

Joyce Meyer: What It Actually Means to Be Holy

As God's children, we are called to live holy lives. The Bible says, "Just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do" (1 Peter 1:15, NIV).

But what exactly does it mean to live a holy life these days? It's important that we take some time to think about this because there is such a lack of integrity in today's society, with much compromise, dishonesty and injustice.

We all face temptations every day, but instead of taking personal responsibility for our choices, we tend to blame others or our circumstances for our negative behavior. And many people who live this way go to church each Sunday and come out feeling like they have done their Christian duty for the week.

But the truth is going to church every week won't make you holy any more than sitting in a garage will make you a car! This brings me back to my original question: What does it mean to live a holy life?

From the Inside Out

Hebrews 10:10b says "we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." This verse is saying we are made holy from the moment Jesus comes into our hearts. Just by His presence, He makes us a holy place for His Spirit to dwell. We cannot do this ourselves. No amount of church attendance, Bible study or prayer can make us holy.

But if God is in our life, then holiness is there. And He begins working in us to make that holiness apparent on the outside ... in our everyday living. He works in us individually,

bringing brokenness and humility, and ultimately, we begin to display His goodness in our lives (see Heb. 12:10-11). Our only responsibility is to be obedient to the Holy Spirit as the work is in progress.

Committed to a Holy Life

The ability to live a holy life comes from having a personal relationship with Christ and being obedient to Him, not from adhering to a bunch of rules. In other words, it's not about following a list of do's and don'ts, but following the leading of the Holy Spirit.

As believers in Christ, the Spirit of God is living in us, and that means we have been made holy. But in order for our behavior to reflect the characteristics of Christ, we have to let Him work His holiness into our everyday lives, changing our mindsets, attitudes, desires and actions. As that happens, we become better representatives of His heart for the world around us (see Gal. 5:22-23).

We must learn how to trust the Holy Spirit to help us lay down our pride and our own self-serving ideas about how to run our lives. Yes, it hurts sometimes while we are changing, but these growing pains will ultimately bring us a much better life than we could ever have on our own.

It's important to understand that God is not as concerned with changing our circumstances as He is with changing us. God loves you, and He always has your best interest at heart, so you can be assured that He will never do anything to harm you. And when you experience the pain of changing, you can be confident that God is doing a good work in you.

This is an inside job, meaning it's a work that goes on inside us personally, privately and individually, so it's up to each of us to get serious about our relationship with God. It's up to every one of us to do what Colossians 3:12 says to do: "Clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility,

gentleness and patience.”

People Are Watching

God wants to work in your life so people can see Jesus in you. We need to shine the light of God’s love through our behavior, expressing our faith by our works, doing things for others. We can actually be the answer to some of the prayers we pray simply by obeying God’s Word and the leading of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Instead of trying to follow a list of religious rules and regulations, we should be enjoying our life in Christ. When the world looks at us, they should see what God’s doing inside of us by what they see on the outside.

Yes, we need to go to church—to be encouraged, edified, strengthened and instructed. We need to spend time each day in prayer and studying the Bible. And then we need to live out what God is doing in us—from the inside out!