

The HOLY Spirit (Pt. 1) – “A Holy Identity”

The Ministry of the Spirit

July 12, 2026

Series Chapter - "HOLY" ...The Holiness Equation

"A Holy Identity" (Pt. 1) + "A Holy Setting & Mission" (Pt. 2) = "Holy Images" (Pt. 3)

"Holy"

[Article] “The Oxford Dictionary defines ‘holy’ as ‘dedicated or consecrated to God for a religious purpose’; of a person, ‘morally and spiritually excellent’. ...the two basic words translated ‘holy’ in Scripture are the Hebrew ‘qados’ and Greek ‘hagios’, which suggest cutting off, or separation. (“Holy, Holy, Holy” from understandingthegospel.org)

“morally excellent”... “separation” ...these concepts create an unavoidable interaction with Human Morals and Human Behavior! ...Which is Real & True—BUT... Is THAT the right starting point for understanding Holiness?

...I would be concerned that Holiness is poorly understood, because it often Features Too Much about MAN! ...If we’re not careful, the emphasis becomes ‘moralism’.

The HISTORY of HOLINESS (files)... [Note: All of These Have a mixture of Helpful & Harmful components]

- **"Worldliness Emphasis"** ... “separation” means “FROM SOMETHING” and it means “DISTINCTION” ...No longer a feature preaching point ...**"Legalism"** dotted every other message in the late 80's to 90's
- **"Disconnection/Distance Emphasis"** ...Church history is filled with associating "Disconnection w/ Holiness" - Monastic Life, Communes, Pilgrims/Puritans, etc.]
 - **Lifestyle Holiness** ...Drinking alcohol ...Stylish dress, make-up, jewelry wearing ...Entertainment ...destroying records, no listening to secular music, don't go to movies, don't own a TV
 - **Technological Holiness** ... **Galileo** (over his ‘heliocentric theory’ vs ‘geocentric beliefs’ **Amish, Mennonite, Plymouth Brethren** ...
 - **Current Holiness Headlines**

...The Formation of Expected "Normative" Behavior is an appropriate and non-ignorable reality for the collection of people known as "The Church"—Who are given the Great Commission launched at Pentecost!

...Christianity is a "SUBCULTURE" in our world. ...It is "distinct," "identifiable" and "separate"—and it should be. ...It is another "kingdom," another "language group," another family association, a 'nation among nations'. ...HOWEVER, when you/I go to "pull on the cord" of attitudes, beliefs, & behaviors—and we "trace that cord back to its origin"—WHAT Do We Find at the Origin of These "WAYS-OF-LIFE"??

The truth for most... ...We find our "family values" ...we find traditions and generational convictions ...we find political platforms ...we find rituals, routines, & normative practices that are a "MIX" of God's revelation and Man's Earthly Reasons

...Thus, Holiness is associated with Humans! ...a tribe, a group, a segment that is identified with certain practices, convictions or behaviors. ...Next thing you know 'Holiness draws its definition and liturgy from MAN!!

?? – Where Does the Scriptures ANCHOR Our Starting Reference Point of “Holy”??

HOLY and Your IDENTITY

1 Pet 1:1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ. To those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion, in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia."

1 Peter 1:3-5 ³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, ⁵ who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

...This is a "Mount Everest" statement/landmark about our lives!

1 Pet 1:10 Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully.

1 Pet 1:14-16 ¹⁴ As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, ¹⁵ but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, ¹⁶ since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."

... "As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance." ...this "behavioral emphasis," this "distinction/separation feature" is completely compatible with this "Salvation" that is based in the mercy and grace of God through Jesus Christ!

...This is HUGELY Agenda Defining! ...whether they're having a good day or bad day, whether they understand the workings of God's providence—THIS Defines Their Next Decision, their Next Life-Goal, their Next Priority ...amidst our infinite possibilities and world of wide-open choices—THIS, is Clear & Simple!

...This is ULTIMATELY Character Defining! ...my character (my reasonings, my angle on life, my approach, my priorities, my values, my preferences) is linked & defined by the HOLY Character of GOD!!

...HERE... the Scripture Gives Me (and my life on Tuesday or in 2026 or in my marriage or in the church or at work) ...MY 'REASON' for whatever I'm about to be or do!

BUT!!... my life has also given me some reasons!

1 Pet 1:14-16 ¹⁴ As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, ¹⁵ but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, ¹⁶ since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."

...This is ONTOLOGICAL! ...Here, at the heart of Peter's ONTOLOGY is the key! ... "**DO NOT BE _____**"
... "**BE HOLY**"

?? - WHY Is This Even Possible?? ...Because of God's Divine Calling—'to be as He is' (ie, "Holy")!

...THEN—Peter's Identity Defining Statement of All Statements!!

1 Peter 2:9-12 ⁹ But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. ¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

¹¹ Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. ¹² Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.

...v. 11-12 (harkens back to 1Pet 1:14) is a SIMPLE Action/Attitude Shaping Command!

HOWEVER, don't strip this command of its Power Source by ignoring v. 9-10!!

...v. 9 ...**THIS passage may be one of the most weighty and clarifying passages in all the Bible as it pertains to me/you gaining an understanding of our IDENTITY—Something that Defines Us, Our Purpose, Our Approach, Our Values, etc.!!**

"CHOSEN" ...where's that come from and what does that mean for me?

Exodus 19:1-6

1Pet 2:10 ... **"Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people"**

...This is Clearly an "IDENTITY Defining Proclamation" from God!!

THIS sits at the Depth of Life's Quest!! ...**We all want "to be" somebody!!**

"You shall be holy for I am holy"

...GOD is HOLY! (We are GOD's IMAGE Bearers—Thus, the possibilities, the opportunities, the boundaries, the pathways that lead to human fulfillment have their origins in Who God IS and What He is Like!)

"...we are cruel to ourselves if we try to live in this world without knowing about the God whose world it is and who runs it. The world becomes a strange, mad, painful, place and life in it a disappointing and unpleasant business, for those who do not know about God. Disregard the study of God, and you sentence yourself to stumble and blunder through life blindfolded, as it were, with no sense of direction and no understanding of what surrounds you." **J.I. Packer**, "Knowing God", p. 19

-- This might be one of the most helpful and burden lifting dimensions that we could possibly hear! ...How many people are being CRUSHED by their attempts to come up with the Ultimate Self-Definition!!

"Who are you? Only you can figure out the answer, and the way you find out is by looking deep into your heart to discover your uniqueness, to come to terms with what you want most from life." **Trevin Wax**, Rethink Yourself, p. 7, 10, 11

"...we see a steady spread of what I have called the culture of 'authenticity'. I mean the understanding of life which emerges with the Romantic expressivism of the late-eighteenth century, that each one of us has his/her own way of realizing our humanity, and that it is important to find and live out one's own, as against surrendering to conformity with a model imposed on u from outside, by society, or previous generation, or religious or political authority." **Charles Taylor**, "Our Secular Age"

?? - What if we cannot solve our "ontology problem" without GOD!!? ...Without God Declaring Us "a People" and without our being defined by His Holiness

?? - What if My Identity (who I am, why I am, what I am for, what defines/explains me) is FIRST related to God—before it is related to anything else?? ...What if the journey to "understand me" (to explore & explain me) is inextricably rooted in God? ...That the Greatest Thing I Can Do to Help ME to Find My Identity & Purpose is FIRST to Know God!!??

“People are starving for the greatness of God. But most of them would not give this diagnosis of their troubled lives. The majesty of God is an unknown cure. There are far more popular prescriptions on the market, but the benefit of any other remedy is brief and shallow.” **John Piper** (quoted in “The Majesty of God in the Old Testament” by Walter Kaiser, p. 10)

...Understanding Our Identity and Our Life Purpose ...as well as Understanding Human Behavior—Doesn't start with my family, my peeps, my denomination, my politics, my ethnicity, my generation, the American Constitution, etc.
...It starts with GOD who chooses me and declares...

“You shall be holy for I am holy”