

David K. Bernard

pursuing holiness

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

A small group resource developed from
In Search of Holiness and *Practical Holiness*

Pursuing Holiness Facilitator's Guide

by David K. Bernard

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David K. Bernard is the general superintendent of the United Pentecostal Church International. He is the founder of New Life United Pentecostal Church of Austin, Texas, and the founding president of Urshan Graduate School of Theology. He holds the J.D. with honors (University of Texas), D.Th. (University of South Africa), and B.A. with high honors (Rice University). His thirty-one books have been published in about forty languages. He and his wife, Connie, have three children and several grandchildren.

Small Group

Facilitator's Guide

Welcome to the *Pursuing Holiness* guide for facilitating small group study. This resource will assist you in leading group members through the companion book and DVD as together we seek how to live a holy life in worship to our loving God.

During the six sessions outlined in this guide, participants will view the DVD, review principles from the book, and engage in reflective discussion questions. Thank you for providing leadership for this journey.

Pursuing Holiness Overview

| | |
|---------------|---|
| Session One | Holiness Defined <i>Read chapter 1 before this meeting.</i> |
| Session Two | Legalism and Liberty <i>Read chapters 2-3 before this meeting.</i> |
| Session Three | Holiness and the Heart <i>Read chapters 4-5 before this meeting.</i> |
| Session Four | The Tongue and the Eye <i>Read chapters 6-7 before this meeting.</i> |
| Session Five | Holiness in Our Appearance <i>Read chapters 8-9 before this meeting.</i> |
| Session Six | The Temple of God <i>Read chapters 10-11 before this meeting.</i> |

About the Study

The topic of holiness is important to all Christians. The Bible calls followers of Christ to a life of holiness and teaches its necessity (Hebrews 12:14). We heed this call in order to please God, for we belong to Him; to communicate Christ to others; and to benefit ourselves, both now and for eternity.

This study uses the book *Pursuing Holiness* by David K. Bernard as the text and participant's resource. Every member of your group should have a copy. As the facilitator, you will have a copy of the book, a DVD, and this guide.

Because a commitment to holiness impacts all the areas of our lives, and rightfully so, many interpretations may abound within your small group about the proper application of holiness principles. This study will present practical applications based on scriptural principles to assist your group in pursuit of how to live a holy life in worship to our loving God.

Before the Study

- Pray that you and the members of the group will be ready to receive what God wants to teach them through this study.
- Make sure your group size is small enough to encourage interaction by all participants; if it is too large, consider breaking up into several study groups.
- Make sure you have a DVD player available and ready.
- Set up a circular area where all participants have a seat that allows them to see each other and the video screen.
- As the facilitator, you should read the entire book and watch all the sessions on the DVD to familiarize yourself with the complete scope of the study.
- Each week, read the discussion questions and think through the answers you anticipate will be given. Prepare to lead the conversation and make notes on the direction you will take.
- Make certain each member of the study group purchases or has access to the book. Ask them to read the chapters included in Session 1 before the first meeting.
- Each week, instruct your study group members to read the chapters included in the following week's discussion.

During the Study

- **Focus.** It is easy for small group discussions to veer away from the goal of the study. Gently encourage group members back to the question at hand if this happens.
- **Include.** Ask specific questions of those who are more hesitant to participate to encourage them to join the discussion.

Session One

Holiness Defined

Chapter 1

Objective

To recognize the call to holiness from Scripture.

Key Scriptures

Hebrews 12:14

1 Peter 1:15-16

Opening

Ask participants to think of a tool, a piece of clothing, or a valuable device that is important to them. Then ask them to share with the group what this item is and how they care for it or set it apart for its special use.

Watch the Session 1 Video Clip:

Holiness Defined

Discuss the following questions:

1. Without detailing the sin, tell about a time you were forgiven. Describe how you felt.
2. Why do you think we struggle so much with sin?
3. What is the connection between sin and holiness?
4. What is your personal definition of holiness?
5. Describe ways you personally safeguard against sin.

(Ask participants to turn to page 28 of their books to see the questions.)

Notes:

Notes:

Conclusion

Read the Conclusion section on pages 26-27 of the textbook to conclude the discussion.

Prayer

Assignment

Read chapters 2-3 prior to the next meeting.

// Holiness is a joyful privilege; a part of abundant life; a blessing from God's grace; a glorious life of freedom and power."

Session Two

Legalism and Liberty

Chapters 2-3

Objective

To differentiate between legalism and liberty and evaluate our motives for interpreting Scripture and establishing applications for holiness.

Key Scriptures

Galatians 2:16

Galatians 5:13

Opening

Begin an opening discussion with these questions:

- Has anyone heard of the President’s Council on Fitness, Sports, and Nutrition?
- What is the role of the Council? (Suggested answer: It promotes programs and initiatives that motivate people of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities to lead active, healthy lives.)
- This council has produced *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* that identifies foods to avoid and foods to eat; would you say the guidelines impose on citizens’ rights to eat what we choose? Why or why not?

Watch the Session 2 Video Clip:

Legalism and Liberty

Discuss the following questions:

1. Why do you think a person might become legalistic?

Notes:

Notes:

2. How can we avoid our holiness turning into legalism?
3. Why is moral law important and what is its connection to holiness?
4. How can we say God is both absolute in His holiness and yet a God of love?
5. Paul described guidelines for Christian liberty concerning the eating of meat. What would be a modern-day example of a similar principle, and what would be the overarching guidelines for addressing the situation?

Conclusion

Read the Conclusion section on pages 59-60 of the textbook to conclude the session.

Prayer Point

Lord, help me to be fruitful in every good work.

Assignment

Read chapters 4-5 prior to the next meeting.

// A mature understanding of our liberty in Christ will motivate us to live a holy life worthy of the freedom given to us."

Session Three

Holiness and the Heart

Chapters 4-5

Objective

To recognize the Holy Ghost's manifestation in human lives as the fruit of the Spirit and evaluate the fruitfulness of our lives.

Key Scriptures

Galatians 5:22-23
Ephesians 4:31-32

Opening

Ask participants who have grown fruits or vegetables to share the basic lifecycle of the types of plants they have nurtured. Lead the group in reflecting on why Scripture compares qualities of love, joy, peace, and so on to fruit.

Watch the Session 3 Video Clip:

Holiness and the Heart

Discuss the following questions:

1. What is the purpose of holiness in our lives?
2. Many times holiness is reduced only to outward standards, yet this session focuses on attitudes and inward principles. Why do you think these concepts are important concerning holiness?
3. Identify a fruit of the Spirit you strive to portray in your life and describe its connection to your pursuit of holiness.

Notes:

Session Four

The Tongue and the Eye

Chapters 6-7

Objective

To establish personal guidelines for daily speech and visual media consumption.

Key Scriptures

James 3:1-13

Matthew 6:22-23

Opening

Ask participants if any of them or someone they know has been hurt by comments made through social media? Discuss the factors that make social media potentially harmful—both for the tongue and the eye.

Watch the Session 4 Video Clip: *The Tongue and the Eye*

Discuss the following questions:

1. Why do you think holiness in speech is important?
2. How could holiness in our speech be connected to the Christian attitudes we discussed in the last session?
3. Media consumption is certainly a relevant topic in our society. How do you set guardrails for what is acceptable on your media devices?

Notes:

Session Five

Holiness in Our Appearance

Chapters 8-9

Objective

To recognize the beauty of holiness and analyze how we can reflect our commitment to holiness in our appearance.

Key Scriptures

I Timothy 2:8-10

I Corinthians 11:14-15

Opening

Many corporations have general guidelines for their employees' appearance and apparel. Why do you think corporations impose these guidelines?

Watch the Session 5 Video Clip:

Holiness in Our Appearance

Discuss the following questions:

1. Multiple principles must be considered when choosing apparel. Describe your process for deciding if clothes fit within your commitment to holiness.
2. Do you think apparel and adornment send a message to people around us? If so, how should that factor into the choices we make about dress?
3. How is hair a sign of glory?
4. Describe how hair reflects our relationship with God and within the family.

Notes:

Notes:

5. What do you think your apparel, adornment, and hair testify to the people around you?

Conclusion

Read the final section on pages 142 of the textbook to conclude the session.

Prayer Point

Assignment

Read chapters 10-11 prior to the next meeting.

// Just as the Bible provides direction for how we can dress in a way that glorifies God, it also directs in how the way we wear our hair can be an act of worship."

Session Six

The Temple of God

Chapters 10-11

Objective

To establish principles for treating our bodies as a temple in which the Holy Ghost will be pleased to dwell.

Key Scriptures

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

Opening

Ask participants what guidelines they have in their homes for keeping their homes clean, e.g. do they have children remove muddy shoes at the front door, does the whole family help clean every Tuesday night, and so forth. Guide participants in a reflection of why we clean the places we live.

Watch the Session 6 Video Clip:

The Temple of God

Discuss the following questions:

1. How does something as simple as the food we eat reflect a commitment to holiness?
2. Describe how the principle of separation from the world factors in when we consider the Christian's stance on alcoholic beverages.
3. Our culture has very open policies about acceptable sexual practices, yet God's Word specifically limits this to the role of husband and wife. Why do you think God so designed it?

Notes:

Notes:

4. Given God's clear view of homosexuality and yet our biblical directive to be kind as Christians, what is the proper response when we are confronted by homosexuality in the media, in the workplace, and with family members?

5. The values and practical applications of holiness we have studied go against much of what our contemporary society promotes. How do we embrace separation and communicate our beliefs with a loving spirit?

6. As a result of all the sessions combined, put your personal statement of commitment to holiness in a single sentence.

Conclusion

Read the Conclusion on the page that follows to complete the study.

Prayer

//We can conquer all sin, including sexual sin, through faith in Jesus Christ, heartfelt repentance, baptism in Jesus' name, the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and daily spiritual disciplines as we rely on the power of the Spirit."

Conclusion

The word *pursuit* indicates an ongoing attempt to attain something, and so it is in our effort to be holy. In every area of our lives, as we have studied throughout these diverse sessions, we must strive every day to let God's holiness work in us and to abstain from sin—a commitment that affects how we think, speak, dress, treat our body, and treat others.

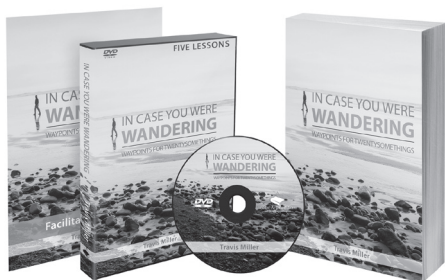
This effort must be bolstered with prayer as we ask the Lord to show us places inwardly and outwardly where we need to make adjustments to present ourselves more effectively as “a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God” (Romans 12:1). Also, we must spend time in the Word of God so it can guide us in how to make the needed changes in our lives and in how to make holy choices in our ever-changing world.

The word *pursuit* might also suggest something illusive about our effort to be holy. We understand after study, however, that we have clear Bible guidelines for living a life of holiness as we continue day in and day out to make decisions based on the principles of God's Word. Should we fail, as is possible with our imperfect human nature, we have the confidence that our holy God is also a God of love, faithful to forgive (I John 1:9). Such hope should propel us all the more in our pursuit to live a life of holiness as worship unto Him—separation from sin unto our loving, holy God.

SMALL GROUP Resources

IN CASE YOU WERE WANDERING

by **Travis Miller**

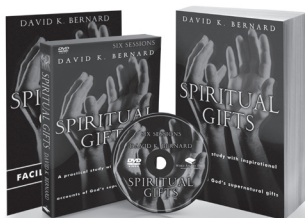


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