

**Review:** Essential elements of revival ---- in addition to humility, honesty, repentance, grace, we must live holy lives.

> Barna quote

An essential element (ingredient) of revival is **holiness**. If we admit we need revival, we must be holy. Given what I have just read, how should we understand “holiness” and how do we practice “holiness”? In order to answer those questions, let’s answer three questions:

1. What does the Bible say?

- a. *“But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for [God's] own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.”* (1 Peter 2:9; based on Ex. 19:5-6)

- 1) **past**;
- 2) **declarative**;
- 3) **foundation** for the present

- b. God’s plan for His creation, His people, His church, is that we be “*holy as He is holy*” (READ 1 Peter 1:14-16; based on Lev. 19:2; Is. 6:1-5).

- 1) **present**;
- 2) **command**
- 3) **process** - see Ephesians 2:19-22

We come to Christ very un-holy. There are many areas of our lives that are very unlike Christ. But when we trust in Christ, and His Holy Spirit comes to indwell us, we then have the life of God within us.

Let’s look at a third verse:

- c. Hebrews 12:14, “*Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.*”

- 1) **future**;
- 2) process;
- 3) **warning!**

> does this verse get our attention???

**2. What is holiness?**

For most people, the word “*holiness*” brings up bad images of rules and legalism.

The best way to understand holiness is to look at God, for He is the standard of holiness. He **IS** holy. The literal meaning of the word “*holy*” is “set apart, different.”

When Isaiah saw into heaven, he saw angels around God’s throne whose only words in His presence were, “*Holy, holy, holy*” (Isaiah 6:1-5). There is no other word we can use to adequately describe God. He is just DIFFERENT than anything else. He is HOLY.

> defined: different, set apart (illustration: *shopping for produce*)

3. How do I (learn to) practice holiness?

a. learn from Biblical **history** (1 Cor. 10:1-11)

In 1 Corinthians 10, Paul uses an illustration that the people of his day would understand and that God had given. It was the illustration of the nation of Israel. God had chosen Israel to be a nation of people that would be set apart and different from all other nations. They were called out to be separated to God and to function as a community that would display the nature and character of God to a watching world. In the passage we just read, Paul uses the illustration of the nation of Israel and their *un*-holiness to illustrate the process God uses - He uses the same process with us: God’s process was to **teach them a truth** and then **give them a test** (ppt). Unfortunately, the vast majority of the Israelites failed... at almost every turn they responded in disobedience. 1 Cor. 10 points out at least four wrong responses:

<u>TEST</u>	<u>RESPONSE</u>
1. 40 days without Moses	Idolatry (v. 7; Ex. 32)
2. Immoral neighbors	Immorality (v. 8; Num. 25)
3. No food or water	Impatience (v. 9; Ex. 21; Num. 14)
4. Bad report from spies	Insubordination (v. 10; Num. 14)

Israel failed to be a truly holy people before the Lord. They **were** different in that they were set apart by God, but they **were not** different in their CHARACTER and LIFESTYLE. God had showed His faithfulness to Israel daily and in many supernatural ways. We have seen that when they had opportunity to respond in faith and obedience, they responded just like the world. They worshiped the golden calf, they committed sexual sin, they grumbled against God and Moses, and they rejected God’s leadership. God wants us to learn about holiness by learning lessons that Israel failed. What is God’s plan for us? To display His holiness through us, to be different, set apart...to be like God in holiness. If we don’t, God disciplines us...this leads us to a second practical action step:

b. understand God’s **discipline** (READ Hebrews 12:10b-11)

*“He disciplines us for our good, that we may share His **holiness**. For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.” (Hebrews 12:10b-11)*

> **discipline** = **training** [He puts us in circumstances that are designed to reveal our unholiness and cast us into a position where we must trust Him to live through us].

c. respond by **obeying** God’s Word (Eph. 4:17-32; Heb. 12:14)

> Ephesians 4:17-31 - contrast holiness with unholiness; according to our behavior

> just as with the nation of Israel, for us, this is a matter of character and lifestyle. The question is: “Are we different than those who do not know Jesus Christ?”

John Piper says that God’s glory is “*His holiness going public.*”

*“If we are to grow in holiness we must become increasingly aware of our sinfulness.”*  
Chris Denado, editor of TableTalk devotional

Author D. A. Carson reminds us, "People do not drift toward holiness. Apart from grace-driven effort, people do not gravitate toward godliness, prayer, obedience to Scripture, faith, and delight in the Lord. We drift toward compromise and call it tolerance; we drift toward disobedience and call it freedom; we drift toward superstition and call it faith. We cherish the indiscipline of lost self-control and call it relaxation; we slouch toward prayerlessness and delude ourselves into thinking we have escaped legalism; we slide toward godlessness and convince ourselves we have been liberated."

A.W. Tozer says in *The Root of the Righteous*: “Every farmer knows the hunger of the wilderness, which no modern farm machinery, no improved agricultural methods, can ever quite destroy. No matter how well prepared the soil, how well kept the fences, how carefully painted the building, let the owner neglect for a while his prized and valued acres, and they will revert again to the wild and be swallowed up by the jungle or the wasteland. The bias of nature is toward the wilderness, never toward the fruitful field. That, we repeat, every farmer knows. What is true of the field is also true of our souls. The truth is that no spiritual experience, however revolutionary, can exempt us from temptation. And what is temptation, but the effort of the wilderness to encroach upon our new-cleared field? The jungle will creep in and seek to swallow up the areas that have been made free by the power of the Holy Spirit. Only watchfulness and constant prayer can preserve those moral gains won for us through the operations of God’s grace. The neglected heart will soon be a heart overrun with worldly thoughts; the neglected life will soon become a moral chaos.”