

# BE HOLY?



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'Be Holy?'  
by  
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# BE HOLY?

'Holy' is a difficult word to define. Only God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit are completely holy, but God calls Christians to seek to be holy too. In 1 Peter 1:15 the Bible says – *'Just as he who called you is holy, you yourselves also be holy in all of your behaviour.'* Being holy means being set apart for God. It means purity and living a life that pleases Him.

There is a real danger in writing this booklet. There are 'dos' and 'don'ts' in it, and you could easily see them as a set of rules which you have to obey to be accepted by God. Nothing could be further from the truth. God has always loved you and always will, and you become His child when you accept Jesus as your Lord and Saviour, not by trying to live a perfect life. Jesus has done everything that's needed and all you have to do is respond. You can't earn God's love or your salvation. It's all about what He's done, not about what you do. 2 Timothy 1:9 says that God – *'saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace.'*

## *So Why be Holy?*

God wants you to be holy because He knows it is the only way of living which will bring you real joy, peace and fulfilment; and this is what He wants for you. He doesn't want you to lead a second rate life, always searching for happiness and peace and a sense of worth. God has always loved you and wants only the best for you. It's not about a set of rules, but a willing response to God who sent Jesus to die on the Cross for you, taking the punishment you deserve. But it is only as you start to live to please God that you will find His way of living is the best way.

## *First Things First*

And it's only possible to really please God when you become His child. When you acknowledge Jesus is God and decide to follow Him, you make Him your Lord. When you believe in and accept His sacrifice on the Cross for yourself personally, you make Him your Saviour. You are then born-again and have a brand-new perfect spirit. God becomes your Father and you His child, and you can start to enjoy your personal love relationship with Him. Romans 10:9 says - *'if you will confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.'* Tell God you are sorry for the wrong things you do, say and think. Believe that Jesus is Lord, that He died for you and that He is now alive. Accept Him as your Lord and Saviour. Say it with your voice and believe it in your heart. If you've done that sincerely, you are now born-again. Jesus has come to live in you and your spirit has been made brand-new – believe it and thank Him. Everything you've ever done wrong or ever will do wrong is forgiven, and you will be with God for eternity.

As a child of God, you now have a whole new family of brothers and sisters. Tell a trusted Christian that you are now born-again so they can help you in your new life in Jesus. And you have the Bible to help you understand and experience more of God's love for you and all Jesus has done and won for you. It will help you to live your life in the best possible way – His way.

## *God's Done His Part*

If you're now born-again, you have a new spirit. Ephesians 4:24 says it has been created – *'in the likeness of God ... in righteousness and holiness of truth.'* God isn't in the process of

creating it – it's been done. But you know that your thoughts, emotions and decisions aren't always holy and these are what make up your soul. No-one has a perfect soul but God wants to help you start to bring your soul in line with your new spirit.

## *Will You Do Your Part?*

God has provided all you need to live a holy life, but if you step outside the way He knows is best for you, things can start to go wrong. 1 Corinthians 6:12 says – *“All things are lawful for me,” but not all things are expedient.*'

To be a Christian inevitably puts you at odds with the world. The world's attitudes are not usually God's. Through the last couple of centuries, being a Christian in Britain was the norm. Of course, for some people it will have been a label rather than a real faith, but to say you weren't a Christian was to stand apart from the crowd. Within the last fifty years or so, things have completely changed. Now the norm is not to believe and being a Christian sets you apart.

But remember, you now have a new spirit which draws you to holy living. As you grow in your relationship with God, you will find more and more that you want to live His way. It won't be a set of rules to obey, but the desire of your heart.

Living a holy life will not make God love you more – that's impossible because His love for you is already boundless. But it will help you to love Him more. It will help you to keep your focus on Him and all He has done and won for you. It will enable you to experience and enjoy your love relationship with Him.

Seeking to live a holy life is a witness to others that God loves them too. It is your holiness which will show God to others. Jesus said in John 13:35 – *‘By this everyone will know that you are my*

*disciples, if you have love for one another.*’ Loving God and loving others are the hallmark of a Christian, and all the guidelines to holy living flow from this, so demonstrating God’s love to the world.

## **How?**

You can’t be holy by sheer will power; you need to surrender to Jesus and allow His truth to settle in your heart. God will strengthen you to live His way as you seek Him, but it is up to you to choose to seek a holy life. No-one is completely holy in this life and all Christians are on a journey, but it is always best to be on the right path, facing in the right direction and moving forward.

There are many things around today which were not available to people in Bible times. But these things can also bring temptations – books, magazines, newspapers, television, radio, CDs, smart phones, the cinema, the theatre and the internet. They are not all bad in themselves, but there is no doubt that they can all contain stuff that is not good for you.

What you focus your eyes and ears on will affect your thoughts and actions. If you focus on violence, horror, sexual immorality, bad language, coarse humour, lies, crime, general nastiness etc, they will settle in your heart and eventually come out in your thoughts, speech and actions. Jesus said in Matthew 15:18-19 – *‘The things which proceed out of the mouth come out of the heart, and they defile the man. For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, sexual sins, thefts, false testimony, and blasphemies.’*

By contrast the Bible says in Philippians 4:8 – *‘whatever things are true, whatever things are honourable, whatever things are*

*just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report; if there is any virtue, and if there is any praise, think about these things.’* And verse 9 tells us the result – *‘the God of peace will be with you.’* Focusing on good, positive things will help you know God’s peace.

There also are many potential idols which the media constantly puts before you, such as – sport, celebrities, fashion, materialism, music, social media etc. When such things start to direct how you think and how you live your life, there is a problem. God created us to worship Him, so in everyone there is a need to worship. For non-Christians, this gets wrongly directed onto things or people, and their focus on these can take over their life.

Do you want to live with negative thoughts of anger, frustration, jealousy, bitterness etc. or do you want your thoughts to be peaceful? Most of you will answer ‘peaceful’ straightaway. The answer to a large extent is in your own hands – choose to live a life of love that pleases God.

### *Now for Those ‘Dos’ and ‘Don’ts’*

Here are some of the ‘dos’ and ‘don’ts’ taken from these Bible passages – Romans 12:10-21; 1 Corinthians 6:18-20; 1 Corinthians 7:12-16; 2 Corinthians 6:14; Galatians 6:2, 9&10; Ephesians 4:25-32; Ephesians 5:1-7, 15-20; Philippians 2:3-5, 7, 14&15; Philippians 4:4; Colossians 3:8-11; James 4:7&11. As you read them, remember they all flow out of God’s love for you. They are not meant to condemn you – they are there for your good, as well as for the good of others. When we seek to live holy lives, we benefit from it and those around us can do too.

## **How you speak**

There should be no – grumbling, arguing, slander, anger, rage, malice, filthy language, lying, obscenity, foolish talk, coarse joking, unwholesome talk or bitterness. Instead, speak to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit.

## **How you behave**

There should be no rage, anger, brawling, malice, drunkenness, stealing, sexual immorality or greed. The Bible says that sexual immorality is very significant. 1 Corinthians 6:18-20 says – *“Every sin that a man does is outside the body,” but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. Or don’t you know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God? ... Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.’*

## **‘Don’ts’ in your relationships with others**

The Bible tells you – not to repay anyone evil for evil; not to be unjustly angry; not to take revenge; not to curse people, even when they persecute you; not to be proud; and not to choose to be united with an unbeliever in marriage, business etc. It also gives advice on what to do if you become born-again and your husband or wife isn’t.

## **‘Dos’ in your relationships with others**

The Bible says – to do good to all people, especially to fellow Christians; to help people who are struggling, including your enemy; to be completely humble and gentle; to be patient, bearing with one another in love; to be kind and compassionate, forgiving each other; to share with other Christians who are in need; to practice hospitality; to bless those who persecute you;



to rejoice with those who rejoice; to mourn with those who mourn; to live in harmony with one another; to be willing to associate with people of low position; to be just; to speak truthfully; in humility to value others above yourself, to not look to your own interests but to the interests of others; to be devoted to one another in love; to honour others above yourself.

### **'Don'ts' in your attitude to life**

Your attitude should not be - selfish ambition or vain conceit; foolishness; giving the devil a foothold in your life; grieving the Holy Spirit; being proud; letting someone deceive you with empty words, or entering into a partnership with such a person.

### **'Dos' in your attitude to life**

A Christian's attitude should be - doing what is right in the eyes of everyone; as far as it depends on you, living at peace with everyone; being wise; making the most of every opportunity; loving sincerely; never lacking in zeal; keeping your spiritual fervour; serving the Lord; being joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer; living a life of love; doing something useful with your own hands; resisting the devil; hating evil; clinging to what is good; not being overcome by evil, but overcoming evil with good; not becoming weary in doing good.

### **Your relationship with God**

Your relationship with God is so precious to Him. Submit yourself to Him; rejoice in the Lord always; be filled with the Spirit; sing and make music from your heart to the Lord; always give thanks to God for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

## *What Difference Will it Make?*

As a believer you'll find you're uncomfortable about some of your old attitudes and the things you used to do. You'll be drawn to holy living without having to agonise over it – it will feel more like what you want to do, rather than having to force yourself. Worldly things that excited you before will lose their attraction. You'll find your focus is more on Jesus and you'll be able to enter more fully into the wonderful love relationship with God that Jesus won for you. You'll have more joy, peace, security and fulfilment in your life.

However, you may also find yourself at odds with some of the people you used to spend time with. But remember, Jesus will never leave you, nor forsake you. And you have your Christian family to share your life with – your brothers and sisters in Jesus.

Remember, you are not condemned when you fail. Romans 8:1 says – *'There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.'* Nothing can stop God from loving you. Just acknowledge what you did was wrong and receive the forgiveness He has already won for you through Jesus and then walk forward in your relationship with Him. Your relationship with God doesn't come from living holy. Living holy comes increasingly naturally from your relationship with God. Holiness isn't the root of living for God, it's the fruit.

## *Be Holy? – Yes!*

Make Jesus your focus. As your relationship with Him grows you will more and more want to live a holy life. God loves you so much – He'll never give up on you. Living a holy life is the best life you can possibly live, and God longs for you to have the best. So – be holy? Yes, Lord!

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You can't earn God's love by being holy,  
and He isn't giving you marks out of ten  
for your behaviour.

But He longs for you to live His way  
because He knows it is the only truly satisfying,  
fulfilling and happy way for you to live.

Find out why, what it means  
and how you can live life better.



**Katherine Hilditch** has been teaching in local churches for many years. In 2013 she wrote her first booklet and since then has written many more. She created her website to make all the booklets freely available to everyone. They can be read online or printed out. Katherine's threefold purpose is to help people understand more about Jesus and all He has done and won for them, to encourage them to go deeper in their relationship with God and to provide material to help them share their faith with others. To read her story and find all the booklets go to –

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