



Holy, Holy, Holy

1 Thessalonians 4:1-7

- Two of the greatest questions we could ever seek to answer in this life that would change the trajectory of everything else. These two questions help to form the framework and worldview by which we see and understand everything and everyone around us.
 - o *Who is God?*
 - o *Who are we?*
- State of Theology Report that comes out every year examines what Americans think about biblical issues, topics, and themes and how that changes over time.
- In 2022 they found that 66% of Americans believe that God does not make any mistakes, but 51% also believe that he learns and adapts to situations in this world.

- They also found that 7 out of 10 Americans believe that God accepts the worship of all religions.
- More than 2/3 of Americans believe that people are inherently good. But nearly the same amount also believe there will be some sort of divine judgement that will occur in the future.
- Most people today are very confused about God and how He interacts with us.
 - o **He is holy, and we are not. We need His help if we are to be like Him.**
- Seen bumper stickers – God is my co-pilot. If that’s the case – MOVE OVER.
- Paul was encouraged by the Thessalonian Christians. He is writing to them and telling them to continue to grow in their walk with the Lord. Stay the course. Stay faithful. Keep going.

Main Point: We can grow in holiness by depending on the Holy Spirit.

I. God's will

- a. What is God’s plan for my life? We spend a lot of time thinking about that and praying about that. We may even worry about the future or about our children’s future.
- b. When you think about your plans and trying to align your plans with God’s plans – this is not a task to take lightly. We will invest money in our plans, energy into our plans, invest relationships into our plans, and we will invest lots and lots of time into our plans.
- c. Trying to align our will with God’s will is a monumental and consequential task.
- d. What is God’s will?

e. VERSES 3 and 4

f. *To know God and to live according to His Word.*

i. Parents have plans and hopes for their children.

ii. They can grow up and get good jobs and marry the right person. But if they don't know Jesus and grow in their relationship with Him, we are missing the mark.

g. Faith consists not in ignorance, but in knowledge—knowledge not of God merely, but of the divine will.¹ John Calvin

h. Know this – God saved you for eternity. But He also saved you for life here on Earth. He has a plan. That plan is to grow in sanctification.

II. God's own people

a. VERSES 5 and 6.

b. There is the expectation that God's people will live according to God's Word and not according to the standards of this world.

c. Self-control, fleeing immorality, pursuing holiness and honor. These are things that should be standard in the Christian life.

i. Those who don't know God will act accordingly.

ii. Those who do know God will act accordingly.

d. To sanctify means to set a part for a particular purpose.

e. Greek Term – *hagiasmos*.

¹ Elliot Ritzema, [300 Quotations for Preachers from the Reformation](#), Pastorum Series (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2013).

<p>Rom 6:19</p>	<p>ἀνθρώπινον λέγω διὰ τὴν ἀσθένειαν τῆς σαρκὸς ὑμῶν· ὡσπερ γὰρ παρεστήσατε τὰ μέλη ὑμῶν δοῦλα τῇ ἀκαθαρσίᾳ καὶ τῇ ἀνομίᾳ εἰς τὴν ἀνομίαν, οὕτως νῦν παραστήσατε τὰ μέλη ὑμῶν δοῦλα τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ εἰς ἁγιασμόν.</p>	<p>I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness.</p>
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<p>Rom 6:22</p>	<p>νυνὶ δέ, ἐλευθερωθέντες ἀπὸ τῆς ἁμαρτίας δουλωθέντες δὲ τῷ θεῷ, ἔχετε τὸν καρπὸν ὑμῶν εἰς ἁγιασμόν, τὸ δὲ τέλος ζωὴν αἰώνιον.</p>	<p>But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life.</p>
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<p>1 Cor 1:30</p>	<p>ἔξ αὐτοῦ δὲ ὑμεῖς ἐστε ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, ὃς ἐγενήθη σοφία ἡμῖν ἀπὸ θεοῦ, δικαιοσύνη τε καὶ ἁγιασμὸς καὶ ἀπολύτρωσις,</p>	<p>But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption—</p>
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i.

III. God's actions

- a. One thing that I want to note – all my points this morning start with God. Even though we are talking about our sanctification, we have to be reminded that this is not possible without God. This is His work, not ours.
- b. In fact, God is the one who initiates and completes this work in our lives.

i. Philippians 1:6 – I am sure of this, that He who started a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

ii. Hebrews 12:2 – Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith...

- c. You contribute nothing to your salvation except the sin that made it necessary.

Jonathan Edwards.

- d. Salvation is God at work in us to redeem us for this life and for eternity. Included in the process of salvation are three components – justification, sanctification, and glorification.
 - i. We have been saved. We are being saved. We will be saved in the end.
 - ii. All three of these components are dependent on the work of God in our lives.
- e. We need to pray daily for guidance as we walk in the Spirit and reject the ways of the flesh.
- f. Had a mentor who said we need to “practice the pause.” When we are treated poorly – pause and pray. When we find out bad news – pause and pray. When we are spinning our wheels and frustrated – pause and pray. When the kids are buck wild and won’t stop fighting about who’s turn it is to play with a toy – pause and pray. Closest I have ever been to speaking in tongues was in moments like that.

IV. God's calling

- a. This is God’s calling – to live in holiness.
- b. You either accept or reject this calling. If you reject this – it doesn’t have anything to do with rejecting others – Instead you are rejecting God.
- c. This is not behavior modification. This is inner transformation. We need the indwelling of the Spirit for this work to be done in our lives.
- d. He says that we are given the Spirit when we accept Him.
- e. Consistent theme throughout scripture
 - i. 1 Peter 1:15-16

ii. But as the one who called you is holy, you also are to be holy in all your conduct; for it is written, Be Holy, because I am holy.

iii. Quoting Leviticus 11.