

The Call to Holiness: A Life Transformed by God's Grace

With Bishop Ronald K. Powell

Introduction:

Good morning, beloved congregation. Today, we gather to reflect on the profound and transformative concept of holiness. Holiness is not merely a set of rules or a list of do's and don't's; rather, it is a state of being that emerges from a deep communion with our loving and merciful God. As we explore the scriptures and delve into the Word of God, let us open our hearts to receive the message of holiness and the call to live lives that are pleasing to Him.

Scripture Reference: 1 Peter 1:15-16 (NIV)

"But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: 'Be holy, because I am holy.'"

Holiness Defined:

Holiness is an essential attribute of God, and it reflects His perfect and unblemished nature. The call to holiness is not a mere suggestion but a divine imperative. It is a summons to live in a manner that is set apart, pure, and righteous, reflecting the character of our Heavenly Father.

What does the Bible teach us about holiness?

What does the Bible say about holiness? Answer In 1 Peter 1:13-16, Peter writes to believers, "Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Scripture Reference: Leviticus 20:26 (NIV)

“You are to be holy to me because I, the Lord, am holy, and I have set you apart from the nations to be my own.”

The Transformative Power of Grace:

It is important to understand that our pursuit of holiness is not rooted in our own strength or merit. Rather, it is the transformative power of God’s grace that enables us to lead lives that are pleasing to Him. Through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, we have been granted access to the grace that empowers us to walk in holiness.

Scripture Reference: Titus 2:11-12 (NIV)

“For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say ‘No’ to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age.”

Holiness in Action:

Living a holy life involves both our inner disposition and our outward conduct. It encompasses our thoughts, words, and actions, as well as our relationships with others. As believers, we are called to pursue holiness in every aspect of our lives, demonstrating the love and righteousness of Christ to the world.

Scripture Reference: 1 Thessalonians 4:7-8 (NIV)

“For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life. Therefore, anyone who rejects this instruction does not reject a human being but God, the very God who gives you his Holy Spirit.”

Challenges and Encouragement:

While the pursuit of holiness is a noble endeavor, we recognize that we are imperfect beings living in a fallen world. We may face trials, temptations, and struggles along the way. However, we are encouraged by the promise that God is faithful to complete the work He has begun in us, and His Spirit empowers us to overcome every obstacle.

Scripture Reference: Philippians 1:6 (NIV)

“Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.”

Conclusion:

As we conclude, let us remember that holiness is not a mere religious obligation, but a response to the immeasurable love and grace of our Heavenly Father. It is a lifelong journey of transformation that begins with surrendering our lives to Him and continues as we walk in obedience and dependence on His Spirit. Let us embrace this call to holiness with humility, recognizing that it is only through God’s grace that we can become the people He has called us to be.

Scripture Reference: Hebrews 12:14 (NIV)

“Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.”

As we depart from this time of reflection and worship, let us carry with us the challenge and the joy of pursuing holiness. May our lives be a living testimony to the transformative power of God’s grace, drawing others to experience the abundant life found in Christ.

Closing Prayer:

Gracious and loving God, we thank you for the call to holiness that you have placed upon our lives. We acknowledge our need for your grace and strength to live in a manner that is pleasing to you. Help us to walk in obedience, to love one another, and to reflect your holiness in all that we do. May our lives be a fragrant offering to you, bringing glory and honor to your name. In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.

May the Lord bless you and keep you, and may His face shine upon you as you seek to live a life of holiness and obedience to Him. Go in peace.