

God Revealed through the Church

The Church - A Demonstration of God's Holiness

God is holy and holiness is the moral condition necessary to the health of his universeWhatever is holy is healthy, ...the holiness of God, the wrath of God, and the health of creation are inseparably united. God's wrath is his utter intolerance of whatever degrades and destroys. He hates iniquity as a mother hated the polio that would take the life of the child.

A.W. Tozer

Ephesians 4: 17 - 5: 20

1) From sin to holiness (vs. 17 – 24)

- Paul begins with insisting that the believers no longer live as the Gentiles do in the futility of their thinking.
- How were the Gentiles living?
 - Darkened in their understanding
 - 2 Corinth 4: 4 “The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.”
 - Separated from the life of God that was in them due to ignorance
 - 1 Peter 1: 14 “As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance.”
 - Hardened hearts
 - Matthew 13: 15 “For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes”
 - Lost all sensitivity
 - Given over to sensuality
 - Indulging in every kind of impurity with a continual lust for more
- How did we come to Christ?
 - We were taught
 - In accordance with the truth that is in Jesus
 - To put off our old self which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires
 - To be made new in the attitude of our minds
 - To put on the new self, created by God in true righteousness and holiness
- When we come to Jesus we don't merely have a change of belief, philosophy and allegiance
- Coming to Jesus always results in a transformation of life
 - Our old life and new don't have anything in common
 - It is a moving from darkness to light, death to life, sin to holiness

2) The holy life (vs. 25 – 5: 14)

What we should not do

- In your anger do not sin. Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry. Don't give the devil a foothold.
- Do not grieve the Holy Spirit

Contrasts between the sinful life and the holy life

- In describing the holy life that we are to live Paul gives a **list of contrasts** between the sinful life and the holy life
 - Put off falsehood and speak truthfully for we are members of one body
 - Don't steal but work and do something useful with your hand that you may share with those in need.

- Don't let unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building other up according to their needs.
 - Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander and malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other as Christ forgave you.
 - Live a life of love just as Christ loved us and gave Himself as a sacrifice.
- There mustn't be a hint of:
 - Sexual immorality
 - Any kind of impurity
 - Greed
 - Obscenity
 - Foolish talk or coarse joking
 - Rather let there be thanksgiving
- You were once darkness but now you are light in the Lord
 - Live as children of the light – goodness, righteousness and truth
 - Find out what pleases the Lord
- Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness but rather expose them
 - It is shameful what the disobedient do in secret
 - Everything exposed by light becomes visible

Consequences of a sinful life

- We are reminded that no immoral, impure or greedy person has any inheritance in the kingdom of God and that the wrath of God will come on those who are disobedient.
 - We are also told not to be partners with such people

3) The Holy Life is positively holy and not merely keeping from sin

- We are to live wise lives making the most of every opportunity because the days are evil
 - Saying: “The devil finds work for idle hands”
 - We need to understand what the will of God is
 - In understanding God's will we will do what is right in His eyes in every opportunity.
- Do not get drunk on wine but be filled with the Spirit
 - Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs
 - Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord
 - Always give thanks to God the father for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ
- Holiness starts with an attitude of living separate from the world and living for God.
 - John 17: 13 – 19 “I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them. I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.”
- We are commissioned to live holy lives in the world and not as monks living apart from the world.
- When we live lives that are set apart for God then we reveal His holiness to the world.