

## LIVING HOLY IN AN UNHOLY WORLD

The word “holy” can feel intimidating. We hear it and immediately think of something far removed from everyday life. However, the call to holiness is not a call to perfection. It is a call to separation. That is, living a life of holiness is living differently from the world around us. That because we belong to a God who is entirely separated from the world (Isa. 57.15).

In 1 Peter 1.15,16, the Apostle Peter writes, *“but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, “Be holy, for I am holy.”* There is no ambiguity in the standard God has set. God is holy, and because He is our Father, we are to reflect His character in how we live.

First, holiness begins with a renewed mind. Peter opens this section by urging us to *“gird up the loins of your mind”* (1 Pet. 1.13). The world shapes us through what we constantly see, hear, and consume. To live holy lives, we must deliberately set our thinking on things that are true, pure, and godly (Rom. 12.2). Holiness is not just about what we do. It starts with how we think.

Second, holiness requires that we reject our former way of life. Peter specifically tells us not to live our lives by *“conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance”* (1 Pet. 1.14). Before Christ, we lived by the way of the world. We chased what the world chases and valued what the world values. Holiness means we no longer let those old patterns define us (cf. Eph. 4.22). We have been given a new identity, and our daily choices should reflect that new reality.

Third, holiness puts God on display before a watching world. When we live differently, people notice (Matt. 5.16). Our separation from the world is never meant to be isolation from the world (1 Cor. 5.10; 10.27). It is meant to be a visible witness. People are drawn to what is genuinely different. And a holy life is genuinely, beautifully different.

God is not asking us to be perfect. He is asking us to be set apart, distinct, and reflective of the One who called us out of darkness and into His marvelous light (1 Peter 2.9).

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*“Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature”*  
-Mark 16.15

**March 1, 2026**

### MEETING TIMES:

SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS : 9:00 AM

SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP: 9:50 AM

SUNDAY EVENING WORSHIP: 6:00 PM

WEDNESDAY EVENING BIBLE CLASS 7:30 PM

## The Transformational Teaching of the Spirit

The difference between the Law of Moses and the Law of Christ is its transformational nature. The Old Law acted as an external guardrail that regulated behavior, but it did not change hearts. In contrast, the teachings of the New Testament served to transform hearts from the inside out that resulted in a natural change in behavior (Rom. 12.2).

To make this point, Galatians 5 contrasts the Law and the Spirit. In verse 18, Paul writes that *“if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law”* (Gal. 5.18). If you are transformed from the inside by the Spirit through the teachings of the New Testament, then you do not need your behavior regulated by the external guardrails of the Law of Moses.

This transformation is manifested by the *“fruit of the Spirit”* (Gal. 5.22,23). These are the attributes that are produced in the lives of those whose hearts and minds have been changed by the Spirit, the New Testament. He then makes this statement in verse 23: *“Against such there is no law.”* There are no constraints or guardrails that limit how much we can love. You cannot have too much joy. Peace has no ceiling.

The revelation of the New Testament is transformational. Perhaps that is why Jesus told Paul that the gospel will *“open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me”* (Acts 26.18).  
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## JESUS THE COMPASSIONATE ONE

### Acts 7:60

#### INTRODUCTION:

1. Acts 6 and 7 record a chain of events that started after Stephen disputed with the Jews concerning Jesus.
  - a) There were four accusations. (Acts 6.10,11,13)
  - b) Stephen responds to their accusations. (Acts 7.1-53)
  - c) The Jews reacted to Stephen's defense. (Acts 7.54-60)
2. From the final moments of his life, we learn how Stephen saw Jesus and how much He meant to him. [Read Acts 7.54-60]

#### I. THE REACTION OF THE JEWS

- A. They were cut to the heart.
  1. **Acts 7.54:** *"they were cut to the heart"*
  2. Literally, they were sawn in two. It carries the idea of being enraged. (cf. Acts 2.37; 5.33)
  3. When you are corrected, do you respond with a heart of contrition or a heart of anger? (Acts 7.51)
- B. Out of a heart filled rage, they murdered Stephen.
  1. **Acts 7.54:** They gnashed their teeth at him.
  2. **Acts 7.57:** They yelled at him.
  3. **Acts 7.57:** They stopped listening to him.
  4. **Acts 7.57:** They ran at him.

#### II. THE JESUS THAT STEPHEN KNEW

- A. There is a vision.
  1. **Acts 7.55:** *"But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God"*
  2. What did He see? (John 1.18; Ex. 33.18,20,22)
- B. There is a description.
  1. **Acts 7.56:** Jesus is the Son of Man. (cf. Dan. 7.14)
  2. **Acts 7.56:** Jesus was standing. (cf. Heb. 8.1; Isa. 3.13)
- C. There is a position.
  1. **Acts 7.56-59:** *"Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."*
  2. He is the One with all authority. (Eph. 4.5,6; Luke 6.46)
- D. There is a display of compassion.
  1. **Acts 7.60:** *"Lord, do not charge them with this sin."*
  2. Why would Stephen say that? (Luke 23.34; 1 Pet. 2.21ff)

**CONCLUSION:** God desires to forgive everyone. (1 Tim. 2.3,4)

## THE WORD: GOD'S APPROACH TO SALVATION

God could have delivered His message of salvation by instilling into humanity everything that he needs to know both to be saved and to remain saved. But for reasons not revealed, God chose to communicate His message through the avenue of verbal and written communication.

At first, God would communicate to man directly. He spoke to Adam verbally (Gen. 2.16). When God was about to destroy the earth with a flood, He came to Noah and verbally instructed Noah to build an ark (Gen. 6.13ff). When you come to Exodus and read about Moses, God's approach changed. On Mount Sinai, God spoke directly to the children of Israel (Ex. 20.1ff). In Deuteronomy Moses reminds Israel that *"you heard His words from the midst of the fire"* (Deut. 4.36). His words and His presence were so terrifying that Israel cried out, *"You speak with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die"* (Ex. 20.19). And from that point, God called Moses to the mountain and gave him the law which Moses then communicated to Israel both verbally and through writings (Ex. 24.3,4).

All through human history, this mode of communication was used by God to convey His message. He asked the question, *"Whom shall I send and who will go for Us?"* (Isa. 6.8). Isaiah answered the call and said, *"Here am I! Send me"* (Isa. 6.8). What kind of mission did God have in mind? In the very next verse, God said told Isaiah, *"Go, and tell this people..."* (Isa. 6.9). He was sent on a mission to deliver God's message. When you come to the New Testament, the Hebrew writer confirmed this mode of communication when he wrote that God *"spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets"* (Heb. 1.1).

Even today, God still speaks to us through a spokesman. The first chapter of Hebrews continues to say that God *"has in these last days spoken to us by His Son"* (Heb. 1.2). Jesus communicated the message of God to His apostles who communicated it to man through preaching (Titus 1.3). This message was then written down which we now have in what is known as the New Testament. For this reason, we are told that *"faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God"* (Rom. 10.17). If you want to come to know and believe in Jesus and understand the will of God, it begins by hearing (Luke 8.21). CLP