

Look
Into
His

Holiness



MINISTRY TO WOMEN 2020

PROGRAM RESOURCES

Salvationist
women

The Salvation Army
Canada & Bermuda

No one is holy like the Lord! - 1 Samuel 2:2

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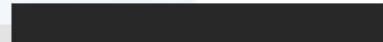
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BIBLE STUDIES

Helps to Holiness

A women's Bible study based on the Book Helps to Holiness by Samuel L. Brengle

LIEUTENANT KAM ROBINSON

In our Monday Night Women's Bible study group in Bracebridge, we had just finished studying Francis Chan's book, "Forgotten God" about the work and influence in the body of Christ of the Holy Spirit. We had used the video teachings available on RightNow Media along with the book and study guide as resources. Once we had completed this study we decided as a group that we needed and desired to delve further into this topic. We agreed that we wanted to watch the videos again and this time work through the application aspect of the Holy Spirit in our lives – Holiness. We wanted to further explore what holiness means and how it is demonstrated in the church. I looked for fresh resources on this topic that we could use but was not able to find anything recent. I then remembered that I had been given a set of books written by Samuel L. Brengle on the subject. I decided to rely on his first book, "Helps to Holiness" to guide us as a group on this subject of holiness while concurrently re-watching the videos from the Francis Chan series on "Forgotten God." Not all chapters in the book resource were studied due to time constraints. Included here are the chapters and topics that were discussed as a guide to lead your Women's group on this subject of biblical study.

From a personal perspective, it is my belief that holiness changes the world. It was when the world encountered pure holiness walking amongst us, Immanuel, that everything changed. Our high calling as Christ followers is to take this indwelling of the Holy Spirit out to once again encounter the world through our demonstrated holiness. Holiness has a remarkable ability to change the atmosphere when it enters into a space. This study deepened my spiritual understanding of holiness and made me more aware of what it means to walk in step with the Holy Spirit. I recently had an experience with holiness that had a deep impact on me. It was a regular Sunday morning before worship and people were rushing from the foyer of the church to their seats to prepare for the worship service. I was on my way to pray when I walked a soldier who was dying. She was frail, thin, and carrying with her a medical diagnosis that was serious and severe. She needed to be physically supported by people on either side of her. Little did I know that this would be her last Sunday on earth. Despite her dire circumstances she was entering into worship her Saviour. In that moment everything stopped, and my breath was taken away. I knew that I was in the presence of pure holiness. It was unexpected and inexplicable, and it changed the atmosphere. Holiness changes the world.

- Lieutenant Kam Robinson



This study makes use of the following resources:

- "Helps to Holiness" by Samuel Logan Brengle
 - o This book is available in print and on Kindle: <https://www.amazon.ca/Helps-Holiness-Samuel-Logan-Brengle/dp/1480062030>

- This book can also be accessed as a pdf online for free:
<http://wesley.nnu.edu/wesleyctr/books/0301-0400/HDM0348.pdf>
- “Forgotten God” study on RightNow Media.
 - RightNow Media is available for free through The Salvation Army:
<https://www.RightNow.org/Account/Invite/TSACANADA>



Helps to Holiness Bible Study: Week One

Opening Prayer

Forgotten God Video #1: I’VE GOT JESUS, WHY DO I NEED THE SPIRIT?

Video Discussion

- Ask the group what stood out for them
- Do we want to experience more of the Holy Spirit?
- Are our expectations about experiencing the Holy Spirit correct?
- God’s will for our life may just be obvious in relation to the suffering of humanity
- Scripture teaches to make disciples and serve the poor
- Have we missed the obvious and missed out on applying the obvious to our lives?
- God’s Spirit says find me by going and ministering to the people
- Is it easy to miss the obvious when we think about the Holy Spirit?
- Are we applying the obvious promises of the Holy Spirit to our lives? What does that look like?
- We are a temple of the Holy Spirit
- We want everyone to hear us, but we are not really listening for the voice of God
- We can’t assume what the mission of the Holy Spirit is in our lives

Session One: Holiness – What Is It? (Chapter One)

- Introduce the author, Samuel Logan Brengle and the topic to the group
- Samuel Logan Brengle was an influential author, teacher, and preacher on the doctrine of holiness in the late nineteenth to early twentieth century, serving from 1887-1931 as an active officer in The Salvation Army. In 1889 while he and his wife, Elizabeth Swift Brengle, were

serving as corps officers in Boston, Massachusetts, a brick thrown by a street “tough” smashed Brengle’s head against a door frame and caused an injury severe enough to require more than nineteen months of convalescence. During that treatment and recuperation period, he began writing articles on holiness for The Salvation Army’s publication, The War Cry, which were later collected and published as a “little red book” under the title Helps to Holiness

- Lead the group on a discussion on what they think Holiness is. (Brengle reveals on page 10 that in essence it is pure love)
- Brengle asks: Do you want to know what the baptism of the Holy Spirit is (page 10)?
- Brengle answers: It is not mere sentiment. It is not a happy sensation that passes away in a night. It is a baptism of love that brings every thought into captivity to the Lord Jesus (see 2 Cor. 10:5); casts out all fear (see 1 John 4:18); burns up doubt and unbelief as fire burns flax; makes you “meek and lowly in heart” (Matt. 11:29); make you hate uncleanness, lying and deceit, a flattering tongue, and every evil way with a perfect hatred; makes heaven and hell eternal realities; makes you patient and gentle with the disobedient and sinful, makes you “pure...peaceable...open to reason, fully of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere” (James 3:17), and brings you into perfect and unbroken sympathy with the Lord Jesus Christ in His toil and travail to bring a lost and rebellious world back to God.
- When you see scripture referenced in brackets you can look up the scripture verses as a group
- Begin at Chapter One: Holiness – What Is It?
- God’s word commands his people: Be Holy! (1 Peter 1:16, 1 Thess 4:3, 7, Heb. 12:14)
- Ask: So what is holiness and when can I get it and how?
- The Bible tells us that holiness is perfect deliverance from sin (1 John 1:7, Rom 6:6, Rom 6:18, Rom 6:11)
- The Bible also tells us that holiness is “perfect love”, a love which must expel from the heart all hatred and every evil disposition contrary to love (page 14)
- Holiness is a state in which there is no: anger, malice, blasphemy, hypocrisy, envy, love of ease, selfish desire for good opinion of others, shame of the cross, worldliness, deceit, debate, contention, covetousness, nor any evil desire or tendency in the heart (page 14)
- It is a state in which there is no longer any doubt or fear
- It is a state in which God is loved and trusted with a perfect heart
- But though the heart may be perfect, the head may be very imperfect which means a holy person can still make mistakes (discuss this as a group and share experiences)
- Share this encouragement found on page 14: But God looks at the sincerity of that person’s purpose, at the love and faith of the heart rather than the imperfections of the head, and calls them holy
- Holiness is not perfection, which belongs to God
- Discussion: Do we feel pressure as Christians to be perfect? Is that often confused with Holiness?
- Brengle says that holiness is the obedience of the heart aided by almighty power and boundless grace (page 15). Do we agree?
- It is the state of heart and life which consists of being and doing just what God wants us to be and do

- Holiness is the perfect renewal of our nature that makes us essentially good, so that we continually bring forth fruit – the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control)
- It is to put off the old self and put on the new self (Eph 4:22, 24), being “renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator” (Col 3:10)
- God means for us to be holy in this life; not reserved for eternity only (Luke 1:74-75)
- It is not a fight against ourselves after we are sanctified, for Paul expressly declared that “our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms” (Eph 6:12)
- Look up 2 Corinthians 9:8 which helps us understand that holiness is available in this life
- Next chapter: Holiness – How to Get It (Chapter 2)



Helps to Holiness Bible Study: Week Two

Opening Prayer

Recap of Last Week

- Samuel Logan Brengle is the author of books on the subject of Holiness
- Chapter One: Holiness – What is it?
- God’s word command his people to be holy
- We talked about the characteristics that aren’t a part of holy living and the characteristics that are (Fruit of the Spirit; Galatians 5:22-23)
- Holiness is perfect love
- But we aren’t perfect because we are human, so God looks at our heart, our intentions and the obedience in our actions to Him

Forgotten God Video #2: WHAT ARE YOU AFRAID OF?

Video Discussion

- Do we want to believe that God’s will for our life is to be comfortable?
- Do we want to live in our own world and enjoy it?
- Are we really ready to say: Holy Spirit lead me anywhere
- Is surrender hard?
- Salvationist Perspective: At age 15 William Booth declared, God shall have all there is of William Booth
- It is easier to say “God’s got something better for you” to those who are living in lack rather than abundance (when we have a lot of things we enjoy on the line vs. suffering)

Session Two: Holiness – How to Get It (Chapter Two)

- Samuel Brengle says the answer is to subtract certain characteristics or ways of being from the soul and then add others
- Subtract: malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy and slander (1 Peter 2:1)
- Subtract: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language (Colossians 3:8 – Paul says to take these off like you would a coat)
- Add: compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience (Colossians 3:12 – like putting on clothing)
- He points out that we have been cleansed of sin (Revelation 1:5, 1 John 1:7)
- Seek the blessing of the subtraction and addition at once (Psalm 103:12)
- Discussion Point: Do we believe that we received potential for full holiness at the point of salvation or is it a process? (Brengle believes the former but it's ok to disagree)
- God wants to put the power of the Holy Spirit into every follower of Jesus and forever do away with that old troublesome, sinful nature, so that he or she can truly say, "Old things are passed away; behold all things are become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17)
- This is just what God did with the apostles on the day of Pentecost
- Read what Jesus said of His earliest followers in John 17:16
- They received the purification of their hearts (Acts 15:8-9)
- Look at the life of Peter, in easy times he said he would never deny Jesus (Matthew 26:33-35) and then he did when facing persecution with Jesus
- But after Pentecost and was a man with a clean heart (Acts 4:19-20)
- After Pentecost you could not scare Peter and he no longer harbored a false pride (Acts 3:12-16)
- Peter preached that we can have the same power that he received on Pentecost (Acts 2:38-39)
- Any child of God can have this by giving yourself wholly to God and ask for it in faith
- Next chapter: Hindrances to Obtaining the Blessing (Chapter Three)

Going into this week:

- Pray that God can have all of you and believe in faith that you will be given everything you need to be Holy
- Keep fighting against the lies that will come that try to deafen you to God's voice
- Pray over the fruit of the spirit and remember the image of removing the character traits that are not Holy and adding those that are

Handout:



Helps to Holiness Bible Study: Week Three

Opening Prayer

Recap of Last Week

- Holiness does involve the subtraction of certain character attributes and the addition of others
- This means transformation is part of holiness
- Reviewing the Fruit of the Spirit is a good personal examination of the evidence of holiness in your life
- There is power with the receiving of the Holy Spirit to make you new

Forgotten God Video #3: THEOLOGY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT 101

Video Discussion

- A sermon can get us excited and full of emotion and passion but then there is the possibility to go back to our regular lives and do nothing with it
- When we are out there in the world the Holy Spirit comes alive in us
- We need to do something by the power of the Holy Spirit
- The world is waiting to see this
- Worship and study of the Word of God is important
- The application of what we learn is needed to make a difference for God
- How do we keep learning and yet maintaining our passion for doing the work that God has called us to do?

Session Three: Hindrances to Obtaining the Blessing (Chapter Three)

- There are hindrances in the way of holiness with most people (page 27)
- These hindrances originate from the flesh
- We cannot be idle and expect holiness just to be lived out of us
- Read 2 Thessalonians 3:10 and Galatians 6:7
- Brengle says we must actively: study the Bible, pray, practice self-examination and self-denial, be obedient and to faithfully attend church (page 28)
- Even if one thing is a hindrance in our lives it can greatly affect our holiness
- Sin must be addressed before holiness can be achieved, read Hebrews 12:1 and Romans 12:1
- Are there some things we will not let go of that may be preventing holiness in us?
- Discussion: Does full surrender mean we put boundaries on what we would do for Jesus?
- Brengle says that if in our heart we have any secret disloyalty to God, then we cannot be holy (page 29)
- Brengle says “God wants perfect loyalty in the secret of your own heart, and He demands it, not only for His glory, but also for your good” (page 29)
- It is replacing our will (ourselves) as central in our lives with God’s will (Jesus) as central in our lives
- This is yielding ourselves to God
- Discussion of Flesh vs. Spirit, Read Galatians 5:17

- Another hindrance is imperfect faith
- Read 1 Thessalonians 1:7-8
- Read 1 Thessalonians 3:10
- Read 1 Thessalonians 5:23
- We must pray for perfect faith
- Read Ephesians 2:8 (grace is received through faith)
- Read Acts 26:18 (faith leads to holiness)
- Read Hebrews 10:22 (full assurance of faith)
- Lack of faith is a hindrance to holiness
- Holiness is a great blessing. It is the renewal of the whole heart and life in the image of Jesus. (page 30)
- Read Matthew 11:29 for characteristics of holiness
- We must seek perfect consecration and perfect faith (page 31)
- Read 1 Timothy 1:5, Brengle says “That verse teaches us that holiness is nothing more than a pure heart filled with perfect love, a clear conscience toward God and others, which comes from a faithful discharge of duty and simple faith without any hypocrisy.” (page 32) Discuss this point
- Scriptures of encouragement that you are not alone in this endeavor: Hebrews 12:1-2 and 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

Going into this week:

- Take stock of any sin that may be present in your life and confess it to God
- As for forgiveness and the power and will to move from the sin you have recognized to be a hindrance to holiness
- Pray for a strong faith and read the hall of faith chapter in found in Hebrews 11



Helps to Holiness Bible Study: Week 4

Opening Prayer

Recap of Last Week

- Hindrances to Holiness
- Hindrances come from our selves (not God or circumstances)
- Holiness is: study of God's Word, prayer, self-examination, self-denial, obedience, and faithful attendance at church
- Great hindrance is “Imperfect Consecration” which is lack of total surrender to God
- Another hindrance is “Imperfect Faith”
- Holiness is a changing of the heart
- Holiness is to be humble like Jesus (look to Him, not ourselves, make Jesus our central focus)

Forgotten God Video #4: WHY DO YOU WANT HIM?

Video Discussion

- Explore our motivations for wanting the Holy Spirit
- Is it about loving others and building them up, helping people to grow closer to God?
- Ephesians 4:15 says: Speak the truth in love
- This brings self-awareness (tell me when there is sin in my life...do you desire this in your heart? Will we listen?)
- Pray with each other “Holy Spirit speak through us, Holy Spirit get sin out of our lives, Holy Spirit helps us to grow in these ways”
- Pray for incredible humility because it’s not about defending ourselves but becoming the Godly women that the Holy Spirit wants us to become

Session Four: The Heart of Jesus (Chapter Seven)

- Read article in The Salvationist “Send the Fire” page 10 (June 2019)
- If we seek to have a heart like Jesus do we first really mean it?
- Samuel Brengle says that if we mean it and we pray for it he is certain that we can have a heart like Jesus and that Jesus wants to give us hearts that are just like His
- We are called to this goal in the world
- Read 1 John 4:17
- Read 1 John 2:3-6
- Samuel Brengle says “It is impossible for us to walk like Him, to live like Him, unless we have a heart like His.” (Referring here to Jesus)
- We cannot bear the same kind of fruit unless we are the same kind of tree
- What kind of heart did Jesus have?

1. We find love in Him; therefore Jesus had a loving heart

- There was no hatred in His love, no venom, no spite, no selfishness
- He loved his enemies and prayed for his murderers (Luke 23:34)
- He loves with an everlasting love (Jeremiah 31:3)
- This is the kind of love He wants us to have (John 13:34), **to love each other just like Jesus loves us** (this is tremendous and important!)

2. Jesus had a humble heart

- Read Matthew 11:29
- Read Philippians 2:7
- Though Jesus is Lord of life and glory, he stopped to be born of a lowly virgin in a manger, worked as an unknown carpenter for thirty years, and chose to live with the poor, ignorant, and vile instead of the rich, noble and intelligent people
- Jesus’ simple, humble heart found its friends among the lowly, hardworking, common people
- Just before His death, Jesus took the place of a slave, washing His disciples feet (John 13:15)
- Read James 4:6, if you want a heart like Jesus, it will be one filled with humility

- Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-7, 1 Peter 5:5, Psalm 149:4

3. Jesus had a meek and gentle heart

- Read 2 Corinthians 10:1
- Read 1 Peter 2:23
- Jesus did not strike back when He was injured, He did not try to justify Himself, but committed His cause to His Heavenly Father
- Read Matthew 12:34, because meekness filled His blessed heart He did not thunder back at His enemies
- The world is very defensive and demands to be treated rightly but Jesus never did
- Read Matthew 5:39
- Read Matthew 5:5

Going into this week:

- Pray that God will give you a heart like Jesus: loving, humble, meek and gentle
- Consider 1 Corinthians chapter 13

Handout:



Helps to Holiness Bible Study: Week 5

Opening Prayer

Recap of Last Week

- Holiness is having a heart like Jesus
- A heart like Jesus is: loving, humble, meek and gentle
- 1 Corinthians chapter 13 (the Love Chapter)
- A further word on being meek: It is not about seeming weak and inconsequential

Forgotten God Video # 5: A REAL RELATIONSHIP

Watch Video

Video Discussion

- Knowing we are loved by God
- The Holy Spirit cries out inside of me “Abba Father”
- Even though we have the same Holy Spirit in us and we are all His children, somehow we understand that uniquely
- Our personalities are all different
- Comfort level with God as our Father
- Holy Spirit gives us this sense of comfort that we can cry out to God anytime we need to
- We are still reverent to God but we know that we can approach His throne with a sense of confidence because of what Jesus has done for us
- Security because of the internal witness of the Holy Spirit
- We are loved in a special way individually by God because it is very important for us to know that we are loved by Him; this is the roll of the Holy Spirit in our hearts
- Our spirits cry out for him in a relationship; it is a REAL RELATIONSHIP
- This involves trust and experience which the Holy Spirit brings
- Relationship is about obedience but it goes beyond that; just like an earthly relationship

Session Five: The Person God Uses (Chapter 10)

- Quote from someone Samuel Brengle knows “People are crying to God to use them, but He cannot. They are not given up to Him. They are not humble and teachable and holy.”
- God is using everyone He can and using them to the full extent of their fitness for His service
- Instead of praying so much to be used, people should search themselves to know whether they are usable
- Read 2 Timothy 2:20-21
- God wants men and women and He is looking for them everywhere
- Read 2 Chronicles 16:9a
- God really desires to use you but before you ask Him again to do so, see to it that your heart is perfect toward Him. Then you may depend upon it that God will show Himself strong on your behalf.

- God will first ask: Is their heart perfect towards Me? Are they Holy? Do they love me? Are they willing to walk by faith and not by sight? Do they love me so much that they have such childlike confidence in my love for them that they trust me to use them even when they don't see any signs from me? Will they be weary and faint when I correct them and try to fit them for greater usefulness? Do they wait for me to lead them by my Spirit? Are they meek and lowly in heart and humble?
- Read Job 13:15
- Read Joshua 1:8
- Read Psalm 32:8-11 (willing to follow vs. stubborn, needing to be controlled)
- Read John 5:44 (people pleaser vs. honoring God)
- Read 2 Timothy 4:2-4
- Read 2 Corinthians 6:1
- Paul was a man that was greatly used by God, his influence is still effective today and yet he saw very dark days
- Read 2 Timothy 1:13-15
- Read 2 Timothy 2:8-10
- Brengle quote "Poor, troubled soul, cheer up! You think you are useless but be of good courage! Trust God!" (page 72)
- Be filled with the Spirit (Discussion: What does this mean?)
- Read John 7:38-39
- Read Ephesians 5:18
- Jesus will see to it that out of your life shall flow rivers of holy influence and power to bless the world

Going into this week:

- Pray that the Holy Spirit equip you to be used by God
- Seek the things that fill you up with the Holy Spirit



Helps to Holiness Bible Study: Week 6

Opening Prayer

Recap of Last Week

- What is our comfort level with God as our Father
- Rather than asking God to use us we must first search ourselves to know whether we are usable
- God wants to work through people, and he is looking for them everywhere
- People used by God are: willing, honor God, partners with Him, trust God, idol free, not leading a life with sin, surrendered, obedient, love God, confident in God, teachable, meek, humble

Forgotten God Video # 6: FORGET ABOUT HIS WILL FOR YOUR LIFE

Video Discussion

- Openness to the Spirit of God
- Pray and ask the Spirit: Is there anything you want us to do right now?
- Most of the time the Spirit leads us to a life of adventure and outside of our comfort zone
- Living a life that keeps in step with the Spirit
- People who are experiencing God are living a life of mission moment to moment (not only thinking long term)
- Sometimes it is just about obedience
- We are supposed to be bold and courageous
- Pray asking the Holy Spirit what you can be doing right now

Session Six: Soul-Winners and Their Prayers (Chapter 18)

- All great soul winners have been people of much and might prayer (eg. Martin Luther prayed for 3 hours per day)
- Paul prayed without ceasing: Acts 16:25; Philippians 1:3-11; Colossians 1:9-11
- Jesus prayed alone for strength to do his ministry: Mark 1:35-39; Matthew 14:23-27; Luke 6:12-13; Luke 22:39-46; John 11:41-43; John 17:1-26; Hebrews 5:7
- Brengle says that the devil opposes our efforts to pray in private
- When the devil cannot move us, he distracts us: James 4:7
- Brengle also says our human bodies can keep us from praying (sickness, unhealthy lifestyle)
- Finally, Brengle says that we fail to respond quickly when we feel led by the Spirit to go to secret prayer
- Brengle quote “We should cultivate gladness at the thought of getting alone with Jesus in secret communion and prayer” (page 118)
- Jesus taught to pray and never give up: Luke 18:1
- Paul did as well 1 Thessalonians 5:16-17
- Hebrews 4:16 calls us again to be bold and confident

Going in to this week:

- Pray asking the Holy Spirit what you can do moment to moment in your day
- Set time aside for private prayer with God asking that He accomplish His saving work through you



Helps to Holiness Bible Study: Week 7

Opening Prayer

Recap of Last Week

- All great soul winners started with much prayer
- Praying without ceasing
- Jesus prayed alone before his ministry
- Be bold and confident when we pray

Forgotten God Video #7: SUPERNATURAL CHURCH

Watch Video

Video Discussion

- The Big Red Tractor Story
- Church system is taking care of its own and surviving
- Do we feel like our church is stoppable? That if key people left our church that we would stop?
- Human effort vs. supernatural effort and where are we?
- Are we planning too hard? Are we praying?
- Without making a conscious choice to depend on the Holy Spirit we CAN do a lot
- So much of church is people moving things along, but the Scriptures point to a church that is unstoppable because it is Spirit led
- Today's church is stoppable by taking away a few gifted people
- I don't want my life to be explainable without the Holy Spirit; a church fueled by the Holy Spirit
- He is calling me – and all of us – to depend on Him for living in a way that cannot be mimicked or forged
- While it is true that we are humans like everyone else, it is also true that we are humans with the Spirit of God dwelling in us
- Focus on prayer because Christ said He would build the church powered by the Holy Spirit and our Heavenly Father loves us and will take care of it

Session Seven: The Radicalism of Holiness (Chapter 20)

- Brengle asserts this throughout this chapter: "Do not think you can make holiness popular." (page 129)
- This is holiness that will reach people: Colossians 1:27 "Christ in you"
- It is an impossibility to make Christ Jesus popular in this world just as he was despised and persecuted when he was crucified: Isaiah 53:2-3
- Christ in you may bring the opposite of peace in relationships: Matthew 10:35-36
- Brengle says: "Christ in you is not a gorgeously robed aristocrat, arrayed in purple and fine linen and gold and pearls, but a lowly, peasant carpenter – a calloused, truth-telling, servant of servants, seeking always the lowest seat in the synagogue and at feasts, condescending to wash the feet of others." (page 130)

- Seek to know and follow in the footsteps of the true, real Jesus, the humble, holy peasant of Galilee
- This is especially how you will notice a false Christ; they will not have these attributes
- Read Philippians 2:6-8
- Christ in you gets under men and women and lifts them up without seeking personal honor
- Read John 5:44
- Read John 12:42-43
- Jesus said that His Spirit is one of self-sacrifice: Matthew 8:20
- We must give up earthly riches and store up treasure in heaven: Matthew 19:21
- That is why, according to Brengle, it is impossible to make such a radical gospel popular
- So do not waste your time trying to make holiness popular, just be Holy because the Lord God is Holy
- Seek to please Him without regard to the likes or dislikes of others and those who are ready to receive Christ will see Christ in you

Going into this next week:

- Pray that others may see “Christ in you”
- Do not be discouraged when the world does not accept you or consider holiness as popular
- Seek the approval of God, not others



"O Boundless Salvation"

A women's Bible study based on the lyrics of "O Boundless Salvation"

CAPTAIN SHARON TIDD

Introduction

The Founder's Song, O Boundless Salvation, was written for the 1893 Boundless Salvation Spiritual Campaign in Great Britain. It was given to our Founder, General William Booth, by the Holy Spirit, over the course of one night, and it became a beacon of hope and joy for Salvationists throughout the centuries. This anthem of our faith is grounded in Biblical truth and thus, worthy of careful, Scriptural study and reflection.

The Founder's song presents a glorious picture of the gift of salvation offered freely by God. The depth and breadth of that salvation is captured very poetically in all seven verses. It is for this that the song is most loved. But the song also captures, with great transparency, the struggles that we, as sinners, often experience in fully claiming salvation's richness, especially the privilege of being wholly sanctified. As Christ-followers we long to experience the full salvation of which this song speaks. We long to know the flood-waters of the Spirit's cleansing flow in our lives, daily! We long to be freed by God to live lives of holiness.

My prayer is that this study, which will guide believers through countless Scripture passages that support the word pictures presented in the Founder's song, will inspire renewed hope and assurance of our full salvation! The purifying work of salvation's flood-waters in the believer's life is ongoing and progressive. We simply have to touch the wave and plunge 'neath those waters.

The study can be pursued individually, but is ideally to be used in a group setting where believers can share and learn from one another's experiences. It is written as seven studies, one for each verse of the song, and is intended to be pursued in verse order. Each lesson will take about 3 hours to complete in a group setting.

May God bless you each as you explore this beautiful song in the light of God's Word. May we each claim fully our boundless salvation!

Grace and Peace,

Sharon Tidd (Captain)



O Boundless Salvation – Verse 1

*O boundless salvation! Deep ocean of love.
O fullness of mercy Christ brought from above.
The whole world redeeming, so rich and so free,
Now flowing for all men, come, roll over me.*

In what ways and with what words/phrases does this verse capture the dimensions of the believer's salvation? What is its scope?

How does this verse's description of our salvation's vastness speak to you personally?

Can you think of specific Scripture passages or verses that affirm the Founder's description of our salvation's vastness?

Read/reflect on these passages: Exodus 34:6-7a; 1 Chronicles 16:34; Psalm 36:5-7; 86:5, 15; Zephaniah 3:17; John 3:16; John 15:9, 13; Romans 8:38-39. What assurances do these passages offer as they reflect on God's salvation? Are there any that you need to claim personally today?

Have you ever found yourself limiting the dimensions of your salvation? How? Why? With what effect? How can this tendency be countered?

This verse declares God's great love for humankind, describing it as a 'deep ocean' (line 1). Read 1 John 4:7-12. What does this passage teach about God's love? What does this passage ask of you, as His child? How hard is it to consistently live out this passage's teaching?

This verse affirms that Christ brought this salvation from above (line 2). What emotions does this truth stir in you? Why? What aspects of Christ's saving work are most meaningful to you? Why?

Reflect on this quote from Tim Keller:

It is not the strength of your faith but the object of your faith that actually saves you!

Read these verses that speak to Christ's work on our behalf: John 10:28-29; 2 Corinthians 5:21;

Hebrews 10:14. What stands out for you in each verse/passage? Are there other Scripture verses/passages on this subject that have significant meaning for you?

The mercy of God is also captured in line 2. Read the following Scripture verses: Lamentations 3:22-23; Micah 7:18-19; Ephesians 2:4-5; Titus 3:4-5; 1 Peter 1:3-4. What do they assert about God and His mercy? Have you found this to be true in your life?

What does God's mercy mean to you / for you? Can you share a specific time when you were greatly blessed by His mercy?

Line 3 affirms that God is redeeming the whole world, and Line 4 declares that His ocean of love flows for all men. What does this say to you? How does holding on to this truth impact how you face present struggles in our world?

Are there people in your world that you struggle to see as worthy of God's redemption? Why? How does this verse challenge that? What is the Spirit of God asking of you in response?

The verse closes with an invitation from the singer to the Song-giver: "Come, roll over me!" Why is this important? What does this request represent? When have you most needed to feel that ocean of love and boundless salvation roll over you? Is it difficult for you to ask for it? Why? Why not?

Are there people in your life who you know need to experience God's love, mercy, and boundless salvation today? How can you help them receive these rich blessings?



O Boundless Salvation – Verse 2

*My sins they are many, their stains are so deep,
And bitter the tears of remorse that I weep.
But useless is weeping, Thou great crimson sea,
Thy waters can cleanse me, come roll over me!*

How does the Founder describe his sin in this verse? Can you relate?

What is sin? How would you define it?

How does sin impact one's life and soul? How does the Founder capture this in this verse? What do you do when you are overwhelmed with your own sin?

Reflect on these verses (in context) that speak about our sinfulness and its remedy. What teaching does each provide? Numbers 32:23; Deuteronomy 24:16; 2 Chronicles 7:14; Psalm 66:18-19; Psalm 119:11; Micah 7:18; John 8:34; Romans 5:18-21; 6:11-14; 6:23; Galatians 6:1; Hebrews 12:1; James 5:16; 1 John 1:8-10, 3:4-9.

The Founder identifies the 'waters' (of God's salvation/sanctification) as the answer to our sin problem. In what way has/does God's salvation provide the answer? Are there any Scripture verses that specifically affirm that for you?

Why is it so easy for us to stumble into sin even after we have experienced God's love, cleansing and forgiveness? What sin claims you most often? How can your sisters help you fight against that sin?

Paul speaks of this ongoing struggle with sin in Romans 7:14-25. Reflect on this passage. In what ways can you relate? What is the solution to this struggle according to Paul? How do we tap into it consistently?

What is remorse (line 2)? How do you express it? Why is it important that we feel and express our remorse? What is the relationship between remorse and repentance?

Read and reflect on Psalm 51. Do you know the background to this particular Psalm? What does this Psalm teach about sin and remorse and repentance? In what ways does the Founder's song reflect this Psalm?

Reflect on Judas' response to his sinfulness after betraying Jesus (Matthew 27:1-5) and Peter's response after denying Jesus (Matthew 26:75). In what ways did they reflect remorse and repentance?

The Founder states that weeping bitter tears is "useless" (line 3). Do you agree? Why? Why not?

Why does your sin illicit God's wrath? Reflect on the teaching in Romans 1:18; 5:9-11;

1 Thessalonians 5:9. What comfort/assurance do these verses provide?

Today, there is evidence of much sin and evil in our world. As soldiers of Christ, what are we to do in response?



O Boundless Salvation – Verse 3

*My tempers are fitful, my passions are strong.
They bind my poor soul and they force me to wrong.
Beneath Thy blest billows deliverance I see.
O come, mighty ocean, and roll over me!*

What are the 'tempers' the Founder is speaking of here? Why would he describe them as 'fitful'?

What kind of situations/circumstances tend to evoke fitful tempers in people? And, in your experience, how are fitful tempers generally expressed?

Have you witnessed fitful tempers in other Christians / in church leaders? What is the impact on you?

What tends to evoke fitful tempers in you? How are your fitful tempers most often expressed?

Read the following verses/passages: Proverbs 29:22; 1 Corinthians 13:4-8; Ephesians 4:26-27;

1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 2:2-3, 6; James 1:19-20. What do they teach about fitful tempers and their effect? Which words here best capture the opposite of 'fitful tempers' for you? How do we pursue those traits and let go of our fitful tempers?

William Booth also refers to 'strong passions' in this verse. What do you think he is alluding to with that phrase? Why do you draw that conclusion?

In what ways can passions be positive things? In what ways can they be harmful and damaging?

Can you think of any Bible personalities who let passions (either sinful or godly) control them? What lessons have their lives offered you?

Are tempers and passions the same, or different?

The New Testament Scriptures often use the term ‘immorality’ when speaking to the subject of sinful passions. How would you define ‘immorality’?

Read the following verses/passages: 1 Corinthians 5:9-13; 6:18-20; Ephesians 5:1-7; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8; Hebrews 13:4. What lessons do they provide on sinful passions (immorality)?

Have there been periods in your life when letting go of sinful passions has been a struggle? What supports from God and from other believers helped you get through those periods?

Can you think of people in your life who are struggling with sinful passions? How can you support them?

According to the Founder’s song, what happens when fitful tempers and strong passions go unchecked? What is the lesson here for you?

The answer to unchecked tempers and passions, according to Booth, is salvation’s ‘blessed billows’.

What are these ‘blest billows’? How do they bring deliverance? How can you tap into them when fitful tempers or strong passions want to claim control?

Again the Founder invites God’s salvation to come and roll over him. What lesson might you take from his repeated requests for the flood-waters of salvation and sanctification to overwhelm him?

How often do you ask God to flood you with His full salvation? Why is it important to do this, especially in times when tempers and passions are raging?

What are some godly passions that you could be pursuing? How can you make them the center of your life? And, when you do, what impact might that have?



O Boundless Salvation – Verse 4

Now tossed with temptation, then haunted with fear.

My life has been joyless and useless for years.

I feel something better most surely would be

If once Thy pure waters would roll over me.

Have you ever been tossed with temptation? What did it feel like?

What do you think are the biggest temptations in North American culture today? What is it about them that makes them so tempting to people?

What things tend to tempt Christians most often? Are they different from things that tempt unbelievers?

Reflect on these verses that teach about temptations and how believers are to overcome them:

Matthew 4:1-11; 6:13; 18:8-9; 26:41; 1 Corinthians 10:13; 1 Thessalonians 3:5; 1 Timothy 6:9-10; Hebrews 4:14-16; James 1:13-18; 4:7. What teaching do you need to take from these verses today?

What makes you most fearful? Why? What does it mean to be ‘haunted by fears’?

When is fear a good thing? When is it problematic?

What fears do you think impact your church family the most? How can you help your brothers and sisters face and overcome those fears?

Reflect on these verses that speak of fear and how believers are to face it: Deuteronomy 31:8; Joshua 1:9; 1 Chronicles 28:20; Psalm 23:4; 27:1; 34:4; 56:3-4; Isaiah 35:3-4; 41:10; 43:1-2; John 14:27; Romans 8:15; 1 Peter 3:13-14; 1 John 4:18.

How do we banish fear?

The phrase “do not be afraid” is written in the Bible 365 times.

That’s a daily reminder from God to live every day fearless!

Reflect on these verses that speak of healthy fear: Deuteronomy 6:1-13; Psalm 103:17; 111:10; 112:1; Philippians 2:12-13. What important truths do they teach us about fear?

Have you ever experienced periods of joylessness? What was the cause? What was the effect?

Have you ever felt useless or purposeless? What caused that? How did it impact you?

In contrast, can you think of periods when your life was particularly full of joy ... or filled with rich purpose? What was at the root of those experiences?

What does the world tend to look to / strive for to find joy and to feel a sense of purpose? What is the end result?

Reflect on these verses and what they say about joy and what brings joy: Nehemiah 8:10; Psalm 16:11; 30:4-5; Isaiah 9:3; Jeremiah 15:16; Habakkuk 3:17-18; Luke 2:10-11; 15:7; John 15:10-12; 16:22-24; Hebrews 12:1-2; James 1:2-3; 1 Peter 1:6-9. According to these Scripture passages, what is meant to give us joy?

Reflect on these verses that speak about purpose: Genesis 1:27-28; Isaiah 43:6-7; Jeremiah 29:11-13; Micah 6:8; Matthew 28:19-20; John 15:16; Romans 12:1-2; Ephesians 2:10; 5:1-2; Philippians 2:12-16. What is our purpose?

Do you have a life verse that has guided you? How has it helped you identify and stay committed to your unique purpose?

The Westminster Catechism declares: Man’s chief end is to glorify God, and enjoy Him forever!

In what ways does the statement above counter the story of joylessness and uselessness captured in verse 4 of the Founder’s song?

According to William Booth’s song, what is the antidote for temptation, fear, joylessness, and uselessness? Are you seeking it regularly?



O Boundless Salvation – Verse 5

*O ocean of mercy, oft longing I've stood
On the brink of that wonderful life-giving flood!
Once more I have reached this soul-cleansing sea.
I will not go back 'til it rolls over me.*

This verse focuses on mercy which is a foundational part of God's boundless salvation. How do you define mercy? When have you needed it most?

Reflect on these verses/passages that speak about God's mercy: Deuteronomy 4:31; Nehemiah 9:5ff (especially verse 31); Psalm 25:4-7; Habakkuk 3:2; Hebrews 2:14-18. (Also, additional passages that were reflected upon under verse 1: Ephesians 2:4-7, 1 Peter 1:3-5.)

Have you ever found yourself standing on the brink of God's wonderful mercy, longing for it, but not grasping hold? What caused you to hold back from receiving? What do you think causes others to hold back?

The Founder is determined, in this moment, to let that ocean of mercy roll over him. What feelings and thoughts does this picture present for you? Have you experienced mercy rolling over you in this way? If you have, how did it impact you emotionally, spiritually, physically?

Booth describes this ocean of mercy as a 'wonderful life-giving flood' and a 'soul-cleansing sea'. In what ways has God's mercy been life-giving for you? In what ways has it brought soul-cleansing?

Have there been periods in your life when you found it difficult to believe that God is merciful? What made belief so challenging? What can you do, when those moments arise, to claim the truth of His mercy?

Do you know someone who is struggling to believe and experience God's mercy right now? What can you do to help them believe and receive it?

Having been blessed with the gift of God's mercy, what do these verses/passages encourage you to do? Hosea 6:6; Micah 6:8; Matthew 5:7; 12:1-13; 23:23; Luke 6:32-36; Jude 20-23.

What are some practical ways that we can show/offer mercy to others?



O Boundless Salvation – Verse 6

*The tide is now flowing, I'm touching the wave.
I hear the loud call of the Mighty to Save.
My faith's growing bolder, delivered I'll be.
I plunge 'neath the waters, they roll over me.*

William Booth captures a God-moment here, saying, “The tide is NOW flowing.” What do you think he is saying with this statement? Is there an important message here about God’s boundless salvation?

When we think of the tide, we think of regularity and predictability. What does this reference to ‘the tide’ say about God’s salvation and sanctification?

Reflect on these verses that speak about God’s timing. How do they impact your understanding of Booth’s reference to ‘now’ in this verse? Psalm 31:14-16; Ecclesiastes 3:1, 11; Isaiah 55:6;

Lamentations 3:25-26; Mark 1:15; Acts 1:6-7; Romans 5:6; 13:11; 2 Corinthians 6:2; Galatians 4:4-7; James 4:13-15; 2 Peter 3:8-9.

In the context of this verse, what does the phrase ‘I’m touching the wave’ say to you? What do you think William Booth is speaking of here?

Can you recall a time when you ‘touched the wave’ spiritually? How significant was that in your spiritual journey? Can you recall a time when you should have, but didn’t, touch the wave? What caused you to hesitate? If you were in that place today, what would you need in order to reach out and touch it?

This phrase ‘touching the wave’, while figurative, does infer a physical connection being made. So how do we “touch” God’s boundless salvation today?

Reflect on these verses: Isaiah 41:10; 43:1-2; Philippians 1:6; Hebrews 11:6; 12:1-3. How do they relate to this action of stepping out in faith to ‘touch the wave’?

In touching the wave, Booth hears the loud call of the Mighty to Save? How significant is hearing God in moments when we touch the wave? In your experience, how does He speak in those moments?

Read and reflect on these verses: 1 Kings 19:9b-12; Psalm 119:105; Isaiah 55:10-11; Jeremiah 33:3;

John 1:1-2, 14; 10:27-28; 14:26; 16:13; Romans 10:17; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 1:1-2. What does each say about God’s communication with His children? If you want to hear from God, what do you need to do?

How important is it to know that the One speaking is ‘the Mighty to Save’? Do you ever struggle to believe this? Why? Why not?

Read these encouraging verses that seek to assure believers of God’s mighty salvation:

Exodus 14:13-14; 15:2; Psalm 91:1-4; Isaiah 63:1; Zephaniah 3:17; John 3:16-17; Acts 4:12; 2 Timothy 1:8-10; Titus 3:4-7.

Touching the wave and hearing God’s voice brought a new boldness to the Founder’s faith. Has that been your story? Why? Why not?

What does a bold faith look like/sound like/feel like? Why is it important to have a bold faith? What is its source? What happens when our faith is not bold? How do we tap into that boldness when it wanes?

Read these verses and reflect on how they might be applied in your life: Joshua 1:9; Isaiah 40:28-31; Ephesians 6:10-13; 2 Timothy 1:7; Hebrews 10:37-39.

What is meant by the statement, ‘delivered I’ll be’? What is the believer delivered from? How does this reflect the boundless nature of God’s salvation? What do you need to be delivered from today? How might touching the wave and hearing God’s voice help you believe for that deliverance?

Booth believed (had faith) for full and perfect deliverance. Why? What had him so convinced? Do you believe in God’s deliverance ... for yourself ... for others? If not, what causes you to doubt? What can counter those doubts?

Reflect on the message of deliverance found in these verses: 2 Samuel 22:2-4; Psalm 32:7; 34:4-7; 34:17; Romans 8:31-37; 1 Corinthians 15:55-57; 1 John 4:4; 5:3-5.

As he ends this verse, Booth moves from merely touching the wave to plunging in and having the waves roll over him. Have you ever experienced this in the physical realm? What did it feel like? What did it take from you to experience it? How does this translate to the spiritual realm that Booth is speaking of here? Why is plunging into God’s full salvation important for the believer?

What does it mean to have the waves of God’s boundless salvation ‘roll over’ you? In what circumstances have you experienced that? What was the result for your spiritual development?

Reflect on these passages: Psalm 1:1-2; Jeremiah 15:16; John 7:37-39 (cf John 4:4-14); Revelation 21:6.

How do they contribute to your understanding of this idea of a spiritual plunge? How do we take that spiritual plunge today?



O Boundless Salvation – Verse 7

*And now, Hallelujah! The rest of my days
Shall gladly be spent in promoting His praise
Who opened His bosom to pour out this sea
Of boundless salvation for you and for me.*

It’s clear from this verse that the full experience of God’s boundless salvation and the Spirit’s sanctification led General Booth to praise. He begins this verse with praise: “And now, Hallelujah!” Hallelujah means Praise to Yahweh (God). In what ways does your experience of God’s boundless salvation and the holiness it offers inspire praise in you?

How often do you ponder the amazing gift of full salvation? How often do you share its impact on your life with others through words of praise and thanksgiving?

When we give ourselves to Hallelujah praise what emotions/feelings well up within us? Is this something that you could use more of in your life? If so, what do you think General Booth would recommend you do in response to that need?

Are there times when you find it difficult to praise God? If so, why? How do you return to praise in those periods?

What truths about our praise are captured in these verses/passages: Deuteronomy 32:3; Psalm 8:2; 34:1-3; 86:12; 119:175a; Matthew 5:13-16; Acts 2:44-47; 5:42; Romans 10:8-9; Ephesians 1:3-8; 2 Timothy 1:8-9a; Hebrews 13:15; 1 Peter 4:10-11

Reflect on these phrases/words used by Booth to define his Hallelujah praise:

- a. now
- b. the rest of my days
- c. gladly
- d. spent
- e. promoting

What does each say about the nature of the believer's Hallelujah praise? In what ways does your life mirror this praise? In what ways does it fall short? Why?

How is God described in this verse (lines 3 and 4)? What does this tell us about His nature, His character, His purposes? Is this the God that you praise?

Reflect on these Scripture verses/passages that speak of God's bosom poured out: Luke 22:20; John 10:11; Romans 5:6-8; 2 Corinthians 5:14-15. How do these verses speak to you? How do they impact the praise / promotion you offer God before others? Are there other Scripture verses/passages that speak deeply to you about God's generous, sacrificial gift of full salvation?

This verse speaks of the universality of God's gift of salvation. His bosom is poured out for "you and me"; for all humanity. As recipients of this gift, what is our role in sharing it with others? Is there something you can do this week to make this gift known to someone who is far from God right now?

How do we live out verse 7 of O Boundless Salvation in our daily lives? How do we ensure that our very being brings glory to God and that His praise is always on our lips?





DEVOTIONAL MESSAGES

Perfection vs Holiness

CAPTAIN ANNE HOLDEN

Matthew 5:48 “Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”

In today’s society, the concept of perfection is loaded with many connotations. Getting a spelling or math test back with “10/10 – Perfect!” at the top instills a feeling of pride. Looking at magazines in the check-out line, seeing “perfect”(air-brushed) models and actresses creates feelings of shame and failure. Women believe they are called to be the perfect wife, mother, daughter, employee, cook, housekeeper – keeping all the balls in the air at the same time.

And now Jesus is telling us we have to be a perfect Christian too?

Does anyone feel exhausted yet?

I know there are those who are reading this that are shooting up their hands and shouting “oh yeah, me!” How can I say this so assuredly? Because I am one of you, sisters.

I have struggled with the weight of perfectionism. I know how exhausting it is. I grew up with an overriding message that what was on the outside, how things “appear” is of ultimate importance. I grew up struggling to maintain the outward image of perfection, all the while knowing inside was a very different picture.

I recently was following the devotional teaching of Leo Giglio called *Goliath Must Fall: Winning the Battle Against Your Giants*, and I was challenged by this question: “what taunts of the enemy am I listening to and am therefore demoralized?”

As I started to journal my answer, I was completely stunned by the answers that literally flowed out through my pen.

“You’ve got to hold it together – what will people think if you can’t do it, if you can’t be perfect?”

“You’re never going to be perfect anyways, so why bother trying?”

“Perfection is still the goal.”

It was an incredible God-moment, because I had no conscious awareness that I was listening to and being controlled by these lies. The other significance of this revelation was recognizing the circular trap these lies created, keeping me stuck in this hamster wheel of frustration and discouragement.

So if I believe that this definition of perfection is a lie of the enemy, what does Jesus mean for me when I am called to be perfect as my Heavenly Father is perfect?

We need to look beyond the surface of these words to understand Jesus’ heart, in His first public teaching. He is speaking to people who have been taught the Law all their lives; people like you and me who understand the expectations of what our outward behaviour should look like.

Jesus covers many themes, including murder, adultery, divorce, taking oaths, justice and prayer. With each example, He starts with “you have heard that it was said...”, reminding the people of the Law.

Jesus then goes on to say “but I tell you...”. He wants the people to understand that it’s about so much more than an outward checklist of do’s and don’ts.

It’s about the heart behind our actions.

God gave us His Law, not to clean us up and just look good on the outside, but to transform our hearts from the inside.

We will never be outwardly perfect, and we need to stop exhausting ourselves trying to be so. But we can strive to be like David, and be women “after God’s own heart” by loving God supremely. This story (source unknown) illustrates this truth beautifully.

A young girl is playing in the dirt beside her father who is tilling the ground, preparing it to be planted. She sees the sweat pouring off of him in the heat and desires to help him. She runs in the house with her muddy hands, grabs the largest glass she can find and fills it with refreshing cold water. With a beaming face, she presents this gift to her father, a glass covered in muddy handprints. Her gift is perfect, because it came from her heart of love.

God knows us intimately; He knows we are but dust (Psalm 103:14). He knows that outwardly, we are going to fail. But if at the very core of our being, we love Him and desire to honour Him in all of our lives, we **are** “perfect, as our Heavenly Father is perfect.”



Who Cares About Holiness These Days?

LIEUTENANT RENEE MCFADDEN

Scripture: 1 Peter 1:13-16

Holiness Unto the Lord - For those who grew up in Salvation Army corps around the world, the cloth on the Holiness Table at the front of the sanctuary is significant because it declares "Holiness unto the Lord". At the end of the message there may have been a call to respond in repentance at the mercy seat leading to salvation and a call to respond for sanctification at the holiness table, leading to holy living. This still may be true where you live and worship today.

Holiness is pervasive in the Bible. God called Israel a holy nation, set aside a holy priesthood, established a holy Sabbath, prescribed holy sacrifices, to be done on a holy mount, in a holy Temple with a holy place—even a Holy of Holies. God himself is a holy God. We read that "without holiness no one shall see the Lord" in Hebrews 12:14. The Bible constantly and repeatedly calls for our total surrender to God in absolute consecration, for our complete submission to His will, for absolute obedience to His Word, and for separation from the defilement of sin of this world. Holiness is not only the essential characteristic of God's nature, it is a central emphasis of His Word. God is holy—we are to be holy too.

And we breathe a collective sigh, don't we? Yeah, right. I'll put that on my to-do list, right underneath getting my PhD in Rocket Science. I think it's safe to say that most of us wandering this earth are just trying to get by. Literally putting dinner on the table every night and putting gas in the car, reminding our preteen boys to shower and remembering to recycle our glass jars in the grey box and not the blue one can seem like plenty of challenges for us. We forget to pray in the morning as we rush to get the lunches made. We spend too much money on coffee or books or clothing, too much time on social media and too little time with our family. We have cutting words to say about people and we break the speed limit during our commute.

We completely recognize that we fall short of God's standard of perfection and holiness. It's glaringly obvious. So, do we abort the mission and chalk it up to Old Testament theology that we hope has all been overruled since Jesus came to forgive us? Now that he understands what it's like to be a human being, surely the bar has been lowered?

1. We are certainly skeptical, maybe cynical or even dismissive. The picture of holiness created for us over the years may appear to be a way to act in church and a list of do's and don'ts. We may have been taught that holiness is something we develop by not dancing, drinking or watching movies. If we could just avoid evil and unclean things, we would be holy and pure. No one should be surprised that many Christians have abandoned this holiness check-list as an impossible reality, assessing that we have failed before we've even started, so it is best left to the religious professionals. However our Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine defines the holy life, not as an optional extra, but as the "Spirit-led journey toward wholeness in Christ." (pg. 198) What might persuade us to care about holiness today?

2. In the Old Testament scriptures, holiness is an attribute of God, but not of humanity. Rituals were established for sanctification or purification, a process by which people or things were cleansed in preparation for an encounter with God. People or things were set apart or dedicated to the service of God. The height of holiness is seen as faithfulness in relationships: to love God and love people. Who cares about holiness? God does.

3. In the Gospels, Jesus was named “the holy one of God” (by the demons) and he is our model of holiness in a human being. He revealed God’s perfect love. His life and death were free of self-interest and he had total integrity in dealing with people and was devoted to fulfilling the Father’s will. Who cares about holiness? Jesus does.

In the New Testament letters to the early believers holiness is described as an attribute of God that the people of God are urged to reflect in their lives. It's the restoration of the image of God in the believer. Holiness isn't about being perfectly without sin. It is about being perfected, being brought to maturity in Christ, which is maturity in love. Notice how it is the people who belong to God, collectively, that are his "holy ones", the saints addressed in the letters. It is always plural, inclusive not individualistic. The saints are communities of imperfect people who are a whole work in progress that will eventually be completed and presentable – as the bride of Christ. Early Christ followers were called to live in a way that was fundamentally different from the lives of those around them, this holiness was evidenced in right living and right relationships. Who cares about holiness? The apostles do.

Over the years holiness came to be seen as the field of the religious professionals, ordained church leaders. Holy people who were set apart from the world, devoted to prayer and piety. However as we affirm the priesthood of all believers we understand that the seed of new life is implanted in each of us when we come to trust Jesus and the Spirit gradually increases its sanctifying work in our lives as we co-operate with God. So who cares about holiness? We should!

It is God's intention that human beings will be holy and whole, fully able to love God and love people. It is his work in us that makes this possible as we live into our new identity as His children. We take on the family resemblance. It's holiness by association! When at the beginning of our faith journey, we are holy by status, though not yet by results. Our Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine assures us that for most Christians the gap between holy status and holy living is at first a very wide one. Growing in grace and in spiritual maturity is about closing that gap, slowly and surely.

I think about riding the tube in London, England when I traveled there years ago. There is a message written on the floor up and down the train station. The words are “mind the gap”! It's just a reminder that there's not a perfect match between the surfaces from platform to train, so riders better watch their step or may end up taking a tumble!



Similarly drifting through life without paying attention to the gaps in our lives may lead you to fall flat on your face. No one simply drifts towards godliness. We won't naturally gravitate towards becoming more like Jesus. It's in the measure of our surrender that the Spirit can empower us to close the gap in our lives between our holy status and our holy living so we don't succumb to a tumble!

We can be a holy people, a sanctified people "set-apart for God in every part and at every level" says scholar N.T. Wright. We grow to understand the holy purposes of God for our lives and just as the pervasive effects of sin have penetrated every area of human life - sanctification by the Holy Spirit can extend to every aspect of our lives. We are going to be inconsistent, fall short and miss the mark, but we are trusting that God will continually narrow the gap.

So shake off the cynicism. Throw away the skepticism and the assumption that holiness is just too hard in 2020. Don't abandon the call to holiness for we believe it is the privilege of all believers to live in wholeness and holiness. God is not giving you a checklist and telling you to simply be perfect, He is telling you to trust that He's in the process of perfecting us and restoring all things. We belong to God and we can live into that future reality, reflecting the life of the Trinity in wholeness and holiness.

"May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it." 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24



Holy Upcycling

A fun program perfect for a “Ladies’ Night Out” or other women’s gathering that includes a craft and a corresponding devotional message.

CAPTAIN LAURA VAN SCHAICK

Introduce “Upcycling”

Wikipedia introduces their article on Upcycling in this way: “**Upcycling**, also known as **creative reuse**, is the process of transforming by-products, waste materials, useless, or unwanted products into new materials or products of better quality and environmental value.”

Upcycling has become increasingly popular in recent years, as awareness about the importance of environmental stewardship has intersected with the world of Pinterest. Craft ideas that repurpose one person’s trash into someone else’s treasure abound!

Make an upcycling project together! –choose one of the options below, or find your own.

Craft Activity

Option 1: T-shirt Bags (A No Sew Project)

T-shirt bags are just that – reusable shopping bags created from old T-shirts.

Source: https://www.kenarry.com/upcycle-t-shirt-tote-bag/#_a5y_p=5232122

What You Need:

- One T-shirt per participant (ask a Thrift Store if you can take some that were going to be recycled/not sold)
- Scissors (fabric scissors are best)
- Pens, markers or chalk (something to mark the fabric with)
- Rulers or measuring tapes
- Optional – upcycled extras, like buttons etc.

What To Do:

1. First, select your T-shirt, ruler and a good pair of scissors. The larger the T-shirt, the larger the bag, it's that simple.



2. Cut the sleeves, neckline and bottom seam off your T-shirt. You can trim the back of the shirt to match the front neckline to make them even. Note – if you want longer handles, cut more of the neckline off.



3. Use your ruler to measure and mark 1" wide strips anywhere from 5-10" up along the bottom of your T-shirt – the longer your strips, the longer the tassels on the bottom of your bag (and the smaller your bag's holding capacity.)



4. Hold the top of each strip down (where they attach to the T-shirt) and pull each strip to the end until it stretches out. The strips will curl – this is what you want to happen.



5. Tie the strips into knots so that both sides of the T-shirt are attached together. (Take the bottom and top matching strips and tie them together.)



6. Trim off any stray threads and bedazzle with any accessories you may have available (buttons are cute!) You now have a cute, upcycled tote bag!



Option 2: Sweater Mittens (A Sew-by-Hand Project)

Sweater mittens are just that – mittens made out of old sweaters.

Source: <https://www.practicallyfunctional.com/the-easiest-way-to-make-sweater-mittens/>

What You Need:

- A selection of old sweaters(ask a Thrift Store if you can take some that were going to be recycled/not sold)
- One piece of white paper per participant
- Markers
- Fabric scissors
- Needle and thread
- Sewing pins

What To Do:

1. Make a pattern for your sweater mittens by tracing your hand. Trace around your hand in a mitten shape, leaving half an inch or more for seam allowance, and so your hand has room to move inside the mitten. Make sure you leave enough room at the wrist to put the mittens on and pull them off!

Cut out the pattern.



2. Turn your old sweater inside out and lay it down, lining up the bottom hems with each other. Place your pattern on the sweater, lining up the wrist with the bottom hem of the sweater. Trace the pattern with a marker.



3. Cut out the sweater mittens using fabric scissors. Make sure to cut through both the front and back layers of your sweater!



4. Once the mitten is cut out, pin the front and back pieces together.



5. Sew around the mitten leaving a 1/4" seam allowance. Remove the pins, trim any loose threads, and trim any extra fabric from the seams so there isn't too much bulk inside the sweater mittens.



6. Turn the mittens right side out, and you're good to go! Repeat the steps to make a second mitten, and you're ready for the cold weather!



PRACTICALLY
FUNCTIONAL

Devotional Message

While it may seem like a bit of a stretch, we can view the process of becoming holy as being similar to upcycling.

The word sanctification comes from two Latin words: *sanctus*, which means holy, and *facere*, which means to make. Thus, sanctification is the process of being made holy. It is a creative process, one that takes what our lives were apart from God – lacking of a purpose, hope, and a future – and re-creating them into one that is characterized by a relationship with the living God – one that has purpose, hope, and an eternal future.

Read 1 Peter 1:13-25a together:

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. 14 As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. 15 But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; 16 for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy." [a]

17 Since you call on a Father who judges each person's work impartially, live out your time as foreigners here in reverent fear. 18 For you know 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, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. 20 He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake. 21 Through him you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and glorified him, and so your faith and hope are in God.

22 Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for each other, love one another deeply, from the heart. [b] 23 For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God. 24 For,

*"All people are like grass,
and all their glory is like the flowers of the field;*

*the grass withers and the flowers fall,
25 but the word of the Lord endures forever.”[c]*

Ultimately, becoming holy, or the process of sanctification, is becoming more like God. Verse 16 says, “Be holy, because I am holy.” The verse is actually quoting the Old Testament (Leviticus 11:44) and the “I” here refers to God. So, the message is “be holy, because God is holy.” But how do we become more like God?

One way is in the way we act. Verse 14 says, “Do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance”, before you trusted Jesus as your saviour. This passage also says in verse 22, that we are to “obey the truth” and “love one another deeply, from the heart.” Becoming holy is taking dark habits are broken, sinful patterns and re-creating them into that which reflects image of Christ. This is done by the power of God’s Spirit. You can think about it this way: **our behaviours are upcycled** – changed from something that is useless and unwanted into something that is useful and new. What was once a T-shirt is now a shopping bag, or what was once a sweater is now mittens.

But sanctification is not just about behaving like God. Sanctification is also recognizing that we *belong to* God. It’s about **being and doing** (verse 15 says, “Just as he who called you is holy, so **be** holy in all you **do**.” (italics added). Just as an upcycled item behaves differently than in its previous form, it also now belongs again. What once was rejected as garbage – like a stained t-shirt or a pilled sweater - now belongs and has a purpose.

Our sanctification – the process of becoming holy – comes through recognizing that we are God’s children (verse 14) that we are chosen before the creation of the world (verse 20), and that we are born again of imperishable seed. (verse 23) **Our identity and sense of belonging are upcycled.** Because of our new identity, our changed actions and behaviours are not burdensome. The sweater does not mind becoming a mitten, and the T-shirt does not mind becoming a bag. So too can we embrace holy living and changed actions as we embrace our identity as children of the one true God.

The Salvation Army’s Doctrines (statement of beliefs) says this: We believe that it is the privilege of all believers to be wholly sanctified, and that their whole spirit and soul and body may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Doctrine 10) If you think that you are not worthy of sanctification - that you have too many bad habits to change or that God could never love you as a child – we believe otherwise. In fact, we believe that everyone has the privilege of being sanctified. You cannot do it alone, though. Your own spirit can only be made blameless by meeting with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will encourage you and guide you to make holy choices, and will help you to see yourself as God sees you – as perfectly loved.





WORSHIP RESOURCES

"When I Look Into Your Holiness" and other holiness themed songs

MAJOR DARLENE ANDERSON

1. When I look into your Holiness (C & W Perrin) CCLI#16347
2. Worship the Lord in the beauty of Holiness (James Curnow) #133 SA Songs of Salvation 2015
3. Holy is the Lord (Chris Tomlin) CCLI#4158039
4. Take my life (Scott Underwood) CCLI#1617154
5. Revelation song (J.L. Kiddle) CCLI#4447960
6. You are Holy (Prince of Peace) CCLI#2332149
7. Holy, Holy (Jimmy Owens) CCLI#18792
8. Holy, Holy, Holy (trad. Hymn) CCLI#6527091
9. Holy, You are Holy (Don Moens) CCLI#17384
10. For Your name is Holy (Jim Cowan) CCLI#2795951
11. Holy, Holy, Holy with 'Jesus Reigns' CCLI#7067552
12. Agnus Dei (Michael W. Smith) CCLI#626713
13. Great are You Lord (S & V Cook) CCLI#26863
14. I see the Lord CCLI#7064832
15. There is a Redeemer (Melody Green) CCLI#11483 or SA Song Book 2015 #204
16. I stand in awe (Mark Altrogge) CCLI#23914
17. For who You are (Marty Sampson) CCLI#4591799
18. None like You (Guerra/Miller/Rozier) CCLI#7007161
19. We fall down, we lay our crowns (Chris Tomlin) CCLI#2437367
20. This is amazing grace (J. Riddle) CCLI#6333821
21. God of wonders (J. Byrd) CCLI#3118757
22. Jesus, Your name is power (Chapman/Cloninger) CCLI#396201 or Maranatha Praise-Red #193
23. What a beautiful name (B. Fielding) CCLI#7068424



"In The Beauty of His holiness"

A responsive call-to-worship or responsive reading based on Psalm 96

Leader: Sing to the LORD a new song;
sing to the LORD, all the earth.

Response: Sing to the LORD, praise his name;
proclaim his salvation day after day.
Declare his glory among the nations,
his marvelous deeds among all peoples.

Leader: For great is the LORD and most worthy of praise;
he is to be feared above all gods.
For all the gods of the nations are idols,
but the LORD made the heavens.
Splendor and majesty are before him;
strength and glory are in his sanctuary.

Response: Worship the LORD in the beauty of his^[a] holiness;
tremble before him, all the earth.
Say among the nations, "The LORD reigns."

Leader: Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad;
let the sea resound, and all that is in it.
Let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them;
let all the trees of the forest sing for joy.

All: Let all creation rejoice before the LORD



"No One Is Holy Like the Lord"

A responsive call-to-worship or responsive reading based on Hannah's Prayer in 1 Samuel 2

Leader: The LORD has filled my heart with joy.

He has made me strong.

I can laugh at my enemies.

I'm so glad he saved me.

Response: There is no one holy like the Lord;

there is no one besides you; there is no Rock like our God.

Leader: Don't keep talking so proudly.

Don't let your mouth say such proud things.

The LORD is a God who knows everything.

He judges everything people do.

Response: There is no one holy like the Lord;

there is no one besides you; there is no Rock like our God.

Leader: The LORD causes people to die. He also gives people life.

He brings people down to the grave. He also brings people up from death.

⁷The LORD makes people poor. He also makes people rich.

He brings people down. He also lifts people up.

Response: There is no one holy like the Lord;

there is no one besides you; there is no Rock like our God.

Leader: He raises poor people up from the trash pile.

He lifts needy people out of the ashes.

He lets them sit with princes.

He gives them places of honor.

Response: There is no one holy like the Lord;

there is no one besides you; there is no Rock like our God.

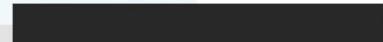
Leader: The foundations of the earth belong to the LORD.

On them he has set the world.

He guards the paths of his faithful servants.

All: There is no one holy like the Lord;

there is no one besides you; there is no Rock like our God.



WEB-BASED MINISTRY RESOURCES

21 Day Holiness Challenge

CAPTAIN BHREAGH ROWE



INSTRUCTIONS

For 21 days there is a picture and a write up to go along with it. The idea is to help women understand what holiness is, understand how to be holy and understand what holiness looks like in every aspect of their lives. Social media is a really easy way to connect and spread the good news to many people. All you have to do is decide when you want the challenge to start and then post the picture and copy and paste the write up for each day. Don't forget to comment yourself and interact with anyone who is commenting as well.

Images will be available on www.salvationist.ca/women-s-ministries/annual-events/promotion-week/

Here are a few tips:

- Advertise what is coming in your corps and on Facebook (or other social media) to get people interested and excited about the challenge AND the theme of this year's Women's Ministries Promotion Week.
- You can start the challenge 21 days before the promotion week, right in the middle or after your promotion Sunday to keep the idea going.
- Try and post the same time everyday so people know when to expect the post. You can actually schedule your Facebook posts in advance so you do not have to worry about being on the same time every day. For more information check out these simple instructions:
<https://www.facebook.com/help/389849807718635>
- Add or take away any information you feel necessary but also feel free to simply copy and paste.
- Interact with anyone who comments. Social media can be a great way to build deeper relationships with those in your corps and community.
- Don't worry about the post too much, don't pay attention to how many "likes" or comments you get. Just because people are not interacting does NOT mean people are not reading and learning.
- Have fun and remember social media is an excellent way to reach people!

Below is an idea for an "intro post" or something you can write up on Facebook to let people know what is coming and why:

The Salvation Army is a Holiness Movement and that simply means we want to be an Army of women (and men) who strive to be more and more like Jesus while sharing the gospel with others. How do we do this? In many ways, but one of the most influential ways to help others understand Jesus is by actually living like Him, being Holy because He is holy. Over these next 21 days we are going to learn a little more

about what holiness really is and how we can all strive for a more holy life. Each day you will see a picture, a small write up and a “read, write, pray, do” section that helps you understand what the Bible says and how we can apply that to our lives. Join along, look for the post each day, invite your friends and discover what God requires of you.



WEEK ONE: “WHAT?”

DAY ONE: What is holiness?



everyone and turn them into disciples.

What is this thing called holiness and why does it matter?

In the simplest way, Holiness means to be “set apart”. God wants us to be Holy because He wants us to be different, unique, like fish swimming upstream when everyone else is floating down. Why? Because He wants us to make people stop and say “there’s something different about that girl, I want to know more!” God has this beautiful vision and plan for us – that we would dedicated our lives to Him and then craft our lives around our calling – to share the love of Jesus with

Holiness matters. Holiness is required. Holiness is hard. Holiness is a journey.

Come along with us over these next 21 days to learn more about Holiness and what that means for your life!

Read: 1 Peter 1:13-16

Write: What are 5 words that you would use to describe holiness?

Pray: “God, help me understand how you want me to be holy.”

Do: Invite someone to come along on the holiness challenge with you!



DAY TWO: Holiness as a lifestyle

My life is pretty ordinary, I pretty much do the same thing every day and sometimes that can be really mundane. If you’re a mom, those simple tasks of motherhood seem to never amount to anything. Maybe you work and feel like it’s a “wake, work, repeat” kind of scenario. How about those who maybe are older (and much wiser) and are feeling forgotten or like their glory days are over? Wherever you are

at in your life know this – these simple mundane and sometimes annoying tasks of life can bring about holiness to the fullest extent.



God asks us to take our ordinary lives – our cleaning, cooking, working, parenting, grocery shopping, laundry and falling asleep on the couch lives – and intertwine holiness all throughout our days. Hand those moments over to Him and watch how cooking a meal and cleaning the house turns into serving others, how loving on and caring for kids turns into teaching and discipling, how grocery shopping turns into evangelism and how falling asleep turns into sabbath. God asks us to surrender our lives to Him and then watch how those tasks we see as worthless turn into worthy acts of holiness.

Read: Romans 12

Write: What are some key “things” described in Romans 12 about holiness that you struggle with?

Pray: God, reveal to me which aspect of my life need a little more holiness.

Do: Write one goal for this 21-day challenge. “After 21 days I want to see growth in this area of my life _____ by showing more _____.”



DAY THREE: Holiness is hard



Don't be fooled by the pretty pictures with the bible and the scriptures and the simple definitions. Holiness is hard. Going against the flow, swimming upstream while everyone is drifting down is not easy. Sometimes, depending on where you are and who you surround yourself with, true Godly Holiness can be lonely and make you feel like a crazy person.

I wake up in the morning with the best intentions to be kind and loving to my husband, to be patient and caring to my children and to try and find those little moments throughout my day to share the love of Jesus with

others. Usually by the time I get my kids out the door for school, my holiness has been tested. I've already yelled once at my husband and now I am to talk to someone about Jesus? No thanks, I just want to keep my head down and get the day done.

Nothing that comes with holiness is the natural way we do things. Holiness is hard. It's a choice that we have to make about 50 times before the kids get out the door and another 50 before lunch. It's hard but it's worth it.

Read: Colossians 3:1-17

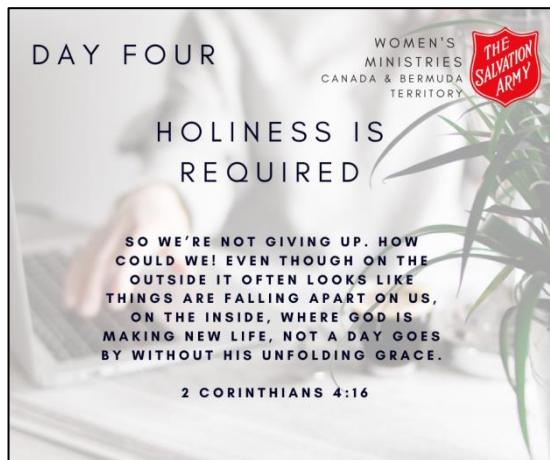
Write: Make a list of the “things” that stop you from perusing holiness every day. Maybe they are found in verses 8 or 9.

Pray: God, help me identify and work on those things I get entangled in each day.

Do: Pick one thing from the list you made and tell someone about your struggle. Accountability is the BEST thing we can do for ourselves.



DAY FOUR: Holiness is required



We have this amazing FREE gift of love, grace and eternal life. It really is free, Jesus died on the cross so we could have access to this gift, all we have to do is accept it. The gift is free but that doesn't mean there are not some requirements. Holiness is one of them.

There are a few different ideas out there about holiness and when (or if) we can obtain it. In the Salvation Army there are two ideas from two different Officers; General Coutts believes holiness is a process, growing to be more like God every day and finally obtained in Heaven. Commissioner Brengle believes that holiness was obtainable here on Earth in a single moment – a second

work of sanctification. Holiness was less about maturity and more about purity. Although there are two different thoughts both believed that achieving holiness (whether now or later) is a necessity.

The gift is free but the work is hard and we must do just that, put the work in.

Read: 2 Corinthians 4 (The Message version)

Write: What are some of the things God requires that you have difficulties with?

Pray: God, help me understand that the purpose of my life is to bring You glory and not to bring myself glory.

Do: Pick one thing on your list and make a commitment to do that thing every single day for the rest of the challenge.



DAY FIVE: Holiness is sacrifice



We talk a lot about the loving sacrifice Jesus made for us so that we would not have to pay the penalty for our sins. But sometimes we forget to talk about the sacrifices that we need to make while following Jesus. Ok, maybe we don't actually forget, maybe we just decide to not talk about them or pretend like they don't exist. Holiness is sacrifice because Holiness goes against every natural desire of our human bodies. "Are you ready to rough it?" may not have been Jesus' exact words but those 5 short words pretty much sum up the Christian life. It's not all skittles and rainbows, it's not all happiness and perfection, its trials and hard climbs and tears and

dusting yourself off and claiming Jesus and His holiness over and over again.

Are you ready to rough it?

Read: Luke 9:43-62

Write: Make a list of some of the things in your life that you find really hard to sacrifice.

Pray: God, show me the ways I can sacrifice more for you.

Do: Pick one thing on that list and figure out what you need to do to give it up. Maybe it's a simple decision, maybe it's replacing the habit with something else, maybe it's simply praying that God will help take it away.



DAY SIX: Holiness vs. Happiness



This is where people start to back off a little. "Wait, God doesn't promise I will always be happy?" God wants a lot of you, He wants a lot from you, and He wants a lot for you, but happiness is not at the top of His list. Don't run away scared. I'll explain, I promise.

Sometimes we get confused with happiness and holiness. Happiness is almost always caused by something we like to do, something we like to get from people or something that makes us feel better about ourselves. Holiness doesn't always bring the same feelings. Holiness is hard. Holiness makes us scared or

question things. Holiness does not always make us happy.

Consider what Paul said in Philippians 3:8 Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. Those things that make us happy, those things are all about our life here on Earth. As Christians, we should be focused on eternity and what God wants us to do before we get there. Paul got it. He counted all those things of Earth as nothing compared to knowing and loving Jesus.

Jesus loves you, a lot! He died for you. He wants you to be happy but His route to happiness looks a whole lot different than ours.

Read: Philippians 3

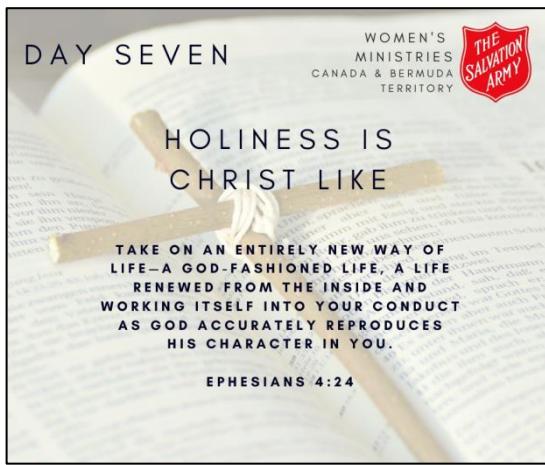
Write: What are some of the things that make you really truly happy? Are they things that glorify God or yourself?

Pray: God, reveal to me the things in my life that bring glory to me and not to You.

Do: Do something today for someone else that you really don't like doing.



DAY SEVEN: Holiness is Christ-Like



As we wrap up this first week of the Holiness Challenge, we finish with this simple truth – Holiness is being like Jesus. That's why Holiness is hard, a lifestyle is required. That's why Holiness will always be greater than happiness. That's why Holiness is a challenge. Jesus was truly and properly God and truly and properly man which means He was just like you and me with all the opportunities for unholy things. Jesus made a choice, He followed God's plan and He worked hard at showing others who God is and what His Kingdom was like. We are called to do the same thing but, unfortunately, are not perfect like Jesus.

There is good news though, grace. What would we do without grace? God wants our best. He wants us to strive towards holiness and although He doesn't want it to become an excuse to not try, grace will always be present.

Holiness is Christ-like and we are called to be Christ-like.

Read: Ephesians 4:17:32

Write: What are some things you know about Jesus' life; how did He live?

Pray: God, reveal to me the things in my life that need to look more like Jesus.

Do: Offer grace to someone today who may not deserve it because guess what, we don't deserve it either!



WEEK TWO: "WHERE?"

DAY 8: Holiness at Home



Home is (hopefully) a safe place for you. It's a place where you can kick off your shoes, change into your comfy pants and not worry about the make-up running or the 3 (or 4) days of unwashed hair. Home is where we can just be ourselves. Holiness needs to start at home. If we cannot pursue a lifestyle of holiness within the four walls of our homes then we will not be able to peruse holiness anywhere else.

Who are we when no one is watching? What are we when no one is watching? What are we watching when no one is watching? This is where all the "whys" of last week meet the hard truths of where and how.

OK, I admit it. I have a bit of a reality TV problem. You know those shows that do nothing for your mind and are pointless and fruitless and basically just make you feel like less of a crazy person? Yup, those reality shows are my jam. Now I am not saying that perusing holiness means never turning on the TV and watching who gets voted off the island, who the newest housewife is or if that guy is actually going to propose to her. But what I am saying is on that pursuit we make decisions like "is this really worth it?" Is what I am watching filling my mind with good or numbing me from reality? Should I be spending my time on this or something that actually fills my soul?

Holiness starts at home because home is where we can make the decisions to fill ourselves with God in order to take on the world OR filling ourselves with culture in order to blend into the world. Remember that "set apart" definition from last week? Yes, watch your *Amazing Race* or *Survivor* or *Grey's Anatomy* but don't let those things take up all the time that you could be feeding your soul.

Read: Psalm 139

Write: Write out what your daily routine looks like. What part of your day are you filling with mindless or useless things instead of holy things?

Pray: God, help me discover activities and practices within my home that help me grow closer to you.

Do: Before you watch TV or Netflix or go on your phone each morning, pick up your Bible or devotional book or prayer journal and give God those first and last moments of your days.



DAY 9: Holiness at Work



Work can look very different for all of us. Some of you may have a traditional “work out of the home” job, others may work from home or be a stay at home mom. Some of you may be in school, in between jobs, trying to discover your next step or have given many years of work and are happily (or unhappily) retired. No matter what our work situation is, it’s important to understand, for most of us, holiness at work is WAY more important than we think.

Before I was called into ministry and Officership I was a Registered Nurse and worked mostly in the ER (because

I have always been slightly obsessed with George Clooney in the show *ER* but that’s another story for another day). I loved my work, I was pretty good at it, but it was hard. The atmosphere is fast and somewhat toxic and extremely difficult to practice holiness.

For some reason I still loved it but was often convicted because of my faith on how to be holy at work when I was more often than not surrounded by a lot of unholiness. I remember this one specific night shift that a young woman came in who was sexually abused. I had the privilege of walking through that tough night, the questions and the procedures with this beautiful, young and scared woman. Most of the time I just listened or sat in silence while holding her hand and, little did she know, I prayed for her that whole 12 hours. The chance never came for me to talk to her about Jesus (and I would have gotten in trouble) but as she left that morning she hugged me and told me my “vibe” was so good and peaceful and helpful that whole night. I told her I loved her, that God loved her and that she was HIS precious child – that’s what that vibe she spoke of was. She kind of looked at me funny, told me quickly that she used to go to church and maybe she should go back again and then turned around to leave.

I have no idea what happened to her. I never saw her again. But that moment, at the end of a long hard night when I was supposed to go home 45 mins ago, that moment of mentioning the name of God is what we are called to do as holy and set apart people. If our coworkers or the people we come in contact with at work don’t see something different about us then we have done something terribly wrong.

Read: Hebrews 13

Write: What are some opportunities you have at work to share Jesus?

Pray: God, forgive me for those moments I have passed up on and help others see something different about me.

Do: Write a list of 5 things you can do at work to share the love of God.



DAY 10: Holiness in the Neighbourhood



Do you know the names of your neighbours? I don't! This is partly because I live in a large city where everyone keeps their heads down and goes about their own business, partly because my neighbours keep changing, but mostly because I am an awkward introvert who doesn't like talking to people.

I believe that THE biggest mission field that we have is within our own neighbourhood. The people you pass by every day, your neighbours, the parents at your kid's school, the cashier at the grocery store, that guy who walks his dog at the same time every day. These are the people we see every single day and most of us don't

even know their names. The message version of John 1:14 says that "the word became flesh and blood and moved into the neighbourhood" which means Jesus, the son of God, became man and moved into the world. If Jesus was walking on Earth today He would know the name of all of His neighbours, He would know the name of that "weird guy" that no one talks to, that sad person that everyone avoids, the homeless man asking for money at the red light and the young kids who are way too loud and annoying. He would know their names, their stories, their needs and would offer help.

Guess what? We are called to be like Jesus. We are called to move into our neighbourhoods and get to know those people and to not stop at that – to show them the love of God. If you are an awkward introvert like me, *that* scares you and makes you close the blinds and duck when you hear the doorbell. But remember last week when we talk about how holiness is hard? Here's a great example. Holiness in your neighbour will look different for you than it will for me in my neighbourhood, but that's ok – open your eyes, see the people you see every day and then watch how God reveals what He wants you to do in your neighbourhood.

Read: Mark 12:28-34

Write: Draw out your neighbourhood. Who are the closest 4 people to your home or some of the people you see every day. Do you know their names? If not, ask and then put that drawing on your fridge as a reminder to be holy in your neighbourhood.

Pray: God, let me see my neighbourhood like you see it.

Do: Have one conversation with a neighbour today and find out one new thing about them.



DAY 11: Holiness at play



What do you like to do? Are you a crafter, a sports lover, is music or is movies your thing? Nature, reading or dancing? What do you like to do when you have a second to yourself? Me, I like anything that means I don't have to interact with people and can just be quietly by myself with a good book and a cozy blanket. Play can look so different for each and every one of us and that's ok. But just because we are "off duty", relaxing or playing does not mean we can take a break from holiness. In fact, these are some of the most important times for us to practice holiness. We may be off duty of our jobs or ministry responsibilities, but we

are never off duty as followers of Jesus.

One of the biggest lessons I have learned over the past few years is how what is around me really determines what is in me. Cluttered house = cluttered mind. Loud atmosphere = anxious soul. Negative people = negative spirit. Bad news = bad attitude. What I do during my "play" time is just as important to my heart, soul and mind as when I am on duty in life and ministry because what I surround myself with in my play ultimately comes out in my life.

Read: Psalm 103:1-5

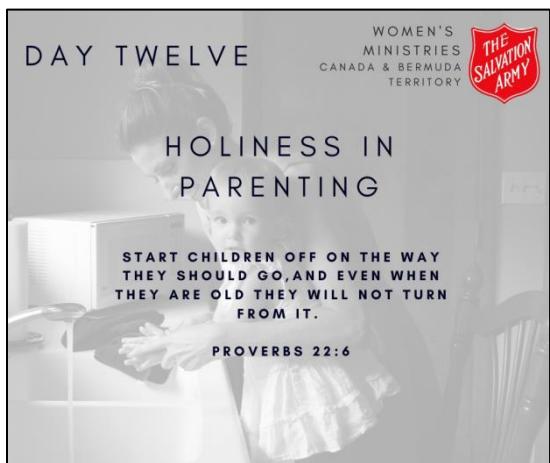
Write: What are some things that fill me? What are those things producing in my life?

Pray: God, reveal to me those things in my life that may seem harmless but are really harmful.

Do: Think of one "play" activity that you can do that is relaxing but produces good fruit in your life.



DAY 12: Holiness in Parenting



Even if you are not a parent, every single one of us has opportunities to speak into children, even if it's just with a little patience. So, not a parent? Don't skip over this day!

Holiness in parenting seems a little like an oxymoron to me. If there is anything in the world that makes me unholy it's two tiny humans names Maverick & Asher. You feel me? As parents and adults, we have this huge responsibility to pass on what we have learned to the next generation and raise them up in the way they should go. I don't think I need to remind you of this but

those little children, they see, watch and hear every single thing we as parents and adults do. Everything.

What are we modelling to our young people? Do they see a bunch of adults who come to church on Sunday and then leave that aspect of their lives in the building? Do they see us practicing holiness in all aspects of our lives? Are we yelling in the car on the way to church offering no patience and grace and then singing about those same things 30 mins later? What are we showing our young people about living a life of holiness?

Holiness in parenting should be as essential as physical nourishment and emotional support. I bet you do not outsource the teaching of Holiness to your kids to someone else. If we cannot figure out how to teach the next generation then who will?

Read: Proverbs 22:1-6

Write: One Christian tradition that you have that you could pass down to the next generation in order to point them to Jesus.

Pray: God, teach me to pass down your love to the next generation.

Do: Find out one way you can serve the next generation in your church or community.



DAY 13: Holiness in Marriage

DAY THIRTEEN

WOMEN'S MINISTRIES
CANADA & BERMUDA
TERRITORY

THE SALVATION ARMY

HOLINESS IN MARRIAGE

LOVE IS PATIENT, LOVE IS KIND. IT DOES NOT ENVY, IT DOES NOT BOAST, IT IS NOT PROUD. IT DOES NOT DISHONOR OTHERS, IT IS NOT SELF-SEEKING, IT IS NOT EASILY ANGERED, IT KEEPS NO RECORD OF WRONGS. LOVE DOES NOT DELIGHT IN EVIL BUT REJOICES WITH THE TRUTH. IT ALWAYS PROTECTS, ALWAYS TRUSTS, ALWAYS HOPES, ALWAYS PERSEVERES. LOVE NEVER FAILS.

1 CORINTHIANS 13:4-8

Marriage is hard. Whatever relationships you experience in your life are hard. It's hard to be so close to people, to know a lot about others, for others to know a lot about you and see you at those very tough and vulnerable moments. God's design for all of us is that we are image bearers, that we reflect Him in all that we do and therefore, He wants us to reflect Him in our relationships and marriages too. That means being patient, kind, not being envious or boastful, not proud, honoring others, not self-seeking or easily angered, keeps no record of wrongs, rejoices with truth, always protects, trust, hopes and perseveres. I mean, that's

quite a list right?

Holiness in our marriages and relationships means that they reflect God and His character. Did you know that the divorce rate within the church is the exact same as the divorce rate of people who do not attend church? Holiness in our marriages means our marriages are set apart (remember the definition last week), it means that people can see something different in our relationships (see that list above) and means Jesus Christ should be the foundation of our marriages.

When was the last time you prayed for your spouse, prayed with your spouse, worshipped together or taught one another?

Read: 1 Corinthians 13

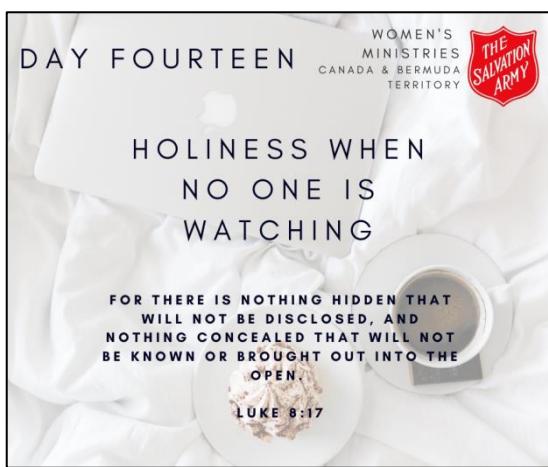
Write: Take the word “love” out of the scripture and replace it with your name.

Pray: God, show me ways to love my spouse or others like you love me.

Do: Do something really caring and unexpected for a loved one today.



DAY 14: Holiness when no one is watching



This one sums up nicely the past 6 days – we can try our best to live a life of holiness at home, work, play, in our neighbourhood, marriages and parenting but none of that is true and genuine unless we are able to practice holiness when no one is watching.

I remember this one time, many years ago, I was trying to stop saying the word “frig” (sorry mom) and replaced it with something (I honestly can’t remember the word). I kept correcting myself around this group of friends and explained what I was doing. One of them jokingly said “Jesus knows your heart”. We laughed and moved on but wouldn’t you know it, 7 years later I still remember

him saying that. No, it wasn’t a ground-breaking thing to say, yes, I know Jesus knows my heart but how many times do we say something when we really mean something else? How many times do we claim a good relationship with God but really haven’t talked to Him in days? How many times do we share that quote on Facebook just for the likes or the attention? How many times do we speak poorly about someone in our heads or, my personal favorite, say we are going to pray for someone but really have no intention of following through?

Who are we when no one is watching?

Read: Luke 8:16-18

Write: What do you do when no one is watching or when you are by yourself? What are some things that you can replace those habits with that will honor God?

Pray: God, help me see who I truly am and how I can be more holy when no one is watching.

Do: Pick one of those things from your list in the “write” section and decide to make that change.



WEEK THREE “HOW?”

DAY 15: Holiness in waking



Are you an early riser? I am, but not because I want to be. I have kids and I need to be awake before them or my whole time becomes chaos. The first thing I do is read – usually scripture or a book or something that involves something about God. It took me an embarrassing amount of time to get a morning routine down but it works and it's important to me.

Why? Because we are marked from our first waking moment as a child of God – an identity that is given to us by grace. That identity has to be the first thing we put on every morning or something else will take over. What is

the first thing you reach for in the morning when you wake? Is it your phone to read the news, check your Facebook, emails or the weather, is it the remote to turn on the news? Are you putting your identity in Facebook likes, email responses and cultural truths or are you putting your identity in Christ and reaching for His word?

God is forming us into new people, it doesn't happen in one big swoop of His magic wand but in the ordinary moments of everyday. How I spend this ordinary day in Christ is how I will spend my Christian life.

Read: Ephesians 6:10-20

Write: Write down all the pieces of armour and what they represent

Pray: God, help me wake up every morning and reach for you and your armour.

Do: For the remainder of this challenge, reach for God's word first every morning.



DAY 16: Holiness in making the bed

My husband makes the bed every morning. Is it up to my standards? Probably not, but at least he does it, right? (Now if only I could get him to put his clothes IN the laundry basket and not beside...) It's become a habit to him, a habit that may have been formed from me nagging too much but a habit just the same.

Think about your day and what you do during each moment and hour. Our days are made up of habits, good and bad. The make-up of 24 hours becomes who we are and what we do. If you are like me, most of your days look the same and become slightly mundane and boring but it's in the repetitive and mundane that we begin to learn to love, to listen and to pay attention to God and those around us.

DAY SIXTEEN

WOMEN'S MINISTRIES
CANADA & BERMUDA TERRITORY



HOLINESS IN MAKING THE BED

GOD IS OUR REFUGE AND STRENGTH,
AN EVER-PRESENT HELP IN TROUBLE.
THEREFORE WE WILL NOT
FEAR, THOUGH THE EARTH GIVE WAY
AND THE MOUNTAINS FALL INTO THE
HEART OF THE SEA, THOUGH ITS
WATERS ROAR AND FOAM AND THE
MOUNTAINS QUAKE WITH THEIR
SURGING.

PSALM 46:1-3



Whether it's making your bed, cleaning your face, brushing your teeth, putting on a certain radio station in the car or going to a certain coffee shop, those mundane things that we do every single day are all opportunities to grow in holiness and closeness to God. A beautiful painting is not made by one big paint brush, but by hundreds and hundreds of tiny brush strokes. A beautiful and holy life is made the exact same way, simple habits and choices to focus everything we do on God.

Read: Psalm 46

Write: What are some of the things you do every single day that sometimes become mundane and boring?

Pray: God, reveal to me how I can grow in my holiness through the mundane moments of life.

Do: Practice stillness today, just like verse 10 tells us. In that mundane stillness you may just hear from God.



DAY 17: Holiness in losing my keys

DAY SEVENTEEN

WOMEN'S MINISTRIES
CANADA & BERMUDA TERRITORY



HOLINESS IN LOSING MY KEYS

DO NOT BE ANXIOUS ABOUT ANYTHING, BUT IN EVERY SITUATION, BY PRAYER AND PETITION, WITH THANKSGIVING, PRESENT YOUR REQUESTS TO GOD.

PHILLIPPIANS 4:6

Scheduling is my love language. I schedule everything and work our lives around rhythms so that we all don't lose our minds. We have certain things we do in order to set our days up right and then I go for the car keys and everything gets thrown out the window. I mean, more often than not they were left in the door all night because I am THAT person, but as soon as something gets thrown off of rhythms there goes my whole perspective, my plan and my cool. I get angry, I blame and I generally just lose my mind when something doesn't go the way I planned it. And yet, here is where I find myself on an ordinary day and here, in my useless

anger and irritation is where God meets me. These moments are an opportunity for formation, for sanctification, for holiness.

Those little moments, frustrations, slips and justifications that happen in the ordinary days of our lives is what forms us into a more holy and set apart people. Holiness doesn't mean that you do not get frustrated when something goes wrong, but it does mean that if we do get frustrated, we quickly realize our misstep and bring ourselves back to God. God searches more earnestly for me than I do for my keys. And unlike my keys, He desperately wants to find you and make you whole. Let's allow God to find us.

Read: Philippians 4:4-9

Write: What is the biggest thing you stress over in life?

Pray: God, remind me that I do not need to be stressed about anything, but I bring it all to you.

Do: Memorize or write down verse 6 and ask God to help you remember that verse in times of need.



DAY 18: Holiness in takeout



God is great, God is good, let us thank Him for our food. Amen.

I am a horrible cook. Just a month or so after we were married I decided to make my mom's meatballs for supper. I was so excited because it was one of my favourite meals. Everything was ready, I served my husband his plate and he sat down to eat before me. God bless him. He ate two or three meatballs before I had a taste and realized I doubled the vinegar for the sauce, and it tasted horrible. He was SO relieved to be able to stop eating them and not have to pretend they were good. Needless to say, I order out when my

husband is away.

As a Salvation Army, we do not practice some of the sacraments that many other churches do, specifically communion. It's not that we disagree with it or think it's wrong, it's simply because of two reasons; 1) at its inception, The Salvation Army never intended to be a full-blown church so why would we do churchy things and 2) simply put – communion is not necessary for salvation. But here's the kicker, we actually do practice communion every single time we sit down together for a horribly cooked meal, some take out or leftovers. Every single time we sit down to eat we can remember His body that was broken and His blood that was shed. Every single time we have a meal together we can practice this important part of holiness – acknowledging the sacrifice of Jesus, thanking Him for all He has done and taking those few minutes to connect with our family and God.

Jesus, we thank you for your sacrifice, for shedding your blood for my sins, for your broken body, for Your amazing love for us. We ask for forgiveness when we fall short of honoring this gift and pray that you will continue to guide us on – God is great, God is good, let us thank Him for our food.

Read: Matthew 26:17-30

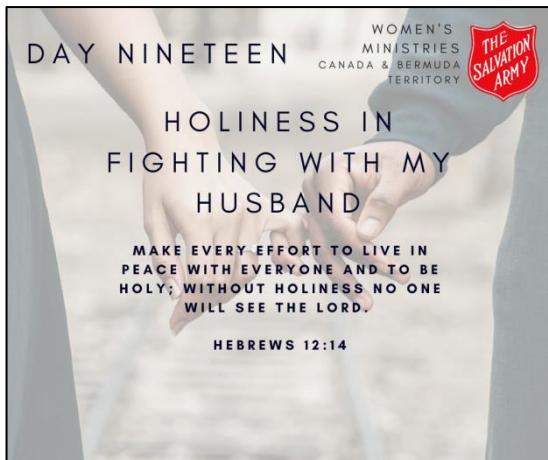
Write: Write out a prayer that includes something from the scripture to say at the beginning of every meal.

Pray: God, remind me every time I eat to thank you for your broken body and bloodshed.

Do: Print off your prayer and place it somewhere close to your table to remind you to practice holiness at every meal.



Day 19: Holiness in fighting with my husband



Where to start with this one? I believe I can say that my husband and I have a good marriage but that does not, I repeat DOES NOT mean we do not fight. Cause we fight! I am a pacifist who yells at her husband and takes the majority of my stresses and emotions out on him. Sometimes he just hugs me and takes it, sometimes he yells back, but all that to say – how do we practice holiness within the fight?

Holiness doesn't mean I never fight with my husband, holiness just means I learn to fight fair and maybe, just maybe, we fight a whole lot less while practicing peace, shalom. We are a people who fight but God is pushing

us towards being people who, through our ordinary moments, show His kingdom of peace. This takes a lot of faith. It takes a lot of faith to believe that the tiny and small decision to lay down my sword in the middle of our kitchen and stop the fighting will usher His peace, His shalom into our world. Holiness is sharpened in the everyday moments of decisions – a decision to yell and pick up my sword or a decision to practice love, joy and peace.

We still need to be "Jesus" to our spouse, even in the midst of a fight.

Read: Hebrews 12:14

Write: Write this verse down somewhere in your home so you can see it every single day and use it as a reminder to practice holiness in all things.

Pray: God, help me make every effort to keep the peace in every avenue of my life.

Do: Do or say something kind to someone who really rubs you the wrong way. Show God's peace and love today.



Day 20: Holiness in sleeping

A lack of rest is an epidemic in our world today and I believe this is an epidemic that is rather unique to women. Men and women were created in the image of God but were also given unique and complementary gifts. One gift we as women have is the amazing ability to never ever have our brains turn off. Men, they have this amazing empty box in their brain that they can go to and think of



absolutely nothing. Nothing. Doesn't that sound wonderful. We as women would go into that box and then we would rearrange some things and get distracted by a dent in the wall or some dust and then we would make a list of all the things we need to do when we leave that nothing box. Tracking with me?

Rest is holiness. And I am not talking about a good nap or a nice manicure. I am talking about good deep soul rest. Soul rest is holiness and boy oh boy do we suck at this. We have limits. We are not super heroes. We cannot do all the things while having joy and peace. We

need rest. We do not need to be connected at all times. We can turn our phones off, not check our emails for a day, not answer phone calls or check things off our list. We can say no. We do not owe any explanations to anyone. We can achieve deep soul rest and it won't always be popular.

What if, as Christians we were known as people who were countercultural, who were well-rested, who embraced our limits with joy and who practiced sabbath at the truest form?

Sleeping is practicing holiness. If we neglect our souls and its care, absolutely nothing we have talked about for these last few weeks matters.

Read: Hebrews 4:1-11

Write: Write a list of all the things that fill you with joy and peace. Do one of those things during your sabbath this week.

Pray: God, help me rest my soul in you.

Do: Scratch one thing off your to do list, turn off your phone notifications (because you do not need to be instantly connected to anyone) and care for your soul today.



Day 21: Holiness Always

Biblically, there is no difference between radical or ordinary believers. We are all called to be willing to follow Christ in radical ways through our ordinary lives. Holiness is the way we radically alter our ordinary lives and live to serve God. Holiness is not a moment, a choice or a thing that we talk about within The Salvation Army. Holiness is who we are, it's in our bones, it's in our DNA, it's completely opposite of what we want to do and it is to make up every aspect of our lives.

Over these past 3 weeks we have looked at what holiness is, why we need it and how we do it but ultimately none of that matters until we decide that our lives can and should be more.



Jesus died so that we can be free, and his instructions are not confusing – ‘be holy for I am holy’. No, holiness does not mean perfection, holiness does not mean an easy life, holiness does not mean no screw ups or mistakes, holiness is not some sort of unobtainable standard we can never achieve – that’s why there is grace. But holiness is required, its commanded, its asked and begged of us and as Christians, it should be our desire.

One day, soon or not so soon, I will stand before God and He will (hopefully) say “well done my good and

faithful servant”. He is not going to say that because I solved world hunger or I saved thousands of orphans or started a massive revival all across the world (although all of that would be so cool – but it would also mean I believed my salvation is based on works). He will say that because I made simple daily habits and decisions to chase after holiness in every aspect, in every moment and every day of my life – I chose to be faithful. Can you even imagine what our world would look like if we, as Jesus followers, actually chased after holiness in all the things of our lives? Dare I say holiness is what the world is clamouring for, they just don’t know it!

As we finish this challenge my prayer for you is that you will know this: there is room for you on this couch. Come sit next to us women who are trying to find our way through kids and jobs and aging parents and responsibilities and managing a home and knowing ourselves. Sit next to us without fear of judgement or condemnation. Sit next to us and know that we are cheering you on. Sit next to us and know that someday you too can pray Hannah’s prayer saying;

I’m bursting with GOD-news!

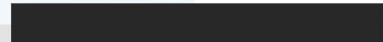
I’m walking on air.

I’m laughing at my rivals.

I’m dancing my salvation.

Nothing and no one is holy like GOD,
no rock mountain like our God.





FRENCH & SPANISH RESOURCES

Devotional - Soyez Saints, Car Je Suis Saint

CAPTAIN VILMA RAMOS

1Pierre 1:16 "Car voici ce que Dieu dit dans l'Écriture : Soyez saints, car je suis saint. " .

La sainteté de Dieu est sa pureté intrinsèque et éminente, le modèle de noblesse auquel l'univers entier doit accéder. Dieu ne consent à aucun modèle créé par l'homme. Il est le modèle. Par conséquent, il demande que sa création soit ajustée à son modèle et à ses dessins. Dieu est majestueux dans toute l'expression de son être.

Qu'est-ce qui est majestueux? Qu'il puisse communiquer admiration et respect pour sa solennité, sa douceur ou sa grandeur.

Qui comme vous, majestueux dans la sainteté, redoutable dans les actes dignes de louange, un fabricant de merveilles? Exode 15: 11Le texte biblique indique clairement et simplement que la majesté est en relation avec la sainteté, c'est-à-dire que la majesté est un élément de la définition de la sainteté. C'est le caractère formidable et caractéristique de Dieu, avec la sainteté. Esaïe 6:3: Ils craient l'un à l'autre, et disaient: Saint, saint, saint est l'Éternel des armées! toute la terre est pleine de sa gloire!

Cet attribut immerge tous ses autres attributs. Son amour est un saint amour. Son omniscience est une sainte omniscience. Son omniprésence est la sainte omniprésence. Tout a été imprégné par cet attribut déterminant de Dieu appelé sainteté. Dieu s'appelle même par ce nom. À travers l'Ancien et le Nouveau Testament, il s'appelle "Le saint". Lorsque nous avons des désirs de sainteté, des désirs de changement, la sainteté n'est pas gagnée, la sainteté est acquise par le Christ, elle découle de la détermination du cœur à commencer à quitter les anciennes structures. « Débarrasser de votre ancienne manière de vivre » Éphésiens 4: 22.

Dans Jean 17: 16-19, Jésus nous dit que nous avons une sanctification progressive de notre vie actuelle en appliquant la vérité de la parole de Dieu. Il a littéralement dit: "sanctifié par la vérité". La mort de Jésus a séparé les croyants éternellement pour Dieu et son royaume, et la vérité de Dieu est le moyen de leur sanctification quotidienne. En nous appropriant quotidiennement la Parole de Dieu, nous en sommes sanctifiés. Nous sommes mis à part pour Dieu et avons changé notre façon de vivre afin d'apporter honneur et gloire au Père. Dieu nous a donné un pain de savon. Il se trouve dans 1 Jean 1: 9. Utilisez-le tous les jours :« Si nous confessons nos péchés, il est fidèle et juste pour nous les pardonner, et pour nous purifier de toute iniquité. Si nous disons que nous n'avons pas péché, nous le faisons menteur, et sa parole n'est point en nous. »



Devotional- vivre en sainteté

CAPTAIN VILMA RAMOS

2 Corinthians 7: 1 « Ayant donc de telles promesses, bien-aimés, purifions-nous de toute souillure de la chair et de l'esprit, en achevant notre sanctification dans la crainte de Dieu »

Dieu nous donne le meilleur exemple de pureté et de propreté. La pureté religieuse était à la fois cérémonielle et éthique. En vertu de la loi sur les mosaïques, une purification cérémonielle était requise pour quatre actes:

- (1) La naissance d'un enfant, enlevée par la circoncision (s'il s'agit d'un homme) et par l'isolement de la mère pendant une période changeante (Lévi. 12: 2);
- (2) contact avec un cadavre, offrande d'une vache rouge prescrite pour le sacrifice de purification (Nombres 19: 1-10);
- (3) certaines maladies, telles que la lèpre (Lévi. 13: 8); et
- 4) la saleté due aux règles (Lévitique 15). La pureté de la famille a été préservée grâce à une réglementation stricte en matière de sexualité (1 Co 7: 8).

Donc, la raison principale pour être pur est notre désir de voir Dieu parce que sa parole dit: «8 Heureux ceux qui ont le cœur pur, car ils verront Dieu! »Matthieu 5 :8. Pur ou propre est identique à saint. «1 Pierre 1: 15-16. « Mais, puisque celui qui vous a appelés est saint, vous aussi soyez saints dans toute votre conduite, selon qu'il est écrit:Vous serez saints, car je suis saint. »

Être saint dans tous vos comportements revient à être saint et pur dans tous les domaines! C'est-à-dire que la victoire sur tout péché conscient, comme le prouvent les Écritures à bien des égards! Nous sommes appelés à être parfaits, tout comme Dieu est parfait! (Matthieu 5:48).

Encore une fois, ceci est la même chose que les actions saintes, les paroles saintes, les pensées pures et saintes, et la même chose que la pensée de Christ! (1 Corinthiens 2:16). Humainement, tout cela a l'air incroyable et est vrai selon les mots très clairs de l'Écriture. Donc, nous devons nous soumettre à cela en toute honnêteté. Nous devons juste le croire, comme un petit enfant, et ainsi nous pouvons le vivre! La sainteté glorifie alors Dieu.

C'est notre hommage et notre reconnaissance du salut qui a amené notre existence. Priez Dieu de nous accorder un cœur pur, comme dit le psalmiste: « O Dieu! crée en moi un cœur pur, Renouvelle en moi un esprit bien disposé ». Psaume 51: 10



Devotionnel la beauté de sainteté

CAPTAIN VILMA RAMOS

Psaume 96: 9 (LSG) "Adorez l'Éternel dans la beauté de la sainteté: craignez toute la terre, devant lui."

Le psalmiste nous appelle à adorer Dieu et adorer est une reconnaissance de la splendeur de sa sainteté. Toute créature sur terre doit l'honorer. La sainteté apporte la beauté, il y a une fascination pour la vraie sainteté. Lorsque nous l'adorons, nous acceptons également tout ce qu'il est et ce que cela signifie pour nous.

« La crainte du Seigneur est le rougissement sur les joues de la sainteté qui en soulignent la beauté." (Spurgeon).

Nous sommes appelés à nous présenter devant la présence de Dieu et à adorer ce qui est beau en lui: c'est sa gloire et sa sainteté. Psaume 148. Les Écritures nous parlent de la beauté de Dieu. Sa Parole nous dit que toutes les belles choses trouvent leur source et leur fondement dans le caractère de Dieu lui-même. Alors, Dieu est finalement la norme du bien, la norme du vrai et la norme de ce qui est vraiment beau.

Psaume 27: 4 J'ai présenté à l'Éternel /un seul souhait, /mais qui me tient vraiment à cœur :je voudrais habiter /dans la maison de l'Éternel /tous les jours de ma vie afin d'admirer l'Éternel /dans sa beauté[a],et de chercher à le connaître /dans sa demeure.

Dans la Bible, Dieu est plus qu'un simple être magnifique. Il est la source de toute beauté. Être avec Dieu, c'est être avec la beauté. Son saint amour, sa grâce, sa justice et sa majesté sont magnifiques. Toute la beauté et la créativité que nous voyons autour de nous ont commencé dans le Créateur. Et plus nous le connaissons - plus nous nous rapprochons de lui - plus nous expérimenterons de beauté. Cela nous donne un plaisir à admirer les couleurs de l'automne, la blancheur de la neige, les couleurs des oiseaux, les couleurs et textures des fleurs, les différentes couleurs de la mer, la voie lactée imprenable et la création entière est pleine de beauté de son créateur.

Lorsque la beauté de Dieu est révélée à la création par la puissance de son Saint-Esprit, notre cœur est complètement transformé. Nous avons été créés par Dieu pour quelque chose de grand, cela devrait nous aider dans trois domaines de notre vie chrétienne: le culte, la tentation et l'espoir. Le psalmiste nous le rappelle: adorer Dieu: contempler sa beauté, adorer est un devoir agréable et il ne s'agit pas de moi, mais de lui. Lorsque nous sommes tentés par la sexualité illicite, le mauvais argent, le plaisir de vengeance, la tentation est vaincue non par notre force, mais par la beauté de la croix. La beauté de Dieu transforme notre espoir. Nous aspirons à le voir, à être avec lui et à apprécier sa présence pour toute l'éternité.

Notre Père céleste a donné à chacun de nous la capacité d'être saint. Notre espoir de sainteté est centré sur le Christ, sa miséricorde et sa grâce. Avec notre foi en Jésus-Christ et les conseils de son Saint-Esprit, nous pouvons devenir purs sans tache, car si nous vivons dans l'Esprit, nous marchons dans l'esprit pour que notre vie soit une offrande sacrée et que nous puissions nous présenter devant le Seigneur dans *la beauté de la sainteté*.

Devotionnel - nous devons être un bon témoignage d'enfants de dieu

CAPTAIN VILMA RAMOS

1 Timothée 4:12 "Que personne ne méprise ta jeunesse; mais sois un modèle pour les fidèles, en parole, en conduite, en charité, en foi, en pureté.

Paul regarde le jeune Timothée et lui donne la responsabilité d'être un exemple avec son attitude, avec son imagination, avec ses actions. Quand les anciens de son église ont demandé: "Qu'est-ce que cela signifie de vivre une vie de pureté?", Ils devraient trouver dans le jeune Timothée son meilleur exemple.C'est un grand défi, mais c'est exactement le genre de défi digne de la Bible. La Bible ne permet jamais à la jeunesse d'être une excuse pour l'impureté sexuelle ou tout autre manque de sainteté. Mais comment? Comment pouvez-vous être ce genre d'exemple? En quoi consiste cette vie exemplaire?

Lorsque Paul donne à Timothée la responsabilité d'être pur, il pense sans aucun doute à la honte et au malheur qui arriverait à Timothée et à toute son église s'il avait été trouvé en train de commettre un péché sexuel. Cependant, nous savons en lisant la Bible que Paul n'a pas seulement voulu que Timothée s'abstienne de tout péché sexuel. Tout d'abord, il voulait mettre l'accent sur une pureté intérieure. Après tout, ce qui est à l'extérieur est toujours le reflet de ce qui est à l'intérieur. Il voulait que Timothée ait les mains pures, bien sûr, mais il souhaitait également qu'il ait un cœur et un esprit purs. La pureté se compose d'actions pures, bien sûr, mais aussi de désirs et de pensées pures. Charles Siméon (Prédicateur anglican) le dit bien: "Chaque mot et chaque regard, oui, et même chaque pensée, doivent être bien protégés, pour que Satan ne prenne pas avantage de nous et qu'aucun murmure de scandale ne se lève contre nous." C'est la norme de Dieu: pas le moindre murmure de scandale.

Jeune chrétien, Dieu vous confie une tâche importante: soyez un exemple de croyants pur. Il ne vous demanderait pas ce que vous ne pouvez pas faire. Au moins, il ne demandera pas ce que vous ne pouvez pas faire lorsque le Saint-Esprit de Dieu habite en vous, le Saint-Esprit qui est beaucoup plus engagé envers votre sainteté que vous ne l'êtes pour votre péché. C'est sa joie de vous sanctifier; C'est son plaisir de vous aider à devenir un exemple de pureté (dans les mots, dans la conduite, dans l'amour, dans la foi). Mon ami donne un exemple aux croyants.

Questions à méditer

Quel est votre plus grand combat dans le domaine de la pureté?

Quelles actions prenez-vous pour combattre ce péché et vivre pour la justice?

Sur qui comptez-vous pour vous aider dans cette lutte à travers la conversation et la prière?

Pensez-vous vraiment que vous - même vous - pouvez être un exemple de pureté?

Pensez-vous vraiment que votre exemple peut faire une différence pour les autres?

De quelle manière pensez-vous être un exemple pour les gens de votre église dans la pureté?

Priez et remerciez Dieu pour chacun d'entre eux. De quelle manière n'êtes-vous pas un exemple pour les gens de votre église dans la pureté? Priez et demandez à Dieu de vous donner sa grâce pour changer.

La vision du prophète Isaïe - Aperçu biblique de la prédication d'Isaïe 6

CAPTAIN VILMA RAMOS

Esaïe était en adoration dans le Temple quand il eut la vision du Seigneur. Le roi était mort mais Dieu reste, il est le roi des rois. Dans le temple, Esaïe découvrit que le vrai roi de la nation n'était pas mort. Dieu était sur son trône. Jéhovah règne: C'est un message fondamental et puissant que le peuple de Dieu doit proclamer au monde. Que les autres reconnaissent son royaume ou non, le Seigneur règne de quelque manière que ce soit, et ce royaume sera un jour imposé directement et de façon évidente au monde entier.

LA VISION D'ISAÏE6.

I. La vision du Seigneur.

1. La vision sublime d'Isaïe était en adoration dans le Temple quand il vit le Seigneur. 6: 1-42.
2. vision interne 6: 5-7 et vision externe d'Esaïe 6: 8-13.
3. Le roi était mort mais Dieu reste, il est le roi des rois. Dans le temple, Esaïe découvrit que le vrai roi de la nation n'était pas mort. Dieu était sur son trône.
4. Des expériences comme Isaïe Job s'écrivent: "Je me hais»Jean Apocalypse 1: 17 Quand je l'ai vu, je suis tombé mort à ses pieds. "Et quand le prophète Daniel vit le Seigneur, il dit dans son livre 10: 8: "Je suis donc resté seul devant cette grande vision, mais il ne restait plus aucune force. Mes forces se sont transformées en faiblesses, car elles m'ont complètement abandonné." Et souvenez-vous aussi de Saul de Tarse, qui deviendra l'apôtre Paul. Après que Paul eut rencontré le Seigneur, il ne se voyait plus comme un pharisién avec sa propre justice, mais comme un pécheur égaré qui avait besoin du salut.

II. Ministère Séraphin - louer Dieu

- 1- Voir la majesté du Seigneur reconnaît son impureté devant Dieu
- 2- Dieu fait l'appel
- 3- Consécration au service d'Isaïe
- 4- OBSERVER LES SEPT POINTS:

- 1 contemplation. "Vu."
- 2 Conviction "Je suis sale."
- 3 Confession. "Malheur à moi!", Etc.
- 4 Purification. "C'est ... nettoyé ton péché."
- 5 Appel. "Qui vais-je envoyer?"
- 6 Consécration. "Je suis ici."
- 7 Commission. "Et il a dit: Allez."

Sermon Persévérand jusqu'au bout

CAPTAIN VILMA RAMOS

Certaines personnes comprennent comment "persévirer" pour se rassembler dans une église locale, ce qui est absolument bon, mais la persévérence va au-delà de la fréquentation régulière de l'église.

En cette période de mobilisation et de changement des choses dans tous les domaines de l'humanité, il est très difficile de rester dans ce que nous avons commencé. C'est pourquoi nous voulons parler de l'importance de la persévérence dans la vie du chrétien. Avez-vous remarqué qu'il est difficile de commencer quelque chose, mais nous réalisons qu'il est encore plus difficile de maintenir ce que nous avons commencé? Salomon dit "Quoi de mieux que la fin des affaires pour commencer (Ecclésiaste 7: 5), la raison pour laquelle Salomon dit que c'est parce qu'entre le début et la fin, c'est de la persévérence et sans elle bien que les affaires aient bien démarré, Ça finira bien. En tant qu'enfants de Dieu, cela n'a pas d'importance tant que nous commençons, mais que nous finissons. Mais qu'est-ce que la persévérence?

Dictionnaire séculier: la persévérance continue de suivre, continuer, porter ce qui a été commencé.

Durer durablement ou longtemps

Dictionnaire biblique: La persévérance vient du grec Proskartérèse qui signifie persévérence, persévérence et Proskartereo, à assister constamment, à continuer sans détours, à rester ferme, à bien tenir.

Quand Jésus a dit: "Si quelqu'un veut venir après moi, laissez-le se renier, prendre sa croix et suivez-moi. (Matthieu 16:24) "Il faisait en partie référence à la persévérence quotidienne sur la route, contre ce que notre chair veut. Choisissez de faire la bonne chose au lieu d'aller de manière simple.

La persévérence indique la constance et la fermeté dans nos convictions chrétiennes, reste ferme dans ce que nous avons cru, ne fléchit pas complètement face à l'adversité et à la tentation à laquelle chaque croyant doit faire face au fil du temps, persévirer est la manière d'être et la manière de faire. Nous faisons ce que nous sommes, parce que ce que nous sommes ne l'a pas été à cause de notre sagesse, car ce que nous sommes est à cause de ce que Dieu a fait, de et en nous. La persévérence est une préservation, nous sommes préservés pour persévirer, et persévirer jusqu'au bout est la marque d'un vrai croyant. Seuls les chrétiens nominaux peuvent cesser de persévirer totalement et complètement, un authentique chrétien persévrera.

La promesse de la persévérence

Romains 8:35-39 La Bible du Semeur (BDS)

Qu'est-ce qui pourra nous arracher à l'amour de Christ? La détresse ou l'angoisse, la persécution, la faim, la misère, le danger ou l'épée? Car il nous arrive ce que dit l'Écriture:

A cause de toi, nous sommes exposés à la mort à longueur de jour.

On nous considère comme des moutons destinés à l'abattoir[a].

Mais dans tout cela nous sommes bien plus que vainqueurs par celui qui nous a aimés. 38 Oui, j'en ai l'absolue certitude: ni la mort ni la vie, ni les anges ni les dominations, ni le présent ni l'avenir, ni les

puissances, ni ce qui est en haut ni ce qui est en bas[b], ni aucune autre créature, rien ne pourra nous arracher à l'amour que Dieu nous a témoigné en Jésus-Christ notre Seigneur.

En quoi devons-nous persévéérer les chrétiens?

1. DANS LE MOT

Cela nous rappelle ce que Moïse a dit à Josué. (Josué 1: 8) L'une des raisons pour lesquelles un chrétien ne prospère pas, c'est qu'ils ne tiennent compte de la parole dans aucune de leurs décisions et ne persévèrent pas à y obéir dans tout ce qu'elle nous envoie, cela dépend de notre croissance et de notre maturité. Il est tellement nécessaire de marcher sur le chemin de la perfection.

2. EN COMMUNION AVEC LES FRÈRES.

Il est d'une importance vitale de persévéérer dans la communion avec les frères puisque Dieu ne nous a pas fait vivre seul mais en communauté. Parce que nous avons tous besoin les uns des autres dans tous les moments où nous passons notre vie dans la joie, la tristesse, le découragement ou la maladie, la Bible dit que tout ce que nous semons est ce que nous récoltons en tout temps, une graine d'amour dans chaque cœur nous trouvons et nous récolterons toujours de l'amour et de la compréhension, comme il est beau de vivre en harmonie! Il est dit Psaume 133: 1.

3. EN PRIÈRE

La prière a été considérée comme l'oxygène à respirer dans la vie spirituelle du croyant. Lorsque cela est nécessaire, il commence à mourir, car sans la communication avec Dieu, la relation meurt. Dans la salle haute, les disciples persévéraient unanimement dans la prière et furent donc remplis du Saint-Esprit. Actes 1:14, dans Colossiens 4: 2, Paul exhorte et nous encourage à persévéérer dans la prière et à le surveiller avec actions de grâces. le moyen de nous maintenir en relation avec le Saint-Esprit.

I. PERSEVER POURQUOI?

Jésus nous a enseigné l'importance de persévérer pour obtenir le salut "Mais celui qui persévrera jusqu'à la fin sera sauvé" Matthieu 24:13. Sans persévérence, le salut ne peut être réalisé. Il s'agit en définitive d'un acte accompli par l'amour de Dieu par Jésus-Christ. Notre modèle de persévérence est et sera le Christ.

Exemples bibliques de persévérance:

La Bible nous montre que beaucoup d'hommes et de femmes qui ont persévéré et ont réussi à conquérir leur victoire et à réaliser leurs rêves. Notre persévérence doit toujours et sera constamment motivée par l'Évangile; la grâce souveraine, ferme et constante, nous préservera pour atteindre le but jusqu'au dernier jour.

Noé qui a persévééré, même critiqué, humilié, méprisé, mais s'est battu pour construire l'arche et s'est sauvé avec sa progéniture.

Josué parfait après Jéhovah, Josué 24:15. Le nom de Josué en hébreu signifie: Jéhovah est le salut. Josué, fils de Nun, de la tribu d'Éphraïm, était un fidèle serviteur et compagnon de Moïse. Il a été nommé par Dieu comme successeur de Moïse, et par sa persévérence, il a encouragé le peuple à détruire Jéricho et a également tiré au sort les tribus de Canaan.

Ruth était une femme qui a persévétré devant Boaz, gardant sa réputation intacte jusqu'à ce qu'elle soit rachetée et adoptée par son épouse, Ruth 4: 13. Et pour la récompense de sa noble persévérance, son nom était inclus dans la généalogie de Jésus-Christ, Matthieu 1: 5

L'apôtre Paul portant constamment un message dans son cœur "les exhorte à persévérer dans la grâce de Dieu" Actes 13: 43.

"Dans le Nouveau Testament, Jésus, l'instructeur de persévérance, nous enseigne à porter du fruit avec patience, Luc 8:15. Jésus dit:" Ce qui tombe sur le bon terrain, ce sont ceux qui, entendant la Parole avec un bon cœur ils tiennent droit et portent des fruits avec persévérence ".

I. Ne pas arrêter de persévéérer

Nous avons eu des hommes qui ont refusé de persévérer et de se laisser emporter par le péché et la perte de la communion avec Dieu. "

Judas, Matthieu 27: 4,5 "

Ananias et Saphira, Actes 5: 1-9 "

Hymenaeus et Alexander, à Timothée 1: 19,20.

La doctrine de la persévérence ne repose pas sur notre capacité de persévérence, même si nous sommes régénérés, mais sur la promesse que Dieu a faite de nous préserver. Paul, écrivant aux Philippiens, dit: "Être persuadé que celui qui a commencé un bon travail en vous le perfectionnera jusqu'au jour de Jésus-Christ" (Phil 1: 6). C'est par grâce et seulement par grâce que les chrétiens persévérent. Dieu finira le travail qui a commencé. Cela garantira que tous les objectifs de l'élection ne soient pas frustrés.

Nous savons que certaines personnes peuvent tomber amoureuses de certains éléments du christianisme sans accepter le Christ lui-même. Il est possible qu'un jeune soit attiré par le plaisir et l'encouragement d'un groupe de jeunes proposant un programme intéressant. La personne peut "se convertir" au programme sans se convertir au Christ. Je pense qu'il nous manque deux choses.

Premièrement: conviction. Et deuxièmement: la conversion. Quelle est la conviction? Voyons cette vidéo sur la conviction.

Quelques synonymes du mot CONVICTION: - persuasion - certitude - certitude - sécurité - constance -

C'est une conviction forte et ferme en quelque chose ou quelqu'un. Le chrétien est motivé dans sa vie par conviction, pas par imposition. Le contraire est le doute et l'incertitude, l'insécurité. Nos convictions déterminent notre comportement, elles affirment nos valeurs, nos engagements et nos motivations. Howard Hendricks, enseignant de la Bible, déclare: "Une croyance est un argument pour lequel vous plaidez. Une conviction est un objectif pour lequel vous mourriez!"

Ce que croit une personne est démontré par ses convictions, détermine son mode de vie et révèle les priorités, tout ce qui compte pour elle. Si nous n'avons pas Dieu en premier lieu, il ne veut pas de notre amour, c'est aussi simple que cela. Si vous ne donnez pas tout votre amour à Dieu, vous ne lui avez absolument rien donné, Dieu veut le premier! Dieu n'acceptera pas une place qui n'est pas la première place.

Conversion, quelle est la conversion? Être converti pour être comme cette personne est. Être chrétien, c'est être comme Christ, comme Jésus Christ, le Seigneur. Pour être chrétien, être converti à Jésus-Christ, c'est être comme Jésus. Je dois donc savoir comment il doit lui ressembler. Je ne peux pas être différent. Et si je vois que dans la Parole cela établit que Jésus-Christ a accompli ce que le Père établit, alors je comprends que je dois aussi le faire et que je dois le faire. Et ce que dit la Bible, je dois le faire. Parce que? parce que je suis converti à Jésus. Par conséquent, si j'ai la conviction et la conversion, je ferai ce qui est dit ici et je réaliseraï ce que le Seigneur dit. Et pour ceux qui acceptent de tout laisser, la promesse est grande du Seigneur et dit qu'il en recevra cent fois plus, dit le Seigneur. Et non seulement il recevra 100 fois plus dans cette vie, mais il héritera même de la vie éternelle. Matthieu 19 :29

Nous avons cette sécurité parce que le salut vient du Seigneur et que nous sommes son travail. Il donne le Saint-Esprit à tous les croyants comme une promesse qui complétera ce qu'il a commencé. Il a également scellé chaque croyant avec le Saint-Esprit. Il nous a marqué d'une marque indélébile et nous a donné sa personne comme premier dépôt, ce qui garantit qu'il se conformera à la transaction. "fermes jusqu'à la fin" persévérateurs, et ainsi nous serons "irréprochables au jour de notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ" (1 Corinthiens 1: 8)

CONCLUSION:

1. Nous devons persévérer dans: La connaissance de la parole, la communion avec les frères et la prière. Il est écrit dans Actes 2:42
2. Beaucoup de gens font une profession de foi en Christ puis la répudient.
3. La persévérence des saints est basée sur les promesses de Dieu de préserver les saints.
4. Dieu achèvera le salut des élus.
5. La doctrine de la persévérence enseigne que les gens qui se détournent de la foi n'ont jamais été de vrais croyants.
6. Nous avons confiance en notre salut parce que nous avons été scellés du Saint-Esprit. Dieu nous a donné sa parole dans le Saint-Esprit afin que notre salut soit complet.
7. L'intercession de Christ est pour notre préservation.

Réfléchissez à ceci:

Sommes-nous persévéreés tous les jours de notre vie? Ou sommes-nous devenus inconstants? Sommes-nous devenus négligents? Nous sommes-nous excusés sous mille et un prétextes? O Comment servons-nous Dieu?

Croyez-vous que Dieu a la responsabilité de vous donner sa couronne pour la vie éternelle si vous ne persévérez pas pour la gagner? Aucun moyen.

En ce jour, je vous invite à commencer à persévérer dans le chemin de Dieu et si vous êtes déjà chrétien, je vous invite à faire revivre pour persévérer et à vous réveiller de votre léthargie ou de votre inactivité spirituelle, rappelez-vous que personne ne gagne rien.

Pensez-vous que les grands champions sont des champions parce qu'ils n'ont pas persévéré? Aucun moyen

Frères, encourageons-nous et commençons à persévirer jusqu'à la fin. Ne laissez pas l'ennemi vous décourager, ne laissez pas l'ennemi vous tromper, ne laissez pas l'ennemi voler votre couronne pour devenir un paresseux qui ne voulait pas persévirer pour ce qu'il était. Rappelez-vous que les choses qui valent vraiment la peine ont un prix élevé, peut-être pas monétaire, mais un prix que nous devons payer pour faire ce qui vaut tant pour nous. La vie éternelle a-t-elle une valeur pour vous? Ou ne vaut rien.



Sermon: Sans Excuses

CAPTAIN VILMA RAMOS

Lecture biblique: Luc 14: 15-24 + parabole contextuelle.

Il est naturel que les humains inventent une excuse lorsqu'ils veulent éviter un engagement ou qu'ils se sentent obligés de faire quelque chose qu'ils ne veulent pas. Cela semble être quelque chose d'inné dans notre essence, car ils sont encore capables de l'inventer. Combien de personnes de son enfance se sont vu confier une tâche ménagère que je n'ai pas réussi à accomplir? pour ensuite inventer une petite excuse et échapper à la répression des parents ou à l'école quand ils ne pouvaient pas faire leurs devoirs, nous avons inventé une excuse pour ne pas assumer nos responsabilités.

Qu'est-ce qu'une excuse? : Raison ou prétexte pour éviter une obligation ou excuser une omission.

Nous n'avons aucune excuse pour ne pas tout donner à Dieu.

Dieu nous a donné la vie, Dieu nous a sauvés, Dieu nous a libérés, Dieu nous donne tout ce que nous avons. Nous n'avons aucune excuse pour ne pas vous servir avec tout. Ce matin, nous allons examiner certaines des excuses les plus courantes d'hommes et de femmes dans la Bible.

1. Adan

L'homme présente sa première excuse, dans le jardin d'Eden, lorsqu'il est confronté à Dieu, en mangeant l'arbre qu'il lui avait été interdit de manger, en le prétextant; que la femme était la coupable et qu'elle, en tant qu'essence de l'homme, était formée, présentait la sienne en disant à Dieu; que le coupable était le serpent qui la séduisait avec un mensonge. Mais ils ne furent pas absous par le Seigneur, car auparavant, il leur avait parlé et leur avait donné le châtiment pour leurs fautes.

II. Moïse

C'est un créateur d'excuses avancées, un expert dans l'art des excuses ... Dans Exode 3, nous trouvons l'appel de Dieu à Moïse. Il a 4 excuses pour ne pas obéir à Dieu:

1. Excusez-moi "Qui suis-je, pour aller vers Pharaon, et pour faire sortir d'Égypte les enfants d'Israël?"
2. Excusez "ils" ne me croiront pas (Ex. 4: 1)
3. (Comme les 2 précédents n'ont pas fonctionné, nous revenons à l'excuse "I", avant qu'elle ne dise ce que c'est seulement et maintenant ce que ce n'est pas).

Je ne suis pas capable (Ex. 4:10)

4. Excusez "AUTRE" "Laissez les autres partir, je vous soutiens" (Ex. 4:13)

Nous n'avons aucune excuse pour ne pas obéir à Dieu

III. Jérémie 1: 4-9

Jérémie pensait que pour servir Dieu, il fallait avoir un certain âge et bien parler. Il avait entre 20 et 25 ans lorsque Dieu l'appela. Il a été averti que les gens ne l'écouteraien pas 7: 27,28. Il lui était interdit de se marier 16: 1-4. Je me suis senti fatal d'accomplir son ministère 4:19; 8: 18-23.

Nous n'avons aucune excuse pour ne pas faire ce que Dieu veut

IV Le paralytique de Bethesda

Jean 5: 2-9

Jésus lui demanda: veux-tu être en bonne santé? Le paralytique lui a parlé de l'étang, je me suis excusé, et bien que son excuse soit bonne, il était au fond un "conformisme", Jésus ne perd pas de temps avec nos excuses, si nous voulons tout changer en un instant, cet homme paralysé l'a guéri. "Un autre me gagne", lui demande D., veux-tu être en bonne santé?

Nous n'avons aucune excuse pour ne pas avancer.

Comment nous écoutons la lecture Dans Luc 14: 15-24 "La parabole des convives", Et Jésus lui répondit: Un homme donna un grand souper, et il invita beaucoup de gens. A l'heure du souper, il envoya son serviteur dire aux conviés: Venez, car tout est déjà prêt. Mais tous unanimement se mirent à s'excuser. Le premier lui dit: J'ai acheté un champ, et je suis obligé d'aller le voir; excuse-moi, je te prie. Un autre dit: J'ai acheté cinq paires de bœufs, et je vais les essayer; excuse-moi, je te prie. Un autre dit: Je viens de me marier, et c'est pourquoi je ne puis aller. Car, je vous le dis, aucun de ces hommes qui avaient été invités ne goûtera de mon souper.

L'excuse n'est ni la sagesse ni l'amour, c'est l'irresponsabilité, le moteur, la fierté et la rébellion

L'excuse est devenue l'un des plus grands vices que nous puissions constater dans le monde aujourd'hui. Nous sommes devenus accro aux excuses et celles-ci sont devenues une habitude que nous ne pouvons pas contrôler. L'excuse est davantage associée au mensonge et à la tromperie et donc au péché. Combien de personnes aujourd'hui vont sous le prétexte d'éviter leurs engagements et leurs responsabilités. Nous utilisons l'excuse pour fuir les problèmes, les responsabilités, pour s'entendre avec les autres. Nous les utilisons à l'université, au travail, dans l'église partout. Les excuses montrent un manque d'intérêt pour quelque chose ou quelqu'un, un manque d'humilité, car nous voulons commettre de nombreuses erreurs que nous voulons dissimuler sous le prétexte de ne pas faire face aux conséquences de nos actes répréhensibles.

Chaque excuse que nous donnons à dieu révèle à quel est la dur de notre cœur et comment notre amour arrive pour lui.

Chaque fois que nous fuyons vers Dieu et ses plans, nous nous privons de l'occasion d'être bénis. Quand je lis l'histoire de Luc 14, je réalise à quel point dans l'église aujourd'hui nous pouvons voir ces différents scénarios. Nous sommes tellement habitués à faire des excuses aux gens que même Dieu lui-même veut le tromper, sachant que Dieu connaît tout notre programme et toutes les intentions de notre cœur et que nous ne pouvons jamais nous moquer de lui (Galates 6: 7).

Une fois que nous mettons une excuse à Dieu, nous disons que vous n'êtes pas important pour moi. Et nous avons passé toute notre vie à faire des excuses à Dieu, à ses plans, à ses desseins, nous nous excusons pour ne pas aller à l'église, pour ne pas servir dans l'église, pour ne pas nous engager dans l'église, et nous avons donc passé toute notre vie, et plus nous mettons des excuses à Dieu, plus nous allons au salut et plus notre vie devient misérable.

Chaque fois que nous mettons des excuses à dieu, leurs bénédictions sont retirées de notre vie

À ces personnes qui se sont excusées dans la parabole des convives, Jésus leur a dit: Car, je vous le dis, aucun de ces hommes qui avaient été invités ne goûtera de mon souper. Cela signifie que Dieu a quelque chose de grand prêt pour nous, quand nous décidons de le servir, qu'il y a une récompense pour tous ceux qui ont faim de faire sa volonté, donc, quand nous passons nos vies à fuir à l'appel de Dieu, dans le jugement final, nous ne jouirons pas du ciel ni de son salut. L'une des choses qui révèlent les excuses sont, quelles sont les choses les plus importantes dans nos vies. Quand une personne ne fait pas une excuse à quelque chose, c'est parce que quelque chose est très important pour sa vie. Par conséquent, une petite excuse est en mesure de définir toutes nos priorités. Quand une personne ne fait pas d'excuses aux affaires de Dieu, c'est parce que Dieu est sa plus haute priorité. Notre cœur est dans ces choses avec lesquelles nous ne nous excusons jamais. L'une des choses que j'ai apprises de cette manière est de ne jamais chercher d'excuses à Dieu, peu importe le nombre de choses que je dois sacrifier. Chaque décision que nous prenons dans la vie, puis ma famille, puis tout le reste, puis chaque décision que je prends est basée sur cette échelle de priorités. Quand une personne excuse chaque jour des excuses à Dieu, il est remarquable qu'il ne soit pas leur priorité et les conséquences sont très regrettables.

Chaque fois que nous misons une excuse à dieu, nous fuissons de lui, et dommage à dieu, c'est comme après la mort sans la capacité minimum du dos.

Dieu a appelé beaucoup de gens, depuis de nombreuses années, à ses voies. Le temps de grâce que Dieu leur a accordé les a protégés d'une mort subite. Lorsque ce temps de grâce se terminera, cette âme ne sera plus sous la couverture de Dieu. Examiner la Bible, chaque excuse non surmontée est devenue une malédiction.

Aujourd'hui, je tiens à partager avec vous le top 8 des excuses les plus fréquentes qui sont souvent dites par de nombreuses personnes qui se disent chrétiennes (beaucoup sont en réalité chrétiennes), d'après ce que j'ai remarqué.

Je veux vous encourager à vous examiner pour savoir si vous avez utilisé des excuses et pour pouvoir cesser de vous excuser pour vivre la vie dans l'abondance et dans l'aventure que Dieu veut que vous viviez. :)

1. "J'attends le temps de Dieu."

En attendant le temps que Dieu a mis de côté pour tout, c'est bien. Cependant, parfois, l'expression "j'attends le temps de Dieu" est utilisée comme une excuse pour ne pas faire quelque chose que nous devons faire et que Dieu nous a déjà signalé. Parfois, c'est une excuse pour ne pas admettre la lâcheté et la dissimuler de la vertu. Attendez le temps de Dieu pour tout, mais quand ce moment arrivera ... n'attendez plus!

Rester en communication avec Dieu et méditer sur sa parole est une clé pour apprendre à ne pas perdre chaque jour de notre vie.

2. "Je ne me sens pas appelé à le faire."

Plusieurs fois, j'ai eu cette conversation avec certaines personnes:

- Moi: Hé, pourquoi ne décidez-vous pas de faire des disciples pour Jésus?

- L'autre personne: Je ne me sens pas appelé à le faire.

La plupart du temps, j'ai entendu cette phrase dans une conversation similaire à celle que je vous ai montrée.

Laissez-moi vous dire ce qui suit:

Faites des disciples ou soyez missionnaire où que vous soyez ...

Il ne s'agit pas de savoir si vous sentez un "appel" ou non (les appels de Dieu ne sont pas des sentiments!).

Il ne s'agit pas non plus de savoir si vous avez certains dons ou talents spirituels.

Il ne s'agit pas non plus de savoir si vous avez un titre ou un poste de "pasteur".

Faire des disciples, c'est faire ce que Dieu a dit dans sa parole. Vous êtes ici pour faire ce que vous devez faire. Une fois que vous obéissez, vous verrez que cela en vaut la peine.

4. "Je dois prier davantage à ce sujet."

Cette excuse est très similaire à la première en termes d'utilisation.

Prier, c'est bien, mais parfois, nous disons que "nous devons prier davantage à ce sujet" alors qu'en réalité, Dieu vous a déjà donné sa réponse concernant le sujet pour lequel vous avez prié. Tant de fois nous prions Dieu d'attendre une réponse qu'il nous a déjà donnée et nous avons décidé de l'ignorer délibérément. C'est quelque chose qui arrive habituellement. Si cela vous arrive, je vous encourage à faire ce que vous devez faire. Obéir à Dieu n'est jamais une perte de temps.

5. "Je dois demander la permission".

Vous n'avez pas besoin de demander la permission à qui que ce soit de faire ce que Dieu veut que vous fassiez.

Vous n'avez pas besoin de demander la permission de prêcher et de faire des disciples.

Vous n'avez pas besoin de demander la permission pour mettre en œuvre vos talents.

Vous n'avez pas besoin de demander la permission pour faire la bonne chose.

Vous avez déjà la permission de changer le monde.

8. "Dieu ne m'a pas parlé."

Comme vous le verrez, cette excuse est très similaire à "J'attends le temps de Dieu" et "Je dois prier davantage à ce sujet".

Nous attendons souvent que Dieu nous parle ... alors que dans la Bible, nous avons besoin de savoir. Il y a ce que Dieu veut que vous fassiez. Tout ce que le Saint-Esprit vous montre dans votre vie de tous les jours, si vous vous laissez guider par lui, est directement lié à ce qu'il a déjà révélé dans les Écritures.

Pour cette raison et plus encore, il est si important d'étudier la Parole de Dieu de tout notre cœur et de tout notre esprit. Enfin ... lorsque nous nous excusons auprès de Dieu, c'est parce que nous ne l'aimons

pas et que nous ne l'aimons pas parce que nous ne le connaissons pas. C'est une évidence lorsque nous nous excusons auprès des gens.

Comment pouvons-nous quitter les excuses?

Avant de quitter les excuses, nous devons avoir une idée claire de toutes nos priorités. Si Dieu n'est pas le premier lieu de votre vie, vous passerez toute votre vie à vous excuser pour ne jamais suivre son exemple ou pour vous engager pleinement dans ses projets pour ce monde. Ensuite, nous pouvons dire que pour laisser des excuses, nous devons:

-Définir nos priorités

Apprendre à assumer ses engagements et ses responsabilités

-Apprenez à sacrifier les dernières priorités pour la première

- Apprendre à toujours dire la vérité, car les excuses sont basées sur la tromperie

-Apprenez à être humble et à reconnaître vos erreurs lorsque vous échouez

-Le plus important, apprendre à être comme Jésus dans une relation étroite avec lui.

Notre temps dans ce monde est petit, nous devons en profiter. Un jour, vous serez devant Dieu et à ce moment-là, il n'y aura aucune excuse. Aujourd'hui, les frères sont le jour où tous les prétextes sont brisés, devant Dieu de s'engager à lui obéir et à le servir sans conditions, sans réserve, avec tout ce que nous sommes et tout ce que nous avons.

Conclusion

Dieu veut que nous vivions sans excuses.

La Parole de Dieu ouvre notre compréhension. Savez-vous ce qui se passera lorsque vous quitterez les excuses? Notre façon de penser positive nous guidera vers le succès.

Mentionnez les excuses, dites-les de votre bouche et ne revenez pas. Dites au Seigneur: "Pardonne-moi, aujourd'hui je me débarrasse de mes excuses, je deviens une autre personne, peu importe ce que j'ai ou ce que je n'ai pas, je laisse tout derrière et je suis sur le point de faire Ta volonté, je le ferai ne pas mettre une excuse de plus ". Tout ce qui est beau se passera lorsque vous quitterez vos excuses.

Frères, les excuses nous paralysent, nous empêchent d'avancer.

Quelle est votre excuse frère? Est-ce bien?

Nous n'avons aucune excuse devant Dieu. Il a tout donné pour nous, tout. Pourquoi n'allons-nous pas lui obéir? Pourquoi n'allons-nous pas vous servir avec tout, sans réservation, sans conditions?

Vous avez deux options: suivre une excuse et vous leurrer, ou briser votre cœur devant Dieu et demander pardon pour les excuses que nous avons eues.

PRIÈRE:

Seigneur, je te remercie pour la vérité de ta parole. Merci d'être si fidèle et miséricordieux, peu importe le nombre d'excuses que j'ai données pour ne pas être avec vous. J'avoue que d'une manière ou d'une

autre j'ai utilisé les excuses et j'ai dû mentir pour les réaliser. Je vous prie de me pardonner de vouloir parfois vous tromper et de vous donner des excuses peu coûteuses pour ne pas vous rendre chez vous et ne pas vous engager réellement à vous servir. Pour toujours. Aidez-moi à être humble et à reconnaître mes erreurs lorsque j'échoue afin que je puisse les changer. Cela commence de moi chaque mensonge et toute la supercherie qui a voulu apporter des excuses à ma vie. Aidez-moi à vous situer en premier afin que vous puissiez définir mon échelle de priorités. Je vous en prie, Seigneur, mon guide et mon gagne-pain, ma tour et ma force, c'est toi. Au nom de Jésus Or, amen.



Sermon-Niveles Básicos de Crecimiento Espiritual

CAPTAIN VILMA RAMOS

INTRODUCCIÓN: Todo individuo que nace, lo más natural de esperar es que crezca, de no ser así, seguramente existe un problema. Cuando nuestros hijos, nuestra mascota, o nuestras plantas no crecen, enseguida comenzamos a ver que les está pasando, incluso los llevamos al médico o les ofrecemos una cierta atención. La vida por definición es un proceso de crecimiento. Todo lo que está vivo en este mundo crece naturalmente.

Hay un paralelismo entre la vida física y la espiritual. Todas tienen su origen con el nacimiento. Ambas tienen en común la esperanza del crecimiento y la madurez, y si esto no es así, hay razones para preocuparse. Si todo en la vida tiende a crecer, este mismo principio es aplicable al ámbito espiritual. Una característica que debería ser esencial en todos los cristianos es inherente individual.

QUE ES EL CRECIMIENTO ESPIRITUAL?

La Biblia nos enseña sobre crecimiento espiritual como un camino en el cual se aumentan la belleza y pureza en la vida de los hijos de Dios. El objeto de la vida de los cristianos no es él mismo, pero el Señor Jesucristo! Por lo tanto, la belleza en la vida de un cristiano no es su propia belleza, pero la imagen de su Señor y Salvador, Jesucristo. La Biblia habla del «despojar del viejo hombre» (el viejo yo) y del «vestirse del nuevo hombre», la nueva persona.

Genesis 2 :7 nos dice que el hombre se convirtió en un ser viviente. La palabra « ser » en hebreo es nephelsh que significa « un ser animado, racional consciente y vivo » El hombre no llegó a ser un ser viviente hasta que Dios soplo vida en El. Como un ser físico animado, racional y espiritual el hombre es único entre todos los seres vivientes en la tierra.

Toda la Escritura habla del crecimiento del cristiano, somos amonestados a crecer; por lógica, si un bebé nació y es bien cuidado y no posee ninguna enfermedad genética, se espera que crezca, Dios espera que crezcamos. (si nacimos sanos). 2Pedro 3 :18- 1Pedro 2 :2; Efesios 4 :15; 1Tesalonisenses 3 :12

Dios quiere que cumplamos un proceso llamado crecimiento espiritual en el cual la persona pasa por diferentes etapas : Bebe, niño, pre-adolescente, adolescente madurez. Crecimiento en madurez espiritual se refiere al proceso en que el Espíritu Santo transforma el entendimiento espiritual del discípulo. Jesús es nuestro modelo, es nuestra meta espiritual.

La madurez espiritual no consiste necesariamente de cuánto conocimiento bíblico yo posea, sino más bien de cuán dispuesto he estado para permitir que el Espíritu Santo transforme mi entendimiento acerca de El y de la vida.

¿Cuándo empiezo a crecer espiritualmente? El crecimiento espiritual comienza con una decisión. La perspectiva de la vida de Dios debe ser cada vez más mi perspectiva (Efesios 1:18). Nuestra forma de ver las cosas debe ser la misma que Dios. Salmos 119: 17-18

Nuestra tendencia natural es limitar a Dios por nuestro entendimiento personal de quién es él y sus acciones. Cuando permito que tu Espíritu Santo me guíe a través de la Palabra de Dios para que él pueda realizar su trabajo en mi vida. El crecimiento espiritual debe continuar hasta el día de mi muerte.

Pablo estaba preocupado por la inmadurez de los Corintios. Ellos habían creído en Cristo, pero tenían muy poco desarrollo espiritual. Tenían una pobre opinión de la vida cristiana, con un razonamiento infantil. De modo que Pablo se dirige a ellos como a niños espirituales, aunque su deseo era darles la doctrina que les corresponde a los cristianos maduros. La carnalidad los dominaba, y no había mejor evidencia de esto que las continuas divisiones en la congregación.

1 Corintios 3:1–3 NTV

Amados hermanos, cuando estuve con ustedes, no pude hablarles como lo haría con personas espirituales. Tuve que hablarles como si pertenecieran a este mundo o como si fueran niños en la vida cristiana. Tuve que alimentarlos con leche, no con alimento sólido, porque no estaban preparados para algo más sustancioso. Y aún no están preparados, porque todavía están bajo el control de su naturaleza pecaminosa. Tienen celos unos de otros y se pelean entre sí. ¿Acaso eso no demuestra que los controla su naturaleza pecaminosa? ¿No viven como la gente del mundo?

Otro texto esencial acerca del crecimiento espiritual encontramos en 1 Juan 2:12-14, donde nos enumera tres niveles básicos de crecimiento espiritual. El Señor Jesús habló de niveles como de una analogía agrícola (Marcos 4:28).

1. Niños pequeños

¿Quién es un niño espiritual?

El apóstol Juan se acerca al mismo tema pero para referirse como analogía al crecimiento humano físico. Juan en el versículo 12 para los niños: “Os escribo a vosotros, hijitos, porque vuestros pecados os han sido perdonados por su nombre.” Todo cristiano debe saber que sus pecados han sido perdonados en su nombre, (Jesucristo), que tiene el poder dado por mi Dios para vencer al pecado y conocer a Dios el Padre y a Dios el Hijo a través de Dios el Espíritu Santo. Un niño espiritual se da cuenta de que él es un hijo de Dios y no mucho más. Tenga en cuenta que un niño pequeño no tiene la Palabra de Dios lo perdurablemente fuerte, solo sabe lo básico. En consecuencia son “fluctuante llevados por donde quiera de todo viento de doctrina...” (Efesios 4:14). En otras palabras solo saben acerca de Dios y Jesús. Ellos no conocen las Escrituras muy bien. De la misma forma, lo correcto es que los cristianos, al principio de su caminar con Dios, necesiten que se les ayude a dar sus primeros pasos. Muchos de ellos al principio no saben alimentarse espiritualmente por sí solos (es decir, no saben leer la biblia), tampoco saben hablar (o sea, no saben cómo orar) y necesitan que alguien les enseñe la escritura, que alguien ore por ellos y en general les de todo el acompañamiento que necesita un “bebé espiritual”. Además, un nuevo creyente aún tiene muchas actitudes incorrectas, porque ignora muchas cosas, “Cuando yo era niño, hablaba como niño, pensaba como niño, juzgaba como niño; mas cuando ya fui hombre, dejé lo que era de niño.” 1 Corintios 13:11 .

El hombre carnal es un niño. Bien pudiera tener hasta cuarenta años de ser creyente y estar haciendo todavía las mismas cosas desde que creyó.

La palabra “carnal” es la traducción de la palabra griega “sarkikos,” que literalmente significa “mundano”. Un cristiano puede ser carnal por algún tiempo, un verdadero cristiano no permanecerá siéndolo de por vida. El deseo de Dios al salvarnos, es que crezcamos progresivamente hacia una semejanza a la imagen de Cristo (Romanos 12:1-2), volviéndonos cada vez más espirituales y cada vez menos carnales, un proceso conocido como santificación. Ver slice -frutos de la carne. El cristiano carnal es una piedra de tropiezo para otros y es un desafío continuo para el ministerio de un pastor. Muchos de los hermanos de iglesia a los Corintios eran carnales. Esta fue la iglesia que más dolor de cabeza le dio a Pablo, todo lo contrario a la iglesia a los filipenses, quienes fueron un modelo de iglesia, cuya característica por excelencia fue la entrega y el dar generoso.

¿Qué es inmadurez espiritual?

“Con el tiempo que llevan de haber creído en la buena noticia, ya deberían ser maestros. Sin embargo, todavía necesitan que se les expliquen las enseñanzas más sencillas acerca de Dios. Parecen niños pequeños, que no pueden comer alimentos sólidos, sino que sólo toman leche. Son como niños recién nacidos, que aún no pueden distinguir entre lo bueno y lo malo.” Hebreos 5:12-13

La inmadurez espiritual surge cuando un cristiano, a pesar de que tiene mucho tiempo en Cristo, no ha crecido, no ha madurado y se sigue comportando como un bebé espiritual. A pesar de los muchos años de conocer de Dios, estas personas siguen teniendo las conductas de un recién convertido. Esto les perjudica a ellos mismos, perjudica su relación con Dios y perjudica a todos los que están a su alrededor, incluso perjudica a la iglesia. Difícilmente se podrá edificar un noviazgo, un matrimonio, un hogar o un ministerio si no se es maduro. La mayoría de las divisiones en las iglesias son ocasionadas por líderes inmaduros.

2. Hombres Jóvenes

El siguiente nivel espiritual se encuentra en el versículo 13: “...Os escribo a vosotros, jóvenes, porque habéis vencido al maligno...” Observemos la forma en la que el apóstol expresa en el verso 13 os escribo a vosotros jóvenes porque habéis vencido al maligno. Fíjese que no está diciendo que vayamos a hacerlo sino que ya lo da por hecho, habéis VENCIDO.

¿Quién es el maligno? Satanás mismo. ¿Cómo se supera a Satanás?

El versículo 14 dice: “...porque sois fuertes, y la palabra de Dios permanece en vosotros...”.

Un joven espiritual es aquel que es fuerte en la Palabra y ha vencido al maligno. Pero ¿En qué sentido ha vencido al maligno? Significa liberarnos de toda mentira del diablo (Juan 8:44). Conoce la sana doctrina al punto de reconocer el error y resistirlo. Por lo tanto, un joven espiritual conoce la Palabra y deja de ser víctima de la falsa religión. Cuando alguien se convierte en joven espiritual entiende la diferencia entre un joven y un niño. Un bebe espiritual no puede entender del todo que es verdad y que no. No entiende mucho la teología bíblica y siempre estará intimidado por la enseñanza de alguien.

3. Padres

En el versículo 13 dice: “Os he escrito a vosotros, padres, porque habéis conocido al que es desde el principio...”

Hay un mayor nivel de crecimiento espiritual que los hombres jóvenes espirituales. Una cosa es saber que alguien pertenece a la familia de Dios y que conoce la Palabra de Dios, pero otra cosa es conocer a Dios íntimamente. Una cosa esa conocer la biblia, pero otra cosa es conocer al Dios detrás de la biblia.

El crecimiento espiritual progresó primero de saber que eres un cristiano a conocer la Palabra de Dios para conocer a Dios mismo. La manera de conocer a Dios es pasar una vida centrada en Su gloria. Eso es lo que llevará al cristiano hasta el tercer nivel de crecimiento espiritual.

El foco de la vida del creyente es glorificar a Dios para comprender la plenitud de Su persona y Su gloria. Este enfoque se convertirá en un imán que atrae al creyente más allá del punto de saber a quién pertenece, a sabiendas de lo que cree, y finalmente conocer a Aquel en quien cree. Esa es la idea central de toda la madurez espiritual.

Es triste cuando el creyente no quiere crecer. Así como nuestra cultura adolece de los llamados Kidults (niños-adultos en inglés), nuestras congregaciones actuales sufren de lo mismo. Un gran número de creyentes que se niegan a crecer en su fe, queriendo sólo disfrutar de los beneficios del perdón de pecados, pero sin querer tomar las responsabilidades del cristiano adulto, como lo son, el vencer la tentación, el crecer en conocimiento de Dios, el enseñar a los más jóvenes a andar en los caminos del Señor y el compartir la palabra con los que no la conocen, y el amar y hacer bien a su prójimo.

Aplicación:

Estamos en una generación de cristianos que la mayoría se distingue por rehuir la responsabilidad. Nos gusta oír que somos salvos por gracia, que podemos tener vida eterna libres de condenación, pero nuestro corazón no ha sido capturado por el valor de la gloria y santidad de Dios. Queremos solo los beneficios iniciales, pero rehuimos crecer y mucho es porque no hemos comprendido a lo que se nos ha llamado. El Señor nos perdonó, pero también quiere salvarnos de las consecuencias autodestructivas del pecado, quiere llevarnos a dejar de pecar, para que podamos ser libres de todos los problemas y destrucción que esto genera, quiere llevarnos a vencer al maligno. Más importante, quiere llevarnos a una relación íntima con el Dios Santo, y debemos recordar que "Sin santidad nadie verá al Señor"

El final del camino es la gloria eterna. Sé animado por estas palabras del apóstol Pablo:

Y todos, mirando a cara descubierta como en un espejo la gloria del Señor, somos transformados en la misma imagen de un grado de gloria a otro, como por el Espíritu del Señor (2 Corintios 3:18, R.V.)

CONCLUSION :

- En la vida como cristianos hay etapas las cuales hay que pasar, es inevitable. Existen tres niveles de crecimiento espiritual : Niño, joven y Adulto
- Los cristianos son las únicas personas que han nacido de nuevo, que no tienen límite de crecimiento
- El crecimiento espiritual es una condición necesaria para todo creyente
- El crecimiento espiritual del creyente es fundamental para sostener la iglesia
- El crecimiento y la madurez espiritual están íntimamente ligados a nuestra capacidad de escuchar a Dios y posteriormente obedecerle Jeremías 7:22-28

-Una persona que vive solo para beber leche espiritual es alguien que decidió no crecer más.

REFLEXION: Tres niveles, quizás comunes, pero que muchas veces no le damos la importancia que se merece. Todos estamos en una de estas tres categorías. Bien puede usted ser un hombre natural, que está perdido y va rumbo al infierno. O puede ser un hombre espiritual viviendo de victoria en victoria. La meta es que en estos niveles de madurez lleguemos al hombre espiritual. Que no nos conformemos con ser cristianos carnales que todo el tiempo somos los mismos, sin crecimiento y por lo tanto inmaduros. ¿En qué categoría se ubica de estos tres niveles? ¿Te has sentido estancado en tu fe ultimamente? ¿Hay un deseo continuo en tu corazón de madurar espiritualmente? ¿Estás convencido que hay más felicidad y plenitud en la madurez espiritual o te ves tentado a permanecer como niño? Nuestra meta es llegar a ser cristianos espirituales. ¿Está dispuesto a serlo?

Oración:

Padre, te damos gracias por tu palabra, te pedimos por un despertar para tus hijos en esta generación, para que reaccionen y busquen crecer en su nueva vida. Es maravilloso el perdón de pecados, pero necesitamos ver que es maravilloso también el poder ser libres de la esclavitud a nuestros hábitos pecaminosos, es maravilloso ir avanzando a ser más como tú, es maravillosa la aventura de una vida de fe, que confía en tí y en tu palabra, que busca tu dirección, y que luego se aventura en ella para comprobar que eres real y fiel y amoroso. Te pedimos que más de nosotros puedan ser convencidos de esto y que no se estanquen en su fe. En el nombre de Jesus yo oro Amén!



Sermon que es lo que dios pide del hombre?

CAPTAIN VILMA RAMOS

I. Lo que el hombre cree que dios le pide.

“¿Con qué me presentaré ante Jehová, y adoraré al Dios Altísimo? ¿Me presentaré ante él con holocaustos, con becerros de un año? ¿Se agradará Jehová de millares de carneros, o de diez mil arroyos de aceite? ¿Daré mi primogénito por mi rebelión, el fruto de mis entrañas por el pecado de mi alma?”Miqueas 6:6-8

Miqueas le habla a Israel quienes creían que a través de sus muchos sacrificios y ofrendas lograban ganar el favor del Señor. Muchas personas buscan agradar a Dios y si es posible ganarse la vida eterna haciendo muchas cosas como las que Miqueas menciona, algunos piensan que la mejor manera es a través de muchas ofrendas, otros piensan que los sacrificios personales y penitencias les hará ganar favor con el Señor, otros creen que por estar involucrados en las tradiciones de sus religiones les ayudará ganar la vida eterna, pero realmente, ¿qué es lo que Dios espera del hombre?

ii. Lo que dios le pide al hombre.

“Oh hombre, él te ha declarado lo que es bueno, y qué pide Jehová de ti: solamente hacer justicia, y amar misericordia, y humillarte ante tu Dios”.

El profeta Miqueas resume en tres condiciones lo que Dios demanda del hombre, es decir, lo que éste tiene que hacer para ganarse su favor y heredar todas sus promesas y hasta la vida eterna: solamente hacer justicia, y amar misericordia, y humillarte ante tu Dios. Solamente esto es necesario, nada más se le necesita agregar a estos tres requerimientos, veamos uno a uno estas condiciones.

Humillarse ante Dios: Humillarse delante de Dios significa: Reconocer que ante la majestad y el poder de Dios no somos nada y que nuestra condición humana es infinitamente inferior a la naturaleza de Dios. (Salmo 8:3-4) Al humillarnos exaltamos los atributos de Dios

El primer paso para acercarse a Dios es el arrepentimiento de nuestros pecados. Este tema ha estado presente desde el principio de los tiempos y los profetas como Miqueas solían exhortar al pueblo al arrepentimiento de sus idolatrías y pecados. De la misma forma, en el Nuevo Testamento el tema del arrepentimiento no estaba excluido durante la proclamación del evangelio. Estuvo en labios de Juan el Bautista: “Arrepentíos, porque el reino de los cielos se ha acercado”, (Mateo 3:1). También lo predico Jesús en los comienzos de su ministerio: “Desde entonces comenzó Jesús a predicar, y a decir: Arrepentíos, porque el reino de los cielos se ha acercado”, (Mateo 4:17). Después de su resurrección les explico a sus discípulos que era necesario que predicasen el tema del arrepentimiento: “y que se predicable en su nombre el arrepentimiento y el perdón de pecados en todas las naciones, comenzando desde Jerusalén”, (Lucas 24:47). “Pero Dios, habiendo pasado por alto los tiempos de esta ignorancia, ahora manda a todos los hombres en todo lugar, que se arrepientan, ¿Qué es el arrepentimiento y es éste necesario para la salvación?”

Muchos entienden el término “arrepentimiento” como “volverse del pecado”. Esta no es la definición bíblica del arrepentimiento. En la Biblia, la palabra “arrepentirse” significa “cambiar tu mente.” La Biblia también nos dice que el verdadero arrepentimiento tendrá como resultado un cambio de conducta (Hechos 3:19). La total definición bíblica del arrepentimiento, es cambiar de mentalidad, mismo que resulta en un cambio de acciones y actitudes. Hechos 2:38 Arrepentirse de que? Pedro está llamando a la gente que rechazaba Pedro está exhortando a la gente a cambiar su mentalidad del rechazo a Cristo como el Mesías, a la fe en Él como Mesías y Salvador. El arrepentimiento, relacionado con la salvación, es cambiar tu parecer respecto a Jesucristo. Nadie puede arrepentirse y venir a Dios, a menos que Dios atraiga a esa persona hacia Él (Juan 6:44). indican que el arrepentimiento es algo que da Dios – sólo es posible por Su gracia. (Hechos 17:30). Por tanto, no necesitamos nada más que arrepentirnos de nuestros pecados para poder agradar a Dios y heredar la vida eterna, esto es lo primero que Dios pide del hombre ”

Entonces la humillacion tiene poder- 1) trae bendicion: “Porque cualquiera que se enaltece, será humillado; y el que se humilla, será exaltado” Lucas 14:11 2) La humillacion produce una revolucion interna en la persona Isaías 29:19. 3) El Espiritu Santo ilumina a los que se humillan. Mateo 11:25-26

2. Amar misericordia.

“Sean misericordiosos, como también su Padre es misericordioso” Lucas 6:36 (RVA)

Ninguna característica describe a Dios más plenamente que la misericordia. Es el primer rasgo que Dios usa para describirse a sí mismo en la Escritura. Es también una característica importante para que cualquier seguidor serio de Jesús, desarrolle. Si es una parte central de lo que Dios es, tiene que ser esencial para nosotros.

En segundo lugar podemos decir que lo que Dios desea del hombre es que ame hacer misericordia. La misericordia es la disposición a compadecerse de los sufrimientos y miserias ajenas, y así como Dios se compadece de nosotros espera que nos compadezcamos de nuestros semejantes. Jesús con la parábola del buen samaritano nos enseña mucha acerca de la misericordia hacia los demás: La parábola es una bella explicacion de la ley de amar al prójimo como a uno mismo, sin acepcion de nacion, partido ni otra distinction. Tambien establece la bondad y el amor de Dios nuestro Salvador, con los miserables pecadores. Nosotros eramos como este viajero pobre y en apuros. Satanás nuestro enemigo, nos robo y nos hirio: tal es el mal que nos hace el pecado. Nadie nos quiso, ni nos pudo ayudar. Pero el misericordioso y bandito Jesus nos ayudo.

Pero ¿qué debe motivarnos a mostrar misericordia a las personas en nuestras vidas?

Dios es misericordioso.

Jesús dijo: "Sed misericordiosos, como vuestro Padre es misericordioso" (Lucas 6:36 NVI).

Antes de juzgar a otros por sus pecados y fracasos, recuerda cuántas veces Dios te ha perdonado. Cuando parezca incómodo ayudar a alguien que lo necesita, detente y recuerda cómo Dios te ha

consolado cuando estas sufriendo. Cuando piensas en aquellas personas que prueban tu paciencia, detente y recuerda cuán paciente Dios ha estado contigo. Y cuando no sientas ganas de recibir a alguien que ha sido cruel o injusto contigo, para y recuerda cuán amable era Dios para ti cuando tú eras su enemigo- Romanos 5:10: "Porque si siendo enemigos, fuimos reconciliados con Dios por la muerte de su Hijo, mucho más estando reconciliados, seremos salvos por su vida."

Necesito misericordia todos los días.

No puedo esperar ser perfecto desde ahora hasta el momento en que muera, así que voy a necesitar más misericordia. La Biblia dice: "pues a los que no tienen compasión de otros, tampoco se les tendrá compasión cuando sean juzgados" (Santiago 2:13a RVC). Necesito el perdón, la bondad, la paciencia y la ayuda de Dios todos los días de mi vida. Dios dice que obtienes lo que das. El perdón y la misericordia son una vía de doble sentido.

La misericordia me hace feliz.

Jesús dijo: "Bienaventurados los misericordiosos, porque ellos recibirán misericordia" (Mateo 5:7 RVA). Hacer actos de misericordia me saca de mí mismo. Obtiene mi enfoque fuera de mí y sobre otras personas. Y eso produce felicidad. De hecho, una buena manera de tratar la depresión es a través de actos de misericordia. Cuando entregas tu vida por los demás, la felicidad comienza a volver a ti, y las nubes de la depresión comienzan a levantar y soplar lejos.

Entonces, ¿Cómo puedes ser misericordioso?

Sé paciente con las peculiaridades de las personas. ¿Quién es esa persona en tu vida quien tiene peculiaridades irritantes?, ¿Cómo puedes practicar la paciencia con esa persona esta semana?

Ayuda a alguien a tu alrededor que está lastimado. ¿Quién a tu alrededor está claramente lastimado que puedas ayudar esta semana? Si no puedes pensar en alguien, entonces no estás poniendo atención. ¡Mira más cerca!

Dale una segunda oportunidad a las personas. ¿Quién necesita que le des una segunda oportunidad?, ¿Cómo puedes mostrar a esa persona misericordia y compasión esta semana?

Haz el bien a aquellos que te han lastimado. Tal vez has sufrido por una herida antigua, que no has podido dejar ir. Necesitas perdonar y luego usarla para bien. ¿Quién es esa persona en tu vida?, ¿Harás una llamada telefónica o una visita esta semana?

Se amable con aquellos que te ofenden. ¿Quién te ofende? Tal vez es un político o un comediante por quien puedes orar. Tal vez es un amigo en el Facebook que tiene diferentes puntos de vista y dice algunas cosas bastante ofensivas. ¿Cómo puedes mostrar amabilidad a esa persona esta semana de manera intencional?

Construye puentes de amor con los impopulares. ¿Quién es la primera persona que viene a tu mente cuando piensas en un rechazado? ¿Quién pasa su hora de almuerzo comiendo solo o no lo ves con ningún amigo en los partido de futbol?, ¿Qué cosa específica harás esta semana para unir con amor el espacio entre tú y esa persona?

Valora las relaciones personales por encima de las reglas. ¿Quién es un no-creyente que podrías invitar a una cena en las próximas semanas? ¿Darás entonces un paso adelante y lo invitarás a la Iglesia? Este es tu ministerio de misericordia. Solamente un Corazon arrepentido es capaz de sentir misericordia, la misma misericordia que él mismo recibió de Dios.

3. Hacer justicia.

Leemos en Mateo 5:10: “10Bienaventurados los que padecen persecución por causa de la justicia, porque de ellos es el reino de los cielos”.

Hoy quiero hacerte ver que Dios es celoso de la justicia.La Biblia dice que Dios es justo y ama la justicia, y también señala que, sólo el hombre recto verá el rostro de Dios. Cuando hablamos de hombre recto, nos referimos al hombre que camina derecho y la justicia tiene que ver con el derecho. No se trata de ser bueno o hacerse el bueno, porque tratar de ser bueno no significa hacer justicia. Las personas que son buenas tienden a ser inoperantes, dicen por ejemplo: “Yo no me meto con nadie, así que no se metan conmigo. Yo hago todo el bien que puedo, me llevo bien con todos los vecinos. Yo dejo vivir, que me dejen vivir”. ¡Este es un tipo de comentario de gente que de justicia no entiende nada! Amar a mi prójimo como a mí mismo es padecer por éste como padecí por mí mismo, significa, desear para el prójimo lo que deseo para mí mismo, preocuparme por él, como me preocupo por mí mismo; quien hace eso, entonces, es una persona justa.Si tienes un pan y a tu lado hay alguien que no tiene qué comer, y tú necesitas el pan entero para quedar con tu panza llena, y te lo comes todo pero no compartes con el que no tiene, entonces, eres una persona injusta. Porque, justicia es que amemos a los demás como nos amamos a nosotros mismos, y que nos preocupemos por los demás como lo hacemos por nosotros mismos.Te pregunto: ¿Qué estás haciendo tú por el prójimo? “

¿Qué es la justicia? (la definición de la justicia [rectitud]) Es interesante que justicia [rectitud] es definida como algo justo tanto en francés como en español. Ser justo en este contexto significa hacer decisiones que son razonables y moralmente correctas. Ciertamente sabemos que las decisiones de Dios son moralmente correctas, incluso que son siempre perfectas. ¿Por qué porque Él recuerda cada pensamiento, cada palabra, y todo lo que alguna vez le sucedió a cualquiera que esté en frente de Él en el juicio, encambio nosotros no tememos el registro completo. El puede hacer una decisión correcta. Juan 3:7 Hijitos que nadie os engane; el que practica la justicia es justo así como Él es justo. Juan nos está dando una advertencia. No sea engañado ni crea que usted es justo de alguna manera; porque usted no lo es, a menos que practique la justicia así como Jesús la practica. El que practica el pecado es del diablo, 1 Juan 3:8. No crea las mentiras que los ministros de las sectas deficientes le dicen a sus miembros, diciéndoles que son justos porque creen, aún cuando todavía están pecando, y el pecado es maldad. Aquel que es JUSTO ha acabado con el pecado.

Juan y Judas, representan las dos clases de individuos que encontramos hoy en la iglesia de Dios. Ambas clases, profesan creer. Mientras Juan luchó seriamente contra sus faltas, Judas diariamente violaba su conciencia. Cedía a la tentación, en vez de ceder su voluntad a la de Cristo. Al hacer eso, rehusó la sabiduría divina. Judas eligió andar en tinieblas. Secretamente albergaba deseos pecaminosos, aún la codicia. Llenaba su mente con pensamientos tenebrosos y peor aún, albergaba dudas si Cristo era el hijo de Dios y siguió dudando hasta que Satanás ganó el control sobre él. Encambio Juan entregó su vida a ser más y más como Jesús. Mi pregunta es eres Juan o Judas? Ojalá esté permitiendo que la justicia de Cristo lo santifique diariamente por medio de su gracia transformadora!

La justicia es imputada cuando usted recibe la fe con el fruto del Espíritu, en contra de lo cual no hay ley, para entonces caminar en amor, obedeciendo los mandatos continuos de Cristo; esto ocurre en el momento de la muerte de su espíritu egoísta en la cruz interna de la negación propia. Cuando usted posee la plenitud de Cristo, que termina en la imputación, y usted es justo como Él es justo. La justicia de Dios por medio de la fe en Jesucristo para todos los que creen. Jesús dijo que nuestra prioridad más importante en la vida debería ser buscar la justicia de Dios: Más bien, buscad primeramente el reino de Dios y su justicia. Mat 6:33. Esta justicia de Dios viene por fe, a medida que usted busca a Dios con todo su corazón y alma. Esta fe es un don de Dios. Permítanme ser más específico. Una persona justa, es un individuo que ha experimentado una entrega completa a Dios sin reserva, tanto en su mente como en su cuerpo. Por medio del poder del Espíritu Santo, Dios puede transformar el carácter para que sea sin mancha en Cristo Jesús. El proceso de la santificación produce santidad en nosotros, y la santidad, es justicia.

En el proceso de salvación, ¿cuál es la diferencia entre la santificación imputada e impartida? H.W., responde a esta pregunta claramente. Observen cuidadosamente. "La justicia por la cual somos justificados es imputada; la justicia por la cual somos santificados es impartida. La primera es nuestro derecho al cielo; la segunda, nuestra idoneidad para el cielo" Definamos el significado de estas dos palabras:

- Imputada, significa acreditar inmediatamente a la cuenta.
- Impartida, significa dar diariamente de la abundancia de uno, a otro.
- La imputada sucede instantáneamente.
- La impartida, sucede constantemente, durante toda la vida

Decir y hacer todo lo que es correcto, es ser justo, es ser guiado por Cristo la luz, dentro de nosotros, guiándonos con palabras para hablar y obras para realizar, y estas obras honran y glorifican a Dios y completarlas es nuestro gozo supremo. Ser justo es ser libre de pecado, ya no caminando en la oscuridad de nuestra mente carnal e imaginaciones impías, ya no satisfaciendo la lujuria y los deseos de nuestra carne, sino estar caminando en la luz, sirviendo y agraciando al Espíritu

CONCLUSIÓN.

¿Qué es lo que Dios pide del hombre? Miqueas nos los dice:

1. Humillarnos ante Dios.
2. Amar misericordia.
3. Practicar justicia.

Dejemos atrás la religiosidad aparente y volvámonos a Dios en justicia, misericordia y humildad.

“La justicia, la justicia seguirás, para que vivas y heredes la tierra que Jehová tu Dios te da”.

(Deuteronomio 16:20) ¡Dios tiene para ti un territorio! ¡Dios tiene para ti promesas extraordinarias!

¡Tiene gozo, fuerza, paz! ¡Dios tiene para ti descendencia! ¡Él tiene para ti vida abundante!

