



## HOLINESS

By Alexander S. Brown, Minister

**T**HERE is a holiness without which no one will see the Lord, according to the writer of Hebrews (12: 14). But the language of holiness has largely fallen out of our vocabulary, and perhaps seems like something that belongs to a by-gone era.

There are a lot of reasons why we tend not to talk a lot about holiness: sometimes it can be because it sounds harsh, extreme – something for fanatics, but not for ordinary Christians. It can be hard to shake the idea that a holy person looks like a monk or a nun, completely removed from the world and cloistered up in silence and devotion. It can be hard to break free of the idea that holiness is for those with a puritanical bent, but not for everyone.

At other times it's simply because we find the whole idea of holiness to be confusing. Is it God's work or our work? Or is it a combination of the two? And if it is, then who plays what part? Are we simply to 'Let go and let God', or are we to discipline ourselves and break our wills so that we can become new?

Our understanding of holiness is mixed up with a whole lot of cultural input that muddies the waters and makes it hard to understand what it is all about, but I think there is another reason why we don't talk about holiness much, and that is because we can carry a guilt about it.

I have heard it said (and you have probably heard me say!) that if you want to make a Christian feel bad, ask him about his prayer life. I think that also plays into this idea of holiness – we don't talk about it much because if we look at our lives we really don't feel very holy. However, we need to get past that. Holiness is a big topic in Scripture, and it is a big part of how we are to understand ourselves as Christians. So, where do we begin?

**B**EFORE we go any further, we need to understand what holiness is. If it's not this cloistered life of monkery, then what is it? Well, simply put it is a striving to live in a way that reflects our standing before God. In his excellent little book *The Pursuit of Holiness* Jerry Bridges describes it like this:

“Scripture speaks of both a holiness which we have in Christ before God, and a holiness which we are to strive after. These two aspects of holiness complement one another, for our salvation is a salvation to holiness...That is, we are through Christ *made* holy in our standing before God, and *called* to be holy in our daily lives.” (p. 33)

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### May Calendar

#### Sunday

9:30 a.m. Sunday School  
*The Hole in Our Holiness*

10:30 a.m. Morning Worship  
*Exodus: God, our Savior*

6:00 p.m. Evening Worship  
*Ezra*

Children's Church, Nursery available

Wed 5/1 Women's Book Group  
 (9:30 a.m., Brown home)

Wed 5/1, 8, 15, 22  
 Midweek Prayer Meeting  
 (6:30 p.m., GIPC)

Sun 5/5 Communion, AM

Sat 5/11 "Second Saturday" Men's  
 Breakfast & Bible Study  
 (8:00 a.m., Brown home)

Sun 5/12 CareNet "Change-for-Life"  
 campaign begins  
 (Mother's Day)

Sat 5/18 **GIPC Work Day**  
 (9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.)

Mon 5/27 Memorial Day Holiday

#### Congregational Meeting

Sunday, April 28, 2013

The Session of Golden Isles Presbyterian Church has called a Congregational Meeting for Sunday, April 28th, immediately following the Morning Worship service, for the purpose of electing church officers.

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# Holiness

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In other words, what we are talking about when we talk about holiness is simply the outward manifestation of our inward reality. Or, to put it another way, we are seeking to live in a way that reflects the union that we have with God through Christ. If we have been united by faith to a holy God, then we cannot be content living unholy lives.

Jerry Bridges describes what this looks like by using an illustration of a farmer who plows, sows, fertilizes and then cultivates a field all the while knowing that ultimately he is utterly dependent on forces outside of his control for any yield. “He knows he cannot cause the seed to germinate, nor can he produce the rain and sunshine for growing and harvesting the crop.” His whole farming enterprise is a partnership between him and God – “The farmer cannot do what God must do, and God will not do what the farmer should do.” And such, says Jerry Bridges, is the pursuit of holiness – “No one can attain any degree of holiness without God working in his life, but just as surely no one will attain it without effort on his own part.” (p. 9) So it is not a ‘letting go and letting God’, but neither is it a resolve to do it ourselves. We must be active, but always realizing our complete dependence upon the work of the Holy Spirit. He must act *and* we must act.

But what does this look like in practice? Well, there are two main ways that we must be active in our pursuit of holiness – we must feed our souls, and we must protect our souls.

**F**IRST, we must feed our souls, and that feeding must come through our Bibles. “Every Christian who makes progress in holiness is a person who has disciplined his life so that he spends regular time in the Bible. There is simply no other way.” (p. 98) In order for us to be healthy we must feed our bodies a regular diet, and like with our physical bodies, unless we are regularly feeding our souls, they will waste and wither. If we are not diligently spending time reading, studying, and memorizing the Word of God then we simply cannot expect to make any progress in holiness – it is only as we submit ourselves to the “sword of the Spirit” that we can expect the Spirit to carve out of us any part that does not resemble Jesus Christ.

However, this is not just true of private, devotional reading. We must also make sure that we are spending regular time sitting under the preaching of the Word. There is a unique power in preaching, as we submit to the Word of God proclaimed. Preaching has traditionally been regarded as one of the “Ordinary Means of Grace” by the Reformed Church, meaning that it is through the preaching of the Word that the Spirit of God ordinarily, that is normally, works in the hearts of His people, both to strengthen them in the faith in Christ but also to convict them of sin that they might more and more repent of their sin and thereby become increasingly holy.

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*We must be active in our pursuit of holiness – we must feed our souls, and we must protect our souls.*

## Building & Grounds



**GIPC Work Day!**  
Saturday, May 18th  
9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

The B&G Committee is sponsoring a church-wide work day on Saturday, May 18th. Jobs include:

- Clearing, cleaning, organizing classroom at end of south hallway (behind kitchen)
- Cleaning windows, glass doors
- Prepping walls in kitchen/dining area for painting
- Clearing gutters/downspouts
- De-cluttering and organizing large storage rooms
- Replacing light bulbs as needed

## Finance Committee

### GIPC Update: Loan Balance

Loan Balance 1/1/13	\$807,308
Principal Paid YTD	\$ 13,890
Loan Balance 5/1/13	\$793,418
2013 Average Payment:	
Interest	\$ 2,574
Principal	\$ 2,678
Total Payment	\$ 5,252

## Men’s Ministry

### “Men’s Fellowship Southern Soul BBQ Supper”

Friday, April 26th • 6:30 p.m.  
Currier home

*Luis Haza will share his testimony.*

### “Second Saturday” Men’s Breakfast & Bible Study

Saturday, May 11th • 8:00 a.m.  
Brown home

*Disciplines of a Godly Man*

## Significant Sessional Actions

- Approved Dr. John R. Sittima as Keynote Speaker for GIPC’s 18th Annual World Missions Conference November 1-3, 2013.
- Approved William T. “Bill” Wood and Clay Huddleston as candidates for office.

# Holiness

(Continued from page 2)

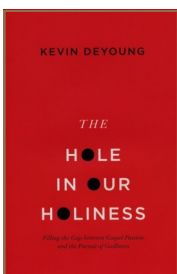
Now both of these take a degree of work to ensure that they are present in your lives. There will always be the temptation to let the business of your day crowd out time for reading your Bible, and there will always be other things that you could be doing instead of going to church on Sundays. But the truth is that if you are neglecting either one of these, you simply will not make the progress in holiness that you ought to be. Your growth will be stunted and your faith weakened.

**S**ECOND, we must keep ourselves away from known areas of temptation. All of us have areas that we know are danger-zones for us. Many of these follow us from our pre-Christian days and we have to watch and take care that we are not letting ourselves draw near to areas that could unduly tempt us and lead us into sin.

So, for example, some people are saved from lives that are dedicated to the pursuit of money, and so it might be wise for that person to make sure that they are always living below their means, and perhaps even intentionally giving away a significant portion of their money. Some people are saved from lives that were characterized by partying and drinking, and so it might be wise for that person to voluntarily not go to bars or even give up drinking. Others are saved from lives of sexual immorality, and so it would be wise for them to make sure that they are avoiding areas where they might encounter pictures or images that would dig up old memories and lead them into sin. Of course, there are many more situations than these three, and it may be that you struggle in a wholly different area, but the point is this – we must know ourselves well enough to know where our weak spots are, and we must be wise enough to avoid them.

This was simply what Jesus talked about when He said, “If your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life crippled or lame than with two hands or two feet to be thrown into the eternal fire. And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into the hell of fire.” (Matthew 18: 8-9) Jesus uses violent language when He speaks about avoiding that which will lead you into sin because often we need to take violent action. We cannot play with our sin, and we cannot just hope that we won’t be tempted. We will, and so we must do what we can to be wise and shrewd in order to defend ourselves against temptation.

**I**T may be that you remember a day when you were zealous for holiness, but life has worn you down. Let me encourage you to recommit yourself right now to a pursuit of holiness, partnering with the Holy Spirit to live as you are – having been made holy in our standing before God through Christ, let us pursue our calling to *be* holy in our daily lives. ▪



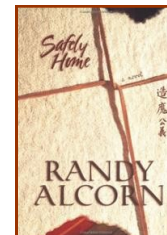
On Sunday, May 5th we will begin looking at “The Hole in Our Holiness,” by Kevin DeYoung. The book is not required for the class but if you would like a copy, you can get it at [christianbook.com](http://christianbook.com) for \$13.99 or [amazon.com](http://amazon.com) for \$14.57.

## Women’s Ministry

### “Beyond the Pages” Women’s Book Group

Wednesday, May 1st • 9:30 a.m.  
Brown home (614 Dellwood Ave.)

*Safely Home* by Randy Alcorn is a challenging story about Christian persecution in China.



The lives of two men who were college roommates played out in very different ways. Reunited after 20 years, they are shocked at what they find out about each other. Thrown

together in an hour of encroaching darkness, both must make choices that determine their destinies.

One man (Ben) discovers through the faith of the other (Li) the truth that God does not promise an easy life on earth, only eternal happiness after death. In fact, Ben doesn't believe Li's story about the persecution of Christians until Li is taken to jail.

Chuck Colson called this book “not only a first class story; it's a bracing wake-up call about Christian persecution in China.”



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**MAY**

"From childhood you have been acquainted with the holy Scriptures." (II Timothy 3:15)

**Family Worship**

**Old Testament Reading**

Date	Book	Chapter	✓
1	<b>Numbers</b>	8	<input type="checkbox"/>
2		9	<input type="checkbox"/>
3		10	<input type="checkbox"/>
4		11	<input type="checkbox"/>
5		12,13	<input type="checkbox"/>
6		14	<input type="checkbox"/>
7		15	<input type="checkbox"/>
8		16	<input type="checkbox"/>
9		17,18	<input type="checkbox"/>
10		19	<input type="checkbox"/>
11		20	<input type="checkbox"/>
12		21	<input type="checkbox"/>
13		22	<input type="checkbox"/>
14		23	<input type="checkbox"/>
15		24	<input type="checkbox"/>
16		25	<input type="checkbox"/>
17		26	<input type="checkbox"/>
18		27	<input type="checkbox"/>
19		28	<input type="checkbox"/>
20		29	<input type="checkbox"/>
21		30	<input type="checkbox"/>
22		31	<input type="checkbox"/>
23		32	<input type="checkbox"/>
24		33	<input type="checkbox"/>
25		34	<input type="checkbox"/>
26		35	<input type="checkbox"/>
27		36	<input type="checkbox"/>
28	<b>Deuteronomy</b>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
29		2	<input type="checkbox"/>
30		3	<input type="checkbox"/>
31		4	<input type="checkbox"/>

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**Family Worship**

**Psalms Reading**

Date	Book	Chapter	✓
1	<b>Psalms</b>	44	<input type="checkbox"/>
2		45	<input type="checkbox"/>
3		46,47	<input type="checkbox"/>
4		48	<input type="checkbox"/>
5		49	<input type="checkbox"/>
6		50	<input type="checkbox"/>
7		51	<input type="checkbox"/>
8		52-54	<input type="checkbox"/>
9		55	<input type="checkbox"/>
10		56,57	<input type="checkbox"/>
11		58,59	<input type="checkbox"/>
12		60,61	<input type="checkbox"/>
13		62,63	<input type="checkbox"/>
14		64,65	<input type="checkbox"/>
15		66,67	<input type="checkbox"/>
16		68	<input type="checkbox"/>
17		69	<input type="checkbox"/>
18		70,71	<input type="checkbox"/>
19		72	<input type="checkbox"/>
20		73	<input type="checkbox"/>
21		74	<input type="checkbox"/>
22		75,76	<input type="checkbox"/>
23		77	<input type="checkbox"/>
24		78:1-37	<input type="checkbox"/>
25		78:38-72	<input type="checkbox"/>
26		79	<input type="checkbox"/>
27		80	<input type="checkbox"/>
28		81,82	<input type="checkbox"/>
29		83,84	<input type="checkbox"/>
30		85	<input type="checkbox"/>
31		86,87	<input type="checkbox"/>

**MAY**

"From childhood you have been acquainted with the holy Scriptures." (II Timothy 3:15)

**Private**

**Old Testament Reading**

Date	Book	Chapter	✓
1	<b>Song of Solomon</b>	6	<input type="checkbox"/>
2		7	<input type="checkbox"/>
3		8	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	<b>Isaiah</b>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
5		2	<input type="checkbox"/>
6		3,4	<input type="checkbox"/>
7		5	<input type="checkbox"/>
8		6	<input type="checkbox"/>
9		7	<input type="checkbox"/>
10		8,9:1-7	<input type="checkbox"/>
11		9:8-10:4	<input type="checkbox"/>
12		10:5-34	<input type="checkbox"/>
13		11,12	<input type="checkbox"/>
14		13	<input type="checkbox"/>
15		14	<input type="checkbox"/>
16		15	<input type="checkbox"/>
17		16	<input type="checkbox"/>
18		17,18	<input type="checkbox"/>
19		19,20	<input type="checkbox"/>
20		21	<input type="checkbox"/>
21		22	<input type="checkbox"/>
22		23	<input type="checkbox"/>
23		24	<input type="checkbox"/>
24		25	<input type="checkbox"/>
25		26	<input type="checkbox"/>
26		27	<input type="checkbox"/>
27		28	<input type="checkbox"/>
28		29	<input type="checkbox"/>
29		30	<input type="checkbox"/>
30		31	<input type="checkbox"/>
31		32	<input type="checkbox"/>

**MAY**

"From childhood you have been acquainted with the holy Scriptures." (II Timothy 3:15)

**Private**

**New Testament Reading**

Date	Book	Chapter	✓
1	<b>Hebrews</b>	6	<input type="checkbox"/>
2		7	<input type="checkbox"/>
3		8	<input type="checkbox"/>
4		9	<input type="checkbox"/>
5		10	<input type="checkbox"/>
6		11	<input type="checkbox"/>
7		12	<input type="checkbox"/>
8		13	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	<b>James</b>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
10		2	<input type="checkbox"/>
11		3	<input type="checkbox"/>
12		4	<input type="checkbox"/>
13		5	<input type="checkbox"/>
14	<b>I Peter</b>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
15		2	<input type="checkbox"/>
16		3	<input type="checkbox"/>
17		4	<input type="checkbox"/>
18		5	<input type="checkbox"/>
19	<b>II Peter</b>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
20		2	<input type="checkbox"/>
21		3	<input type="checkbox"/>
22	<b>I John</b>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
23		2	<input type="checkbox"/>
24		3	<input type="checkbox"/>
25		4	<input type="checkbox"/>
26		5	<input type="checkbox"/>
27	<b>II John</b>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
28	<b>III John</b>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
29	<b>Jude</b>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
30	<b>Revelation</b>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
31		2	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Week beginning APRIL 28**

**Romans 12:17-19**

Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay," says the Lord.

**Week beginning MAY 5**

**Romans 12:20-21**

To the contrary, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

**Week beginning MAY 12**

**Proverbs 31:30**

Charm is deceitful, and beauty is vain; but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised.

**Week beginning MAY 19**

**Isaiah 26:3-4**

You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You. Trust in the LORD forever, for the LORD God is an everlasting rock.

**Week beginning MAY 26**

**I John 3:1-2**

See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know Him. Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when He appears we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him as He is.