“God... has saved us and called us to a holy life”
2 Timothy 1:9

This is our team goal.
Aim to live in holiness.

“Walk in Newness of Life”
Romans 6:4

Book 1 of 3 in The Complete Advanced Bible Study on Christian Worship for Pleasing God, by Rick David, an Evangelist and Author of FreeBibleStudy.org
A Parable of The Christian Life

In this parable of the Christian life, Rick David compares God’s people to a team. Teams have membership requirements. So does God’s team. Teams have goals, opponents, and equipment. So does God’s team. Teams practice together. They play in certain leagues. They wear uniforms. They have certain ways of talking. So does God’s team.

What are the requirements to become a member of God’s team? What is His team goal? Who is His opponent? What kind of equipment does God give to His team members? How should members of God’s team practice together? In what kind of league does God’s team play? What kind of uniform do members of God’s team wear? What kind of language is appropriate for members of God’s team?

Come join God’s team! Satisfy the requirements to become a member. Pursue God’s team goal. Defend yourself against God’s opponent. Put on God’s equipment. Practice with God’s team. Play in God’s league. Put on God’s uniform. Talk the way God wants you to talk.
The Complete Advanced Bible Study on Christian Worship for Pleasing God, a Three Book Series

1. The Bible Study on New Life, “Walk in Newness of Life” (Ro 6:4). What our duties are after personal salvation.

2. The Bible Study on “True Worshipers... For Such People the Father Seeks to Be His Worshipers” (Jn 4:23). The characteristics and habits of true worshipers.

3. The Bible Study on the Regulations of Divine Worship, “Now Even the First Covenant Had Regulations of Divine Worship” (He 9:1). Covenants have regulations of worship.
Benefits, Goals and Objectives of This Study

1. Know exactly what it means to be born again, to have new life.
2. Learn what your duties are after you are saved by the gospel of Jesus Christ.
3. Be called by God to live in holiness, all the days of your life.
4. Understand the holy character and nature of God, and imitate it.
5. Develop a comprehensive and wise application of holiness, holy living.
6. Strengthen your ability to win your spiritual battles against Satan.
7. Stop or reduce sinning in certain areas of your life.
8. Become mature, complete, and perfected in the Christian faith.
9. Be equipped and useful to serve in the kingdom of God’s dear Son.
10. Strengthen other Christians in holiness when you meet with them.
11. Abstain or withdraw from certain unholy relationships.
12. Increase your righteous and holy acts or works.
13. Avoid improper and unholy ways to speak and act.
14. Gain control of one of your most wicked members, your tongue.

Cover Explanation

I use a soccer ball, field, and goal as an earthly illustration or comparison to impress upon our hearts various Christian truths that we are like a team with certain members, with a specific goal, in a special league, with unique equipment, distinct uniforms, strengthening practice sessions, a certain kind of chatter, and a very talented opponent whom we all must successfully compete against to win the game and receive the glorious prize, the crown of eternal life.

Acknowledgements and Dedication

I thank God who, by His holy favor, has enabled me to write a study about His divine nature and what that should mean to us in regards to our daily living. I thank the students, who over the years have grown in holiness as a result of this study. It truly has been a holy encouragement to me to learn of your progress in this matter and to see, face to face, holy growth in some of you, especially my very own holy children! I thank those who have first taught me very well about living in holiness, namely Paul and Naomi Yoder, who later became my in-laws. As I sought a Holy God, your holiness, specifically in your teaching, is what attracted me to you in the first place. It is what caused me to eventually join you in the church in your home, and to work with you for many years in the labors in the kingdom both locally, in the family, and various places worldwide. I dedicate this study to the one who truly loves and seeks, through Jesus Christ, the Spirit of Holiness, God.

About the Author

Greetings. My name is Pat “Rick” David Yanello. By God’s grace and power, He has called me to be an evangelist, a husband of one wife, a father of nine children (all from that same wife!), a publisher, a home schooling father, and more. I have authored several Bible studies that have been used by tens of thousands of people worldwide. I am truly blessed by God to establish FreeBibleStudy.org and FreeBibleSchool.org, and the core curriculum used therein. These websites have had millions of page hits. I was born and raised in Pennsylvania, but I have also lived in Texas and North Carolina. I have personally served in the spreading of the gospel in many communities throughout the United States, and in Kenya, Tanzania, and Mexico.

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1. How to Become a Member of God’s Holy Team 9

Teams in this world have membership requirements. To join God’s team, you must be born again. One cannot be “born Christian”. So your life must change in certain and significant ways. It’s all about obeying the Gospel, which is the Death, Burial, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. You must somehow imitate or reenact Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection.

2. God’s Team Goal Is Holiness 13

Teams have goals. God’s team goal is holiness. We seek a holy God. We seek a holy life. Does your Christianity separate you from anything? It must or else you are not a true Christian.

3. God’s Team Has an Opponent of Holiness 19

Teams have opponents who try to defeat them. Our adversary, the devil, will try to defeat us in reaching our holy goal. Consider your enemy! Consider his equipment, his playing field, his power, his created nature, and his doom.

4. God Equips His Team to Win through Holiness 23

Teams have equipment to help them successfully play their game. When we join God’s team, He equips us with the Holy Spirit to live within our hearts. He is the Spirit of truth, which is the exact “piece” of equipment we need to battle against our enemy of lies, the devil. God knew we needed truth to win, so He sent the Holy Spirit of truth within our hearts, and He also gave us the written word of truth, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Put on the full armor of God! Get equipped by holy teachers.

Test 1 on New Life
5. God’s Team Must Practice Together to Strengthen One Another in Holiness 31

Teams get together to strengthen their individual and group playing skills. God’s team ought to get together to strengthen [that is encourage] their individual and group holiness. Only practice in the true way, form, or style. Follow every regulation of Christian team practice. Only play your God-given team position(s).

6. God’s Team Must Stay in the League of Holiness 37

Teams play in certain leagues. God’s team must only play in the league of holiness. Members must perfect [mature] holiness [separation] in their relationships. To avoid sinning, prevent yourselves from getting into certain binding agreements with unbelievers. Separate yourselves from any unholy relationship with unbelievers or believers.

7. God’s Team Must Wear Holy Uniforms 47

Teams wear uniforms to distinguish themselves from other teams. God’s team distinguishes itself by wearing the Messiah. Clothe yourself with righteous acts. Put on your wedding clothes. Wear proper vs. improper uniforms. Wear gender specific uniforms. Women ought to wear a covering, not men.

8. God’s Team Must Talk Holy 61

Teams have certain ways of talking, a certain vocabulary. God’s team must talk holy. Enrich your speech. Consider the seriousness of misusing God’s name. Avoid direct and indirect misuse of the name of the Lord. Avoid direct and indirect foul and profane language. Don’t play the fool! Instead be a joy. Seek to instigate joy.

Test 2 on New Life
How to Become a Member of God’s Holy Team

You Must Be Born Again

It can be both a challenge and an honor to join a certain sports team or business team. For one must be willing and able to somehow satisfy or fulfill all of the essential requirements which relate to the unique nature and goal of the team. The same is true with God’s team. It is both a challenge and an honor to join it. Yet, this honor is greater than any other honor in life. For it is an eternal and everlasting honor, not a temporary earthly one, as with sports or business.

What are the essential requirements which one must, by faith, satisfy or fulfill in order to become a member of God’s holy team? How do they relate to the unique nature and goal of God’s team? As you will see in the following parable, it relates to dying to one’s natural life and rising again to live a new life.

Jesus said, “You must be born again” (Jn 3:7). “Unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God” (Jn 3:3). “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God” (Jn 3:5). So to be able to “see” and “enter into” God’s kingdom (that is, to be able to recognize God’s team and also to become a member of it), at some fitting point after one is born naturally, he must also be born again according to or through the gospel of Jesus Christ. [Next, as you should realize, this means you must be born again by imitating or reenacting Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection.]

So, one cannot be “born” Christian. To become one, “you must be born again”. Therefore, to join God’s holy team, one’s life must change in certain significant and meaningful ways.

Being Born Again Relates to Obeying or Imitating Christ’s D.B.R.

When one is “born again,” he is truly and simply obeying Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection, which essentially is the gospel. For example, Paul said, “Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel... that Christ [D] died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was [B] buried, and that He was [R] raised on the third day according to the Scriptures” (1 Cor 15:1, 3, 4). So the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ essentially is the gospel. And one must obey that gospel/dbr to be saved. It is the unique goal of the gospel. For example, “Those who do not know God and... those who do not obey the gospel [the DBR]... will pay the penalty of eternal destruction” (2 Thess 1:8, 9). And, “What will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel [the DBR]?” (1 Pe 4:17). On the next page, look at how one precisely obeys the gospel/dbr to be saved from his sins and born again.
How One Must Be Born Again by **Imitating** The Gospel (the D.B.R.)

He died for our sins... 

He was **buried**...  

He was **raised** on the third day... 

**He Died for Our Sins**

"He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross so that we might **Die to sin** and **live** to righteousness" 1 Pe 2:24; Lk 24:46, 47

**He Was Buried**

"We have been **Buried with Him through baptism into death**" Ro 6:4; Col 2:12; Ac 8:35, 36

**He Was Raised to New Life**

"so that as Christ was **Raised from the dead**,... we too might walk in **New-ness of life**" Ro 6:4; 2 Cor 5:15

---

You Must **Die to Your Sins in Repentance**  
You Must Be **Buried in Water Baptism**  
You Must Be **Raised to Live a New Life**
There Are 3 Key Steps to Being Born Again

After hearing the gospel (the D.B.R.) of Jesus Christ, and when you start to believe it (Ro 10:9, 10), that Christ died for your sins, was buried, and raised from the dead on the third day, you then must take three key steps to be born again, to enter into the kingdom of God and be saved from your sins. These steps meaningfully and directly relate to imitating or reenacting what Christ did for you in dying on the cross, being buried in a tomb, and rising up to live again. For example:

**Step 1 - Repentance of Sin (Dying)**

“He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die [D] to sin and live to righteousness” (1 Pe 2:24).

So the reason why Jesus died on the cross for our sins was so that we might learn to die to our own sins and instead “live... right”. After his second heart surgery, my father started to comprehend this gospel teaching. For example, when he was seeking to be discharged from the hospital, I, along with my kind mother, saw him sit up on his hospital bed and heard him boldly tell his doctor this: “For ten years, my son [me] has been telling us to repent. I am going to start living right, go to church, eat right, etc.”.

So my father knew that he was not living right, and he declared the reason for knowing this; he somehow heard about the gospel of repentance from me (Lk 24:47). For in our family, we had nearly every form of sexual immorality, intoxication, drugs, and more. In my own way, I, at risk of persecution, was opposing this publicly to their faces for years, knowing the fearful outcome of this kind of behavior. Indeed, through hearing the gospel, one must truly regret his sins to the point that he is so sick of them that he is willing to renounce them, put them aside, and instead live right. As Paul said, one must “turn to God” in “repentance” (Ac 26:20), not “come to God as you are,” as some like to say. For example, upon meeting Jesus, Zacchaeus immediately renounced his sin by pledging to give half of what he owned to the poor and to restore fourfold what he defrauded from others (Lk 19:8). Upon hearing the gospel of repentance, certain magicians renounced their sin by burning their very expensive magic books in the sight of everyone (Ac 19:19). Others renounced their idols and instead worshiped the true and living God (1 Thess 1:9, 10).

Note: Likewise, one must renounce any other sin which God has condemned through the gospel of Jesus Christ, and instead start to live right in that area of life. We studied a variety of these sins, along with how to properly repent of them, in The Advanced Chronological Study of the Holy Bible, Containing the Old and New Testaments (Level 1).

But make no mistake. To be a member of God’s team, you must change. You must give up your sins. You must renounce them. You must be sick of them. You must confess and forsake them. You must separate from them. You must start to live right. This is what it means to die to sin. Christ died for our sins. We must die to our sins and live to righteousness. No one can be saved or forgiven without repentance (SEE Lk 24:46, 47). No one can truly be a member of God’s team without renouncing sin, and changing for the better. You must have a turning point. You must turn to God, “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Ro 3:23). And so your turning point needs to be a turn away from sin. Sin is your reference point, for we all have said something wrong, thought something wrong, did something wrong, believed something wrong, etc. So as Paul said we must “turn to God” in “repentance” (Ac 26:20).
Step 2 - Baptism in Water (Burial)

“How shall we who died [D] to sin still live in it? Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized [B] into Christ Jesus have been baptized [B] into His death [D]? Therefore we have been buried [B] with Him through baptism [B] into death [D], so that as Christ was raised [R] from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life” (Ro 6:2-4).

Truly, this passage, explains the three key steps to being born again, to have new life. It lists them in 1, 2, 3 fashion, and they parallel what Jesus essentially did for us in the gospel. For example, first, in response to hearing the gospel, you must have “died to sin” and not “still live in it”. This is an outstanding explanation of repentance, which was studied in point one. Second, you must be “buried with Him through baptism,” not sprinkled [Gk. raino] or poured [Gk. cheo], for baptism [Gk. baptizo] means or is synonymous with the word bury, immerse, or dip (Also SEE Col 2:12). Additionally, it is how Jesus commanded us to call on the name of the Lord to be saved. Please read a brief explanation of this in the box to the right.

Step 3 - Walk in Newness of Life (Resurrection)

Like Jesus, you must be “raised” up out of the grave, the watery grave of baptism to “walk in newness of life”. Indeed, “He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf” (2 Cor 5:15). So, out of appreciation for what Christ did for you on the cross, to honor Him for the redemption He performed in your life, you ought to freely devote your entire life to learning and doing His will, not your own or any others.

Step 2 - It is how to call on the name of the Lord to be saved

If you are not yet aware of it, many disciples are confusing how to apply this passage: “Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved” (Ro 10:13). Is this to be done in prayer or in water baptism? As I pointed out in The Advanced Chronological Study of the Holy Bible, Containing the Old and New Testaments (Level 1), the Lord commanded us to do this in water baptism, not in prayer. For example, a risen Jesus said to baptize them “in the name of” the three distinct persons of God (Mt 28:19). In this passage, Jesus is referring to how to call on His name to be saved in water baptism.

The baptizer is to say, “I baptize you in the name of the Father, the Son (Jesus Christ), and the Holy Spirit”. Then he is to literally bury or immerse (baptize) the person in the water (figuratively, in to the death of Christ), and quickly raise him up out of it, so that he can then begin to live his new life, having been born again.

As one can easily see in the book of Acts, this is exactly how the apostles and others led people to call on the name of the Lord to be saved, such as in Acts 2:37, 38 and in many other passages. One of the most prominent and irrefutable examples of this is Paul’s own conversion story. For when he retold it to others, even his enemies, he said that Jesus Himself sent a man to him to tell him: “Now why do you delay? Get up and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name” (Ac 22:16). From Paul’s own statements, we can see that he was commanded to call on the name of the Lord to wash away his sins in water baptism, not in prayer.

Note: For answers to the most prominent questions about water baptism and salvation, please read the Q&A session in the water baptism lesson in The Advanced Chronological Study of the Holy Bible (Level 1). Likewise, for a thorough study of all the Scriptures surrounding how to call on the name of the Lord to be saved, please read the following lessons in it: “Go Make Disciples of Christ in Every Nation,” “How Jesus Said We Must Be Saved,” “How the Apostles Said We Must Be Saved,” and “We Can Be Saved by Calling on the Name of the Lord in Water Baptism”. If you yourself have not yet practiced this correctly, I encourage you to correct the error you made or were led to make, and do it right, in water baptism. Get rebaptized for the right reason, to call on His name to be saved. Then, you will be righteous in this matter, and will also set the right example for others to observe. Truth needs witnessed to others in word and in deed, so that they have a chance to consider it and do it right themselves.
God’s Team Goal Is Holiness

A. We Seek a Holy God

In this Bible study, I compare God’s people to a team. I hope that this will help us to learn some important truths about being a Christian. In this world, teams are organized and formed to compete for a prize or to seek a certain goal. For example, running teams reach for the finish line. Business teams reach for the buyer’s money. But our common purpose is not to pursue sports or the buyer’s business. Instead, you joined God’s team to pursue a holy God. First and foremost, we have joined the Lord’s team to pursue God. Carefully think about this-- the highest prize that our team must seek is Him, that is His Holiness.

1. God Is Divine in Nature

“Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust” (2 Pe 1:2-4).

So when we seek God, through the knowledge of Jesus Christ and the promises surrounding Him, then we seek to become “partakers,” participations, and team members of “divine nature.” God is divine in His nature. But what is “divine nature”? Above, Peter revealed that it is the opposite of the corrupt nature which is in the world, and from which we need to “escape”. So the divine nature is not corrupt, defiled, or sinful. Instead, divine nature is pure, undefiled, and sinless or in one word, Holy. Therefore we seek a holy God. We seek holiness. Holiness is the nature of God.

2. Divine Nature Is Holy

(a) One of God’s Names Indicates His Holy Nature

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit” (Mt 28:19).

(b) God Himself Claims to Be Holy

“I AM Holy” (1 Pe 1:16).

(c) His Dwelling Place Is Holy

“Holiness befits Your house” (Ps 93:5). “Then the Levitical priests arose and blessed the people; and their voice was heard and their prayer came to His holy dwelling place, to heaven” (2 Chron 30:27).
Conclusion

Through God’s Son, Jesus Christ, and the promises surrounding Him, we can escape the corrupt and unholy nature which is in the world, and in us, and instead begin to participate in the divine nature, God. Divine nature is holy. So we seek a holy God. We seek His holiness. We must consider God as holy, speak about Him as holy, sing about Him as holy, and so on and so forth. We must also live in holiness all of our days. Our nature or character must become holy. For this is the reason why God saved us, to live a holy life.

B. We Seek a Holy Life

To understand the overall plan of God for our lives, we must look for the bigger, broader, and wider picture in the Scriptures. We must be like a bird flying high above the earth, who can see a more complete picture of the it than just the dirt when looking for worms.

Reach for a Holy Life

1. The Big Picture Includes Striving to Live in Holiness

Below is a wide angle Scripture which is an overview of God’s plan for us, from start to finish. Carefully study it. It reveals God’s two-fold purpose for our lives; the two major goals that God is trying to accomplish in every Christian’s life.
“God... has [1] saved us and [2] called us to a holy life” (2 Tim 1:9 NIV).

First God has saved us, but He has also called us to a holy way of living. God saved us to live in holiness. This is our duty after personal salvation. Holiness is now our vocation, our job. Getting saved from our sins is simply the starting point of what should mark our pursuit to live holy. Christian living is holy living. This is a very important form of our worship, living in holiness. For example:

“Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship” (Ro 12:1). Here we learn that our worship is more than what we do in church. It is also “living... holy... which is... worship”. [This is the precise reason why I have included this Bible Study on New Life within my Complete Advanced Bible Study on Christian Worship for Pleasing God. How we live is a major form of worship. “Living... holy... is your spiritual service of worship.” It is what our new life is to be all about. So we must learn about this first and foremost. Rightly so, it is the first study or book in my series of three on Christian worship/Level 2.]

3. We Must Pursue or Seek Holiness to Be Saved

In a lesser sense, but still a very, very important sense, our own holiness or lack of it has something to do with our eternal destination, our salvation or condemnation. For example, the Scriptures command us to: “Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification [holiness] without which no one will see the Lord” (He 12:14 NAS). “Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord” (He 12:14 NIV).

So if we fail to “pursue” a holy life, if we do not follow our calling to live holy (2 Tim 1:9), then we will not be permitted to see the Lord; we will not be saved. Once we are saved, we then must pursue a life of holiness. This is our goal. It is what the Christian life is all about. Carefully consider these Scriptures which impress upon our hearts that God, through Christ, from the start, has called us to live in holiness.

2. God’s Holiness Makes Us Holy

(a) Christ’s Sacrifice Saves Us and Makes Us Holy

“And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach” (Col 1:21, 22). So it is only through Christ’s holy sacrifice on the cross that we are truly made holy before God. What Jesus did makes us holy.

(b) Jesus Became our Sanctification, Our Holiness

“But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification [holiness], and redemption” (1 Cor 1:30). Jesus became our wise and holy redeemer. It is because of His holiness, righteousness, and wisdom that we can be Christians.

3. We Must Pursue or Seek Holiness to Be Saved

In a lesser sense, but still a very, very important sense, our own holiness or lack of it has something to do with our eternal destination, our salvation or condemnation. For example, the Scriptures command us to: “Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification [holiness] without which no one will see the Lord” (He 12:14 NAS). “Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord” (He 12:14 NIV).

So if we fail to “pursue” a holy life, if we do not follow our calling to live holy (2 Tim 1:9), then we will not be permitted to see the Lord; we will not be saved. Once we are saved, we then must pursue a life of holiness. This is our goal. It is what the Christian life is all about. Carefully consider these Scriptures which impress upon our hearts that God, through Christ, from the start, has called us to live in holiness.

2. God’s Holiness Makes Us Holy

(a) Christ’s Sacrifice Saves Us and Makes Us Holy

“And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach” (Col 1:21, 22). So it is only through Christ’s holy sacrifice on the cross that we are truly made holy before God. What Jesus did makes us holy.
is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth" (Eph 4:20-24). So even when we begin to learn or teach someone about the gospel of Jesus Christ, we need to learn or teach them about the "way... of holiness of the truth". The truth is holy, whether it is basic truth or advanced truth.

(b) Jesus Tried to Make His Disciples Holy with the Truth and His Lifestyle

"Sanctify [make holy] them in the truth; Your word is truth" (Jn 17:17). “For their sakes I sanctify [make holy] Myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified [made holy] in truth" (Jn 17:19).

(c) Paul Taught the Gentiles with All Boldness So That They Would Become Holy

“But I have written very boldly to you on some points so as to remind you again, because of the grace that was given me from God, to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles, ministering as a priest the gospel of God, so that my offering of the Gentiles may become acceptable, sanctified [made holy] by the Holy Spirit” (Ro 15:15, 16). So the purpose of Paul’s ministry was to make men holy by the holy gospel sent from the Holy Spirit, God.

(d) The Spirit’s Goal Is to Save Us Through Holiness

“But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification [holiness] by the Spirit and faith in the truth" (2 Thess 2:13). So God saves us through holiness, by His Spirit and our faith in the truth.

(e) God disciplines Us to Be Holy

“He disciplines us for our good, so that we may share His holiness” (He 12:10). God does not want us to behave in an unholy way. This is why He attempts to correct us in various ways, such as the corrective teaching of His word.

(f) All of Our Behavior Must Be Holy

“As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; because it is written, ‘YOU SHALL BE HOLY FOR I AM HOLY’ " (1 Pe 1:14-16). So, in obedience to God, we should aim to be like Him, holy, in every part of our lives. Act holy.

(g) Disciples Must Walk the Highway of Holiness

“A highway will be there, a roadway, and it will be called the Highway of Holiness. The unclean will not travel on it, but it will be for him who walks that way, and fools will not wander on it” (Isa 35:8). This is a prophecy about the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The gospel is a call to a wise, high, and holy walk or lifestyle.

(h) Before Jesus Returns, Our Hearts Must Be Established in Holiness

“Now may our God and Father Himself and Jesus our Lord direct our way to you; and may the Lord cause you to increase and abound in love for one another, and for all people, just as we also do for you; so that He may establish your hearts without blame in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints” (1 Thess 3:11-13). So God’s goal is to build a foundation of holiness within our hearts so that when Jesus comes back we will then be ready
and prepared for Him. The oil in our lamp, if you will, must be the oil of holiness.

(i) We Must Mature in Holiness, Both on the Inside and Outside of Our Bodies

“We let cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh [outside] and spirit [inside], perfecting [maturing] holiness [separation] in the fear of God” (2 Cor 7:1). The fruit of holiness is something which must be matured or perfected, inwardly and outwardly. So holiness is not something that we can immediately possess in its entirety. It is something in which we must grow. As you will see in the lesson called God’s Team Must Stay in the League of Holiness, this commandment to be “perfecting holiness” especially means in our relationships with unbelievers.

4. Examples of Holy Ones

(a) John Was a Holy Man

“Herod was afraid of John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he kept him safe” (Mk 6:20). How could Herod, an ungodly man, a man who was not a Jew, know that John was a holy man? How did John prove to be holy? What kind of life did John have? How did he live? What was He called by God to do? What did he teach?

(b) Sarah Was a Holy Woman

“For in this way in former times the holy women also, who hoped in God, used to adorn themselves, being submissive to their own husbands; just as Sarah obeyed Abraham” (1 Pe 3:5, 6). Why did Peter use Sarah as an example of a holy woman? With what did Sarah adorn herself to prove that she was a worthy example of what a holy woman should look like? What kind of life did Sarah have? How did she live? What was she called by God to do? With what should holy women adorn themselves today?

(c) Paul and His Coworkers Boldly Testified to Others That They Lived Holy

“For our proud confidence is this: the testimony of our conscience, that in holiness and godly sincerity, not in fleshly wisdom but in the grace of God, we have conducted ourselves in the world, and especially toward you” (2 Cor 1:12). How did Paul and his coworkers conduct themselves in this world? How were their lives holy? How did they live in holiness? Why would God show favor [grace], not wrath against their behavior? What did Paul mean when he said that they lived “not in fleshly wisdom”? What is the opposite of the flesh? Is it not the spirit, the Holy Spirit, to live spiritually, not sensually?

(d) Apostles and Prophets Were Holy

“The mystery of Christ,... has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets” (Eph 3: 4, 5). “Remember the words spoken beforehand by the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior spoken by your apostles” (2 Pe 3:2). Who were the prophets and apostles of God? How were they holy?

Conclusion

We joined God’s team to pursue a holy God. We joined God’s team to pursue holiness. Indeed, He saved us to live a holy life (SEE 2 Tim 1:9). Everything about God is holy. Likewise, He wants everything about us to be holy. This includes more than just our worship of Him during church. It involves our daily lives. As a form of our worship towards Him, He wants us to live holy every day. “Living... holy... is your spiritual service of worship” (Ro 12:1). God’s team goal is holiness. New life, new goal. But what does holiness truly mean? Next, study the precise definition of this word so that it can be brought into clear focus. For when we truly understand in our hearts what holiness means, we then can begin to apply it, with wisdom, to all aspects of our lives.
The Definition of Holiness

In one word, holiness means to “separate” (2 Cor 6:17). We must separate from something to be holy, separate. Consider the following definitions which are from Vine’s Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words.

1. Holiness (Hagiosune)

“Denotes the manifestation of the quality of holiness in personal conduct. Fundamentally signifies separated, and hence, in Scripture, in its moral and spiritual significance, separated from sin and therefore consecrated to God, sacred. The resultant state, the conduct befitting those so separated.” So according to this definition above, holiness must be manifested, visible, in our conduct in life in the form of separating or keeping separate from things that do err, defile, tarnish, and corrupt, namely sin. Are you in the habit of separating from sin? Set yourself apart! Holiness means to be set apart from sin.

2. Sanctification (Hagiasmos)

“Sanctification is thus the state [condition or situation] predetermined by God for believers, into which in grace He calls them (2 Tim 1:9), and in which they begin their Christian course and so pursue it. Hence they are called ‘saints’ (hagioi)... i.e. ‘sanctified’ or ‘holy’ ones’. Sanctification... is an individual possession, built up, little by little, as a result of obedience to the word of God.” So according to this definition, sanctification means holiness. And we know that holiness means separated from sin. So when God said, “Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord” (He 12:14), He meant that without holiness, without sainthood, a person will not be saved. In other words, without separating from something, no one will see the Lord. God expects us to separate ourselves from certain things in this world. This is a Bible study on sainthood, holiness. It is a Bible study on separation, sanctification.

Note: Some teach that to be holy, to be a saint, it means that one is “set apart to God”. On the contrary, let me clarify something here. God is not set apart to God, He is set apart from sin, holy. He said, I am separate, so you be separate, meaning holy. So some of you need to dig deeper into the true meaning of holiness or else you will deceive yourselves into thinking that you are indeed set apart to God, and yet do not have to separate from anything for God. Holiness must be applied.

3. Does your Christianity separate you from anything?

In 2005, a famous American singer, when categorized or labeled by the “secular” news media as a Christian singer instead of a secular singer [i.e. sensual or worldly], responded to this charge by saying:

“My Christianity does not separate me from anything”

She said this in the context of launching her new “secular” album with an indiscreet picture of herself on the front. Perhaps she is not aware that Christians are called to live a separated life, to be holy. Perhaps she did not learn Christ in a holy way, as one ought to (SEE Eph 4:20-24). But your Christianity must separate you from all things which are not sacred (holy) in this world, including sensual forms of music. Don’t let the world embarrass you, a holy Christian, into being worldly, sensual, or unholy (not sacred, not separated).

Conclusion

Since holiness means being separate from sin, and therefore consecrated to God, this study seeks Bible answers for the kind of separated lifestyle that God desires for His holy team. God is holy, meaning separate. He calls us to be holy, meaning separate (1 Pe 1:14-16). God saves us in holiness. God calls us to live in holiness. A holy God seeks us. We seek a holy God. God seeks holy people. We seek a holy life. New life, new goal. God’s team goal is holiness. But we have an opponent of holiness. So it will not be easy for us to live a holy life.
Consider Your Enemy

Every team has an opponent, a challenger, a competitor. Satan is the opponent of God and His team. Therefore, Satan is the opponent of holiness. What are his capabilities, talents, and tactics? To be better able to withstand his opposition, consider your enemy.

1. The Name “Satan” Means Adversary

(a) Consider the Greek and the Hebrew Definition of the Word “Satan”

The Greek word for Satan, like the one used by Jesus in Matthew 4:10, means “adversary (one who opposes another in purpose or act).” The Hebrew word for Satan, like the one used in 1 Chronicles 21:1, means “adversary, one who withstands” [Strong’s Concordance]. So Satan is literally our opponent, our foe, our enemy, our adversary. So the Scriptures fittingly and correctly name him as such.

(b) Peter Called the Devil Our Adversary, Our Satan

“Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour” (1 Pe 5:8). The Greek word here for “adversary” means “an opponent in a suit of law, an adversary, an enemy” [Strong’s Concordance]. Jesus referred to Satan as an enemy (Mt 13:25). The Greek word for “devil,” used here by Peter, means “prone to slander, slanderous, accusing falsely” [Strong’s Concordance].

Fittingly, we read about: “The accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night” (Re 12:10). Yet, while it is true that Satan acts as our accusing and prosecuting attorney, Someone greater is acting as our defense and advocating attorney. “We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous” (1 Jn 2:1). And, “The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil” (1 Jn 3:8). Amen.

2. Satan Is Anti-Christ, Anti-Christian

(a) He Is the Opposing Spirit of Falsehood, Unbelief, and Disobedience

“Every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is
already in the world" (1 Jn 4:3). This antichrist spirit is simply the spirit of disobedience. “And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience” (Eph 2:1, 2).

(b) Satan Opposed God’s People of Old, Both Individuals and the Nation

For example, he opposed Joshua and Jerusalem. “Then he [an angel of the Lord] showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him. The LORD said to Satan, ‘The LORD rebuke you, Satan! Indeed, the LORD who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is this not a brand plucked from the fire?’ ” (Zech 3:1, 2). So here we see Satan accusing Joshua and the Lord Himself advocating for Joshua and Jerusalem and her people, the Jews.

Satan opposed the whole nation of Israel. “Then Satan stood up against Israel and moved David to number Israel!” (1 Chron 21:1, 2). [Related passage: 2 Sam 24:1-25] Satan also stood up against an individual, Job. “You [Satan] incited Me against him to ruin him without cause” (Job 2:3).

(c) Satan Opposes Followers of the Seed, Jesus

This was prophesied from the beginning. For example, this prophecy in the garden of Eden indicates that there would be enmity, that is ill or sick feelings, between Satan, Christ, and His people. “And I will put enmity [ill feelings] between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel” (Ge 3:15).

Satan demandingly opposed Peter. “‘Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat; but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.’ But he said to Him, ‘Lord, with You I am ready to go both to prison and to death!’ And He said, ‘I say to you, Peter, the rooster will not crow today until you have denied three times that you know Me’ ” (Lk 22:31-34).

Consider His Equipment

Satan has many talents. He has a lot of power. He uses all of it to tempt mankind to sin against God, and therefore destroy man’s saving relationship with Him. Keep this in mind as you consider Satan’s abilities below.

1. He Is Greater than Us, Like an Angel

Obviously, he can go places that flesh and blood cannot go, like heaven (SEE Job 1:6; Zech 3:1, 2).

2. He Has a Natural Talent to Be Deceptive

“Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies” (Jn 8:44). He is the source, originator, and the beginning of falsehood and false teaching. He is the deceiver of the whole world (Re 12:9).

3. He Has Power to Do False Wonders and Signs

He will use them to oppose and exalt himself above all things (2 Thess 2:1-12).
4. He Can Manipulate the Elements
He manipulated the wind and fire to destroy Job’s belongings (Job 1).

5. He Can Manipulate Health
He manipulated Job’s health (Job 2). Jesus blamed the devil for causing a woman to be crippled (Lk 13:16).

Consider His Playing Field

1. He Controls the World
“The whole world lies in the power of the evil one” (1 Jn 5:19). “The whole world is under the control of the evil one (1 Jn 5:19 NIV).

2. He Is the World’s Ruler
When speaking of the Devil, Jesus said to His apostles, “I will not speak much more with you, for the ruler of the world is coming, and he has nothing in Me” (Jn 14:30).

3. He Is the World’s God
“And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God” (2 Cor 4:3, 4).

4. He Can Give Worldly Power to Anyone
“Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory; and he said to Him, ‘All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me’ ” (Mt 4:8, 9).

5. He Can Enter and Control the Heart
“Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back some of the price of the land?” (Ac 5:3)

6. He Disguises Himself as an Authoritative Teacher of Truth (as well as his demons and false teachers)
“For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will be according to their deeds” (2 Cor 11:13-15).

And so He and his servants pretend to be the angels, the leaders, the teachers, the apostles, the ministers of truth. He can control the pulpit!

Consider Him a Creature, a Created Being

There is clear evidence that Satan is a creature, not the Creator.

1. God Told Us that He Created the Serpent
God Himself implied that He created Satan when He said this: “Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made” (Ge 3:1). Indeed,
God even gave Satan a creature type name, calling him a “serpent”.

2. Jesus’ Refusal to Worship Satan Proves that Satan Was a Created Being

Satan said, “‘All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me.’ Then Jesus said to him, ‘Go, Satan! For it is written, ‘YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY’ ’” (Mt 4:9, 10). Satan tried to get Jesus to worship him. But Jesus rejected that form of worship. This is another obvious piece of evidence that indicates that the devil is a created being. We are not to worship created beings. That would be the sin of idolatry. But we must worship the Creator alone. Below, consider this further.

3. Since Satan Is Not the Creator, By Default He Was Created

Romans 1:25 indicates that people who follow the lie, and not the truth, worship “the creature” and not “the Creator”. Satan is a liar. People who follow or worship a liar are idolaters. Since we know that Jesus created the world (Jn 1), then Satan could not be the Creator. And as Romans 1:25 reveals, only the Creator is to be worshiped. Unlike the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, Satan had a beginning. He is a creature.

4. Satan Is Like an Angel

Since he went places that flesh and blood cannot go, like heaven, we know that Satan is like an angel. Angels are created beings. They are directed to worship God, who is the Creator (SEE He 1:6). But Satan refuses to worship God in spirit and in truth. Yet when he does worship God, it is in flesh and in error.

Consider Him Doomed!

Satan has already been judged, condemned, but not yet sentenced to the fire of hell (So there is no hope for him or for those who worship him, such as his demons, and those who follow them). For example, Jesus said, “The ruler of this world has been judged” (Jn 16:11), with judged meaning condemned. And Satan knows it! “For this reason, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has only a short time” (Re 12:12). Likewise, his demons know that they are already condemned, but awaiting sentencing! For when some of them met Jesus, they said, “What business do we have with each other, Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?” (Mt 8:29). So, they are altogether making haste to mislead as many as possible before the great day of their sentencing to the Lake of fire, a long with all those who love and hold fast to their deceptions. Consider Satan doomed, and all those who enjoy and follow his lies.

Conclusion

Satan is rightly named. He is our adversary. He is our opponent and God’s opponent. He is very, very powerful and can even control nature, kingdoms, and health. You must do all that you can to defend yourself against him, and leave the rest to Jesus. New life, new obstacles. God’s team has an opponent of holiness. But God equips His team to win through holiness. In the next lesson, study the holy equipment which God gives to His team to help them defend themselves against the devil. Use every holy thing to repel him.
God Equip His Team to Win through Holiness

Consider Your Holy Equipment

Every team has some kind of equipment. Ball teams have a ball. School teams have books. Business teams have tools. When you became a member of God’s team, you gained access to equipment that enables you, helps you, and makes it possible for you to defeat your opponent, Satan.

1. Receiving the Gift of the Holy Spirit Is the Key to Overcoming Satan

The most important “piece” of equipment which you received, when you believed and obeyed the gospel, is God’s indwelling Spirit of Holiness (READ Ac 2:38; 5:32). Do you realize that it is only by the Spirit of Holiness that you can overcome the spirit of unholiness?

(b) The Gift Is for Living a Holy Life

Contrary to what some worshipers may think, we should be looking for and quickening the Holy Spirit to manifest Himself in disciples, not primarily in a particular talent or gift, which has value, but in living a holy life (2 Tim 1:9). We see in Matthew 7:21-27 that “many” people will try to trust in their talents and abilities on Judgment Day, saying, "‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS’ ” (Mt 7:22, 23). Jesus rejected them to hell because of their unlawful, unholy lifestyle.

So understand that how you live is obviously more important to God than how you serve Him with your talents. Your talented efforts for God are important, or originator of false teaching. We gain the victory because of “He,” the Person of the Holy Spirit who is inside of us. We defeat, conquer, prevail over, triumph over our enemy because of the greater Spirit of Holiness that indwells us. God is more than just on our side; He is inside.
but they are not important enough by themselves to gain you salvation in the end. If you disregard, or neglect your call to be holy, you will be lost (SEE He 12:14). On the other hand, according to Matthew 25:14-30, if you fail to use your talent(s) for God’s purposes, you will then be judged by Him as wicked, lazy, and lost. He will cast you out into the outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth, namely hell. So we must not neglect one thing (living holy) over the other (using our talents for God), but understand and do both but with more weight, importance, or priority on obeying the Spirit of Holiness in our own lives.

Conclusion

As soon as we join God’s team, by being born again through re-enacting the gospel/DBR, we are equipped with the Holy Spirit. Receiving Him is the key to overcoming our opponent and to live a holy life. God is the one who works in us to give us the victory. No wonder Paul could say about all of the battles we face: “But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us” (Ro 8:37). Truly, overwhelming winning is through the Son, the Father, and the Holy Spirit who indwells us. Rely upon the Spirit of Holiness for victory over Satan.

2. Put on Holy Armor, Daily!

To strengthen us for our battles against the enemy, to make the weak strong, Paul compared certain Christian qualities, fruits, virtues, and holy states of being to a soldier with armor. Keep this in mind as you read this comparative illustration below so that you do not get lost in the earthly, physical illustration of the soldier. But instead zero in on understanding the depth of the spiritual words which Paul compared to the soldier’s armor and weapon. It is easy to understand the soldier’s physical armor. It is not so easy to understand the spiritual things which Paul compared to it. Why is this so?

“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand firm therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH [A] TRUTH, and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF [B] RIGHTEOUSNESS, and having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF [C] PEACE; in addition to all, taking up the shield of [D] faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. And take THE HELMET OF [E] SALVATION, and the sword of the Spirit, which is [F] the word of God. With [G] all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints” (Eph 6:10-19). So, do not only pray for yourself!

Above, Paul listed seven Christ-like/Christian qualities or states of being that will help us resist the Devil, if we put them on, if we live them. Let me take this one step further by comparing these things to their exact opposite. This will help us to zero in on their proper meanings. But remember this one thing: all of these things relate to something we must put on. So they must be a part of our lives, our character, our habits. They must be something we possess, have, or practice.
[A] Truth vs. Lies or Falsehood [vs. 14]

“Therefore, laying aside falsehood, SPEAK TRUTH EACH ONE of you WITH HIS NEIGHBOR, for we are members of one another” (Eph 4:25). To be Christian, is to speak the truth. This is the wise thing to do. “Listen, for I [wisdom] will speak noble things; And the opening of my lips will reveal right things. For my mouth will utter truth; And wickedness is an abomination to my lips. All the utterances of my mouth are in righteousness; There is nothing crooked or perverted in them” (Prov 8:6-8). Be wise. Reveal right things to others. Utter truth. Speak nothing crooked or perverted. Be a straight shooter. Unless you are fully committed to being truthful, you will lose battles against Satan. Defend yourself with what is true. Tell the truth. Practice the truth. But don’t cast your pearls before swine! Consider Rahab: by reverent faith toward God, she hid the spies.

[B] Righteousness vs. Unrighteousness [vs. 14]

“Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God?” (1 Cor 6:9) Only those who are right will be saved, not those who are incorrect, unright. “Little children, make sure no one deceives you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous” (1 Jn 3:7). Unless you are fully committed to being right, you will lose battles against Satan. Defend yourself by doing the right thing. Practice righteousness. Do the right thing.

[C] Peace vs. War [vs. 15]

War and peace. For a variety of reasons, this is a difficult subject for many disciples. Yet, peace is one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit (Ga 5:22). Jesus considers those blessed who know how to make peace (Mt 5:9). He told His disciples to love their enemies, and in many places in the gospel He gave examples of how to do just that (Mt 5:43-48). But can a Christian love his enemies, and hate another’s? The apostles’ doctrine states that we are to never take revenge or pay back evil for evil on our enemies, but we must leave room for the wrath of God to fall upon them (SEE Ro 12:14-21; 1 Thess 5:15). But can a Christian take revenge on another person’s enemy? Are we permitted to fight and kill anyone else’s enemy, like the government’s enemy, but not our own enemy?

Before Paul knew Jesus as Lord and Christ, he was fiercely aggressive. “I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor” (1 Tim 1:13). We have a record of some of his violent acts against certain people that he thought were his enemies and God’s (Ac 7:58, 8:1; 9:1, 2). But after he became a Christian, there was no record of him ever physically harming another person again, even his murderous, persecuting enemies, of which he had many. Paul understood and lived what he taught to us, that our battle, and his battle, was no longer against flesh and blood, but against the spiritual forces of wickedness, not physical ones (Eph 6:12). The Christian struggle is not a physical struggle. It is a spiritual one. Indeed, among other qualifications, the men who are to be put in charge of a church must not be physical fighters, not physically combative persons; “not... pugnacious, but gentle, peaceable” (1 Tim 3:3). Pugnacious means a warrior, a fighter, a physically combative person, a brawler, a violent man instead of a gentle and peaceful man. Our leaders must be soldiers of the cross (spiritual leaders, the cross), not soldiers of men (physical leaders, the sword). Consider the following illustration which speaks to this struggle.
It's a Cross, No It's a Dagger!

There once was a man who held a letter opener in his hand. And as he held the handle of it, he looked intently at the blade, and thrust it in the air, saying, “It’s a dagger!”. But then he turned it upside down and held the dull blade. And as he stared intently at the cross beam of the handle, he lifted it in the air, and said, “No, it’s a cross”. He was puzzled and confused. He did not yet know if it was a cross or a dagger. And so he turned it right side up and said, “No, it’s a dagger.” Then he turned it upside down, and said, “It’s a cross.” He kept on doing this until he finally solved the problem in his mind. He grabbed the dull blade, and lifted the letter opener into the air, and said, “It’s a cross”. Now the implication here is that he was not going to be a fighter. He would lift up the cross of Christ, not a sword.

What about you? When you look at the cross, what do you see? Is it a cross or a sword? It could be a cross or it could be a sword. It all depends on how you look at it. If you look at the cross right side up, it is a cross. If you turn it upside down, it looks like a sword, dagger, or knife. Which way will you look at the cross? When you look at Christianity, what will you see? When you look at Christ, what will you see? When you look at the world, what war will you fight? Will it be the spiritual one or the physical one? Unless you are fully committed to peace, you will lose battles against the Devil. Defend yourself by doing the peaceful thing. Do the peaceful thing. Christianity is designed to create spiritual warriors. “Shod your feed with the preparation of the gospel of peace” (Eph 6:15). For what are you preparing, war or peace? Practice peace making.

[D] Faith vs. Unbelief [vs. 16]

Consider Abraham. During his difficult wanderings on the earth, he grew stronger in faith. “Without becoming weak in faith he contemplated his own body, now as good as dead since he was about one hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah’s womb; yet with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God” (Ro 4:19, 20). But the Israelites, during their difficult wanderings on the earth, at one time grew weak in faith (Nu 13:25-14:24; He 3:7-19). As you wander into great difficulties and trials on your earthly journey, unless you grow stronger in your belief in the precious promises found in Christ, you will lose battles against the opponent. During your difficulties, defend yourself from the devil by growing stronger in the promises of Christ. In difficult times, give glory, respect, and honor to the Lord. Consider Job. He did not waiver in faith during the loss of his family, the loss of his business, the loss of his health, discouragement from his wife, and the loss of respect from others, even his friends! Amazing faith! How sweet the example. Practice more faith toward God, not more doubt!

Note: But there is a difference between expressing strong faith in God and boasting. One expression is in the context of faith toward God, and needs no “Lord willing” attached to it. But the other is in the context of arrogance (Ja 4:16; 3:5), and needs this detail of cautious deference attached to it: “If the Lord wills” (Ja 4:15). Remember the revealed reason why God confused the language of the people of Babel. It was because nothing they purposed to do, seemingly in arrogance, without faith in God, would not be impossible for them (Ge 11:6). So God stopped their ambitious efforts to succeed. Man must learn to trust in God’s power and live by faith in Him or end up being confused in all that he hopes to do.

[E] Salvation vs. Condemnation [vs. 17]

People living outside of Christ and His will are in the state of condemnation or wrath because of their sinful lack of conformity to His will. But people living in Christ, who are conformed to His will,
are in the state of salvation or grace, meaning His favor. “Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus” (Ro 8:1). For we read that: “He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God” (Jn 3:18). So, beware of unbelief towards the name of Jesus. Today, it is the source of all sins against God and man.

Unless one is in the state of salvation, he will lose the entire battle against the enemy. Defend yourself by being in Christ, conforming to His gospel/DBR will. This is salvation (SEE Ro 8:29). As the first lesson of this study pointed out, How to Become a Member of God’s Holy Team, putting on the helmet of salvation is all about being born again, meaning one must undergo a death, burial, and resurrection; that is he must re-enact or imitate the gospel (SEE Ro 6:1-4), by 1. Dying to sin (D), 2. Being buried with Christ in water baptism, and (B) 3. Rising up from the watery grave to live a new life (R); having in this way received in his heart the indwelling person of the Holy Spirit (SEE Ac 2:38).

[F] The Word vs. No Ability to Speak It [vs. 17]

Did you ever see a soldier go to battle without a weapon? No soldier goes to war without one to defend himself. If he did, the enemy, who has weapons, will easily defeat him. Likewise, if we fail to sufficiently know and use the word of truth, our enemy, who knows and uses a weapon of lies, will easily defeat us. No commander sends out his soldiers unprepared without a weapon. Instead he gives his soldiers weapons and trains them in how to use them.

Unless you know how to use the word of God, you will lose battles against the enemy. Defend yourself by quoting, speaking, and using the word of God. Know it completely. Apply it. Speak it. Keep it. Sharpen your sword, both sides!

Step 1: Get Knowledgeable, memorize it!

It is easy for us to understand the illustration or comparison that the word of God is like a sword. But for many of us it is hard to understand the word. It is harder yet to properly use or speak that word in defense against our unholy opponent. Lack of sufficient basic knowledge about the word of Christ is a common problem with disciples and churches.

For example, Paul had to rebuke a whole church because it was failing to know and uphold the basic doctrine that Christ rose from the dead (the R in the DBR). There were some who were saying that there is no resurrection of the dead, and so Christ did not rise from the dead. So Paul rebuked this church, saying, “Become sober-minded as you ought, and stop sinning; for some have no knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame (1 Cor 15:34). It is a shameful and serious sin for a Christian to fail to understand the resurrection of the dead, and so Christ did not rise from the dead. So Paul rebuked this church, saying, “Become sober-minded as you ought, and stop sinning; for some have no knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame (1 Cor 15:34). It is a shameful and serious sin for a Christian to fail to understand the resurrection of the dead, and so Christ did not rise from the dead. So Paul rebuked this church, saying, “Become sober-minded as you ought, and stop sinning; for some have no knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame (1 Cor 15:34). It is a shameful and serious sin for a Christian to fail to understand the resurrection of the dead, and so Christ did not rise from the dead. So Paul rebuked this church, saying, “Become sober-minded as you ought, and stop sinning; for some have no knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame (1 Cor 15:33). He meant that worshipers who spread this kind of false teaching about Christ and the gospel will corrupt
one’s knowledge about the essential important facts about the person of Jesus Christ. So disciples must not keep company with them. Instead, disciples must keep good company, with people who know and believe the gospel (DBR).

Other groups of disciples, like the Hebrews, were noted for lacking knowledge about many of the basic and elementary teachings of the Christ, such as baptisms, faith toward God, repentance, and the like (READ He 5:12, 6:1, 2). This is not a small problem, but a widespread one among disciples even in our day. Many do not yet even know what is the good confession (SEE 1 Tim 6:12, 13; Ro 10: 9, 10). This indicates that they do not yet know how to properly preach and teach the gospel, for the purpose of the gospel is to get people to first have the good belief (SEE Jn 20:31) so that they can then declare that good belief in public.

So before we can use God’s word as a defense against the Devil, we must first get knowledgeable of it. In the old covenant, God said that His people died because of lack of knowledge (Hosea 4:6). Because of lack of comprehension, they lost the battle. Likewise in the new covenant, God says that people will die spiritually if they do not know Him (2 Thess 1: 8, 9). So, as Peter said, we must add to our faith knowledge (2 Pe 1:5, 6) and grow in grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Pe 3:18).

Step 2: Use “It”, not “I Think”

Having knowledge is one thing, but using it is another. Keeping the sword in its sheath during a spiritual battle is backwards and will lead to a disaster. Jesus was knowledgeable of the word and He used it to defend Himself against the Devil’s attacks (Mt 4), to refute them. He said, “It is written”. Eve also was knowledgeable of the word and could quote it to the Devil, but she failed to obey it (Ge 3:1-6).

She could not counter the Devil’s false interpretation/teaching of the word which she received and thought she knew. But Jesus could counter the Devil’s improper handling, use, and teaching of the word of God (Mt 4:6, 7). Unless you know how to properly handle the word of God, you will lose battles against the enemy. Defend yourself by quoting, speaking, and using the word of God. Know it completely. Apply it. Speak it. Keep it. Sharpen your sword, both sides! Then use it! Practice speaking the word of truth.

[G] All Prayer vs. No Regular Communication with Your Commander [vs. 18]

Work hard in prayer, and not only for yourself. Put effort into it. Always spend time praying about your spiritual battles, needs, and godly and holy desires, and the needs of all the other Christians you know.

If your opponent has been bold enough to go stand before God to accuse people like you who follow God, then why not go boldly in prayer to God for yourself? Like the angel Michael when he was battling with the devil, there may be a time when you even have to ask or appeal to the Lord to rebuke the devil for you. “But Michael the archangel, when he disputed with the devil and argued about the body of Moses, did not dare pronounce against him a railing judgment, but said, ‘The Lord rebuke you!’ ” (Jude 9). Michael argued with the devil over Moses. He fought the battle with the so called sword. But he needed to call in reinforcements, the Lord. Lord, rebuke the devil for us! Unless you devote yourself to prayer, you will lose ground in your spiritual battles. Defend yourself with all prayer and petitions. Pray. Practice praying and petitioning God, for yourself and for all those you know in Christ.
Conclusion

A spiritual war is going on for our souls. God is fighting to save them, through the spirit of holiness; spirituality. But the Devil is fighting to destroy our souls, through the spirit of unholliness; sensuality. Paul knew that we needed to be equipped to fight this spiritual war. So he taught us how to be strong, not weak in the Lord and the power of His holy might. He compared seven Christian virtues, characteristics, or states of being to the armor of a soldier. If we can learn to put on all of these things, and become skilled in them, by practice, then we are assured that we can overcome the unholy advances of the Devil, no matter how strong they may be. God equips His team to win through holiness. But you must bring all of your equipment with you to practice, and during the game of life.

Consider Your Equippers

Gifted teaching equips us. For example, “WHEN HE ASCENDED ON HIGH, HE LED CAPTIVE A HOST OF CAPTIVES, AND HE GAVE GIFTS TO MEN... And He gave some as [A] apostles, and some as [B] prophets, and some as [C] evangelists, and some as [E] pastors and [E] teachers for the equipping of the saints [holy ones]” (Eph 4:8, 11, 12).

So, Jesus has given some of His disciples certain gifts or talents to equip, furnish, build up and edify the separated ones, or those so being separated from sin (saints, meaning holy ones); Christians. All of these gifts or talents have one thing in common, that is the gift of teaching. But they do not all have the same responsibility or specialty, so to speak. For example:

[A] Holy Apostles (Eph 3:5)

These have been given the main responsibility or talent to be the highest authority in the church for all time (SEE 1 Cor 12:28), over any other gifting or talent, excepting Christ and God the Father. The apostles are the final source of all proper teaching about the Messiah, for they were chosen by name by Him to be the covenant bearers, like Moses. We clearly know and can prove that this calling would include the twelve apostles of Jesus as well as Paul, who equipped us to put on the holy armor of God. No one can be an apostle in the authoritative sense of these men, for God has already placed the apostles and Christ in the foundation (that is, the teaching foundation) with the prophets (SEE Eph 2:20). So, you and I cannot be in the foundation, the Bible, but only built upon it or by it. So we cannot be Christ, or the apostles, or the prophets. This is why we must strictly devote ourselves to learning the apostles’ and prophets’ teachings, like the first church in Jerusalem did (SEE Ac 2:42). Being devoted to their teachings, which are the Scriptures, will definitely help us to be equipped for the battle.

[B] Holy Prophets (2 Pe 3:2)

These have been given the main responsibility or talent to receive the words of God from Him by direct revelation and pass them on to disciples. So they were also bearers of the covenant will and word of God, but were not higher in authority than the apostles (SEE 1 Cor 12:28). For example, even though Paul was called to be an apostle, it is also true that he was a prophet. For he did not learn the gospel from man, but by revelation of Jesus Christ (Ga 1:11, 12). In the Scriptures, this is the main, ordinary, and sacred use and meaning of the word or calling of prophet. Prophets have been given direct, and audible revelation by the Holy Spirit, like Samuel (1 Sam 3:10; 20). Jesus promised the twelve apostles that the Holy Spirit would be sent to them to reveal the truth to them (Jn 14:26). So the apostles were also prophets.

[C] Holy Evangelists

These have been given the main responsibility, talent, or specialty to be heralds who go
out from the church (or from church to church like Timothy) to bring the good news to new hearers, like a newspaper boy on the street corner who heralds today’s copy of the newspaper. He aims to bring or distribute the news to all the people, everywhere. Evangelists are preachers, announcers, proclaimers, travelers who go out for the sake of the name (SEE 3 Jn 7, 8). Jesus was an evangelist, a preacher. For He said it Himself by declaring that He needed to travel from town to town to spread the news about the kingdom of God (READ Mk 1:38).

Note: Contrary to many people’s thinking or teaching, Timothy was called or gifted to be an evangelist, not a pastor. For example, Paul told him to do the work of an evangelist (2 Tim 4:5). He was not called to be a pastor or told to be a pastor. A pastor has different responsibilities and qualifications than an evangelist. But Timothy, an evangelist, was directed to help select pastors for the churches (SEE 1 Tim 3:1-7; also Titus 1:5-14). The apostles were evangelists as well since they were told to go into all the world and preach the gospel (Mk 16:15).

[D] Holy Pastors (Shepherds)

Pastor means shepherd. A shepherd cares for the flock, he guides it, he feeds it (he himself teaches it), he waters it, he defends it. These have been given the main responsibility or talent to tend one flock, one church, not two churches, not ten churches, not one hundred churches. Just like a father is called to care for one family, pastors are called to serve one church. Yet, a church is supposed to have more than one pastor. I explain these things in the Bible Study on the Greater Gifts (Level 3).

Notes: Peter was also a pastor (a shepherd), which he refers to in 1 Peter 5:1-5. He was married and had believing children, which is evidence of some of the God-breathed qualifications to be a pastor (READ Titus 1:5-14; 1 Tim 3:1-7).

As you ought to see in the Bible Study on the Greater Gifts (Level 3), pastors are also called elders (presbytery) 1 Tim 4:14 KJV and overseers (bishops 1 Tim 3:1 KJV). These are one in the same position, not three different gifts (SEE Ac 20:17, 28 and 1 Pe 5:1, 2, where all three descriptions—pastor (shepherd), elder, overseer—refer to the same group of men. For the word shepherd (pastor) refers to his responsibility to feed, that is to organize, teach, and care for the flock. Elder refers to his gender and age in society. Overseer refers to his authority from God to rule over a church.

[E] Holy Teachers

These have been given the main responsibility or talent to impart the holy word of Christ to others, without any other specialty or talent. Now, a person could be a teacher, but not a pastor, evangelist, prophet, or apostle. He may not have those special-ties or additional talents or callings from Christ. But the gift to teach must be present across all of these gifts. For example, a pastor must be able to teach (1 Tim 3:2). So, a person could be a teacher, but not an evangelist; that is he does not have the additional specialty or talent to spread the gospel all around everywhere, in every town. So teaching is one thing, but having the responsibility to evangelize the world or pastor a church is another thing. So, just because a person can teach, it does not mean he is also pastor, prophet, or evangelist. Teaching, by itself, is different than being a prophet, apostle, pastor, or evangelist; though all teach.

Conclusion

Jesus has given certain disciples the gift to teach His holy word to the rest of us. Yet, not all teaching gifts have the same God-given responsibility or specialty. However, the purpose of all teaching gifts is to equip the holy ones (Eph 4:12) to defeat their opponent the Devil, and his false teaching (Eph 4:14). When we read the Scriptures, we can be equipped by the holy apostles and prophets, since they wrote the Bible through the Holy Spirit (SEE 2 Pe 3:2). We ought to find holy evangelists, pastors, and/or teachers who can help us to more readily understand the Scriptures. We need stabilized in the words of the apostles and prophets so that we will not be tossed about by every kind of false teaching (Eph 4:14). We need equipped by holy teachers to get us working in a variety of ways to help support the efforts to equip other saints for the battle (Eph 4:12, 16). New life, new equippers, new trainers, new coaches. God’s team is being equipped to win through holiness. But this will take a lot of practice. We must practice together to strengthen one another to live in holiness.

Now Complete the TEST 1 on New Life
God’s Team Must Practice Together to Strengthen One Another in Holiness

An Introduction to a Most Holy Team Practice

Every team trains together. Every team practices their game. They do so to strengthen the skills needed to defeat their opponent, to reach their goal, to win the prize, together. Each team member has a unique position to play (or in which to train) for the purpose of helping the other members of the team win. The same is true for God’s team. It must gather together to strengthen all of the spiritual skills needed to reach their goal, to defeat their opponent, to win, together. Each Christian has a unique position to play (or train in) for the purpose of helping the other members of God’s team overcome their sensual adversary.

As it is written in the holy “play book,” be “not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging [strengthening] one another” (He 10:25). The word “assembling” means church, or churching and “encouraging” means to strengthen. So, we ought to be in the habit of assembling together in worship to strengthen [encourage] one another towards our team goal. Yet, Christian worship (team practice) is a deep subject, and so will require more than one lesson about it. This lesson is a overview of three key or essential aspects about it. You will carefully study these key principles in the other books in Level 2 and 3.

Next briefly consider, explore, and review three key and essential elements of a holy team practice.

Key #1 - Only Practice in the Way, Method, Style, or Form in Which Jesus Wants You To

Sports teams and business teams do not all practice the same way. For example, the way a soccer team practices is different than the way a track team practices. Obviously, teams like these have different goals. So they have different skills to strengthen. So, depending on the kind of team, it practices according to its goal, according to its strengthening needs. Likewise, since Christians have a unique goal, and therefore unique skills to strengthen, they must practice in a unique way, style, or form. Christians have been given a very holy way in which to practice.
Now, the way or style in which we practice together matters a whole lot to God, since it is a form of worship, respect, and reverence towards Him as our Father, and also a way of encouraging one another, His children. Therefore the way in which we practice together should matter a whole lot to each and every one of us as well. Christian worship pleases God. But evidently, not all forms or styles of worship are Christian. Not all kinds of worship are true. Not all forms of worship are holy. Not all ways of worship help Christians reach their true goal. So to begin with, when we consider “team practice,” we need to think about and understand the overall way in which God wants Christians to conduct their practice. In doing so, this will help every member of the team reach the goal of holiness.

In the second book of three in this series on Christian worship (Level 2), you will study the specific way or nature in which to worship God. So, for now, below, consider a brief outline of it.

1. Focus on a Person, Not a Place

Jesus said, “Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father” (Jn 4:21). So the way in which to practice (worship) does not depend on a place. Indeed, it depends on the person of Jesus Christ, His name, and some other team members. “For where two or three have gathered together in My name, I am there in their midst” (Mt 18:20). Christian practice centers on God’s Son, the Messiah, not Jerusalem, not Solomon’s Temple, not Moses’ Law, etc.

2. Worship the Father, Not a Genderless Being

Jesus said, “You will worship the Father” (Jn 4:21). So our team practice should be focused on God as our Father, not a genderless being or a mother, as some would have us believe. Obviously, a gender battle is raging in the world. Indeed, some worshipers are even “translating” Bibles without the male gender! Amazing!

3. Know the God of the Scriptures, Do Not Remain Ignorant of Him

Jesus said, “You worship what you
do not know; we worship what we know" (Jn 4:22). For various reasons, certain worshipers truly do not know God. They are ignorant of Him. So true teams comprehend the exact nature and character of God, and they demonstrate it by their behavior, especially during team practice.

4. Worship in Spirit, Not in Flesh!

Jesus said, “True worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth” (Jn 4:23). So the way in which we should practice together should be in spirit, spiritual, not sensual. Indeed, the way to worship God is in spirit and truth, not in flesh and error, not in sensuality and the commandments of men, not in the ways and means of the world, not in traditional or contemporary, not in denominational or non-denominational, not in Mosaic or Davidic, and so on and so forth.

5. Worship in Truth, Not in Error!

Jesus said, “True worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth” (Jn 4:23). So the way to worship God is in the truth, not in error, not in the traditions and commandments or opinions of men, and so and so forth. God expects us to practice accurately, according to His Son’s truth.

Key #2 - Follow All of the Practice Regulations

Sports teams and business teams have certain rules, regulations, or policies for how to practice or play their game. Every member of the team should learn and follow them. This helps the team, and its leaders, reach their goal. Violations of these rules could lead to disciplinary action or removal from team. Likewise, Christ has certain rules and regulations (commandments) that must be learned and followed, especially during team practice. This helps their Holy Leader reach His goal with His team. Violations of these commandments could lead to disciplinary action, by men or by the Lord Himself, even removal from the holy team. Below consider this further. It is an outline of the last book in the series on Christian worship.

The Bible Study on The “Regulations of Divine Worship” (He 9:1)

1. Covenants Have Regulations of Worship

“So now even the first covenant had regulations of divine worship (He 9:1). This verse, and related passage, implies that the Christian covenant has regulations of worshiping God. Yet, when it comes to being a Christian, many worshipers do not believe that it has anything to do with obeying certain rules and regulations. Yet the kind of relationship which God wants with His worshipers is a regulated one. The Christian covenant has rules and regulations which govern one’s conduct in life and in the household of God, during worship. Brethren, there are very serious consequences for breaking these regulations or remaining ignorant of them. God does not save rebels! So we must be ruly, not unruly.
2. Review the Heart, the Essence of True Worship

Friends, the nature of our worship must reflect the nature of our God. It must be spiritual and truthful, not sensual and erring. For God is spirit and truth, not flesh and error. So the nature and character of our worship must be the same. Simply because of God’s nature, He only can accept worship, or elements of it, that is according to that nature. Likewise, He can only accept groups of worshipers who worship Him in keeping with His character.

There are many things in the Scriptures which mark worshipers as worshipping God in flesh, not in spirit, not according to God’s true nature. This could include the kind of music that we sing, prayers that we submit to God, covenant we follow, style of worship that we promote or practice, the way that we “name” ourselves as a church, and much more. Likewise, there are many things which mark worshipers as worshipping God in error, not in truth. Things such as promoting ourselves, our own opinions, and our own traditions over Christ and His truth. So, we must renew our minds with Christ’s teachings about true worshipers, the characteristics and habits that they demonstrate and in which they grow.

3. Beloved, Understand Whom We Worship

All throughout the Bible we find evidence of who God actually is. The Old Covenant began to describe Him as an “Us” and an “Our” and as “the Spirit”. The New Covenant more completely described the “Us” as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; three separate and distinct persons. Our God, whom we worship, is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

4. Church, Observe the True Meaning of the Word Worship

When it comes to worshiping our God, many worshipers have not yet learned and put into practice one of the most basic and reverent aspects of it. Throughout the whole Bible, from the beginning of the Old Testament to the worship activity in heaven, as recorded in the book of Revelation, true worshipers have demonstrated the sacred meaning of the word; to bend the knee in worship of God. In its most authentic use, this is what the word worship means. Let us practice it together!

5. Friend, Observe the Regulation to Attend Worship, with a Purpose

From now on and into eternity, God wants people to worship Him, together, through Jesus Christ, His Son. There are many reasons for this. First, we have commandment to do so, to be in the habit of attending worship services. But there is more to it than just attendance. God wants every Christian to attend, but to come with the purpose to motivate members of the assembly (with their gifts and talents) to be much more loving and also heavily involved in good works. So we must come to worship with a purpose to increase people’s love for God and man (and women and children) and to do excellent things in life.

6. Beloved, Know How to Conduct Yourself During Worship

Did you know that our Father has a code of conduct for those of us who enter His household? It affects the words that we speak while in His home, and even those who ought to be speaking words in His home. Likewise, it affects the adornment of His daughters, whom should be leading or following, and how we should
treat each of the different kinds of members of His household. During a worship assembly, and even in the greater kingdom of God, there is a code of conduct to be followed among all Christians.

7. Gifted Ones, Observe the Regulations for Using Your Talents During Worship

“Now concerning spiritual gifts” (1 Cor 12:1). The subject of this verse is spiritual gifts, and the next three chapters is devoted to the regulation of such in an assembly during worship (1 Cor 14:26). So we need to learn and put in to practice the regulations concerning certain team positions.

8. Church, Observe The Lord’s Supper, and Its Regulations Church

“Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord” (1 Cor 11:27). Would you like to be guilty of killing the Lord, the Christ? How a team practices the Lord’s Supper is very important in the sight of God. Yet, some do not even observe it, or do not have a habit of doing so!

9. Church, Observe The Regulations for Judging Wicked Members

“Do you not judge those who are within the church? Remove the wicked man from among yourselves” (1 Cor 5:12, 13). So God’s team must not practice together with wicked team members. This would include people who confess Jesus as Lord, yet are still liars, idolaters, sexually immoral, and those who are carrying around any other condemnable LOG of sin.

10. Friends, Observe The Regulations for Dealing with False Teachers

“Do not receive him into your house, and do not give him a greeting” (2 Jn 10). God’s team must not encourage false teachers in any way, shape, or form, with greetings, by receiving them, or by offering them hospitality, etc.

Key #3 - Only Play the Position Which God Has Assigned to You

There are many teams in a league, which means there are a lot of positions to fill. Indeed, the very nature of a team is that it has more than one member, and therefore has more than one position to play. This is why it is called a team. This is why it has members, not one member. Every position on a team is very important, necessary, and needed to help the team reach its goal.

Every team member must diligently learn and practice his position to become or remain competitive. In doing so, he will play to the best of his potential and abilities. Thus he will help bring victory to the team. Likewise, to help bring victory to God’s team, every Christian ought to find a position on one of God’s team, and play it well. There are three kinds or categories of positions (spiritual gifts), and three studies written for them. These comprise The Complete Advanced Study on Spiritual Gifts to Cause Spiritual Growth (Level 3).
Conclusion

God’s team must practice together to encourage one another in holiness. We should conduct our practice in the way and manner in which Christ commanded, in spirit and truth, not in flesh and error, not in traditional or contemporary, not in denominational or non-denominational, not in any other way. This pleases His Father, since His nature is Spirit and Truth. Every member should learn and apply the regulations associated with team practice in order to help the team, and God, reach its holy goal. In a fitting and proper manner, every member should rise up and fulfill his God-given position(gifts) on the team. This will strengthen the other members in a variety of ways. New life, new practice, new skills.
Teams in this world participate in leagues. One team plays in one league, but not in every league. When you join a team, you are also joining the league in which it plays. And as some say, “He is out of my league,” or “She is out of my league,” or “This is out of my league,” likewise, as Christians, there are many relationships and things which are out of our ballpark, because they are unholy.

As you ought to see in the passage below, staying in the league of holiness is about the kind of binding relationships we join, enter, or maintain in various stages or aspects of our lives; agreements that naturally work against and deter one’s faith in Christ.

Understand the Context

The main subject of this passage (2 Cor 6:14—7:1) is making binding agreements with unbelievers, specifically avoiding them in order to be holy. “Do not be bound together with unbelievers” (2 Cor 6:14). For what do honey bees have in common with wasps, hornets, bears, or mice? Do they hive together? Birds of a feather flock together. “What fellowship has light with darkness?” In the beginning, “God separated the light from the darkness” (Ge 1:4). So, with some things, God has made them

On Holy Relationships

“Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness? Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, ‘I WILL DWELL IN THEM AND WALK AMONG THEM; AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE.’ Therefore, COME OUT FROM THEIR MIDST AND BE SEPARATE [be holy],’ says the Lord. ‘And I will welcome you. And I will be a father to you, And you shall be sons and daughters to Me,’ says the Lord Almighty. Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God” (2 Cor 6:14—7:1).
to be separate, like believers [light] being separate in certain ways from unbelievers [darkness], specifically in the sense of what this passage is addressing: certain binding agreements with them. For these could work sorely against one’s faith in Christ and devotion to Him.

So when the passage concludes by saying, “Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God (2 Cor 7:1),” it especially means in regards to certain binding relationships with unbelievers. We are to perfect [mature] holiness [separation] in our relationships with them, and with anyone or anything else that God has said will defile one’s “flesh and spirit”.

This means we need to clean up both the inside of the cup (the spirit) and the outside of the cup (the flesh); both the internals and the externals are important to God. For we are commanded to: “cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness” (2 Cor 7:1). So we have been given the responsibility to wash ourselves from any and all defilements, corrupters, bad influences of both the inside and the outside of our bodies, especially cleaning up, if possible, certain kinds of relationships and situations we enter into with others. For our number one goal in life is not how well we can take care of ourselves socially, financially, and the like, but to be, first and foremost, holy. So, if you must let something suffer loss, you must not let it be your holiness.

A. PREVENT Yourself from Getting into Binding Agreements with Unbelievers

“Do not be bound together with unbelievers” (2 Cor 6:14), meaning bound [obligated to be] together by the law of God or man. When something is bound together, it is intertwined, fastened, or stuck together in some way, like a rope or the pages of a book, which are bound together, they have a binding. They are obligated to be together. Next, consider some important examples of agreements which are binding in the sight of God or man, agreements which can defile one’s flesh or spirit.

1. Marriage Is a Binding Agreement [Marriage-Bound]

One of the most important binding agreements which anyone can enter into, including unbelievers, is marriage. In God’s eyes, marriage is binding for all peoples, not only for believers. For example, God said: “Marriage is to be held in honor among...
and the marriage bed is to be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge" (He 13:4).

So, marriage is to be honored among all people, not only believers. Otherwise, God will condemn anyone who dishonors it through fornication or adultery, regardless of whether one believes in Him or not. For from the beginning, even before Christ was made known or His holy covenant, when God made man and woman, He “joined” (Ge 2:24) them together in holy marriage, not in sexual immorality, for Eve was Adam’s “wife” (Ge 2:24; 25), not his girlfriend, lover, mistress, fiance, etc. Therefore, marriage is from God, and was established at the foundation of the world for all men to follow (SEE Ge 2:24). It is an ancient Biblical custom. All men everywhere ought to be aware of it.

So when God said, “Do not be bound together with unbelievers” (2 Cor 6:14), this would specifically apply to marriage because it is a binding agreement in His eyes, whether one is religious or not, whether one gets married in a church or not. Nevertheless, you ought to prevent yourself from entering into a marriage with an unbeliever. But what if you have married an unbeliever?

What You Ought to Do If You Married an Unbeliever

Be cautious. Be wise. Do not sin. You must honor your marriage agreement (unless God considers your marriage adultery, which I briefly explain below). So, again, first and foremost, you must honor your marriage agreement! Marriage is marriage, whether one believes in God or not! Let me remind you of this key verse about it: “Marriage is to be held in honor among all... for fornicators and adulterers God will judge” (He 13:4). There are two things you must understand about this verse.

First, God recognizes or acknowledges that marriage is to be honored by all, around the world, in every nation, regardless of a belief system. It is the honorable, not dishonorable thing to do, everywhere. This has been so from the beginning of creation, and every subsequent generation of man from then on is to honor it (READ Ge 2:24). It is the righteous custom from the beginning of time, before there were any Christians! So you must not try to separate, renounce, or unbind a marriage between a believer and an unbeliever (even your own marriage to an unbeliever). It is still a marriage in God’s sight. It is still an honorable union. Indeed, from the beginning, marriage is honorable among all.

Second, you must not dishonor or disrespect the institution of marriage (even your marriage to an unbeliever) by instead committing some form of sexual immorality against it, such as the sins of fornication and adultery, or even perversions. Otherwise, as God said, unless you repent and
Some Work Arrangements Are Binding

When two demon possessed men met Jesus, they cried out, saying, “What business do we have with each other, Son of God?” (Mt 8:29).

In another situation, one said, “Let us alone! What business do we have with each other, Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God” (Lk 4:34).

It seems that these leading ones in the kingdom of darkness readily and quickly understood, as soon as they met Jesus, that they did not want to be in business together with the Son of Light. Indeed, they questioned even the very hint of that kind of relationship, “for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness?” (2 Cor 6:14).

Consider How a Young Christian Woman Prepared for Marriage

I once met a minister’s daughter who prepared herself for marriage in a unique way. To avoid being marriage-bound to an unbeliever, she placed a sign on the wall her bedroom, saying, “If I get married, I will marry a Christian.” So, while growing up as a child, she encouraged herself in this way. She prepared the hope-chest of her heart, if you will, to only marry a Christian.

Child of God, if you plan to get married, you should somehow prepare your heart to marry a Christian. Indeed, even Christian widows who want to get married again, are clearly commanded by God, their heavenly Father, to only marry in the Lord, which means a Christian, a believer (SEE 1 Cor 7:39). Prevent yourself from being marriage-bound with an unbeliever.

YOU MUST READ THE FINE PRINT: As I carefully pointed out to you in the Advanced Chronological Study of the Holy Bible, Containing the Old and New Testaments (Level 1), fornicators sin by having sexual relations outside of marriage. They do not get married. They both have never before been married. To repent, and do the right thing in God’s eyes, fornicators must either separate or be joined together in marriage. Adulterers and adulteresses sin by not remaining faithful to their first and rightful spouse, either through an affair or through divorce and remarriage. For Jesus said that if any man marries a divorced woman, he is committing adultery with her (READ Mt 5:32), meaning against her first husband. For she belongs to him, until death, whether or not they remain married. A woman belongs to a man as long as he lives (SEE Ro 7:3; 1 Cor 7:39), saith the Lord. For woman was made for man. Likewise, if any woman marries a man who has divorced his wife for a reason other than her being sexually immoral (SEE Mt 19:9), she is committing adultery against his first wife. Her marriage to this man is an adulterous union. It is not holy. So, if your marriage is adulterous, meaning you married a divorced woman or you married a man who divorced his wife for a reason other than her being sexual immoral, you need to separate from that marriage. It is adultery. It is not holy. This is the reason why John the Baptist openly spoke against King Herod’s marriage to Herodias (Mark 6:17, 18), saying it was not right for him to have her as a wife. For she was divorced or separated from her rightful husband. She had a husband that was still living. So when Herod married her, he and she were committing adultery. They were joined together in adultery. If you have questions or need further training or clarification on these holy commandments, I recommend that you complete or re-complete my Advanced Chronological Study of the Holy Bible, Containing the Old and New Testaments (Level 1), especially the lesson on repentance regarding adultery.

Refuse Certain Business Agreements

There are certain business arrangements that do not make sense for any Christian to be involved with at all, like being in business with demons. You must refuse to enter into certain business partnerships. Be discerning. For example, what does a spiritual person have to do with a sensual business? What does a moral companion have to do with an immoral company? What does a decent soul separate from it, He must “judge” (He 13:4) and condemn you to hell, especially on the day of judgment.
have to do with an indecent trade? What does a wholesome person have to do with an unwholesome commerce? What does a sober person have to do with the business of intoxication? What does a spiritual soul have to do with a sensual sale?

“At Will” Employment

“At will” employment is an understanding or agreement that many businesses have with their employees. It means that either the business or the employee can sever or quit that relationship at any time, at the will of either the one or the other, even without notice. So it is not binding in that sense. It seems like an equitable, voluntary yoke. But some employment agreements are not “At will,” but modified versions of it that bind employees in certain ways which cause them to violate the will of God.

Some Personal Examples

Consider Ross Perot, American businessman. In his day, he was one of the richest men in the world. Yet he demonstrated a very firm holy business mentality. For example, before he sold his pioneering software outsourcing company, Electronic Data Systems (EDS), to General Motors in the 1980’s, his company would not enter into certain contracts to provide their services to businesses that were morally questionable or unholy, like the distribution of filthy video content, gambling, etc. But after Ross left and was replaced by another president, the company started to get into some unholy business agreements, partnerships, and contracts. (Now in 1989 I joined EDS, which was about four years after Ross left. For the next ten years I worked mainly as a software engineer supporting banking, health care, and telephony businesses before resigning to pursue evangelism full-time.)

I remember attending a company-wide teleconference that was being conducted by some high ranking company executives. It was sort of a “town hall” type meeting with all the other employees (we had about 100,000). During a question and answer session between the employees and the officials of the company, I was struck by what an advanced software engineer said. He had the courage to say, in the hearing of the whole company, something like this: “EDS has always been a company of high moral standing. Why are we now getting into contracts to support gambling, etc.” A company lawyer responded and tried to justify the involvement with these companies. If I remember correctly, he claimed that these things are now more accepted by the culture. As a side point, beware of leadership changes. It may result in a shift to the left or degradation of moral clarity, standards, and propriety once held, had, and maintained. Not all leading men are able to refuse certain business agreements because they have a morality problem themselves. Some are greedy and primarily seek money and profit, regardless of the type of business partnerships which they get into. Some people think that business has nothing to do with morality or holiness.

Consider OfficeMax furniture store, print centers. In 2006, a Christian man, who was skilled in the printing business, applied for a part time job in the print department at OfficeMax, an American office products store. The company was readily interested in hiring him, and expected to put him to work within a few days. But during the hiring interview, the manager said that, as a condition of employment, the company would require him to sign a one hundred percent flexibility agreement. This meant that he would have to work any time they wanted him to work during the seven day week. The man quickly thought to himself that if he signed this agreement, he would then be binding himself with unbelievers to work anytime that they wanted him to work, even Sunday morning, during worship times, etc. So he told the manager that he could not agree to work on Sunday morning because it is the day that he attended church. He told the manager that he was committed to God and to the church. He could not bind himself by signing a 100% availability agreement. Because of this, the manager quickly lost interest in this man as an employee, and did not offer him a job. He said, “Why didn’t you tell me this before?” And, “I think I’m religious. I go to church once or twice a month.”

Unfortunately, the binding work agreement of this company did not allow for employees to be fully committed to God and church. Who is the devil at the top of this company who wanted to bind people from worshipping and honoring God? This policy clearly is anti-Christian. It disrespects God, His people, and God’s word, which directs those who worship Him to not be in the habit of missing church (SEE He 10:25). Do you want me to agree in writing to give up going to church to work here? Obviously, I did not get the job. Nor did I want it. Yes, I am the man. Now If God expects a Christian to go to church, then why would a Christian let anybody else, especially unbelievers, even a business, try to distract him from this by making him legally commit himself in writing to do so? The print business is no emergency. Besides, they had plenty of people, unbelievers willing to work on Sunday. Why not offer them the extra work?

3. Soldiering in America Is Binding [Being War-Bound]

Soldiering is not “At will.” For example, even in America, the land of the free, when you voluntarily sign up to be a soldier, you must sign up for several years at a time. You are bound to that time frame and cannot be easily discharged. You cannot quit or be absent from it without being A.W.O.L., absent without leave. This is punishable by imprisonment, and death by other countries standards. Plus you must go wherever they want you to go, whenever they want you to go,
without your family. And you must fight whomever they want you to fight. You must kill whom they want you to kill. Soldiering is very binding.

Consider King Jehoshaphat who Brought Wrath Upon Himself and His Nation by Forming Certain Binding Agreements with Unbelievers

Even though Jehoshaphat was a righteous and holy man before God, he still made two bad agreements for which he suffered shame and loss of lives. For example, “The Lord was with Jehoshaphat because he followed the example of his father David’s earlier days and did not seek the Baals, but sought the God of his father, followed His commandments, and did not act as Israel did” (2 Chron 17:3, 4). Yet, Jehoshaphat made two unholy binding agreements with a wicked person. For example:

“Now Jehoshaphat had great riches and honor; and [1] he allied himself by marriage with Ahab. Some years later he went down to visit Ahab at Samaria. And Ahab slaughtered many sheep and oxen for him and the people who were with him, and induced him to go up against Ramoth-gilead. Ahab king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat king of Judah, ‘Will you go with me against Ramoth-gilead?’ And he said to him, ‘I am as you are, and my people as your people, and [2] we will be with you in the battle.’ ” (2 Chron 18:1-3). “So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat king of Judah went up against Ramoth-gilead” (2 Chron 18:28).

So, Jehoshaphat was both [1] marriage-bound, and [2] war-bound with an idolatrous king. Jehoshaphat did not stay within the league of holiness. This brought judgment and condemnation from God. For example, God sent a man to Jehoshaphat to rebuke him, and so put him to shame for his binding agreements with this unbelieving king. “Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him and said to King Jehoshaphat, ‘Should you help the wicked and love those who hate the LORD and so bring wrath on yourself from the LORD?’ ” (2 Chron 19:1-3). Again, “What agreement has the temple of God with idols?” (2 Cor 6:16). Ahab was an idolater, among other wicked things. So binding oneself in this way to help the wicked brought a rebuke and warning of God’s wrath upon this good king, and Israel. The lesson is this, especially for national leaders: Do not bind yourself or your people in war or marriage with idolaters and murderers and liars and the like. Be holy. Be separate. You have God’s blessing to do so.

Note: Christian, when someone like Ahab asks you, “Will you go with me,” so to speak, in a binding agreement, such as in marriage or in war, what will you say? Being the helpful Christian that you are, like Jehoshaphat, you might just say, “Yes”. But, you should simply say, “No” or if fitting and wise, say “I cannot do that” or “I cannot support that.” The reason for this is that it would bring the wrath and judgment of God upon you. You must do the things God favors (graces), not wraths. You must keep yourself in the love, in the grace, the favor of God, not His wrath. Avoid his wrath! Escape His wrath, through following Jesus Christ! Yet, Christians should help people, even unbelievers, but not in this way at all! Ahab was as an idolater, even though he was Jewish. So why would Jehoshaphat unwittingly make two binding agreements with him, both in marriage and in war? At some point, God will rebuke us and put us to shame for entering into unholy partnerships. Are you helping the wicked accomplish their wicked goals? Prevent yourself from entering into certain agreements with them or else you will bring God’s fierce wrath upon yourself or a stiff, public, humiliating rebuke. Mature separation in your relationships with unbelievers. Do not class yourself with them. You are in a different league than them. You are not in the league of liars, murderers, idolaters, adulterers, and the like. You are in the league of the redeemed; you have been redeemed from these wicked and worthless things.

4. Slavery Is Binding [Slave-Bound]

“Do not become slaves of men” (1 Cor 7:24). Some make themselves slaves of their own free will (See Ex 21:5). But others have been forced into slavery, like Joseph (Ge 37:26-28). But eventually, Joseph was freed. If
you can get your freedom by some righteous way, get it. Christians are not to become slaves of men. If it is within your power, prevent yourself from becoming a slave. “Were you called while a slave? Do not worry about it; but if you are able also to become free, rather do that. For he who was called in the Lord while a slave, is the Lord’s freedman; likewise he who was called while free, is Christ’s slave. You were bought with a price; do not become slaves of men” (1 Cor 7:21-24). Since we are commanded not to become slaves of men, slavery is therefore a sin to a holy Christian. Yet, it is a binding agreement. Beware!

**Conclusion**

There are certain relationships in this world that are binding, things which must not be broken, such as marriage, soldiering, slavery, certain work agreements, and the like. God’s team must be aware of the binding nature of these things for the purpose of staying in the league of holiness. Members must prevent themselves from entering into these kinds of binding agreements with unbelievers, with people or organizations who do not truly believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God or His holy will and commandments. Yet, we know that many of us have not obeyed the commandment to not be bound together with unbelievers or with certain things or situations which are defiling our flesh and spirit. And so, we need to carefully consider the next point about separating ourselves from any unholy relationship, situation, or thing.

**B. SEPARATE Yourself from Any Unholy Relationship with Unbelievers and Certain Believers**

You are now the light. You are God’s light. “What fellowship has light with darkness? ‘Therefore, **COME OUT FROM THEIR MIDST AND BE SEPARATE** [be holy],’ says the Lord. ‘AND DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAN; And I will welcome you’ ” (2 Cor 6:14, 17). If you want to be welcomed by God Himself, if you want to be His son or His daughter, you must do what He said to do. You must somehow “come out from,” “separate” yourself from, and “do not touch” certain unclean or unholy things, including certain relationships.

Some of us have not been wise enough to do what the first point of this lesson said to do, to prevent ourselves from getting into binding agreements with unbelievers. So obviously we must now think about our current relationships and whether or not we should separate or distance ourselves from any of them, and if so, how we should rightfully separate from them. This can be a very tricky thing to properly figure out, simply for the fact that many of us need to add to our faith knowledge, and moral excellence, and other good virtues (SEE 2 Pe 1:5). If you are not fully knowledgeable about the will of Christ, especially about morality according to New Testament standards, then you could have a very difficult time evaluating your current relationships.
The Marriage Scene in the USA Is a Mess

Indeed, I myself, at this time, am hard pressed to find a church in the United States who understands Christ’s will regarding sexual morals, especially concerning what constitutes adultery. For many churches have a lot of members who have married into adultery (SEE Mt 5:32), and have not yet repented of it. They are like King Herod, who had married a woman whose husband was still living (SEE Mark 6:17, 18). This constitutes adultery (READ Ro 7:3). For not only did John believe this and admonish this unbelieving king about it (and Jesus said that no one was greater than John / Mt 11:11), Jesus also believed it and said it so clearly. “Whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.” (Mt 5:32).

Man, have you married a divorced woman? Woman, have you married a man who divorced his wife for a reason other than her being sexually immoral (Mt 5:32)? Do you know what you must do to be holy in the sight of God?

So, you must first get very knowledgeable about the will of Christ, especially about sexual morals, morality, according to Christ’s standards. Find out what Christ believe is unclean in regards to certain relationships. If you find yourself in an unholy situation with an unbeliever, or even a believer, for again, many disciples have a problem with morality and wickedness, you must remove yourself from that relationship. As God said, you must come out from the middle of it (2 Cor 6:17). Come out from being housed with it. This is how you become holy. Your own flesh and spirit must be properly distanced from an unholy thing. Below, consider these examples of unclean relationships.

1. Unholy Marriage Unions

Like Herodias, whom King Herod had married (Mark 6:17, 18), there are certain people who are not valid candidates for marriage. You could have married one of them. You could be one of them. Husband, you could have married an adulteress. If you did, this would make you an adulterer. You would both be sinning against the woman’s rightful first spouse. Wife, you could have married an adulterer. If you did, this would make you an adulteress. You would both be sinning against the man’s rightful first spouse. These unholy marriage agreements were studied in my Advanced Chronological Study of the Holy Bible (Level 1), the lesson on repentance from dead works. Please refer to that study for the details of what is adultery and how to repent of it.

2. Unholy Living Arrangements

When Jesus offered the water of life to a Samaritan woman, she responded by asking for that water (Jn 4:15). So Jesus then tested her on one of her unholy relationships. “He said to her, ‘Go, call your husband and come here.’ The woman answered and said, ‘I have no husband.’ Jesus said
Many people are like the woman at the well. They want what Jesus has to offer in regards to eternal life, yet they have unholy relationships. Some just “shack up,” live together, co-habit or have sexual relations without living together. These are all unholy relationships because they violate the Scriptures on holy marriage (SEE He 13:4). It is sexual immorality. Members of God’s team must separate from these kinds of relationships to become holy. And like the woman at the well, a woman who has been married before, even several times, you should not just marry the person with whom you are living or having sexual relations. Do you yet understand what constitutes adultery? Do you yet understand how to repent of it in holiness? What does holiness mean? What is synonymous with the word? In your relationships, have you done what the word means in order to be what the word means?

Avoid All Appearance of Evil: “Abstain from all appearance of evil” (1 Thess 5:22 KJV). When a man and a woman live together without being married to each other (even if they are just sharing the space or expenses and not each other’s bodies), it appears evil, immoral, and unholy. They look immoral to the world. They look immoral to the church. They cannot change that perception without moving completely out from the same house. “COME OUT FROM THEIR MIDST AND BE SEPARATE (be holy),” says the Lord. “AND DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAN.” It is unclean, meaning unholy, to be in the middle of a relationship that is evil or even appears evil. You must separate from it to be holy. But some men and women refuse to do what God said to do, to come out from the midst of certain unclean relationships. And so they continue to be evil or appear evil. For example, some will still live together in the same house, claiming that they are not having one another. Some pledge as a solution to their immorality that they will just sleep in different rooms of the same house. Others say that they need to live together because of financial reasons or health care reasons, even if they claim that they are not having one another. All of these excuses are not good enough; they are not acceptable. They are not holy. No one should live together or co-habit without being married. It appears evil. And if you truly should not be married together, then you need to separate. God is faithful, with every temptation to be immoral or appear immoral, God provides a way out of it so that we will be able to endure it (SEE 1 Cor 10:13). You have a way out from your unholy relationship. You very likely had a way or ways out before you got into it. Holiness is our goal, not financial well being, not relationship well being, so to speak. You can endure your financial hardship without appearing to be immoral. God provides endurance (but you cannot endure hell). You have a way out. Remember Jesus said that He would never leave you or forsake you. If you want to be in a saving relationship with God, to be one of His holy sons or His holy daughters, you must avoid all appearance of evil in your relationships. You cannot just live together with someone. It appears immoral. Remove yourself from what appears to be evil. The appearance of things is important to God, whether it appears holy or not. It should be important to us as well in all things, such as the appearance of our relationships, the appearance of our adornment, the appearance of our attitude, etc. Is it holy or not?

3. Unholy Work Arrangements and Community Involvement

There are some businesses, employments, or community volunteer efforts that we find ourselves in that are unholy. Take time to carefully think about these areas of your life. Consider everything that has been written about holiness in this entire study on New Life. Then make all the necessary changes as quickly as possible in the sight of God to become holy and to appear holy. Do not lag behind in holiness. Without holiness, no one, not even you will see the Lord (READ He 12:14).

4. Separate Yourself from Scoffers

The very first Psalm says that the blessed man does not sit, stand, or walk with certain types of unholy individuals. Instead, he devotes himself to holy things, like the word, and bears the kind of fruit that goes along with it. From whom are you getting counsel, advice or guidance? With whom are you walking down the path of life? With whom
are you standing around or loitering? Of what gang are you a member? What memberships do you have? With whom are you sitting on the couches, stools, and bleachers of this life? Where are the wicked, sinners, and scoffers of today? Are they in your community, school, on T.V., etc.? Separate yourself.

5. Despise a Reject

Be redemptive to all, meaning preach the gospel of repentance to them, and forgive them if they believe it and repent of their sins, even their sins against your own spirit or flesh. But as Psalm 15:4 indicates, you must take no pleasure with him who is, in gods eyes, a reprobate [a reject]. Whom are you enjoying, drooling over, or esteeming? With whom are you keeping company or having a friendship? Is he or she a reject in God’s eyes, a reprobate? Someone who will be discarded by the Almighty God because he is like a broken tool, defective? And who can repair this person, this reject, but God? What kind of effect is God’s word having on this person? No effect at all? Enjoy holy Christians as your companions.

6. Leave the Presence of a Fool

From whom should we separate? Proverbs 14:7 says that we should separate from a fool. Keep company with the wise and you will be wise (SEE Pr 15:7). Holy men do not play the fool. Nor do they enjoy them. Take no pleasure in a fool. Keep company with God fearing, obedient souls. We must have the same goal as the Psalmist, to be a companion, a friend, of all those who fear God and keep His commandments (Ps 119:63). Reverence for God and obedience to His commandments is holy. Who are your friends? Be friendly with holy men and women. Make them your companions, your company.

Note: Obviously, there are other kinds of relationships and situations which we must consider how to perfect in holiness. For example, parents and the training of their children. Should believing parents let unbelievers school their children? Is it a binding relationship? Even if it is not, should Christian parents let the unbelieving world train their children; five days a week, all day long? Brethren, we home schooled all nine of our children. And others we know, who cannot do this, put their children in Christian run/type schools. Yet we know of many Christians who voluntarily put their children in the unholy education league of the world. And what about participating in the league of unholy holidays? Consider Halloween. Why do so many Christian women in America decorate their homes with witches and all the other evil stuff related to this most unholy day? It’s a little like having statues of idols in your house on “Idol Day.” If there was such a day, it’s like having little statues of murderers on your living room table. Why entertain yourselves with something God hates, witches? Time will fail me if I speak of the evils associated with the myth of old ‘Saint’ Nick and other unholy days. Purify yourselves!

Conclusion

When you joined God’s team, you entered the league of holiness. Your goal must be to stay or get within that league, especially in regards to all of your relationships. You need to diligently prevent yourself from getting into unholy relationships with unbelievers or believers. You must separate from any unholy situation in which you find yourself. You must mature separation with unbelievers. You must do this out of Godly fear. You should be a companion of those who fear God and keep His commandments. You must strive to be good company as well, holy company. Is your company holy? God’s team must stay within the league of holiness. Indeed, new life, new league.
God’s Team Must Wear Holy Uniforms

Consider Your Adornment

Do opposing teams wear the same uniform? Indeed, they do not. Unless one is a spy, or a wolf in sheep’s clothing, this simply does not happen. For some very good reasons, teams ought to wear different uniforms, to differentiate themselves from each other. For example, a player needs to know who is on his team and who is not. For he wants to pass the ball to members of his own team, not the other. A coach needs to know which players are his. For he wants to give signals and instructions about his strategy and winning game plan to his own team, not the other. A referee or judge needs to know the difference between two teams. For, when a player does not play by the rules, he wants to give a penalty to the correct team. The crowd or spectators need to know the difference as well. For some want to cheer for their team, not the other. Therefore it is obvious that every battle or every competition automatically requires opponents to look different from each other or else there would be chaos. Opposing teams must not, cannot, and should not blend in with each other by wearing the same uniform. God’s team has a distinguishing feature in its uniform, holiness. Holiness is what makes God’s team different than any other team. Indeed, it is how God even knows that we are on His team. Put on the holy uniform which God wants you to wear. On whose team are you? If you truly want to know the answer to this question, then simply look at or examine your adornment. Consider your uniform.

Wear The Messiah

First and foremost, our uniform is the Messiah. He is holy. Wearing Him, being Christ-like, Messiah-like makes us look different than our opponent. When we talk about our uniform, this is the most important thing to keep in mind. But how do we begin to “wear” Christ?

1. You Were Clothed with Him in Water Baptism

“For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ” (Ga 3:27). In baptism, we change our clothes. We change our uniform. We change teams. We change who we are into. We no longer wish to wear the opposing teams uniform. It is unholy. We no longer want to be on Satan’s team. We no longer want to be into the Devil, the things of the Devil. We want to be “into Christ,” the things of Jesus Christ, through “baptism”. Putting on Christ requires such a total change of life that it is likened to a death, burial, and resurrection into a new life.
And water baptism imitates Christ’s burial. For example, “What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it? Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life” (Ro 6:1-4). When we are buried with Christ in baptism it means that we are discontinuing our life of sin; we bury or end it and start a new life to be Christ-like.

2. God Planned for Us to Put on Christ

“For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren” (Ro 8:29). It is our destiny to become fitted, matched, molded into the image of God’s holy Son. On the other hand, it is also our destiny to not be fitted, matched, or molded into the pattern which the world presents to us through Satan, his team members, or unholy and unrighteous people. “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind” (Ro 12:2). Instead we must: “put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him” (Col 3:10). We know who created us. Our new self must be like Him. In another place we read: “put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth” (Eph 4:24). So to put on Christ means to put on holiness and righteousness. Now think about your uniform of righteousness.

Clothe Yourself with Righteous Acts

To wear Christ is to be clothed with doing what is right. This is illustrated so beautifully in the following passage.

1. Put on Your Wedding Clothes

Get ready for the wedding! “ ‘Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready.’ It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints” (Re 19:7, 8). The bride is God’s team. Her wedding gown is the “righteous acts” of its members, the saints, the holy ones. Righteous acts are moral, good, and virtuous. They are upright, just, and excellent. They are decent, honorable, and noble deeds. These are the kinds of things which God gave to us for clothing; to wrap around ourselves as a covering. It is how we make ourselves beautiful and ready for Christ, like a bride who splendidly adorns herself for her bridegroom.

But some will not be ready for Him because Jesus said, “Friend, how did you come in here without wedding clothes?” (Mt 22:12). To be without wedding clothes is to be without the kind of righteous acts which God expects us to perform. We must be a person: “who by faith... performed acts of righteousness [wedding clothes]” (He 11:33). For: “MY RIGHTEOUS ONE SHALL LIVE BY FAITH” (He 10:38). Put on the uniform of righteousness. By faith, do the right things, in the right way. Have the right attitude while doing so (Lk 17:7-10; Job 10:15).
“The one who practices righteousness is righteous (1 Jn 3:7). Practice what is right. "Everyone also who practices righteousness is born of Him" (1 Jn 2:29). [For more encouragement read Ezekiel 18:5, 21, 27; 33:14, 19 and Romans 10:5] Warning! People who practice the wrong thing, the unrighteous, will not inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor 6:9).

2. Consider Some Examples of Wearing Righteousness

Note: Time will fail us if we consider all of the examples in the holy Scriptures of how certain people of faith wore righteousness as their garments. Below are simply a few of them.

(a) Christ Clothed Himself with The One Act of Righteousness

“Through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men” (Ro 5:18). This is the greatest and most righteous act of all time, which was done in full view of the whole world, on our behalf! Only Jesus can wear this righteous piece of clothing. But we can put on whatever is left of righteousness which God wants us to fulfill or complete. And this is to be done to bring attention to Christ’s clothing, His robe of salvation. Amen.

(b) Abraham Wore the Righteousness of His Faith in the Word of God

“They answered and said to Him, ‘Abraham is our father.’ Jesus said to them, ‘If you are Abraham’s children, do the deeds of Abraham. But as it is, you are seeking to kill Me, a man who has told you the truth, which I heard from God; this Abraham did not do’ ” (Jn 8:39, 40). What were the deeds of Abraham? First and foremost they were his ready belief in the truth of God’s word. "And He took him outside and said, ‘Now look toward the heavens, and count the stars, if you are able to count them.’ And He said to him, ‘So shall your descendants be.’ Then he believed in the LORD; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness” [wedding clothes] (Ge 15:5, 6). To reckon means to count or credit. So when Abraham believed in God’s words, the Lord counted it as a righteous act. We see that Abraham loved the truth. So a righteous act or deed is to believe in the promising truth of God’s word when He makes it known to us. Abraham also readily acted on his belief in God’s word. He obeyed it (Ge 12:4; 17:23). But these Jews who claimed that Abraham was their father did not readily believe in the promises which Jesus was bringing to them from the Father. Instead they were ready to persecute Him for it. This was an act of unrighteousness. They put on the wrong clothes. But we must do the deeds of Abraham. When we hear the promises of Christ, we must put on the righteous clothes of belief in them. Wrap yourself with faith in God’s word. Believing is a righteous act (Jn 6:29).

(c) The Ethiopian Eunuch Clothed His Heart with Belief in the Name of God’s Son

“And Philip said, ‘If you believe with all your heart, you may [be baptized].’ And he answered and said, ‘I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God’ ” (Ac 8:37). Like Philip, an evangelist, Jesus also directed those seeking to do God’s will to clothe their hearts with the righteous act of believing in the Son of God. “Therefore they said to Him, ‘What shall we do, so that we may work the works of God?’ Jesus answered and said to them, ‘This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent’ ” (Jn 6:28, 29). So the very first “work” which God wants us to do for Him is to believe in His Son. “For with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness” [wedding clothes] (Ro 10:10). It is a righteous act of the heart to believe in the Son of God. So the most important piece of clothing is for adorning our hearts. We wear the belief of God’s Son, inside. It is a first work. Our hearts must be clothed with the righteousness of believing in Jesus as Christ, the Messiah. Then we confess it unto salvation (Ro 10:9).

(d) This Sinful Woman Clothed Herself with the Righteous Act of Repentance

“And there was a woman in the city who was a sinner; and when she learned that He was reclining at the table in the Pharisee’s house, she brought an alabaster vial of perfume, and standing behind Him at His feet, weeping, she began to wet His feet with her tears, and kept wiping them with the hair of her head, and kissing His feet
and anointing them with the perfume” (Lk 7:37, 38). “Then He said to her, ‘Your sins have been forgiven’ ” (Lk 7:48). She demonstrated the fruits of repentance. For example, she went to the person from whom she ultimately needed to get forgiveness, Jesus. She cried to Him about her sins. So, she was sorry for what she had done in her sinful life. But she did more than just cry about it—she wiped His feet with her tears and her hair. This is an amazing act of repentance. She kissed and kissed His feet. Even more she poured perfume on them. But if this woman went back into her sin would she continue to have forgiveness? Consider the woman who was caught in adultery. Jesus forgave her, but He also told her: “From now on sin no more” (Jn 8:11). So from that point forward she was no longer to be in that adulterous union. Now, if she went back into that adulterous relationship, would Jesus continue to not condemn her? When does adultery stop being adultery? Is it when a person believes that he or she is forgiven of it? Or is it when a person discontinues or separates from that unholy relationship or marriage? You should not marry into adultery. If you ought not to have had the person in the first place, then you should not marry the person (remember the story of John the Baptist and King Herod). If I steal your bicycle, then later realized that I should not have taken it, should I then continue to keep it? Certainly not. I still would be a thief. Instead, I should return the bike to you. It belongs to you, not me, a thief (likewise any woman who has been stolen away from her first and rightful husband). This was Herod’s sin.

When you realize that you are wearing a certain type of sin, you should not keep it on your members or put something on over top of it to cover it up, since you cannot hide sin from God. You must totally remove your dirty clothes and replace them with the clothes of repentance. This is a first work which goes right along with belief in God’s Son. Faith in Jesus without being fitted with the clothes of repentance is like faith without works. It is useless: dead (Ja 2:17, 24, 26). We must take off the stained clothing of sin, and replace it with the new and white clothing of repentance. This is a most righteous act.

(e) Abel Clothed Himself with Righteous Giving

“By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous [wedding clothes]. God testifying about his gifts, and through faith, though he is dead, he still speaks” (He 11:4). “Cain, who was of the evil one... slew his brother. And for what reason did he slay him? Because his deeds were evil, and his brother’s were righteous” (1 Jn 3:12). Clothe yourself with the righteousness of giving your very best to God, even if others are jealous or angry about it.

(f) Noah Clothed Himself with Righteous Preaching

God: “did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a preacher of righteousness” [wedding clothes] (2 Pe 2:5). Noah was saved because he was righteous, specifically in his preaching. “But Noah found favor [grace] in the eyes of the LORD” (Ge 6:8). God obviously favors (graces) righteousness, not unrighteousness. “Grace would reign through righteousness” (Ro 5:21), not unrighteousness. Again, God does not favor (grace) unrighteousness. Instead it receives His wrath.

(g) Jonathan Put on a Righteous Robe of Risking His Life for the Sake of the Kingdom

“Then Jonathan said to the young man who was carrying his armor, ‘Come and let us cross over to the garrison of these uncircumcised; perhaps the LORD will work for us, for the LORD is not restrained by many or by few’ ” (1 Sam 14:6). This pioneering righteous act of faith led to a great victory for Israel. Therefore Jonathan is greatly esteemed among his brethren. For through Jonathan the Lord opened a great window of opportunity for the kingdom. In a different sense, not in the sense of fighting a physical war, but the spiritual war, the New Testament instructs us to hold in high esteem those who have risked their lives for the sake of the advancement of the gospel of Jesus Christ. For no greater agape love has a man than this, then to
lay down his life for his friends (Jn 15:13; 1 Jn 3:16). Jonathan was willing to risk his own life, even alone, all by himself, for the sake of the kingdom of God. Wear the pioneering robes of advancing the kingdom of God through the Gospel. And if you are not called to do it yourself, or if you cannot go yourself, then wear a righteous robe of supporting those who do go. “Therefore we ought to support such men, so that we may be fellow workers with the truth” (3 Jn 1:8). Put on your “work” clothes! Be “workers”!

(h) Tabitha Continually Wore Acts of Kindness and Charity

“Now in Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (which translated in Greek is called Dorcas); this woman was abound- ing with deeds of kindness and charity which she continually did” (Ac 9:36). Apparently she made tunics and garments for widows (Ac 9:39). But when Tabitha made clothing for others, she actually was clothing herself with a reputation for good works. This is the kind of “clothing” which certain women must have been in the habit of making in order to be eligible to receive “clothing” from others. For example, “A widow is to be put on the list only if she is not less than sixty years old, having been the wife of one man, having a reputation for good works; and if she has brought up children, if she has shown hospitality to strangers, if she has washed the saints’ feet, if she has assisted those in distress, and if she has devoted herself to every good work” (1 Tim 5:9, 10).

Gaius had a reputation for good works, like showing hospitality toward certain strangers (3 Jn 5-8). Jesus had a reputation for good works, like washing His disciples’ feet (Jn 13:1-17). Cornelius had a reputation for good works, like assisting those in distress; giving to the poor (Ac 10:1, 2). “Our people must also learn to engage in good deeds to meet pressing needs, so that they will not be unfruitful” (Titus 3:14). Continually clothe yourself with a reputation of good works, acts of kindness, and charity. Show yourself able to contribute to the “pressing needs” which arise among certain groups of Christians.

Wear Proper vs. Improper Uniforms

Our clothing is not only figurative in nature, such as the putting on of Christ in water baptism, or wearing wedding clothes (righteous acts). Likewise, it is not only what some call “spiritual” in nature, like the Spirit within ourselves; the inside of the cup. But it is also external in nature; the outside of the cup; our physical adornment; how we arrange our whole look from head to toe; our physical appearance. For what we believe on the inside will show itself on the outside.

Remember, God is concerned about us cleaning up both the inside (the spirit) and the outside of our bodies (the flesh). “Let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh [outside] and spirit [inside], perfecting holiness” (2 Cor 7:1). So, a holy separation must occur on the inside and outside from all things which defile our spirit (the inside) and flesh (the outside), including one’s adornment. As you ought to see in the passage below, there is a proper and an improper way for Christians to adorn themselves, physically, especially women or females. For example:

“I want women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with [2] braided hair [3] and gold or pearls [4] or costly garments, [5] but rather by means of good works, as is proper for women making a claim to godliness” (1 Tim 2:9, 10). What “adornment” is proper for women making a claim to godliness”? What is “proper clothing” for godly women? The subject of this passage is “proper” vs. improper adornment for Christian women, meaning their physical appearance, how they arrange themselves-- their hair, their clothing, their jewelry, etc.

Note: Since we already studied the righteousness of adorning ourselves with “good works,” we will not consider it here, even though this passage encourages it as a woman’s adornment.
1. Dress Modestly & Discreetly

“Likewise, I want women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly” (1 Tim 2:9). Proper clothing is modest and discreet. To adorn yourself “modestly” means with a sense of shame or honor, bashfulness, reverence, regard for others, respect, etc. This is why some versions of the Bible say it this way, that a godly woman dresses: “with shamefacedness and sobriety” (1 Tim 2:9 KJV). A woman who dresses without shame is a woman who acts in a brazen, boisterous way. She has no shame. She is not ashamed of her body. Instead she flaunts it, in different ways. But a godly woman is ashamed to reveal her body to others. Likewise, to adorn yourself “discreetly” means to not reveal yourself to others in various ways with your clothing. To be hidden. But to be indiscreet means to reveal yourself, especially certain tempting parts of your body. Obviously a godly woman dresses in a non-revealing way, not sensually or sexy. Her clothing is not immodest or indiscreet. She is hidden. A godly woman does not dress in a sexually alluring way. For example:

(a) Shut the Doors and Window Shades of Your House!

In the dark of the night, when you walk by someone’s house, what do you see? Is there a bright light shining out of it, since the door is not completely shut or a window shade is not pulled down all of the way? Naturally, you might glance in once. Yet some work very hard at not looking in at all. Others would stare and stare; only stopping if the owner catches them. But when they are free, they just might look again to see what they can see, and to look at what they can look at.

(b) Children & Young People Should Also Be Modest & Discreet

Ladies, please listen to me. Mothers, listen to me. Men, please listen to me. Fathers, listen to me. It is obvious that one of the things which men lust after the most in this world is females; in particular, young females who dress in a revealing way. Younger females who dress with less discretion are a tremendous temptation for men. Why do you think certain young women in the world are so popular among sensual men? Why do you think that there is child pornography? Why do you think that there is child sexual abuse? Let us not be naive about this. Let us instead be wise about it. Perverted men
lust after indiscreet children and young people. This is a very unfortunate fact of life. So I encourage young women and children to dress modestly and discreetly, to cover up properly. I encourage parents to not have two different standards of adornment between young and old, with the former revealing more and the latter revealing less. Besides if there is a different standard between parent and child, there is a great chance that the younger will never switch to the better when they become an adult. The naively indiscreet way in which we adorn our children, or let our children adorn themselves, seems to carry forward into their adulthood, without any shame at all on their part. This is our fault! We are the parents who let this happen. Parents, I encourage you to avoid differing discreclional standards of dress between you and your children. Lust is in the world.

(c) Everyday Life (in America) Is Filled with Immodest and Indiscreet Adornment

Listen, do not ignore the indiscretions of certain sports and their associated activities, or certain recreational activities. Instead, guard yourselves against them. Be holy. Separate yourself from them. In sports, at work, and in the home, many people do not dress modestly or discreetly. Visitors may come to a person's house, only to find the owners or their children not properly dressed. Consider the shamefacedness of Shem and Japheth. Unlike their brother Ham, they did not look upon the indecency of their father, even in their own home. Instead they covered him up with a garment (Ge 9:23). If they did this righteous act in their own home, how much more should we cover up fully in public? Many sports teams undress right in front of our eyes to play their sport, wearing little clothing. Swimmers, beach-goers, and pool-goers wear next to nothing, living in sensuality, causing lust to abound. Clothing is either too tight, or there is not much of it to be found. Many sports require dress in what amounts to undergarments. The sport of swimming today requires almost no clothes. Indeed, it is just like being naked, with an individual wearing so little clothing that it could fit into the fist of one hand. Therefore, certain sports and recreational activities are not wise to participate in because they are indiscreet and unholy in adornment. Some things are out of your league. Some things are out of the ballpark of holiness. Now if any of you are struggling with or objecting to what I am saying, you must go back to the so called "drawing board," the foundation of saving faith in Christ, and put holiness in it (SEE Eph 4:24). Make it your goal to grow mightily in holiness, the likeness of God.

(d) I Encourage You To Wear Clothing Which Is Long, Not Form-Fitting, and Complete

Obviously, the length, the fit, and the coverage of our clothing has something to do with our being "modestly [bashfully] and discreetly [not revealingly]" dressed. First, think about length. Length can be bold or bashful, hidden or revealed. Consider "shorts". Are shorts just that, short? How can "shorts" be long? How can some of us say, "Wear your long shorts"? Could you have a long short hair cut? Did you have a long short day? Isn't this confusing language? For certain reasons, such as heat, sexiness, aerodynamics, or suntanning, shorts have been designed to expose or reveal our bodies. Obviously, when clothing is shortened, the more revealing and indiscreet it becomes, likewise, for shortened dresses and skirts. When a woman sits down in a shortened dress or a shortened skirt, she struggles to not expose herself. She reveals more of herself than when she is standing. I encourage women to wear long dresses and skirts so that this will not be a problem for you and a temptation for men. Please avoid exposing yourself when you sit down. Wear long clothing. Be discreet. Close the doors and the windows to your body. The length of our clothing has something to do with our being discreet or indiscreet, shamefaced or brazen.
Second, think about fit. Fit can be bold or bashful, hidden or revealed. Tight clothing is bold. It reveals our form. It is “form-fitting,” indeed “form-revealing”. No matter the length, so called “painted on,” skin tight clothing is very bold, very revealing. Today, there are so many pieces of clothing like this, such as certain types of pants, slacks, etc. For example, “Jeans” have been designed to be form-fitting, especially for women. They are modeled that way, and sold that way. There is no other main intent for them. Form fitting styles or brands of clothing like these should be avoided altogether. They are indiscreet. But the opposite of form fitting is loose fitting or baggy. I encourage you to maintain a loose and baggy fit to your clothing. Lust is in the world. The fit of our clothing has something to do with our being bashful or bold, revealing or discreet.

Third, think about coverage. Coverage can be bold or bashful, hidden or revealed. Today we are faced with a bombardment of clothing which has coverage problems. For example, “V” necklines, dresses with slits, short shirts, cut off shirts, sleeveless blouses, see-through clothing, holes, etc. All of these things catch a man’s eye to look further into your sexuality. How many of us would rip our shirts at the neck? How many of us would cut off our shirts at the belly button? How many of us would rip our dresses in the back or up the side with our own hands? Wouldn’t this seem brazen? Why do we wear such clothing? Why are we giving people a sneak peak at our bodies? Why do we reveal our chests, waists and legs? I encourage you to avoid clothing that exposes your chest, back, waist, belly or legs. The coverage of our clothing has something to do with our being bashful or bold, revealing or discreet.

2. Not with Complicated or Fancy Hair Arrangements

“Likewise, I want women to adorn themselves... not with braided hair” (1 Tim 2:9). “Do not let your adornment be merely outward--arranging the hair” (1 Pe 3:3 NKJV). Here we have two apostles of the Messiah, both Peter and Paul, telling Christian women not to do certain things with their hair. Obviously, many women have a habit of spending a lot of time and money on the adornment and arrangement of their hair, to get it arranged in an unnatural, complicated, embroidered, plaited, or fancy way. But godly women must not make their hair so fancy. On the other hand, if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her (SEE 1 Cor 11:15). Long hair is for her God-given glory; beauty; to distinguish her as a woman. If you are able, why not have simply arranged long hair? It will be to your glory and will please God if it is not complicated. It is the natural way to do it. How much of your time and money do you spend on arranging or doing your hair? Avoid fancy hair arrangements. Quit spending so much time and money on a "hair do". According to the apostles, it is not what godly women do. I encourage you to keep your hair simple, and womanly, long, not manly, which is short (SEE 1 Cor 11:14, 15).

Note: When you see an italicized word in a passage of the Bible, this usually means that the translators of that Bible are alerting you to the fact that this word is not in any of the ancient manuscripts. They inserted it. It is a guess or human estimate of what they think could be there. [But many Bibles do not italicize the words which they add]. So in the following passage of Scripture, which is related to a godly woman’s adornment, the word “merely” is not in the Scripture. It is not God-breathed. It is not a quote from God, but man. It is man-breathed. And therefore, it has misled some on the true meaning of this passage, especially in relation to what the other Scriptures point out on the same subject, a woman’s adornment (for example 1 Ti 2:9 “not with”). “Your adornment must not be merely external—braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses” (1 Pet 3:3). So, because of this inserted word “merely” some might think that this passage is not teaching against the outward arranging of hair, or wearing jewelry, or the costumization of women. But without it, it clearly teaches the exact same thing which Paul, another apostle, taught (1 Ti 2:9). Besides, who would want to be a “mere” outward woman, superficial? Is superficiality Godly? But again, “merely” is not a part of the verse.
3. Not with Jewelry

“Likewise, I want women to adorn themselves... not with... gold or pearls” (1 Tim 2:9). “Your adornment must not be merely external--... wearing gold jewelry” (1 Pe 3:3). It is improper for Christian women to wear jewelry, such as gold, pearls, and other like things. Let me point out to you that when Paul said, "not with," and Peter said, "not be... wearing," in reference to "jewelry," they both discouraged or forbid Christian women from wearing it. The subject here is "jewelry," not simply gold or pearls, which are only examples of jewelry. A properly dressed Christian woman will avoid the jewelry habit. It is superficial. Christian women must not be external women, superficial. It is improper for them to adorn themselves with jewelry. I encourage you to not wear it. If any of you object to this, let me direct your attention to two words in this context on adorning yourselves with "jewelry"; "not with". With what are you adorning yourselves?

4. Not Wearing Expensive Clothes, Costumizing, or Being a Fashionista!

“Likewise, I want women to adorn themselves... not with... costly garments” (1 Tim 2:9). The cost of a piece of clothing has something to do with the propriety of it. Christian women ought to adorn themselves with inexpensive clothing. It is improper for Christian women to buy, collect, and adorn themselves with "costly," meaning expensive clothing. Peter added this to the subject as well: “Your adornment must not be merely external--... putting on dresses" (1 Pe 3:3). What does this mean? Does it mean that Christian women "must not be... putting on dresses," to go naked? That would be an absurd, twisted, and destructive way to interpret and apply this verse. Obviously women ought to put on dresses. But instead Peter is discouraging Christian women from practicing a "costumed" or "fashionista" kind of lifestyle, which is the "putting on of dresses". Just like Solomon habitually multiplied wives and concubines, women routinely multiply clothing. They become devoted collectors of it. How many shoes do some women have? Certain women, even leading ones of nations, have become famous for their shoe collections, others for their wardrobe, with some being auctioned off for a high price after they die. It is obvious that women are tempted to have a costumed superficial kind of lifestyle, putting on all kinds of different dresses, shoes, and such for a multitude of reasons and occasions.

Ladies, how big and varied is your personal wardrobe? How many different kinds of clothing do you put on in one day? How much time and money do you spend in developing your wardrobe, in arranging your clothing? Are you a serious collector? Don't be a collector. Many of the world’s vain beauty pageants like to see women in all kinds of different outfits; skimpy ones, evening ones, formal ones, casual ones, etc. Women can easily enjoy the putting on of various outfits, repeatedly. They are praised for it. They can easily dress themselves up and up and up. She says to herself, "Which dress should I wear?" or "Which dress is fitting?" The answer is this: a holy one, one that is inexpensive, modest, and discreet; not revealing. This is the kind of outfit which God wants a Christian woman to wear, to any event. Are women tempted to be "putting on [the] dresses"? Are women tempted to buy expensive clothing? I urge you, Christian woman, to buy inexpensive clothing and to avoid a "costumed," "fashionista" kind of lifestyle. Amen.
Conclusion

It is improper for Christian women to adorn themselves with immodest, indiscreet clothing; fancy, time-consuming, or complicated hair arrangements, such as the braiding, plaiting, or embellishment of their hair; jewelry; expensive clothing; and a costumed, theatrical type of putting on of outfits. Instead, Christian women are encouraged to adorn themselves with a reputation for good works. Their clothing ought to be bashful, not bold, being ashamed to reveal themselves to others. What kind of reputation do you have? Is it connected to your clothing, your hair, your jewelry, the cost of your clothing, the variety and quantity of it? Are you living a costumed kind of life? I encourage Christian women to put their time and money into good works, not their adornment, not makeup.

Wear Gender Specific Uniforms

To wear the other gender's clothing and adornment is a perversion. It's perverted. And perversions are an abomination to the Lord. “A woman shall not wear man’s clothing, nor shall a man put on a woman’s clothing: for whoever does these things is an abomination to the LORD your God” (Deut 22:5). “But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable... their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death” (Re 21:8). Ladies, it is an abomination to the Lord to wear a man’s adornment: his shirt, his pants, his hair, his ties, etc. Men, it is an abomination to the Lord to wear a woman’s adornment; her hair, her dress, etc. For the Scriptures say that by nature, by creation, God gave long hair to a woman for her natural beauty. But it is also says that it is a disgrace for a man to have long hair (1 Cor 11:14, 15). The implication here is that, by the natural order of things, a man should not have or keep his hair long and a woman, if she can, should keep her hair long, not short like a man would.

Adorn yourself in a gender specific way. Women must not be masculine and men must not be effeminate. Don't be a pervert! This is why we should not encourage our daughters to be a "Tom-Boy" or our sons to be a "Sissy-Girl," and whatever that entails for their hair, activities, and clothing. Boys should be boys and girls should be girls. “Or 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 effeminate, nor homosexual” (1 Cor 6:9). We should not encourage any male to be effeminate. We should not encourage any female to be emasculine. But someone might ask, “Are some men born homosexual?” Solomon said, “Behold, I have found only this, that God made men upright, but they have sought out many devices” (Eccl 7:29). And “God saw all that He had made [including man and woman], and behold, it was very good” (Ge 1:31). So the conclusion is this: God did not make man homosexual or any other wicked thing. He made man very good and upright, straight, not “gay” or crooked or perverted. But some men and women, themselves, have decided to behave in a perverted way, to act that way, to live that way, to talk that way, to dress that way, and to have sexual relations that way. Each gender has sought out many vices. They enjoy it, naturally! It's their sinful nature. Sin is enjoyable.
Women Ought to Wear a Head Covering, But Not Men

This is such a profound and meaningful thing, this covering idea. The key to understanding it all is this: How does God want one to show honor and respect to his authority in the kingdom of God? As you ought to see in the following passage, both man and woman have a God-ordained head, meaning authority. Some call this “the headship”. And a head covering has something to do with it. Carefully read about it below.

“But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ. Every man who has something on his head while praying or prophesying disgraces his head. But every woman who has her head uncovered while praying or prophesying disgraces her head, for she is one and the same as the woman whose head is shaved. For if a woman does not cover her head, let her also have her hair cut off; but if it is disgraceful for a woman to have her hair cut off or her head shaved, let her cover her head. For a man ought not to have his head covered, since he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of man. For man does not originate from woman, but woman from man; for indeed man was not created for the woman’s sake, but woman for the man’s sake. Therefore the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels. However, in the Lord, neither is woman independent of man, nor is man independent of woman. For as the woman originates from the man, so also the man has his birth through the woman; and all things originate from God. Judge for yourselves: is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered? Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonor to him, but if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her? For her hair is given to her for a covering. But if one is inclined to be contentious, we have no other practice, nor have the churches of God” (1 Cor 11:3-16).

The subject of this passage is Christian authority (headship) in the kingdom of God (1 Cor 11:3) and how Christ wants us to show respect, honor, and submission towards it (1 Cor 11:4, 5). It is kind of like what Americans are asked to do before their national anthem is played. The announcer asks that the men remove their hats out of respect and honor for the flag. How much greater is God than a flag or the nation which it represents? Through this illustration of “hats off for the flag” so to speak, do you get a sense of the kind of honor which God is commanding here in this passage? Is the covering more acceptable to you now, you who refuse to practice it? Next, consider three key points in this passage on the subject of authority (headship).

1. "Understand" Whom Has the Authority Over Whom

"I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ" (vs. 3). Here God established who is "the head of" whom, meaning whom is one’s authority, namely that Christ is over man, man is over woman, and God the Father is over Christ. Do you understand this?

Notes: The phrase “head of” in this passage is also used throughout the Scriptures to describe various kinds of authority, such as which government or governor has authority over another. For example: “For the head of Aram is Damascus and the head of Damascus is Rezin (now within another 65 years Ephraim will be shattered, so that it is no longer a people), and the head of Ephraim is Samarria and the head of Samarria is the son of Remaliah. If you will not believe, you surely shall not last” (Is 7:8, 9). It is also used to describe which commanders have authority over the armies. For example: “And it shall come about that when the officers have finished speaking to the people, they shall appoint commanders at the head of the people” (De 20:9). It is also used to describe which men have authority over the household or tribe. For example: “Then the sons of Israel sent to the sons of Reuben and to the sons of Gad and to the half-tribe of Manasseh, into the land of Gilead, Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, and with him ten chiefs, one chief for each father’s household from each of the tribes of Israel; and each one of them was the head of his father’s household among the thousands of Israel” (Josh 22:13, 14). So, to be “head of” someone is to be their chief, their leader.
2. A Man Must Remove His Head Covering During Certain Activities / Especially in Worship

"Every man who has something on his head while praying or prophesying disgraces his head" (vs. 4). So to not be a man who "disgraces his head," meaning Christ, but to instead show honor and respect towards Him, to show submission to Him, a Christian man should remove his head covering during prayer times or when prophesying. So when we pray or when we speak God's word, like during church, it is the time we need to encourage men to perform this holy commandment out of honor and respect for their leader, Christ. Note: For example, when a great and distinguished Christian man wanted to pray for and with me, for he and his work was very well known worldwide, I first said, since he was wearing a hat, "Let's remove our hats to show honor to Christ as it is pointed out to us in 1 Corinthians 11". Then he willingly removed his hat and we both prayed together.

3. A Woman Must Put on a Head Covering During Certain Activities / Worship

"But every woman who has her head uncovered while praying or prophesying disgraces her head" (vs. 5). So to not be a woman who "disgraces her head," meaning man, but to instead honor and respect him as her authority, her leader, to show submission to him, not rebellion against him, a Christian woman should put on a head covering during prayer times or when prophesying. So when we pray or when we speak God's word, like during church, this especially is the time we need to encourage women to perform this holy commandment.

This is why some churches have encouraged male attendees to remove their hats, and put them on a hat rack out in the foyer of the church building, and encouraged or required women to wear head scarves during church (this especially was the requirement of most churches in the United States before the 1970's). Church is the place where we pray. It is the place where the word of God is preached. Obviously, it is the most fitting and necessary place to practice this holy commandment before God.

Now, there are more points in this passage, but these three points are the main ones. I address some of the other points below and also in The Bible Study on the Non-Teaching Gifts, specifically the study on the gift of prayer.

The Greek Definition of "Cover" and "Covering"

The word "cover," which is repeatedly used in this passage, in various forms (cover, uncover, covering), literally means:

"Having (something) down the head"
Vines Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words

"To cover up, to veil or cover one's self"
Strongs Concordance of Greek Words

So in the context and setting of 1 Corinthians 11:1-16, the word means to remove or to cover one's head with something, like a head scarf, which goes "down the head". For it is a veil.
How much Greater Is God than a Flag?

Think about this: if men take off their hats for a flag, which represents a nation, how much easier is it for holy men to take off their head coverings, at certain times specified by the holy Scriptures, out of respect for the authority of Jesus Christ. Isn't Christ greater than all of the nations? Isn't His Father making all the nations a footstool for His Son? Likewise, it ought to be easy for holy and submissive women to put on a head covering, at certain times specified by the holy Scriptures, out of respect for the authority God gave to man. Brothers and sisters, we should have no discomfort in saying these things or in doing them, for even the natural world has taught us about the need for this kind of respect and acknowledgment in certain situations. Consider "hats off for the flag".

But obviously, this teaching applies to our daily life outside of the assembly as well, around our dinner tables, and in our conversations with God and others. For Christ is man's authority, not only while he is in church, but also in the world. Let us be ready to show this type of honor and respect towards our head (our authority) in any situation. It is the honorable thing to do in the sight of God.

Below are some common questions you might have about this passage.

Q: Isn't this talking about the hair, not an artificial covering?

A: There are several facts or truths revealed in this passage which can persuade and convince us that this is not talking about the hair. But first, let me tell you a story. In the 1960's, the translators of the New International Version, which became widely popular, was evidently the very first Bible to insert a footnote at the bottom of 1 Corinthians 11, which essentially said that an alternate translation would be to insert the word "hair" throughout the passage (today some Bible "translations" do just that). My father-in-law wrote to the committee which translated this passage to inform them that "hair" was not a part of the original Greek text throughout, and therefore they are not translating it, but adding to it or making an interpretation, and a faulty one at that. [More correctly, it was simply an opinion (guessing), not the revealed truth.] In response, one of the translators on that committee wrote my father-in-law and admitted that he attempted to keep the footnote out of the translation but he was overruled by the head of the committee. In short, it is not God breathed, but man breathed. They are not quoting God.

Now consider the evidence. First, the words "uncovered" and "covered" denote or indicate something much broader than our hair. When is a man's head covered? When is a man's head uncovered? When is a woman's head covered? When is a woman's head uncovered? Is this simply a matter of hair, not any other type of head covering?

Second, the word "while" indicates the condition for doing so, when it is necessary and also when it is not necessary. It is conditional, of a certain and fixed duration, not continuous but intermittent. So when God forbid "every man" from having "something on his head while praying and prophesying," this instructs him when he must not have something on his head (while praying to God and speaking the revealed word of God). Likewise, when God forbid "every woman" from having "her head uncovered while praying and prophesying," this instructs her when she must have something on her head. So the "frequency" of doing so indicates something which can be put on and be removed, like an artificial head covering, a scarf or a veil, etc. (besides, this is what the word actually means in the Greek, to be veiled, meaning covered). Indeed, there is hardly a man alive who can remove his hair when he prays. There is hardly a woman who can put on her hair during prayer.

Third, the verse at the bottom of this passage, which refers to a woman's natural covering of long hair, is not the point or the subject of this passage. Instead it is simply a tertiary illustration to prove the point for a covering, the propriety of it, that even the natural order of things teaches us about the veil or covering. In other words, God, through creation, is a witness to a woman being covered, specifically being evidenced in her long hair, which flows down her head.
Q: “You can’t bind this on others! It’s simply your opinion.”

A: Sometimes teaching this passage brings out a very authoritative and negative reaction from Christians, especially the ones who do not practice it in the way specified by God. A minister of the gospel actually said this to me, “You can’t bind this on others”. But the fact is I did not bind this on others, an apostle did and so did the angels (SEE vs. 10). Jesus said to one of His apostles: “whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven” (Mt 16:19). Obviously, the apostle’s teachings are binding. Therefore, no one of us can unbind Paul’s teaching on Christian authority and how to show respect towards it, which includes coverings. It is “bound in heaven”. It is not simply from earth or a specific culture or an age long ago. It is from God. God ordained it. Jesus said, “Was the baptism of John from heaven, or from men? Answer Me” (Mark 11:30). Likewise, answer me. Was Paul’s teaching on authority, including the covering, from God or from men? Are you like the Scribes and Pharisees? Will you claim ignorance to avoid the consequences of the crowd and to excuse yourself from obeying the teaching on it? Besides, we can only teach what we have come to learn and practice. I have come to learn about it. And so I practice it, my family practices it, and I teach it to other Christians. But, if you cannot teach it, I suggest that you have to first learn it. When an announcer asks you to remove your hat for the playing of the national anthem, do you tell him, “You can’t bind that on me”? Certainly not! Why? It’s because you know how to give honor to whom honor is due (READ Ro 13:7). Therefore, I urge you to be at peace with Paul’s teaching on this. Men, teach your women to do this. Besides, I am not speculating (opinion), I am telling you the truth. I am not guessing (opinion). This is a revealed truth, not a hidden, undisclosed subject. It’s in the Bible. It is a commandment of Christ. It needs to be taught. It needs to be observed, meaning practiced. If you say this is just my opinion, well then you do not understand the difference between truth and opinion, or even application.

Q: This is abusive & disrespectful to women!

A: Well, what can I say to this? Isn’t it abusive and disrespectful to one’s authority not to do so? It’s a sin. For example, the Scripture says that it is a “disgrace” (1 Cor 11:4, 5) for a man or woman to do otherwise. Therefore, it is the honorable and respectable thing to do in the sight of God. As the Scripture says, it is the “proper” (1 Cor 11:13) thing to do. Yet for ungodly, disobedient, and rebellious people and worshipers it may seem improper to do. Consider it a test of your faith to obey it and practice it in the sight of others, especially God’s holy team, during team practice, etc. Set the holy example. Have courage.

Notes: To help you properly interpret this passage on Christian authority and how to show honor towards it, I recommend you get a copy of my tract: “What Is the Subject of This Passage?” In it, I give you an encouraging way to interpret subjects, passages, and contexts in the Bible. It will help you to find the true subject and meaning of almost any passage in the Scriptures, even the one on the covering/headship. I urge you to get a copy of it and read it to be better equipped to interpret the word and this passage. For many are misunderstanding the subject of this passage by teaching, not a point in it, but a tertiary illustration on hair. You must learn to discern the difference between the subject, points, and illustrations of a passage. Otherwise, you may be teaching and emphasizing the wrong things.

Now, the purpose of this lesson was to introduce the “covering” as a part of a Christian woman’s holy uniform during prayer, and not a part of a Christian man’s holy uniform. So if you have more questions about this passage, please find answers to some of them in The Bible Study on the Non-Teaching Gifts, specifically the lesson on the gift of prayer. It answers these questions: “But my translation specifically says that men ought to pray with short hair and women with long hair.” “But at the end of the passage Paul literally talked about long hair as a covering for woman.” “If we are all one in Christ, where there is no male or female (Gal 3:28), then how could the headship and covering custom apply today?” “What does it mean when it says that a woman ought to have authority on her head?” “What does ‘because of the angels’ mean?” “Are these verses talking only about marital authority between a husband and a wife?” “What kind of covering should a woman wear?” “Is her long hair only for her husband to see? Is this the reason why she needs to cover it in public on top of her head under a covering?” “Should women have long hair and men have short hair?” “Should a head covering be worn in every culture or nation?” “The head-covering was only for their culture.” “Paul said we are not to be contentious about it.” I expect you will be surprised at the true answers to these questions.

Conclusion

God’s team must wear holy uniforms. When we are baptized into Christ, we clothe ourselves in a most holy way, with Jesus. Then we spend the rest of our lives preparing our wedding dress for our wedding day. Yet our Groom has chosen our dress for us. He wants it to be right. Unlike earthly brides, we must adorn ourselves properly, not with gold jewelry or pearls, and things of that nature, but with discreet, modest, and inexpensive clothing. Members should also dress according to their gender, thus avoiding abominable perversions. Finally, during certain sacred events, we properly handle our head coverings to show respect and honor to our head, our authority. Indeed, new team, new uniform. New life, new clothes. New authority, new respect. New honor, new submission.
WARNING!

1. Satan Will Tempt You and Me to Sin During this Lesson

When one studies or teaches the difference between holy and unholy language, he himself will be tempted to, wittingly or unwittingly, use or give examples of foul or profane speech. Beware, Satan will try to use this lesson to tempt the one who studies it and the one who teaches it to speak, state, or give examples of profane language, either in a very direct or indirect, subtle way, and therefore sin while doing so. Have you ever cut or hurt yourself while showing others how not to cut or hurt themselves?

For example, to show others how not to take the name of the Lord in vain, teachers will be tempted to take the name of the Lord in vain, use foul or profane language, or use evil words to show others how not to do so (my own ears have heard so called “senior” pastors intentionally do this while teaching or conversing on the subject!). The one who studies this lesson will be tempted to ask questions, make statements, or comments which contain foul language or improper uses of the name of the Lord. It’s better for students to not say anything during this lesson. It will be hard enough for a teacher to shed light on this subject without sinning himself. Pray for teachers! In my experience, I know of only one man, one of my teachers, who taught me about this without sinning in his speech. Years later, I praised him for it.

2. There Is No Liberty or Fitting Time or Place to Speak Improperly

Obviously, this lesson attempts to teach against bad language without using it directly or indirectly. No member of God’s team, especially the one teaching, should use this lesson to take the liberty to express examples of bad language, either verbally or in writing. At no time or place, either publicly or privately, is it proper to use, write, speak or repeat foul or profane language. The one who does so will bring God’s judgment upon himself. Put the greatest of restraints upon your tongue or else Satan will take advantage of you to use this as a time to make you feel free to sin in your speech. Hold your tongue. At no time do you have the liberty to state or use foul and profane language.

3. There Is No Liberty to Be Silly or Amused (Instead Seek Joy)

Some will be tempted to be silly with this topic or think it is good for a few laughs. But it should be taught soberly, with all seriousness. Sinful speech is no laughing matter; it is not a subject for amusement. During this lesson, extinguish or suppress any foolhardiness and desire to be amused or entertained, or any desire to be the entertainer in chief. Instead, enrich your speech.
Enrich Your Speech

While many teams in this world “talk trash”–in an unclean, unholy way–members of God’s team must be careful to speak in a clean, separate, pure and holy way. Whether you are a new team member or if you have been one for a while, you must take a look at every part of your own language. Our speech is a topic for serious consideration and consequence. For example, if any member continues in the habit of reviling others or lying, then he will not be permitted into heaven but instead he will be thrown into the lake of fire (1 Cor 6:9, 10; Re 21:7, 8). Reviling and lying are only two types of evil speech that members must overcome in order to be saved, to become a member of God’s holy team. These are membership issues, conversion issues. These are sins one must die to. I pointed this out to you in The Advanced Chronological Study of the Holy Bible (Level 1).

Yet, there are other types of bad language that members must overcome. The good news is that the grace of God has been given to us to improve every part of our speech. For example: “I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus, that in everything you were enriched in Him, in all speech and all knowledge” (1 Cor 1:4, 5). So one of the ways in which God’s favor can save us from poverty is in the poorness of our tongue. To be enriched means to be improved, enhanced, deepened, and developed in something. We know that the world, even if it has great material wealth, is impoverished, poor, or under-developed in holy speech. At one time, when we were of the world, we also were poor in speech. Many disciples still need to improve their language in some way. Every part of our speech must be enriched by God’s grace to be Christ-like. This benefits our own selves as well as others. Obviously our tongues have been designed to affect the ears of others. When we are enriched in Christian language, then we will be able to speak gracefully to people. This fulfills God’s will as revealed in this commandment: “Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear” (Eph 4:29). Notice in this verse the three ways in which we can give grace to those who “hear” us speak.

1. Do Not Use Bad Words [“unwholesome word”]

Unwholesome words are bad words that cannot nourish the soul, the spirit. Do not feed the ears of the people around you on bad words. “Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking deceit” (Ps 34:13). Graceful speech is not foul; it is not flattering; it is not reviling; it is not slanderous; it is not silly; it is not blasphemous; it is not deceptive; it is not misleading; it is not vain or meaningless, etc. These things are evil.

2. Use Good Words [“a word...good for edification”]

Give them something good to taste, chew, and swallow which is nourishing to the soul. Instead of starving or defiling people with your words, God expects you to feed them with your words. “Let all things be done for edification” (1 Cor 14:26). Every good word is edifying. Speak good words. “What’s the good word?” Now there are many good words which God spoke to His people for nourishment which are not positively stated; they are in the negative. Eight of the Ten Commandments are in the
negative; no and not. Any good word, whether stated in the positive or in the negative, can be spoken mildly, that is, kindly. But there is a time when the good word is opposing, cross, stern, or even severe. For example, Samuel spoke God’s good words of opposition, severity, and rejection to King Saul (1 Sa 15:22, 23). However, King David failed to oppose one of his sons when he began to exalt himself and conspired to become king in David’s place (1 Ki 1:6).

3. Consider the Need ["a word... according to the need"]

If you really want to attempt to feed a person on your words, first consider his circumstance or condition. For example, if someone around you is suffering, tell him to pray (Ja 5:13). If somebody near you is facing a great and good challenge, tell them to be strong and courageous (Josh 1:6). If someone apologizes to you, forgive him. This is how you can give grace to your hearers. If someone does not yet believe that Jesus is the Messiah, make the good confession to him (1 Tim 6:12, 13). In what condition is this person? What are his circumstances? Is he someone who should be honored? Give honor (respect) to whom honor is due (Ro 13:7). Speak according to the need. What is fitting for you to say? Next, consider three common problems with speech today in the U.S.A.

1. Holy vs. Vain or Foul Use of God’s Name

Taking the name of the Lord in vain or profaning it in any form, whether directly or indirectly with abbreviations or euphemisms, is not right, appropriate, or acceptable. Meaningless/useless (vain) or foul (profane) use of God’s name is a grave and major sin.  

Consider the Seriousness of Misusing God’s Name

It is a most serious offense for any person to use God’s name in an unholy way, in any age. It offends God, therefore it is a sin against Him.

(a) God Warned His Own People Against Misusing His Name

“You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain” (Ex 20:7). God personally wrote this commandment with His own finger, along with nine others, on two tablets of stone (the TenCommandments). This indicates the serious and weighty nature of this command. It was listed among the sins which required the severest of punishments; in this case death (Lev 24:16). Think about the severity of the punishments which were to be given for failing to keep some of the Ten Commandments. The punishment for taking the name of the Lord in vain was death (Lev 24:16). The punishment for the sin of idolatry was death (Deut 13:1-5). The punishment for one who did not keep the Sabbath according to Moses’ Law was that he would be cut off from the assembly and put to death (Ex 31:14, 15). Yet we know that today, for a variety of good reasons, Christians are not required to keep the Sabbath (SEE Col 2:16), but they must go to church (SEE He 10:25). The punishment for a child who did not honor his parents was death (Ex 21:15, 17). The punishment for shedding innocent blood (murder) was death (Ex 21:12-14). The punishment for committing the sin of adultery was death (Lev 20:10). Even in the New Covenant, these sins are punishable by spiritual death in the lake of fire (Rev 21:8). I hope we appreciate anew the seriousness of the subject at hand.
In a similar way, we can misuse the name of the Lord simply by excluding it or leaving it out of our speech when we instead should have mentioned it. For example, in another place, God said, “You shall not profane My holy name, but I will be sanctified among the sons of Israel” (Le 22:32). But at one time, Moses, while using the talent which God gave to him, brought forth water from a rock, but failed to set apart (sanctify) God as holy in the hearing of the sons of Israel. So God said to Moses and Aaron, “Because you have not believed Me, to treat Me as holy in the sight of the sons of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them” (Nu 20:12). To “treat Me as holy” means to sanctify His name. The Psalmist revealed the specific way in which Moses did not sanctify God’s name before the people, saying, “They also provoked Him to wrath at the waters of Meribah, so that it went hard with Moses on their account; because they were rebellious against His Spirit, he spoke rashly with his lips” (Ps 106:32, 33). Moses said, “shall we bring forth water for you out of this rock?” (Nu 20:10), meaning him and Aaron, not God. At this time, permit me to sanctify God as holy, not myself! It is He who is your teacher, not me. It is His word, not mine! I am an unworthy servant of God, only doing what I ought to do in sharing the word of God with you. You are learning from Him, not me. I am only a creature, not the Creator. Bless and give thanks to His holy name for this course, not mine!

Note: Joseph, in regard to his own amazing talent, quickly sanctified God in his speech to others, to his fellow prisoners and even to the greatest leader of the world, Pharaoh. For example, “They said to him, ‘We have had a dream and there is no one to interpret it.’ Then Joseph said to them, ‘Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell it to me, please’” (Ge 40:8). Again, “Then Pharaoh sent and called for Joseph, and they hurriedly brought him out of the dungeon; and when he had shaved himself and changed his clothes, he came to Pharaoh. Pharaoh said to Joseph, ‘I have had a dream, but no one can interpret it; and I have heard it said about you, that when you hear a dream you can interpret it.’ Joseph then answered Pharaoh, saying, ‘It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh a favorable answer’” (Ge 41:14-16). Like Joseph, when we are tempted to take the credit for our perceived talent, for doing something amazing, even in front of the greatest of worldly men, we ought to say plainly that it is in God to do something, not ourselves. “It is not in me, but God” “It is not in me, but God” [For further consideration on this subject, see Daniel 2:20, 2:22-23. What did he say that was related to giving God the glory and credit, not himself?]

(b) Moses Was Punished for Not Treating God as Holy in His Own Speech to Others

(c) God Warned People Not to Curse His Name or the Name of One of His Rulers

“You shall not curse God, nor curse a ruler of your people” (Ex 22:28). To “curse” means to speak profane and blasphemous things against someone, to speak evil of, to revile. Regarding leaders, David did not curse King Saul, nor did he stretch out his hand against him, even though he was David’s enemy (1 Sam 24:6, 10, 11; 2 Sam 1:14-16). But Shimei did not go unpunished for cursing King David (2 Sam 16:5-13; 1 Ki 2:8, 9, 36-46). Regarding the name of the Lord, Job offered sacrifices to God for his children, in case they cursed the Lord in their hearts (Job 1:5). When Job himself suffered miserably and was tempted by his wife to “curse God and die” (Job 2:9), he instead blessed His holy name (Job 1:21). Jesus warned us not to curse the Holy Spirit, saying, “Whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin” (Mk 3:29). “Blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven... whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come” (Mt 12:31, 32). Now some mistakenly teach that this sin has nothing to do with what one actually says about the Holy Spirit. But on the contrary, it specifically has to do with what one says about Him, for Jesus said, “whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him. Truly it is a form of reviling God. Reviling, cursing, and blasphemy are verbal things, like when the thieves next to Jesus were reviling Him as he hung on the cross. When people have great difficulty in life, when things do not go as they had hoped or planned, Satan temps them to curse others for it, especially God, even the Holy Spirit. For example, I met a man who specifically said that he had verbally cursed the Holy Spirit because he had never gotten married. So he blamed the Spirit of God for it. He did what Jesus warned the world not to do. He spoke against the good Holy Spirit. He sinned at the cost of his eternal life! So, when you are mad or disappointed with your life, do not curse God, especially God in the form of the Holy Spirit. You most certainly must avoid speaking against the name of the Holy Spirit. Yet do not misuse any of God’s names, either (1) directly or (2) indirectly.
Avoid Direct and Indirect Misuse of God’s Names

In everyday sayings, in everyday life, many people have a bad habit of using the name(s) of God thoughtlessly, carelessly, as a meaningless expression, as a swear word, a curse word, or a foul word. (Now, God’s names include, Lord, Christ, Jesus, Jesus Christ, God, etc.) People vainly profane it when they suffer, get hurt, are disappointed, angry, bitter, or when they want to condemn or damn others. They misuse it when they want to take vengeance, or when they want to show disgust, swear, or use foul, filthy, or trashy language, or when they just want to express amazement, wonder, shock, surprise, or astonishment about somebody or something. They do this in two ways or forms, either (1) directly or (2) indirectly. But in no way or form, and at no time is it right to use God’s name in an unholy way.

(a) Avoid DIRECT Misuse of God’s Names

“Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them; for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret” (Eph 5:11, 12). It is one thing to “expose” sin, making it accountable to the truth, but it is another thing to “speak” sin. Do not be the devil’s reporter! Without imitating their speech, without speaking sin, this lesson attempts to expose some of the sins which people commit in misusing God’s names. For it would be disgraceful, dishonorable, and shameful to speak the same way. Below is a cleaned up, disinfected, sanitized list of some direct problems that certain Americans have in misusing God’s name. [The names of God have been completely removed and blanked out from these problem sayings as well as any reference to foul language. Do not fill in the blanks with God’s name or foul words.]

Alert! Remember, this is not the time to misuse any of God’s names in a direct or indirect way, either verbally or in writing. This is not the time to bring up everything we know about how people misuse the name of the Lord. It is too difficult for most people to properly disinfect these things. For the most part, leave it unsaid. Some things are better left unsaid. Therefore, this list is intentionally left incomplete for fear of taking the name of the Lord in vain or profaning it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Dis-Infected Direct Saying</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GOD</td>
<td>1. Oh my Blank or just Blank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Blank damning someone/thing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LORD</td>
<td>1. Oh my Blank or just Blank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Blank-y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Blank-y Blank-y, look who’s forty (used as a rhyme/alliteration to announce a 40th birthday)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JESUS</td>
<td>1. Blank (used alone as a foul word)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHRIST</td>
<td>1. Blank (used alone as a foul word)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JESUS CHRIST</td>
<td>1. Blank Blank (used as a mix of foul words)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(b) Avoid INDIRECT Misuse of God’s Names

When one in-directly misuses the name of God, perhaps he thinks he is being polite, well-mannered, proper, courteous, or not rude. But when a person in-directly misuses the name of the Lord, he is still being vain or foul. There are two ways
in which a person can in-directly misuse God’s name: (1) with abbreviations and (2) with euphemisms. An abbreviation is a shortening of a word or saying to certain letters, syllables, or consonants which means the same thing as the original word or saying. So it is the short cut (reduced, compact, abridged) way or method that people use to say something vain or foul. A euphemism is the substitution of a mild, vague, or in-direct word or saying for one that is openly foul, profane, filthy, improper to use, or offensively harsh or blunt. It is a slight or major variation of a foul or profane saying that secretly means the same thing. Below is a cleaned up, dis-infected, sanitized list of some in-direct problems that certain Americans have in misusing God’s name. The names of God have been completely removed and blanked out from these problem sayings as well as any reference to foul language. Do not fill in the blanks with God’s name or foul language.

**Only Use God’s Name in a Holy Way**

Here are some proper ways in which to use the name of the Lord; in prayer (Mt 6:9); in baptizing (Mt 28:19); in teaching (He 5:12; 6:1); in singing (2 Sam 22:50); in blessing (Ruth 2:4; Nu 6:22-27); Etc. Let us not be poor or impoverished in our use of the name of the Lord. Instead let the grace of God enrich our tongues.

**2. Clean vs. Filthy Talk**

In a similar way that a person can improperly use the name of the Lord, he can sin in using filthy words, both directly and indirectly (with abbreviations and euphemisms). Profanity, obscenity, and foul language in any form, whether direct or indirect with abbreviations or euphemisms, is not appropriate or acceptable at any time. “There must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks” (Eph 5:4). So instead of talking trash or being a coarse comedian, you should express thanks, gratitude, and appreciation for something admirable, commendable, or worthy. This gives grace to the hearers. Learn not to profane but to praise, honor, and applaud what is right. Filthy talk is trashy, dirty, indecent, foul, or immoral. Coarse talk is crude, vulgar, unrefined, or foul-mouthed. Without giving examples of filthy words, for no one should give examples of them, many people use them to do the following.

(a) To describe sexual relations and reproductive organs, or the same as an expression of disappointment or when upset, or just as a filler word or adjective, or to describe a person not liked or thought of as a fool or an idiot. [What used to describe something as not normal, a freak, is now...
a euphemism to describe a certain foul word for sexual relations.]

(b) To describe human or animal excrement, manure, and urine and the parts that excrete, or the same as an expression of disappointment or when upset, or just as a filler word or adjective, or to describe a person not liked or thought of as a fool or an idiot.

(c) To describe something which is broken or goofed up.

(d) To describe or rate a situation as miserable or lousy, with one of the words related to the process of drinking from a straw.

(e) To describe anger, disgust, disappointment, or condemnation of another by vainly misusing Biblical words such as hell.

Do not be poor or impoverished in your speech by using any form of foul language. But instead enrich your use of clean language.

3. Sober vs. Silly Talk

Another major problem with people's speech is that it can be very silly. Silly talk is not appropriate among God's people. "There must be no... silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks" (Eph 5:4). So we have been instructed to replace "silly talk" with thankful talk, because gratefulness is edifying. Learn not to be silly but to instead express gratitude for what is right. Silly talk is foolishness. "He's so silly!" "She's so funny!" "Foolishness [silliness] is bound up in the heart of a child; The rod of discipline will remove it far from him" (Pr 22:15). But it is obvious that foolishness is also bound up in the hearts of certain men and women who are undisciplined in sober speech. Listen to what God said about his people of old: "Ephraim has become like a silly dove" (Ho 7:11). "For My people are foolish... They are stupid children" (Jer 4:22). God help us not to play the fool, in word or in deed.

Silliness / Foolishness Will Ruin Your Life!

Consider these very heavy statements about silly, foolish talking. "But with the mouth of the foolish, ruin is at hand" (Pr 10:14). Where there is foolish talk, great damage is not far away, it's nearby; it is "at hand," meaning as close as your hand is to your body. "Dead flies make a perfumer's oil stink, so a little foolishness is weightier than wisdom and honor" (Ecc 10:1). So silliness is heavier than you might think. "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, and foolishness. All these evil things proceed from within and defile the man" (Mk 7:21-23). So according to Jesus, foolishness is evil and defiles the man. It is like murder, sexual immorality, and the like. So silly speech is an evil thing and it defiles the man. And anything that defiles the man is sin. Silly speech then is a sin. This is a weighty matter, a log not a speck.

Leading Men Must Not Be Silly Men, But Grave or Dignified Men

Leading men must be men of gravity, not levity. This is listed as one of the qualifications or characteristics for being a pastor of a church: "keeping his children in subjection with all gravity" (1 Tim 3:4 KJV); "keeping his children under control with all dignity" (1 Tim 3:4 NAS). Gravity means being dignified, and being dignified is not being foolish or silly, but sensible
and sober-minded. So silly, foolhardy men must not be put in charge of a church. The opposite of gravity (seriousness) is levity (jokiness). Especially before the assembly, we should be men of gravity not levity, apostles of Christ not apostles of fun, always looking to be edifying, not funny or a joker. Instead of wanting to be “the life of the party,” “the fun of the party,” try being the “light” of the party, a spiritual light. For all disciples are taught by God to be people of gravity, dignified, and serious, older men, younger men, and women alike (READ Titus 2:2, 6; 1 Tim 3:11). “Be serious” (1 Pe 4:7 NKJV). “Be sober” (1 Pe 5:8 NKJV). “Become sober-minded as you ought” (1 Cor 15:34). Do people think you are serious?

Spokesmen for God Must Not Be Silly Men, But Solemn Men

Not only was the Holy Spirit serious in His speech (SEE Ac 20:23), but Paul, a teacher, was called to be serious in what he said as well. “But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, so that I may finish my course and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God” (Ac 20:24). Solemnly means seriously and earnestly. So Paul was not called to be silly or foolish in what he said to others, even to the lost. For example, “While Paul was saying this in his defense, Festus said in a loud voice, ‘Paul, you are out of your mind! Your great learning is driving you mad.’ But Paul said, ‘I am not out of my mind, most excellent Festus, but I utter words of sober truth’” (Ac 26:24, 25). So Paul was not silly, even with those who were lost, for Festus was lost. Paul was respectfully serious with this leading man.

Look to Instigate or Activate Joy (a fruit of the Spirit) vs. Comedic Laughter

Some, when they open their mouths, are simply looking for the opportunity to be silly, to make people snicker, to play the fool, the idiot, the jester, to be the entertainer, the clown, the humorist, or to tell a joke to God’s people. Yet this is not a serious, sober, dignified, wise, or prudent thing to do.

In a courtroom, before a judge, would it be fitting to play the fool, be silly, or tell a joke? It is not appropriate to do so; neither is it in any assembly of God’s people, small or great, where God, the Judge of all men, has pledged to gather with them. Some wish to be to be the “life of the party” instead of the “light” of the party. Jesus was the light of the world, not the court jester. He was here, not for popularity’s sake, or entertainment’s sake, but instead to save and purify some souls through preaching and teaching the holy will and word of His Father.

Indeed, there is a difference between being a joy and a jester, between a joyful heart and a joking heart. For a joyful heart, not a joking heart, is good medicine (Pr 17:22). Sarah’s laughter was not over a joke, she was overjoyed and amazed about something good. She enjoyed it. So the next time you want to make someone laugh with your silliness, comedy, or foolishness why not instead try to give them, and your Father in heaven, something to truly enjoy or rejoice about? “A joyful heart is good medicine” (Pr 17:22). What an excellent subject to consider! Raise sounds of joy (1 Chr 15:16), like the joy of salvation (Ps 51:12), for
there is rejoicing among the angels of heaven over one sinner who repents (Lk 15:7). And repentance is initially not joyful, but full of sorrow (2 Cor 7:9, 10). So through the preaching of the gospel, with all soberness, try to get someone to grieve over his sins to the point that he brings joy to the angels in heaven. The gospel is not a platform for silliness, but for sorrows! The gospel is not here to tickle your “funny-bone,” or your “silly-bone.” God sent it to prick your “sorry-bone,” your “grief-bone.”

Shout aloud for joy (Ezra 3:12). Let Your godly ones sing for joy (Ps 132:9). Sing for joy over your victories (Ps 20:5), like when the women sang for joy over David’s victory. He defeated their common enemy, Goliath. Reap with joy (Ps 126:5). Talk about how you can make Paul’s joy complete (Philippians 2:2). Rejoice with those who rejoice (Ro 12:15), like with Jesus, who rejoiced over how His Father revealed the truth to childlike people and hid it from the so-called wise (Lk 10:21).

Be a joy, not a grief, to your leaders, especially your parents, by obeying and submitting to all of their direction and guidance that is in accordance with the will and commandment of the Lord (He 13:17).

Finally, dwell on that time for everlasting, not temporary joy (Is 61:7). Joy is a fruit of the spirit (Gal 5:22), not silliness. Joy is gladness. Be glad. Don’t be silly. Do not be poor or impoverished in your speech by using silly or foolish language. But instead enrich your use of sober and wise language. Be a joy to others and to God. Be thankful. Be appreciative. Be joyous. It is the medicine we truly need. Why not repent of your silliness?

Conclusion

The grace of God is trying to enrich all aspects of our speech, especially our use of God’s holy name. Our team language must be clean, not filthy. Our speech must be sober, not silly. There are many more aspects of our speech which we need to enrich in holiness, like for example, the spiritual or sensual nature of it; the oath or yes/no nature of it; the flattery or sincerity of it, and more. But we must also be careful to cultivate the source of our speech, which is the heart (SEE Mt 12:34, 35; 15:11). We speak from that which fills the heart, from our inner man, our spirit. If you take the name of the Lord in vain, then you have a vain heart, not a reverent and good heart. If you use filthy language, then you have a filthy heart, not a clean heart. If you are a silly person, then you have a silly or foolish heart, not a sober or serious heart. Therefore, we must do what Solomon said for us to do. “Watch over your heart with all diligence, For from it flow the springs of life” (Pr 4:23).

Let us clothe our hearts with holiness. God’s team goal is holiness (separateness). God’s team has an opponent of holiness (separateness). God’s equips His team to win through holiness (separation). God’s team should practice together to strengthen one another in holiness (separateness). God’s team must stay in the league of holiness (separation). God’s team must wear holy uniforms (separate). And finally, God’s team must talk holy (separate). New league, new language. New life, new vocabulary.
Ho! All things must become new: New life, new goal, new opponent, new talents, new relationships, new practice, new music, new adornment, new language, and so on and so forth.

“Let... the one who is holy, still keep himself holy” (Re 22:11).

“And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure” 1 Jn 3:3

For Zacharias prophesied as to one of the reasons why Jesus Christ would be born, that we “might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him all our days” (Lk 1:74, 75). What a great thought, to serve God in holiness and righteousness all our days, through His beloved Son. Let us strive together to fulfill this prophecy, in our own lives, in the lives of our families, and in the lives of our churches. Amen and amen.
“This is a wonderful lesson. It is a must for all Christians to learn.” Leke, Nigeria

“This is truly the strong point of Christian maturity, as this will give me the mind set and character to serve the Lord and the church. A truly wonderful lesson, and I thank God for it, as it was what I needed to initiate the beginning of the rest of my life with God and Christ. Thank you.” James, New York

“I learned the importance of being clothed with the uniform of holiness in all aspects in relation to being a good witness for Christ. i.e. in appearance, word, and deed. I will be more conscious of walking in holiness more than ever.” Cornell, Puerto Rico

“I enjoyed what I studied on adorning yourself.” Pearl, New Jersey

“I learned the meaning of holiness and how to overcome the opponent of holiness. I was impacted most by the steps to become stronger in the word and in God and the steps to take to become stronger to stand up to the adversary.” Lynette, California

“It is plain that this course is utterly important for anyone who longs for growing in holiness. It gives answers about how and what are the practical means required for this growth in sanctification. What impacted me the most is the work of God in us through the Holy Spirit by training us to cling to Him and teaching us how to know our opponent the Devil in order to walk safely in God’s path, that even when we fall failingly in sin, we should repent and rise up to continue our fighting against the Devil and not renounce to despair and depression. Thank you... for encouraging me. It is really a blessed study I ever pursued.” Animar, Morocco

“The most important thing I learned is how you have to always wear the whole armor of God at all times in order to make it in this world.” Stephanie, Washington, DC

“I agree that holiness is God’s plan for man, so that we can always have victory over the wiles of Satan.” Gabriel, Nigeria

“I am so thankful for these lessons. They are teaching me so much, even about my own life. Some of the lessons are hard to swallow, but I remain in awe, and praise of God for showing me. I have been praying that He would show me nothing but truth. That He would give me what He had to give me, and take from me what He needed to take, to make me right with Him. These lessons are proving to be very helpful in answering some of those prayers. They are leading me to see what I need to do. I need to leave my current living situation to ‘avoid evil appearance’, I need to be rebaptized for the right reasons. I even prayed that He would make me sure of my salvation, and through these lessons, I have found out how to become sure of it. Thank you very much.” Katrina, Michigan

“I learned about putting on God’s armor. What struck me the most was the different ways of using profanity. I now know the difference between indirect and direct use of profanity and will be on my guard. I will change the armor when worshiping and praying.” Philip, Texas

“I am much stronger in all. Thank You.” Vern, Ohio

“What struck me the most is the uniform that God wants us to wear. I will advise those who are not aware of this uniform especially advising women to cover their heads.” David, South Africa

“I thank the Lord so much for this.” Sylvester, Pastor, Ghana

“To live a holy life need to use holy uniform. This lesson study in details regarding the holiness of Christian life. From now on I’ll try to live a holy life.” Koman, Indonesia
What people are learning

“I have learned the importance of holiness in the life of a Christian. What struck me most is that ‘Without holiness no one can see the Lord.’” Pastor, Cameroon

“I am so happy that God calls me to a holy life. I am holy because of His death and resurrection. I’m also happy because of His promises to me and all His children. God gives promises so we can partake of divine nature. Moreover, God put His armor to me. He protects me from danger.” Sambath, Cambodia

“I gained knowledge about what I have been struggling with for years, that is 1 Timothy 2:4-10. It gives me great joy.” Lucy, Great Britain

“I learned that I must perfect holiness in my life and that I must make sure that I’m in holy relationships in my life. What impacted me the most was the teaching on proper language and speech as it relates to God. The teaching has made me think about how to say things in the proper way so that I will not speak improper or vain words.” Lola, New Jersey

“I WISH I HAD COME ACROSS YOUR TEACHINGS EARLIER AS POSSIBLE and adjust my view of the word of God. God bless you and your ministry.” Julius, Kenya

“It showed me I need to watch everything I say and how I say it.” Fred, California

“Everyday I hear people use foul language and they say they’re Christians. God told us not to grieve the Holy Spirit. That’s what’s happening when we use foul words.” Michelle, Texas

“This study was very informative with its complete explanation of what it means to take the Lord’s name in vain. Without this study, I would have never fully understood the magnitude, or the great weight of this commandment.” Angela, Florida

“What impacted me the most was the adornment part. I have a strong urge to cover my head now because we used to wear a head covering at a Catholic church I went to when I was little.” Veronica, Louisiana

“I have learned to avoid any binding agreement with unbelievers. This will lead me to perfection.” Uwoma, Nigeria

“I learned what holiness and perfecting really means and how to change my life to live that holiness. To live a perfect and holy life is the way that we live, talk, think, dress and even choose the people that we have relationships and agreements with. I’m really going to work hard with the grace of God to change my life into holiness.” Marthinus, Ireland

“What impacted me the most was to learn about the adornment for women in this lesson, also learn how to be more holy too.” Kathy, North Carolina

“I learned about how God expects us to dress as women and the fact men’s heads are to be uncovered and women’s covered.” Colene, Nebraska

“I am impacted by the fact that to be dressed properly is more than having on appropriate outer garments, we must be adorned from within.” Evelyn, Virginia

“I think this lesson is my favorite one so far.” Robert, Florida