual fleeing or a continuous escaping
- Paul is telling believers that we should make a habit of running from sin – especially sexual sin

*“Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.”*

*(1 Corinthians 6:19–20, NKJV)*

- The Holy Spirit has chosen to live on the inside of us
- The Third Person of the Trinity
- He is fully God and utterly Holy
- If for no other reason, we need to “flee” from sin and not drag the Holy Spirit into situations that are contrary to His holiness

*“As we grow in holiness, we grow in hatred of sin; and God, being infinitely holy, has an infinite hatred of sin.”*

– Jerry Bridges, *The Pursuit of Holiness*

If our sin grieves the heart of God it must grieve our hearts as well

- We must flee from sin and pursue that which pleases Him above all else
- Only through this way of life can we experience an ongoing sense of His power and joy in our lives

In fact, holiness and sanctification is the will of the Lord for our lives

*“For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality;” (1 Thessalonians 4:3, NKJV)*

- Paul was simply saying that it is God’s highest will for you to become holy in practice
- That is, your behavior should reflect your status
- We are to behave in a manner that is holy, separate, and different than the lost, unregenerate world that surrounds us

To live this way we must be committed to the premise to not think like the world, talk like the world, or act like the world – but to think, talk, and act like God Himself

*“I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.”*

*“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.”*

*(Galatians 5:16, 22–24, NKJV)*

*“that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor,” (1 Thessalonians 4:4, NKJV)*

- Know – *a student who has learned practical skills to accomplish a task or a goal*
- Possess – *to manage or control*
- Vessel – *the human body*
- Paul is saying that our base instincts should not control us
- We must master them

We are to develop a *Body Management* system

- This could apply to the kind of food and how much food we eat
- What we watch with our eyes
- Where we go with our feet
- How we spend our money

We may need to acquire some skills we don't presently have through reading books, attending seminars or classes, etc.

*“Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,” (Hebrews 12:1, NKJV)*

*“not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God;” (1 Thessalonians 4:5, NKJV)*

- We are not to live our lives in the grip of passion and lust
- He wants us to rise up and possess our vessel
- Live our lives in honor and respect for His Spirit living on the inside of us

*“that no one should take advantage of and defraud his brother in this matter, because the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also forewarned you and testified.” (1 Thessalonians 4:6, NKJV)*

- Defraud – to take advantage of someone
- This is a strong warning to not take advantage of others ethically, morally, financially, or sexually
- The Lord will step in and avenge
- Even if you escape judgment from friends, you face a Higher Judge

*“For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness.” (1 Thessalonians 4:7, NKJV)*

The walk of daily, practical holiness does not happen automatically just because God has chosen you, cleansed you by Jesus’ blood, placed His Spirit inside of you, and separated you from the rest of the world

- It will take a moment by moment yielding to God
- A dedicated effort to flee all forms of behavior that are contrary to what He desires for your life

*“If Christ has died for me... I cannot trifle with the evil that killed my best Friend.” – Charles H. Spurgeon*

*“but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct,” (1 Peter 1:15, NKJV)*

*“And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.” (Romans 6:13, NKJV)*