

Holiness and Love

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[0 : 00] Well, winter is a time for soups and stews and poikikos. Nothing nicer than a nice soup or a nice chunky stew.

! A stew that is too sweet doesn't make sense.

Likewise, if you just keep pouring salt in it and don't add any sugar, it's going to be way too salty and too unpleasant. Sweet and salty, you need to get them in the right balance.

Too much sugar, it's too sweet. Too much salt, it's too salty. Well, in Christian life, there are two vital ingredients that we need and that we need to keep in balance.

And that is the ingredients of holiness on the one hand and love on the other hand. If you just keep filling up holiness, you might become a little bit too salty.

[1 : 17] So holy that no one really wants to taste and see that the Lord is good, as Peter tells us. But if you pour too much sugar in it, and too much love, and too much acceptance, you'll end up being too sweet.

So accepting that you don't have a taste that is distinctive to the candy floss that the world loves so much. Maybe your life doesn't have any flavoring of holiness or love in it.

Maybe you're just living a bland kind of existence. Trying to live a generally good life, as long as it doesn't take too much effort, or that it's too radical. Our passage today, Leviticus 19, challenges all of these ways of living life.

God shows us that living with holiness and love are by no means optional extras in the Christian life. They are essential ingredients if you're going to live a life that is both tasty and nourishing.

A life that goes beyond bland, same old existence, and it doesn't actually make a difference, consequence to a life that kind of zings with goodness and blessing and holiness and love.

[2 : 36] You know, when you make a poiki, you want to get that zing, you want to get that taste, you want to get that flavor, so that you want more of it. And that's what holiness and love should be doing in the life of a Christian.

But to do that, you need to have both holiness and love in your life, and you need to keep them in the right balance. But how does holiness work? And how does it relate to being a loving presence in the world?

And so we're going to look at how holiness and love work together. If you're like most people, you're not exactly dying for a talk on holiness.

It's typically not high on our agenda. But Leviticus 19 helps us clear up some common misconceptions when it comes to holiness. And so the first misconception is that holiness is mainly about avoiding sin and withdrawing from the world.

That's a common misconception. We tend to think holiness is what the monks did in the olden times, leaving all their worldly possessions to retreat into a holy huddle to go and live in the desert.

[3 : 46] One of the famous earliest monks was St. Simeon, who went to go live on a pillar for 40 years. And he started off a very short little pillar, so he was just a few feet off the ground, and he could still get food and water and go to the bathroom when he needed.

But that wasn't holy enough. And so gradually over time, this pillar got taller and taller until he was 20 meters off the ground. And I don't know how holy it was getting food to him and then making sure that he could use the bathroom, but that's what they considered as being holy back in those days.

Well, Leviticus 19 challenges us because it blends holiness and loving your neighbor into a seamless, inseparable unity. It's not about withdrawing from the world, but it's about being involved in the world.

So, chapter 19 starts off with verse 1 and 2. The Lord said to Moses, Speak to the entire assembly of Israel and say to them, Be holy because I, the Lord your God, am holy.

And so the entire assembly, the whole people, gathered people, gathered together, have this one message from God through his spokesperson, You need to be holy because God is holy.

[5 : 10] But this chapter, well, this section of the chapter at least, is bookended in verse 18, and it ends not with holiness, but loving your neighbor.

Verse 18 says, Do not seek revenge or bear grudge against anyone among your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord.

And so what Leviticus 19 does is mix together vertical holiness towards God and horizontal love for people, and what it does is it weaves them throughout the chapter together.

It doesn't keep them separate. For example, the first command that God says, after verse 2, he says, Be holy because I, the Lord your God, am holy.

Up till now in Leviticus, what you would expect is, go and make a sacrifice. Go and do something that is worshiping God. Go to the tabernacle. But he doesn't say that. The very first thing he says is, Each of you must respect your mother and your father.

[6 : 19] The same verse then says, And you must observe for my Sabbaths, I am the Lord your God. So there's already this mixing between holiness towards God and loving, and being involved in the world around us, with people around us, with relationships.

Then there's verse 4 to verse 8. It starts off with, Do not turn to idols or make metal gods for yourselves. I am the Lord your God.

So that's a Godward dimension. And it goes on to talk about sacrifice. When you sacrifice a fellowship offering to the Lord, sacrifice it in such a way that it will be accepted on your behalf.

And it goes on about how it must be eaten before the third day. Anything left over until the third day must be burned up. If anyone eats of it on the third day, it's impure and will not be accepted.

And if they eat it, they have desecrated what is holy to the Lord. They've got to be cut off from their people. So that sounds like a Godward thing. But remember when we looked at the fellowship offerings? Do you remember why you had to eat it before the third day?

[7 : 33] It's because you're expected to eat it with other people. There's a hospitality element to the fellowship offerings. It's not just towards God. It is primarily towards God.

But you invite all your family and friends. And you eat it in the first and second day. And that's the reason you invite as many people as you can. Because you can't eat it on the third day. Do you remember that? I think it was about having a party with God, if I'm correct.

Yeah. So there's this God element. And there's this people element woven into the text already. Verse 9 and 10 isn't about God at all in one sense.

It's about reaping harvest and grains and leaving things left over for the poor and the foreigner.

Verse 10. Do not go over your vineyard a second time or pick up the grapes that have fallen. Leave them for the poor and the foreigner. There's a hinge, I guess, from verse 11 down to verse 18.

[8 : 36] That's a lot more about how we deal with people. Don't steal. Don't lie. Don't deceive one another. Don't swear falsely by my name. But then it mixes holiness in there in verse 12.

Don't profane the name of the Lord. And in verse 14, fear God because you're not to take advantage of people with disabilities. Don't curse the deaf or put a stumbling block in front of the blind.

But fear the Lord your God. Fear your God. I am the Lord. And so what we see is there's this inseparable link between holiness on the one hand and loving others on the other.

Holiness is not about withdrawing from the world, but loving your neighbor in a way that you are a source of blessing and goodness and life to them. And the way that the chapter is constructed helps us to see that.

Now there's a second misconception about holiness, that it is primarily about keeping a bunch of rules. We tend to think that holiness is about ticking off a bunch of do's and don'ts.

[9 : 48] And let's be honest, there's a fair number of them in this chapter in Leviticus and in fact throughout the whole Old Testament and the New Testament. But it's not primarily about keeping a bunch of rules.

The context of Leviticus 19, everything that we've seen in Leviticus up till now, tells us that holiness is really about belonging heart and soul to God.

In Leviticus, there's a difference between something that is clean and something that was holy. And the holy thing has been transferred completely into Yahweh's, into the Lord God's ownership, into God's ownership.

Yahweh's, God's name in the Old Testament. That's the stuff that gets to go in the tabernacle, in the tent, and in the holy of holies. Very few things get to go there.

Something that is holy is transferred completely into God's ownership. One commentator says, In terms of daily life, becoming holy, therefore, entailed becoming more and more like God, which may also be understood in terms of belonging ever more deeply to Him.

[11:02] And that's why in Peter, we see that Peter connects holiness with salvation. Maybe just turn there quickly to the New Testament, and we'll see this, how Peter treats holiness and salvation.

So 1 Peter, chapter 1, verse 15.

Well, let's start at verse 14. As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. So notice the past tense there.

Don't be like you used to be. But just as He who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do. For it is written, be holy because I am holy.

He's quoting this text in Leviticus 19. But what does He, how do you do that? What does Peter go on to say? Does he go on to quote a number of rules, do's and don'ts?

[12:15] He doesn't do that. Look what he says. Since you, verse 17, Since you call on a Father who judges each person's work impartially, live out your time as foreigners here in reverent fear.

He's picking up notes and themes from Leviticus 19. But then he says this, For you know. So be holy because you know, verse 18, that it was not with perishable things, such as silver or gold that you were redeemed, from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, the stuff that you used to do.

You were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. And so what Peter is saying is to be more holy, you need to think more and more about your salvation.

You need to think more and more about Jesus to realize what a huge price was paid for you, what a huge grace it was given to you. And what an incredible inheritance that you promised.

And so being holy is less about rules and more about deepening your relationship with your savior. In Levitical terms, in terms of Leviticus, it's getting closer to the source of your life.

[13:35] So when we're thinking about holiness, we must make sure that we don't make holiness what I call a stand-alone project. You can't be holy or loving without God being at the center of your life.

Otherwise it's just going to be about your efforts and about do's and don'ts. God doesn't want that. He's not a giant micromanager in the sky. And so godly holiness is neither withdrawing from the world nor loving like the world does.

Rather, Leviticus 19 tells us that holiness is about practicing love in such a way that people are drawn to God and, as Peter says, to taste and see that the Lord is good.

He's quoting from the Psalms there. So then, now we've got those misconceptions out the way, let's walk through the chapter to see how holiness works in practical, everyday life.

And I think, so we're going to look at practical, everyday holiness. And that's one of the things that we realize in running through this chapter in Leviticus is that it covers a broad swathe of life.

[14:48] It doesn't cover everything. This is not the only thing that God has to say about holiness, but it certainly touches on major areas of life that if you start looking at this, you're immediately going to kickstart being more holy if you listen to what God is saying.

But the important thing is to put it into practice. And so we're going to look at how holiness works, reminding ourselves that holiness and love, I'm basically going to use them a little bit interchangeably now.

But how holiness works in the home, how holiness works at work, and how holiness works with our friends.

So first, in the home. And what's interesting is that holiness begins in the home. I guess that's where we spend most of our time, outside of work, and our family relationships shape us more than almost anything else in our life.

And so that's why God starts with the very first command to respect or honor, or fear actually, the word is fear, your mother and your father.

[15 : 58] And he must have been thinking about us of the African family because you generally fear your mother more than you fear your father, if I remember back to my childhood. Respect your mother and your father.

Be holy, so respect your mother and your father. Be holy, don't withdraw from the world. In your home, you can start practicing holiness in your home.

So children who are still living under their parents' roof, I was going to say if you're under 18, but you know the way the world goes these days, so whether you're 8 or 28, or whatever age you are, if you're still under your parents' roof, you need to honor them.

In general terms, it means quick, cheerful obedience. I still don't know where I got that from, but it's probably one of the best ways to understand how to honor and respect your parents.

It means quick and cheerful obedience, not slow, grumpy, long-lipped disobedience, if I can put it like that. None of the stooped shoulders, the long arms, and the feet that do this.

[17 : 06] And the lip that's even lower. Yes, Dad. Yes, Mom. At once. Good luck with that, parents, but that's the aim.

I think it also means working hard at communication, to respect your mother and your father, especially when relationships can be difficult. And so sometimes we can say to ourselves, but they don't deserve my respect.

But the Bible never lets you off the hook in that regard. You need to show them respect no matter what. In fact, you need to show respect to all authority. In the New Testament, in the book of Peter, Peter goes on to say, you know, slaves, you need to honor your boss, even if they're not a nice boss.

And you can imagine what having, what being a slave and having a horrible boss in the ancient world was like. It's way more not nice than having a not nice boss in the modern world.

And he says, no, I don't care about that. You're still to show them respect. Take a beating. And it's better to be honored for doing the right thing, even though bad things are happening to you, to respond in the right way, to still show them respect and honor.

[18 : 29] And that's not easy. That's why we need God's help to be holy. And so respect your parents. Work hard at communication, especially when the relationship feels difficult and goes through difficult patches or is difficult.

I remember a family member that struggled with our dad. You know, I did too. And I went through some very difficult times as a family.

And for many years, I held a grudge against him and all the stuff that he did and the stuff that he didn't do. But in the end, I knew I had to forgive him. I just had to.

As a Christian, I just had to. And because God commands it. And so I did that. I dealt with it. I went to go chat with him.

And there was some good reconciliation there. The other family member who's not a Christian never dealt with it. And it's too late now because my dad's passed away.

[19 : 31] And so he's sitting with regret and guilt. And I'm so glad that I went to go and speak with him. And so I want to encourage you to work at honoring and respecting your parents while you still can.

Don't wait until they're gone. Well, there's more to say about holiness in the home. And that is about hospitality. And we get that from that fellowship offering in verse 5 to verse 8 which we mentioned a bit earlier.

Yes, it's a sacrifice to God. But remember, you invite your friends to come and eat the meal with you. So holiness in the home is about hospitality and generosity.

We're to share food with other people in our home. God doesn't want us to enjoy him alone. He wants us to enjoy him together with other people.

One of the most powerful tools you have for loving people is a Christian home that is open and welcoming. Especially to those whose own families are struggling.

[20 : 37] And especially if you've still got a mom and a dad involved in the home. If you don't and you're Christian by yourself for whatever reason, that's okay. You can still invite people. But I can't tell you how wholesome and good it is when you've got a mom and a dad and their kids and you invite people whose family life is a little bit wonky, not as stable.

And they just, the kids will stream there. They know there's wholesomeness and goodness and love and acceptance. And it's just one of the easiest ways to be involved in the world to show love to

others.

Say, listen, come for a meal. We'll hang out together and we'll let the kids run around for a bit. So, make it a habit to invite people over and share meals.

Here's an easy, simple test to check on your holiness of hospitality. Have you shared a meal with someone from the church within the last month? There you go.

It's a good test of holiness. You don't have to spend years on a pillar outside in your backyard. Very, highly unrecommended.

[21 : 53] Have you shared a meal with someone from church within the last month? You don't have to be a great cook. Don't make excuses why you shouldn't invite them. Buy the ingredients, let them help, order in.

But take time to invite others to share meals with you. And the other generosity that we see is in verse 9 and 10. Now, this could well come under the holiness at work heading, but we often do this, what we're going to read now from home, so I'm going to put it there.

So, verse 9 and 10, it says this, when you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Do not go over your vineyard a second time or pick up the grapes that have fallen.

Leave them for the poor and the foreigner. I am the Lord your God. And this kind of activity would have been done from home anyway. And so, the next time you cut the lawn, when you mow the lawn and you pick the fruit from your fruit trees at home, your orchards, right?

Not orchards, orchards. Yeah, orchards. Yeah. Well, we don't do that anymore. But the principle is this, don't consume everything in your economic life for yourself.

[23 : 16] Build generosity into your economic life. We don't have harvest fields, but we do have pantries and fridges. So, make sure you've got enough to give to those who are struggling.

And typically, the people who are struggling are going to come and harvest from you at your front gate during the course of the week. So, does this mean I must give to every person who comes to my gate?

No. You don't. You've got work to do. You've got a family to care for. You're busy. So, when I'm too busy to help, I will speak to the guys at the gate and say, guys, I'd love to help you, but I can't right now.

Why don't you come and join me on Sunday? So, I'll always refer them. I say, I can't help you now, but come see us on a Sunday. We give out soup. It's at St. Mark's Church. They all know where it is. It's easy for me.

I just point behind me, but just tell them where St. Mark's Church is. Everyone who needs food in Plumstead knows where St. Mark's Church is. They walk up and down past here all the time.

[24 : 22] And so, if I can't help them at the time, I say, come and get some soup from us on a Sunday. I often tell the guys, if they get me on the weekends, and I'm like, guys, I can't handle this on the weekends either.

So, I don't just drop everything and run around and try and help them, but I do make sure I've got stuff that I can help them with as and when I can do it. But I do make sure also that I refer them to somewhere that can help them.

Just to make a note, there's two kinds of helping. One kind of helping keeps people stuck in the same place, and one kind of helping actually changes their situation.

So, you know, many who ask for food don't need more food. What they need is help to break out of their addictions and their lifestyles.

So, what I say is use your discretion, but be careful of keep on giving what they need when they ask for it, because you ultimately want to help change the situation, not help them stay in the situation, if I can put it like that.

[25 : 34] But that requires conversation. And input. But just treat them like a normal person. It's like, hey, man, what's your name? Yeah, what, what, what, what, what?

I often get people who tell me, oh, Dylan, someone came to my gate, and I say, okay, cool, what's his name? No, you don't know the name. I say, okay, but then I can't identify them.

I don't know who they are. They just say, what's your name? My name is this. Give them your name. Don't give them your phone number. And talk to them. If they're bugging you, say, listen, you come here so often, you're freaking me out.

Stop bringing my doorbell. Let's make a time when we can sort something out. So try and develop a relationship with them and see how much you can help them there. The point is to be prepared to be generous.

Have a system of generosity. God didn't leave generosity to feelings. He built it into his calendar. You're supposed to be supposed to go and sacrifice. That means you've got every, whenever you do the fellowship offering, you've got to give other people food.

[26 : 38] We should do the same. You can pack sandwiches with your family. You can keep U-turn vouchers at home or in the car. I really need to get a set of U-turn vouchers that I can show you.

I did have them and now they're not with me, of course. I'm hoping to get U-turn into the church sometime to tell us how those vouchers work and we can start using them, start using them at the church.

Join the Good Samaritan Project on a Sunday. Make soup once a month. Come and dish it up. Come and sit with the guys and talk to them. If you're at school, get some friends together and organize a sandwich drive.

It's really easy to do. You'll have great fun, especially if you've got your friends there and you're going to help others to be generous as well. Small things that you can do to build generosity into your lifestyle.

Alright, and then there's holiness at work. So that's holiness in the home, really. There's more there, but we're just picking and choosing here. But the next thing to look at is holiness at work, which is it's quite an interesting thought that you can be holy at work.

[27 : 56] You're not just holy at church on a Sunday. I don't mean that means you must play Christian music over the radio at work and have pair meetings.

I mean, by all means, do all of that stuff. But what does holiness at work look like according to God? He says this, verse 13, do not defraud or rob your neighbour.

Do not hold back the wages of a hired worker overnight. So to be holy at work means to pay workers on time and pay them a fair wage.

Very simple. Not rocket science. This is especially important in our country where so many live hand to mouth. When I was working at U-Turn, which helped homeless people, there were so many stories of guys that needed help that came from a situation where their boss hadn't paid them on time or hadn't paid them well or made a promise of payment and they never did.

and it gets them into such big trouble because they've got such a shallow safety net. There's hardly any safety net for them. And so this is a tactic that some big companies often use to maximise their profits.

[29 : 20] They have these big orders with smaller companies and then they just delay payment, delay payment, delay payment and then the small company will eventually, their hope is a small company will go out of business and then they don't have to pay them at all.

It's terrible. And so God considers it a great evil when we can't be bothered to make sure people who are dependent on us have enough for their daily bread.

We've just prayed for that in the Lord's Prayer. And if you're at all able to make sure that they get their daily bread because you're employing them, you need to do that.

If you employ people, pay them the same day they work. Stick to the agreed amount. Keep your promise. Let your yes be yes and your no be no. I actually used this verse once when I'm, when I was dealing with someone and they weren't, and it was just, we had a gardener or someone doing some work at the house once at our business where I used to work.

And yeah, they kept on delaying payment and they said, oh, I don't have enough. Here's your, here's a 50 Rand. And the guy was really struggling. And so I had to go to the, to the, to the finance department.

[30 : 38] I said, guys, you need the, you said you're going to pay the guy. You need to pay him. He's 50 Rand. He can hardly get back home. You know, for us it doesn't, for people who've got money and, and, and, oh, we've got extra money lying around.

Guys don't have extra money lying around. So holiness is really just let your yes be yes and your no be no and pay them on time.

Pay them a fair wage. And then lastly, I mean, there is more about holiness at work. You can use verse three, you must respect your mother and your father.

The same thing as respect your boss. And in fact, some of the stuff that we'll see with holiness with friends can be applied to holiness at work and holiness at home.

So let's actually go on to that. So holiness with friends and that's really kind of verse 16 to verse 18. It says this, do not go about spreading slander among your people.

[31 : 36] Do not do anything that endangers your neighbor's life. I am the Lord. Do not hate a fellow Israelite in your heart.

Rebuke your neighbor frankly so you will not share in their guilt. Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against anyone among your people but love your neighbor as yourself.

I am the Lord your God. This verse obviously gets picked up by Jesus in the New Testament and it's used as one of the two great commandments. Remember?

I think it's in Matthew 22 when they're asking what is the greatest commandment? And God says, well, love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength. And then he says, but the second commandment is like it.

Love your neighbor as yourself. And so holiness, even there in the New Testament, it's the same thing as here in the Old Testament. Holiness towards God and loving your neighbor, good actions, not good feelings.

[32 : 38] Yes, have good feelings but primarily have good actions. Love is primarily an action, not a feeling. They're working together in the New Testament just as much as they're working together in the Old Testament.

Hope you can see that. Holiness with friends can equally be applied to having holiness at home and at work because we've got to do the same thing with our friends as we do with people at work and at home.

Although primarily, or here I'd like to say also in the church. So in our relationships, God takes slander and holding grudges very seriously.

We think they're small things. They're kind of like on those little list of sins that's like, it's not really a sin. I haven't hurt anyone. I haven't killed anyone. Yeah, well, remember what Jesus says about hating your brother?

Yeah, you've already murdered him because it's going to lead to that. And in fact, that's what God says. He says, verse 16, don't go about spreading slander among your people.

[33 : 43] He doesn't change tack. Do not do anything that endangers your neighbor's life. So if you're slandering them, you're endangering their life. You say, oh, it's a bit heavy. I think what God is saying is that we need to take what we say about others behind their backs as urgently as if you were driving a car that was about to barrel into them and wreck their lives.

don't do anything that can endanger their life. Don't slander. If you're driving a car and you're going to smash into them, you must slam on the brakes.

You must stop driving that car. So if you're slandering, you need to stop it because you're putting their life in danger. So by the way, you're kind of putting your life in danger, but if it weren't for the grace of God.

Slam on the brakes, change direction, this is a very simple thing. We do struggle with it. We struggle with this.

How do I know we struggle with it? Because I deal with it here at church. We've got people wanting to exit our WhatsApp groups, get someone off, block them here at the church.

[35 : 12] So what? What did they do? They didn't reply to my message that I sent on Monday and it's Tuesday. And complain, so and so, did you see, did you hear, did you know, I don't like what they did, blah, blah, blah.

Okay, did you go and speak to them? Oh, I could never do that. Okay. Jesus says, go and do the thing that you said you can't do.

It's like not an optional extra. I don't know why we're treated as an optional extra. It's weird to me. I've spoken to people directly. You need to go and do this.

No, no, no, I don't need to do that. Jesus says you must go do it. No, I don't need to go do that. Stop talking about them behind their back. Go and sort it out with them. No, I don't need to do that.

Okay, then. It's funny how much holiness we need in our lives. And love. Because can you see how they go together there? This is about holiness, but it's about loving them.

[36 : 23] Go and sort it out. Go and speak to them. Just so that we know. Slander. And then, oh, no, I'm not slandering them. You're being critical and you're being negative.

That is the definition of slander. Oh, they thought it was like character assassination and libel and making weird and wonderful claims about stuff they haven't done.

No, it's just being negative and critical. You're supposed to build people up, not bring them down, break them down. Okay, so.

That's slander. What about grudges? When you feel bitterness or you're bearing a grudge towards someone at church, don't let it fester. Don't let anger take a root in your life.

The solution is to go and talk it out. Funny it says you must go and rebuke them, doesn't it? Verse 17.

[37 : 27] Don't hate a fellow Israelite in your heart. Rebuke your neighbor frankly, so you will not share their guilt. So they're doing something that you hate, well go and tell them.

Okay, rebuke there doesn't mean go and be horrible and shout at them, like I'm doing now. Not that I'm doing that, but. But this is him and listen, can we chat?

There's something in my heart, there's something you've done that I don't like, I just want to check in with you. Did you mean that? Can I tell you what my experience of that was?

Rebuke doesn't mean being harsh, it means speaking the truth in love, speaking the truth, tell them what happened, do it in love. Don't just be loving and not tell them what the problem is and keep the problem in your heart.

It's going to come out and guess where it's going to come out? Not with the person that you're supposed to speak to. It's going to come out there, there, there, there, there, you're going to slander them again. You're driving that car that's going to kill them. Apply the principle from Matthew 18.

[38 : 44] Now who was Jesus? Oh, only the wisest person who ever lived, only the son of God who came out from heaven and tells us, if you do this, you're going to live a better life. No, no, no, I don't want to do that because why?

Because I don't know. Why? I don't know. I suppose you've got to swallow your pride. You've got to let go of that hate. You've got to go and work at being loving, at being holy. I have yet to be in a meeting where Christians sit down to sort out a grievance that they've got between themselves that hasn't gone well.

You've got to do this. And we tell ourselves, oh, I'm too scared, oh, it won't go well, they're going to hate me, and blah, blah, blah. But I've never been, I've yet to be in a meeting where Christians have had problems with each other.

You know, I'm one of them. I'm not like just a partial judge. I've got a problem with me. Sometimes I've got a problem with them. It's helpful to have a third party. And then you talk it out.

And after the meeting, you're all friends again. It's amazing. It's magic. It's because you're doing what God tells you to do. Sit down, sort out your grievances, go to the person and speak to them.

[40 : 05] Holiness literally is talking to another person about the things that you don't like in a nice way that helps re-establish good relationship, not in a way that breaks down the relationship. You can, of course, just let go of the grudge.

Verse 18, do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against anyone among your people. Do not bear a grudge. Do not carry it. Drop it. Sometimes the best thing to do is to forgive and release it in your own heart without them knowing because you don't need to tell them because you've dropped it.

So what's the problem? There's no problem. It's when you go fishing, they call it catch and release. Yeah, well, Christianity is about forgive and release.

Okay? They don't need to know. Peter himself talks about love in 1 Peter 4 verse 8.

Love covers over a multitude of sins. So let it go. Reestablish good relationships. Holiness looks like going to talk to someone when you need to.

[41 : 19] Holiness can also look like not talking to them, not giving them a cold shoulder, not telling them the stuff that's irritated you. Just let it go. Don't let it bug you.

If it keeps bugging you, take it to them. Okay, and then as we close, being holy and being loving takes intentionality.

It takes planning. It's not going to happen automatically by itself because of who we are, because of the sin that remains in us. Yes, we've got the Holy Spirit in it. It pushes us towards these things, but as you can see, it helps to be reminded of them and say, did you go and do it?

When I was at U-turn working with the guys who were homeless, one of them was homeless because his brother had stolen 40,000 rand from him. Can you imagine?

He lost everything, business, everything, on the street, 40,000 rand. We were doing some Bible study and it was about forgiveness and he was like, no, you can't tell me about forgiveness. [42 : 27] We were chatting, we were chatting and I said, look, just try it. Just try and go and forgive the guy. Just try and forgive your brother. See what happens. Just tell him, I forgive you, I don't want your money. Because now they're not talking anymore.

For years, 10 to 20 years they hadn't been talking. I didn't think he was going to do it. I mean, who's going to do that? He went and did it. He comes back after a couple of weeks, big, broad, happy smile, I'm friends with my brother again.

He knows that he doesn't have to pay me the money back. Isn't that cool? It's amazing. God's word can do that. Okay? Being holy and loving takes intentionality, takes planning.

So, just back to 1 Peter 3 and we'll finish there. 1 Peter 1, sorry. So, he starts at section 1 Peter 1 verse 13.

He does start with the therefore, which is, we don't have time to look for why he wrote the therefore. If you do know 1 Peter 1, you know that he's talking about the amazing salvation that you've got in Jesus Christ, an inheritance that can never spoil, perish, or fade.

[43 : 44] And he says, therefore, because you've got all these cool things that Jesus has done for you, therefore, with minds that, verse 13, 1 Peter 1 13, therefore, with minds that are alert and fully sober, set your hope on the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at his coming.

one translation is, prepare your minds for action. Be sober minded. Prepare your minds for action.

To be holy, we must prepare our minds for action.

The image is of someone, I think, preparing for a race. The old King James had gird up your loyans, if you remember what that is. They hitch up your skirt so you can motor somewhere. It's an athlete preparing for a race.

And so, let me end by asking you, if Peter wants us to be holy by preparing our mind and preparing our lives, by working out the same way that someone would work out how to run a race, so what is your holiness workout schedule?

What is your holiness workout schedule? How are you going to get there? How are you preparing your mind? How is your preparation going on being holy?

[45 : 03] It's not going to happen by accident. You've got to engage your brain here in this thing. You can't be a good athlete if you don't have a workout plan. You're not going to wander into being more holy.

It's not something you stumble into. It happens when you engage your mind to think about doing it better. And then lastly, who is your holiness coach? Who is your holiness coach?

No winning athlete has their own coach. No winning athlete does not have their own coach. Every winning athlete has a coach. You won't change in holiness necessarily by yourself.

It helps to have a friend or a partner push you on the way. So here's a challenge. Find yourself a holiness coach. Set up some goals and plans of action.

Take your pick from the areas we've discussed today. Being more holy in the home, more holy at work, more holy in your relationship with your friends. And I think that is the way that you can start bringing the holy presence of God into the situation that you want to change and trust him to fill it with his redeeming love.

[46 : 21] That's going to take prayer, isn't it? So let me pray for us. Heavenly Father, we've seen your heart that you want us to be holy just as you are holy.

You want us to be like you. You want us to be in your presence. You want us to belong to you. And you've done that, Lord. You've saved us. You've redeemed us. And now you're purifying us.

not to withdraw from the world into a holy huddle, but to love the world better. And in this way, Lord, we long to be your holy loving presence in the world to others.

Help us to do that well in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.

Amen.