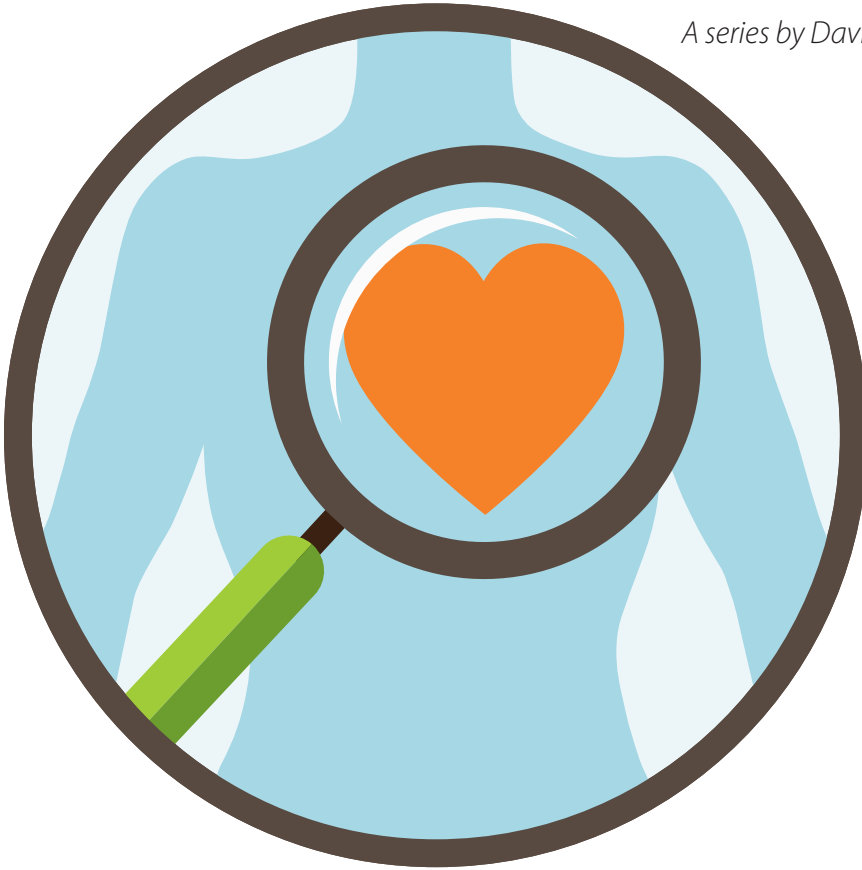


**ADULT**

# Authentic Holiness

*A series by David E. Myers*



## **SERIES BIG IDEA**

The quest for authentic holiness is an inside-out process that begins with a transformed heart and affects our entire being.

*Lesson 1.1*

*Lesson 1.2*

*Lesson 1.3*

*Lesson 1.4*

*Holy Hearts*

*Holy Heads*

*Holy Hands*

*Holy Habits*



# Authentic Holiness: Holy Hearts

A series by David E. Myers

**Lesson Big Idea:** The quest for authentic holiness is a process that will transform the affections of our hearts.

## Foundation

**Scripture Focus:** Colossians 3:2

Tell the story of Peter and Cornelius on page 10.

- » *What do you think Peter struggled with the most concerning the vision God gave him? ⚙️*
- » *Why do you think God showed the vision to Peter three times and then simultaneously had the men standing at the gate of the house? ⚙️*
- » *How will God confirm His will to you if your heart is open to God's direction for your life? ⚙️*
- » *Why do you think God used Peter to take the gospel to Cornelius? ⚙️*
- » *How can we be sure our hearts are open and pure so God can use us? ⚙️*

## Frame

A. Any biblical definition of holiness must include holiness of the heart.

- » Deuteronomy 7:6
- 1. The New Testament church was committed to the disciplines and uniqueness of their faith, including holiness.
  - » I Peter 2:9
- 2. Holiness is taking on the **nature** of God in our own hearts.
- 3. We can only strive to live a life that is pleasing to God by the imparting of God's holiness into our own hearts.

B. Peter's decision in Acts 10 revealed that Peter had a **new heart**.

- 1. A new heart is a change in **priorities**.
  - » Matthew 6:21
- 2. Your heart will follow where you put your treasure.
- 3. If my treasure is what I value the most, then my heart will follow.

C. Peter loved the Lord so much that he was willing to check his emotions when confronted, and not simply react out of instinct.

1. There will be **evidence** of a new heart.

- » *How did your heart change when you got saved?* ⚙️
- » *What do you long in your heart to do for the Lord?* ⚙️
- » *Has your heart demonstrated that it is more willing to learn of God's Word than before? If so, in what ways?* ⚙️

2. Another way a heart becomes holy under the guidance and direction of God's will is that it becomes steadfast.

3. His (David's) heart was **determined**.

D. We must determine that we are going to **serve** God.

1. A fixed heart will bring clarity of **judgment**.

2. A fixed heart will not falter in a **storm**.

- » *How can you get a determined heart if you are not sure what God's plan is for your life?* ⚙️
- » *How can your heart find that fixed point like a compass and lock in to the will of God?* ⚙️

3. A perfect heart is a heart that is **guarded**.


4. The best way to guard your heart is to hide **God's Word** in your heart.

- » Psalm 119:11 ⚙️

## Finish

Tell the story of Paul on pages 13-14.

# Foundation

**Scripture Focus:** Colossians 3:2 

**T**he apostle Peter was staying at his friend's house, Simon the tanner, in Joppa. Joppa (present-day Jaffa) is a beautiful city on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, and Simon the Tanner had a house by the water. Peter had taken a few days off from his hectic schedule and was enjoying some rest and relaxation with a friend in a beautiful setting. (See Acts 9:43; 10:6.)






Around lunch time, Peter was up on the roof of the house praying. Houses in that place and time had flat roofs that functioned as additional living spaces. The Lord decided to take this opportunity to reveal some valuable insights to Peter. While praying, the Lord showed him a vision of a large sheet tied at the four corners descending from Heaven. On the sheet were many unclean animals that were—according to Old Testament law—unlawful for the Jews to eat.

A command from Heaven accompanied the descending vessel: "Rise, Peter; kill, and eat." Peter took issue with the command and refused. The voice from Heaven further instructed Peter, "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common," or unclean. This was done three times. (See Acts 10:9–16.)

As Peter struggled to figure out what this meant and whether it was a message from God or just his own flesh, a knock came to the door downstairs. Some servants from the household of Cornelius, a Roman centurion, had traveled from Caesarea seeking Peter.

They explained how their master had been seeking God and was directed to send them to this house. They were to ask if a man by the name of Peter would come and tell them what they must do to be saved. The Lord instructed Peter to go with them and Peter obeyed. (See Acts 10:17–22.)


Coming from a devout Jewish background, it was not an easy assignment for Peter to go to a Gentile's house—much less a Roman centurion—and share the gospel. Peter was committed to following the teaching and tenets of the Jewish faith, but his love for God and God's plan caused him to open his heart to the Gentiles, taking them the gospel. Holiness must start with the heart first and foremost—a heart that is open to the will of God and the Word of God.


-  **What do you think Peter struggled with the most concerning the vision God gave him?**
-  **Why do you think God showed the vision to Peter three times and then simultaneously had the men standing at the gate of the house?**
-  **How will God confirm His will to you if your heart is open to God's direction for your life?**
-  **Why do you think God used Peter to take the gospel to Cornelius?**
-  **How can we be sure our hearts are open and pure so God can use us?**



## Frame

**A**fter God used Peter to bring the gospel to Cornelius—where he and his household were saved—the gospel began to spread to all nations. There was some initial resistance from the church in Jerusalem, but ultimately the leaders recognized that God was expanding His message to all nationalities. (See Acts 11:1–18.)



The New Testament church was learning that holiness of the heart was not a violation of the Old Testament but rather a fulfillment of the holiness of God at work in their lives. **Any biblical definition of holiness must include holiness of the heart.**



The Jews were keenly aware of Deuteronomy 7:6  which instructs, “For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth” (KJV). **The New Testament church was committed to the disciplines and uniqueness of their faith, including holiness.**


I Peter 2:9  further encapsulates the definition of biblical holiness in the New Testament by stating, “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light” (KJV). Peter, who had received this revelation of salvation to all men, revealed he was still committed to the concept of holiness having a defining impact on our commitment to the ways of God.

**Holiness is taking on the nature of God in our own hearts.**   When we come to the Lord, we have new desires based on our newfound love and appreciation for God. This love is demonstrated by our desire to live in a way that would please God. The holiness of God is the nature or character of God. For us to live as holy people, we must open our hearts to the nature of God.

We are born of flesh and are not holy in our own selves. **We can only strive to live a life that is pleasing to God by the imparting of God’s holiness into our own hearts.** This means that we learn of His ways through His words and we endeavor to keep an open heart. Ultimately, this process involves each of us asking a pivotal question, “Will I conform my heart to the Word of God or will I try to get God’s Word to conform to my desires?” The former is the pursuit of holiness; the latter is not.



**Peter’s decision in Acts 10 revealed that Peter had a new heart.**   Prior to receiving the Holy Ghost in Acts 2, Peter loved God but would often get into trouble and make the wrong decisions because of the impulsiveness of his heart. His passion sometimes was ahead of God’s plan and purpose. In Acts 10—when Peter was confronted with this vision—Peter’s immediate reaction was to reject such a message, but he remained teachable and let God lead him in the right direction.

Each of us must allow the new heart God gives us at the point of salvation to be responsive to the Word of God. When we come to the Lord, the Lord still uses the personality of our heart for His purposes, but we must yield that same heart first to His direction and then to our desires. More than anything, **a new heart is a change in priorities.**  

Matthew 6:21  says, “For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” (KJV). **Your heart will follow where you put your treasure.** A new heart has new desires and new priorities because we learn what is really valuable in life. We learn that the things of God are what we truly long for. In a culture where people allow their hearts to lead them into unwise decisions, the Word teaches us to let the emotions of our hearts follow the dictates of our values.

**If my treasure is what I value the most, then my heart will follow.** If my treasure is possessions and the things I own, then that is where my heart will land. If my treasure is based on the pursuit of God’s will and His ways, then my heart will be there. What do you treasure?

**Peter loved the Lord so much that he was willing to check his emotions when confronted, and not simply react out of instinct.** A new heart that is developing a holy nature readily receives instruction from the Word of God, even if it is contrary to prior beliefs or concepts.

A new heart is not something that remains hidden. The heart will be revealed. **There will be evidence of a new heart.**   The heart may be the incubator for feelings and emotions, but it is not an iron curtain. The heart will burst forth in a very visible manner. The Bible even tells us that our mouths will express the overflow and abundance of what is in our hearts. (See Luke 6:45.)

The evidence of a new heart is a heart that not only expresses itself differently—such as praising God rather than cursing God—but also reveals its nature through our actions. For example, before

## LESSON BIG IDEA: The quest for authentic holiness is a process that will transform the affections of our hearts.

you were saved, you may have enjoyed going to establishments you would never be comfortable in now. Additionally, relationships change. These changes are evidence of a new heart. (See II Corinthians 7:1.)

You may remember the first time you started dating your spouse. You would stay up late at night talking on the phone. You would drive miles to see each other. You would buy gifts that even surprised you. Money was no object. You would go with little to no sleep. Your friends were concerned about you. They would say things like, "This is just not you." There was only one explanation: you had a new heart.

⚙️ **How did your heart change when you got saved?**

⚙️ **What do you long in your heart to do for the Lord?**

⚙️ **Has your heart demonstrated that it is more willing to learn of God's Word than before? If so, in what ways?**

**Another way a heart becomes holy under the guidance and direction of God's will is that it becomes steadfast.** It becomes constant. The psalmist David described his heart as being fixed. (See Psalm 57:7.)

In Psalm 51, David recorded an incredible prayer of repentance for his sins of murder and adultery. At first glance it would appear David was rejoicing that his heart was fixed or repaired, perhaps going back to its original state. But actually David was saying **his heart was determined**. 🖋️ 📖 He had set his heart on a fixed course. He was not going to get distracted or deterred.



Salmon can swim thousands of miles, up streams and waterfalls, dodging the sharp claws of grizzly bears, to arrive back at the very spot they were spawned. They can do this because when they are born there is an imprint of the place of their birth placed in their brain. The imprint is put into their sense of smell. The imprint is put into their will. At a designated time, that trigger is pulled and nothing can stop them.

There are some things in life that must be settled for you and me. **We must determine that we are going to serve God.** 🖋️ 📖 We must draw a line in the sand and commit ourselves to be called children of God. Family members may come and go, but we are going to serve God. Trouble may come, but we are going to serve the Lord. We are going to have determination imprinted on our hearts.


The world may get worse. Sin may abound. I may lose my job. My freedoms may be challenged. I may be persecuted for His name's sake. I may lose a loved one. But regardless of the circumstance, I will not quit. My heart is fixed. It is developing a holy nature of consistency regardless of the circumstances.


David was so troubled with his enemies and wayward family members. He often became frustrated with his own weaknesses. Because he was a king, he had a lot of options available to him. He had choices. He was used to doing it his way. But in this one area, he was saying, "I do not have any options. My heart is fixed."

**A fixed heart will bring clarity of judgment** 🖋️ 📖 and direction for what God's plan is for your life. The fixed point of a compass gives direction to every other path. If I am lost in the woods, I must establish the fixed point of north based on the magnetic pull of the earth. Once I establish that fixed point, I know every other direction. The same is true of our walk with God. A holy heart is a heart that is cognizant of God's heart.

**A fixed heart will not falter in a storm.**   There is a feature on some small aircraft called a fixed speed propeller. This is a propeller that will adjust its angle to keep your speed constant. As you ascend, the angle of the propeller cutting into the wind becomes less efficient. The angle of attack has caused your propeller to take less than a full bite into the oncoming wind. A fixed speed propeller will adjust to the angle and you do not lose any efficiency from the climb; your speed is constant.



Sometimes in your walk with God, your angle of attack changes. The enemy is hitting you from a new direction. You have a greater burden to carry than you did before. There is additional stress. There is additional sacrifice. But if you have a fixed heart, you can make the adjustments, so you do not lose your spiritual efficiency. You will not lose a holy heart that is growing in the Lord.




 **How can you get a determined heart if you are not sure what God's plan is for your life?**

 **How can your heart find that fixed point like a compass and lock in to the will of God?**

We must pursue having a perfect heart. It seems odd that anything in our flesh could become perfect. We are inundated with the concept that nobody is perfect. We truly believe that even the pursuit of perfection is a recipe for disappointment. Certainly, on our own we will always fall short. But there is something about pursuing God that makes our efforts more than just another exercise in futility.

David made mistakes but he never stopped pursuing God. His son Solomon was also blessed and highly favored. But at some point Solomon became comfortable with the blessings and the perks. His heart became divided. He learned how to compartmentalize the things he enjoyed. He let others steer his heart. The Bible makes it clear that David had a perfect heart, but Solomon did not. (See I Kings 11:4.)

**A perfect heart is a heart that is guarded.**   A perfect heart is one that is never allowed to wander. A heart can wander off just like a child who is not being carefully watched by a responsible parent. It is heart neglect to let a heart go off by itself. This can easily happen by what we see or hear, or by some hurt we harbor in our hearts. There are some things we must evict from our hearts, like the landlord who exercises his authority of ownership. (See Proverbs 4:23.)

**The best way to guard your heart is to hide God's Word in your heart.**   A perfect heart is a guarded heart and a guarded heart is a heart that has hidden the Word of God deep in the crevasses and recesses of the innermost being. David learned to do this, and it kept him through all of life's ups and downs. (See Psalm 119:11.) 

A perfect heart is a heart that is longing for God. It is a heart that is reading the Word of God consistently. It is a heart that is determined to never give up. A heart that is pumping with anticipation to get to the house of God and praise Him is a heart that is becoming holy. It is the excitement of new life.

## Finish

**T**he apostle Paul was one of the most prolific apologists for Jesus in the New Testament. He wrote many of the New Testament epistles. He established churches in many different places. He witnessed to kings and governors. He was unapologetic about his faith, and yet he was very polished in his presentation of the gospel. But he did not start out that way.

Paul started off as a well-educated, well-connected persecutor of the early Christian church. He was a skilled lawyer and unrelenting in his determination to extinguish the Christian faith. He had to be brought down before God could truly use him. He got knocked off his high horse on the road to Damascus and lost his eyesight. (See Acts 9.)

## LESSON BIG IDEA: The quest for authentic holiness is a process that will transform the affections of our hearts.

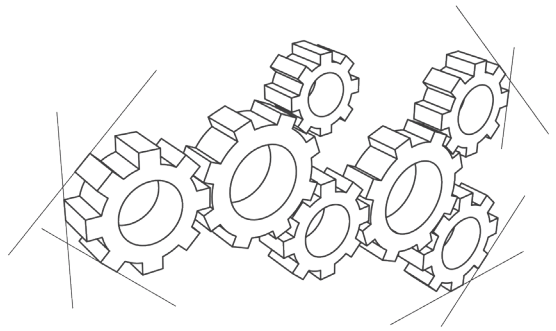
God saw that he could use Paul. Paul would be the perfect apostle for the Gentiles. He was gifted and determined, but he was heading in the wrong direction. After Paul's heart was changed, God took all of the skills and gifts he had and simply started using them for the kingdom of God rather than against it.

The amazing beauty of God's work in our lives is that He can take a heart that is scarred and bruised and turn it into an unstoppable force for good. This is what God looks for. God looks for a heart that He can use. He looks for a heart that can be molded—a heart that can be holy!

A holy heart will always lead to evangelism. Just as Peter and Paul had a change of heart that set the then-known world on fire with the gospel of Jesus Christ, so will our lives lead to evangelism when the affections of our hearts are set on the kingdom of God. The overflow of our hearts longing for God will spill over into our testimony. The environment we inhabit will be supercharged with the unrelenting force of a holy heart.



# Small Group Leader's Guide



## Authentic Holiness: *Holy Hearts*

**Opening Question:** Name one thing in this natural life you don't think you could ever do without. Why?

**Scripture Focus:** Colossians 3:2

Tell the story of Peter and Cornelius on page 10.

### Group Discussion:

- What do you think Peter struggled with the most concerning the vision God gave him?
- Why do you think God used Peter to take the gospel to Cornelius? ⚙
- How can we be sure our hearts are open and pure so God can use us?
- How did your heart change when you got saved?
- What do you long to do in your heart for the Lord?
- What does Scripture mean when it refers to the heart? ⚙
- What does it mean to have a pure heart?
- How do we conform our lives to God's Word?
- Is it difficult for you to take instruction from God's Word? Why or why not?
- What are some values in society that directly conflict with the values of God's Word? ⚙
- What are some values taught in God's Word that are most important to you?
- Why are these values so important to you?
- Why is it important to honor the Lord with our lives? ⚙
- How can we show honor to God with our lives?
- What does it mean for God to be first in your life? ⚙

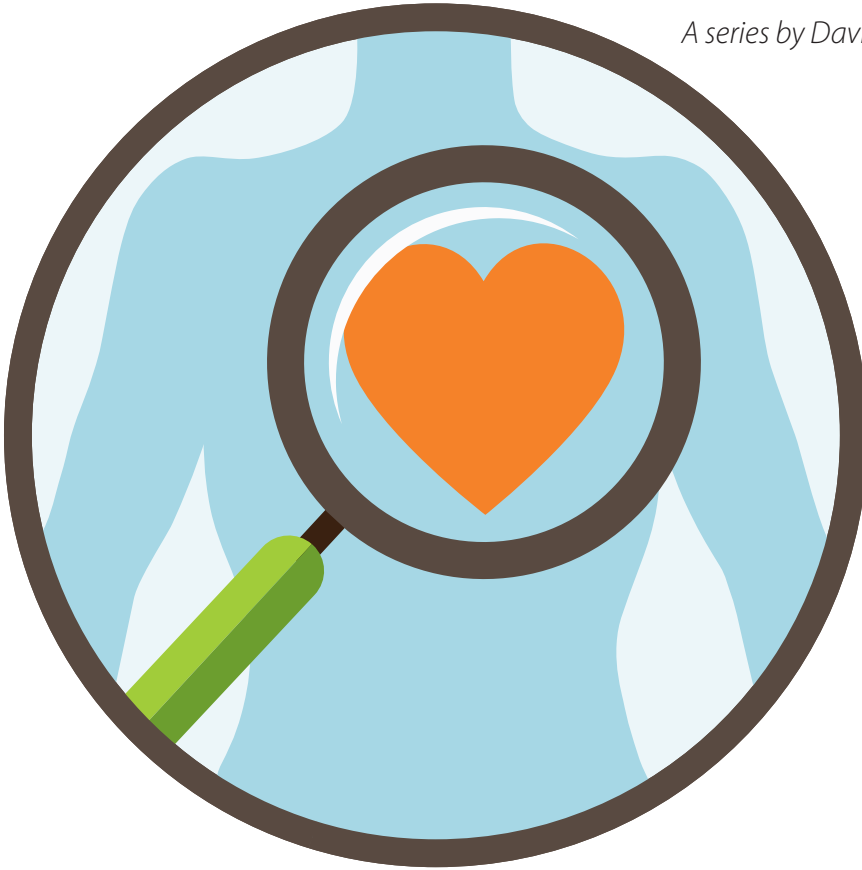
### Prayer Focus

Lord, I want my heart to desire holiness. I want my life to be conformed to Your Word. I choose to treasure the values of Your Word above all else. I am determined to honor You with my whole life. I long for You to be first in my life.

# YOUTH

# Authentic Holiness

*A series by David E. Myers*



## **SERIES BIG IDEA**

The quest for authentic holiness is an inside-out process that begins with a transformed heart and affects our entire being.

*Lesson 1.1*

*Lesson 1.2*

*Lesson 1.3*

*Lesson 1.4*

*Holy Hearts*

*Holy Heads*

*Holy Hands*

*Holy Habits*

# Authentic Holiness

## Holy Hearts

### BLUEPRINT

#### SERIES BIG IDEA

Authentic holiness is an inside-out process that begins with a transformed heart and affects our entire being.

#### LESSON BIG IDEA

Authentic holiness is a process that will transform the affections of our hearts.

#### LEARNING TARGET

To realize that the desires of our hearts affect every other area of our lives.

#### KEY SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

Colossians 3:2

#### SUPPLIES

clay, Play-Doh, toothpicks for the clay

## FOUNDATION

The apostle Peter was staying at his friend's house, Simon the tanner, in Joppa. Joppa (present-day Jaffa) is a beautiful city on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, and Simon the Tanner had a nice house by the water. Peter had taken a few days off from his hectic schedule and was enjoying some rest and relaxation with a friend in a beautiful setting. (See Acts 9:43; 10:6.)

Peter was hungry around lunchtime and was up on the roof of the house praying. The Lord decided to take this opportunity to reveal some valuable insights to Peter. While Peter was praying, the Lord showed him a vision of a large sheet tied at the four corners, descending from heaven. On the sheet were many unclean animals that were—according to Old Testament law—unlawful for the Jews to eat.

A command from heaven accompanied the descending vessel: "Rise, Peter; kill, and eat." Peter took issue with the command and refused. The voice from heaven further instructed Peter, "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common, or unclean. This was done three times. (See Acts 10:9–16.)

As Peter struggled to figure out what this meant and whether it was a message from God or just his own flesh, there was a knock at the door downstairs. Some servants from the household of Cornelius, a Roman centurion, had traveled there from Caesarea seeking Peter.

They explained how their master had been seeking God and was directed to send them to this house. They were to ask if a man by the name of Peter would come and tell them what they must do to be saved. The Lord instructed Peter to go with them and Peter obeyed. (See Acts 10:17–22.)

# LESSON BIG IDEA: Discovering Our Godly Desires

Being a devout Jew, it was not an easy assignment for Peter to go to a Gentile's house—much less a Roman centurion—and share the gospel. Peter was committed to following the teaching and tenets of the Jewish faith, but his love for God and God's plan caused him to open his heart to the Gentiles, taking them the gospel. Holiness must start with the heart first and foremost—a heart that is open to the will of God and the Word of God.

## Opening Discussion


- What do you think Peter struggled with the most concerning the vision God gave him?
- Why do you think God showed the vision to Peter three times and then simultaneously had the men standing at the gate of the house?
- Why do you think God used Peter to take the gospel to Cornelius?

## Middle-School Exercise

1. Provide the class with Play-Doh to use. Have a container of hard Play-Doh as well for comparison.
2. Instruct students that they have a few minutes to create whatever they can imagine.
3. Once they have finished, allow students to show off what they have created.
4. Explain that just as they shaped the Play-Doh into what they saw fit, God purposefully attempts to shape us into what He has imagined for us. It simply takes a willingness to make us like a soft and moldable Play-Doh. When we are unwilling, we are not better than the container of hard Play-Doh that is unusable.

## Senior-High Exercise:


1. Provide Play-Doh or clay for the class.
2. Divide the class into a couple of teams and give them a few minutes to plan and create something with the materials provided.
3. Emphasize teamwork.
4. After they have finished, allow students to show off what they have created.
5. Explain the significance of the materials being able to be molded. Contrast the materials with that of a container of hard clay as you explain that in order for us to be shaped by God and have our hearts changed, we must be willing and “soft” to His touch in our lives.

 *Have one or two of your students share some personal dreams. Then have them share some goals they have for life, school, or in other areas. How do these relate to God, if at all? Why are dreams and goals that are centered on God so important for life choices?*

# FRAME

## I. Defining Holiness

A. What is holiness?

1. Read Deuteronomy 7:6. 
2. The New Testament church was committed to the disciples and uniqueness of their faith, including holiness.






B. Read 1 Peter 2:9. 


1. Peter received this revelation of salvation to all men.
2. He revealed he was still committed to the concept of holiness having a defining impact on our commitment to the ways of God.

C. Holiness is taking on the **nature** of God in our own hearts.  


1. When we come to the Lord, we have new desires based on our newfound love and appreciation for God.
  2. This love is demonstrated by our desire to live in a way that would please God.
  3. The holiness of God is the nature of God.
  4. For us to live as holy people, we must open our hearts and minds to Him.
- D. We can only strive to live a life that is pleasing to God by imparting God's holiness into our own hearts.
1. This means that we learn of His ways through His words, and we endeavor to keep an open heart.
  2. Ultimately, this process involves each of us asking a pivotal question, "Will I conform my heart to the Word of God or will I try to get God's Word to conform to my desires?" The former is the pursuit of holiness; the latter is not.



## II. Peter's Decision

- A. Peter's decision in Acts 10 revealed that Peter had a **new heart**.  
1. Prior to receiving the Holy Ghost in Acts 2, Peter loved God but would often get into trouble and make the wrong decisions because of the impulsiveness of his heart.
  2. In Acts 10—when Peter was confronted with this vision—Peter's immediate reaction was to reject such a message, but he remained teachable and let God lead him in the right direction.
  3. Each of us must allow the new heart God gives us at the point of salvation to be responsive to the Word of God.
  4. When we come to the Lord, the Lord still uses the personalities of our hearts for His purposes, but we must yield that same heart first to His direction and then to our desires.
- B. A new heart is a change in **priorities**.  
- C. *Read Matthew 6:21.* 
1. Your heart will follow where you put your treasure.
  2. A new heart has new desires and new priorities because we learn what is really valuable in life.
  3. In a culture where people allow their hearts to lead them into unwise decisions, the Word teaches us to let the emotions of our hearts follow the dictates of our values.
- D. If my treasure is what I value the most, then my heart will follow.
1. If my treasure is possessions and the things I own, then that is where my heart will land.
  2. If my treasure is based on the pursuit of God's will and His ways, then my heart will be there.



 *What do you treasure?*


 *How did your heart change when you got saved?*

 *What do you long in your heart to do for the Lord?*


- E. Peter loved the Lord so much that he was willing to check his emotions when confronted, and not simply react out of instinct.
1. A new heart that is developing a holy nature readily receives instruction from the Word of God, even if it is contrary to prior beliefs or concepts.
  2. A new heart is not something that remains hidden. The heart will be revealed.
- F. There will be **evidence** of a new heart.  
1. The Bible even tells us that our mouths will express the overflow and abundance of what is in our hearts. (See Luke 6:45.)
  2. The evidence of a new heart is a heart that not only expresses itself differently—such as praising God rather than cursing God—but also reveals its nature through our actions.
  3. Before you were saved, you may have enjoyed going to establishments you would never be comfortable in now.

# LESSON BIG IDEA: Discovering Our Godly Desires









4. Additionally, relationships change. These changes are evidence of a new heart. (See II Corinthians 7:1.)
- G. Another way a heart becomes holy under the guidance and direction of God's will is that it becomes steadfast.
  1. In Psalm 51, David recorded an incredible prayer of repentance for his sins of murder and adultery.
  2. At first glance it would appear David was rejoicing that his heart was fixed or repaired, perhaps going back to its original state.
- H. David's heart was **determined**.  
  1. He had set his heart on a fixed course. He was not going to get distracted or deterred.
  2. There are some things in life that you and I must be fixed on.




 *How can you get a determined heart if you are not sure what God's plan is for your life?*

 *How can your heart find that fixed point like a compass and lock in to the will of God?*

 *This would be an excellent time for a personal testimony. Alternatively, consider asking ahead of time for a volunteer in the class to share his or her story.*

## III. Determined to Serve God

- A. We must determine that we are going to **serve** God.  
  1. We must draw a line in the sand and commit ourselves to be called children of God. Family members may come and go, but I am going to serve God.
  2. Trouble may come, but I am going to serve the Lord. I am going to have determination imprinted on my heart.
  3. The world may get worse. Sin may abound. I may lose my job. My freedoms may be challenged. I may be persecuted for His name's sake. I may lose a loved one. But regardless of the circumstance, I will not quit.
  4. My heart is fixed. It is developing a holy nature of consistency regardless of the circumstances.
- B. A fixed heart will bring clarity of **judgment**.  
  1. The fixed point of a compass gives direction to every other path. If I am lost in the woods, I must establish the fixed point of north based on the magnetic pull of the earth.
  2. Once I establish that fixed point, I know every other direction. The same is true of our walk with God. A holy heart is a heart that is cognizant of God's heart.
- C. A fixed heart will not falter in a **storm**.  
  1. There is a feature on some small aircraft called a fixed speed propeller. This is a propeller that will adjust its angle to keep your speed constant.
  2. As you ascend, the angle of the propeller cutting into the wind becomes less efficient. The angle of attack has caused your propeller to take less than a full bite into the oncoming wind.
  3. Sometimes in your walk with God, your angle of attack changes. The enemy is hitting you from a new direction. You have a greater burden to carry than you did before. There is additional stress.
  4. There is additional sacrifice. But if you have a fixed heart, you can make the adjustments, so you do not lose your spiritual efficiency. You will not lose a holy heart that is growing in the Lord.
- D. A perfect heart is a heart that is **guarded**.  
  1. We must pursue having a perfect heart.
  2. David made mistakes but he never stopped pursuing God. His son Solomon was also blessed and highly favored. But at some point, Solomon became comfortable with the blessings and the perks. His heart became divided.

3. A perfect heart is one that is never allowed to wander.
  4. It is heart neglect to let a heart go off by itself. This can easily happen by what we see or hear, or by some hurt we harbor in our hearts. There are some things we must evict from our hearts, like the landlord who exercises his authority of ownership. (See Proverbs 4:23.)
- E. The best way to guard your heart is to hide **God's Word** in your heart.  
1. A perfect heart is a guarded heart, and a guarded heart is a heart that has hid the Word of God deep in the crevasses and recesses of the innermost being.
  2. David learned to do this, and it kept him through all of life's ups and downs.
  3. *Read Psalm 119:11.* 

# FINISH

The apostle Paul was one of the most prolific apologists for Jesus in the New Testament. He wrote many of the New Testament epistles. He established churches in many different places. He witnessed to kings and governors. He was unapologetic about his faith, and yet he was very polished in his presentation of the gospel. But he did not start out that way.

Paul started off as a well-educated, well-connected persecutor of the early Christian church. He was a skilled lawyer and unrelenting in his determination to extinguish the Christian faith. He had to be brought down before God could truly use him. He got knocked off his high horse on the road to Damascus and lost his eyesight. (See Acts 9.)

God saw that He could use Paul. Paul would be the perfect apostle for the Gentiles. He was gifted and determined, but he was heading in the wrong direction. God took all of the skills and gifts Paul had and simply started using them for the kingdom of God rather than against it.

The amazing beauty of God's work in our lives is that He can take a heart that is scarred and bruised and turn it into an unstoppable force for good. This is what God looks for. God looks for a heart that He can use. He looks for a heart that can be molded—a heart that can be holy!

## Discussion Questions:

- Why can things go wrong even when we have the best intentions?
- Why then is it so important that our hearts are in the right place and we obey God above all else?

## Middle-School Finish:

1. Discuss the dreams and goals of the students in your class.
2. What goals do they have for school?
3. What goals do they have for college?
4. What do they want to do as a career?
5. How are these things impacted by their relationship with God?
6. How should they be impacted?

## Senior-High Finish:

1. Discuss personal dreams of your students.
2. Who has a dream to be a sports star? A musician? A doctor?
3. How did they come to embrace these dreams? Where did the dreams stem from?
4. Were these dreams and goals motivated by their relationship with God? How so?
5. How can they begin to find their desires in Christ?


## The Big Picture

- We need to live a life of true holiness.
- Our hearts must change first, and then our desires will follow.

# LESSON BIG IDEA: Discovering Our Godly Desires

## Final Reflections

- How will God confirm His will to you if your heart is open to God's direction for your life?
- How can we be sure our hearts are open and pure so God can use us?
- Has your heart demonstrated that it is more willing to learn of God's Word than before? If so, in what ways?
- How have your desires changed in the last year?

 *Allow students time to share what they have written.*

# SELAH

Using the following points, take this time to guide your students in prayer.

- Lord, I want my heart to desire holiness even if it means making my heart new again.
- I want my life to be conformed to Your Word, so help me to be disciplined and follow after what Your Word says.
- I choose to treasure the values of Your Word above all else even if it means compromising friendships.
- I am determined to honor You with my whole life. I long for You to be first in my life.

 *Allow students time to update their Personal Discipleship Guide.*



**CHILDREN**

# Authentic Holiness



## **SERIES BIG IDEA**

The quest for authentic holiness is an inside-out process that begins with a transformed heart and affects our entire being.

*Lesson 1.1*

*Lesson 1.2*

*Lesson 1.3*

*Lesson 1.4*

*Holy Hearts*

*Holy Heads*

*Holy Hands*

*Holy Habits*





# Authentic Holiness: Holy Hearts

## BLUEPRINT

### SERIES BIG IDEA

Authentic holiness is an inside-out process that begins with a transformed heart and affects our entire being.

### SERIES MEMORY PASSAGE

“But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy” (1 Peter 1:15–16).

### LESSON BIG IDEA

Authentic holiness is a process that will transform the affections of our hearts.

**STUDENTS WILL** evaluate how holiness is a process of transformation in our hearts.

## Early Elementary (Grades 1-3)

### TOOL BOX

#### FOUNDATION

- PowerPoint 1.1
- *Internet*: Before and after pictures of people involved in drug addictions
- Paper, pencils
- Butterfly garden kit, caterpillars or chrysalis, butterfly books, whiteboard, marker

#### FRAME

- Series 1 memory verse poster (TRP)
- Butterfly template (TRP) , music, construction paper, marker, tape
- Heart cutout (TRP) (1 per student) on white paper, crayons, pencils
- White sheet or tablecloth, can of sardines, raw broccoli, Brussel sprouts, and/or any other food undesirable to children
- *Visual*: Peter’s Vision (TRP)

#### FINISH

- Activity papers, crayons
- Paper (1 per student), pencils

#### SELAH

- *Series song and lyrics*: “Holy Like You”
- Glass filled with dirt and trash, bowl of clean water

## Late Elementary (Grades 4-6)

### TOOL BOX

#### FOUNDATION

- PowerPoint 1.1
- *Internet*: Before and after pictures of people involved in drug addictions
- Paper, pencils
- *Video*: Metamorphosis of a butterfly
- *Visual*: Metamorphosis (TRP)
- Metamorphosis worksheet (TRP) (1 per student), pencils, crayons, picture of yourself as a baby or very young child (the more embarrassing the better)

#### FRAME

- Series 1 memory verse poster (TRP)
- Memory verse printed in large letters on 8 ½ x 11 paper (4–5 words per page), Bible, timer
- Posterboard or newsprint cut into heart shapes (1 per pair of students), markers
- White sheet or tablecloth, can of sardines, raw broccoli, Brussel sprouts, and/or any other food undesirable to children
- *Visual*: Peter’s Vision (TRP)

#### FINISH

- Activity papers, pencils
- Paper (1 per student), pencils

#### SELAH

- *Series song and lyrics*: “Holy Like You”
- Whiteboard, marker

# Foundation

## Early Elementary (1-3)

### Transformed

Prior to class search the Internet for before and after pictures of people involved in drug addictions. If you use the link below, scroll down and choose the examples you wish to use before class begins. If your students are younger, you may wish to choose the less shocking examples.

<http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/world-news/faces-meth-horrific-transformation-fresh-faced-4705220>

Show students the pictures or videos of the transformation process from a healthy individual to a barely recognizable addict.

Assign students to small groups to discuss the changes that take place on the outside when a person abuses drugs. Appoint a scribe in each group; give the scribes paper and pencils to write their discussion points down.

Students brainstorm the changes that take place inside when sin is invited into our lives and we move away from God. Allow student groups to share their discussion points with the class.

### Reflection

- **How does sin transform lives?**
- **How does God transform us and give us holy hearts?**
- **Which transformation would you prefer to experience?**

## Late Elementary (4-6)

### Butterfly Garden

Show the butterfly garden kit. If the butterflies are in the caterpillar stage, students make predictions or observations about them. Write student responses about the caterpillars on a whiteboard.



Students form small groups and share the books about butterflies.


### Reflection

- **How do caterpillars change into butterflies?**
- **What is your favorite butterfly? Why?**
- **How do we change as humans?**

### Transformation

Prior to class search the Internet for a video showing the metamorphosis of a butterfly.

Show the video of a caterpillar transforming into a butterfly, or use the metamorphosis visual (TRP) . Hand out the metamorphosis worksheet (TRP)  for students to complete while watching the video.

Discuss the transformation of the caterpillar. Using the metamorphosis visual (TRP) , show how the caterpillar has to change if he is going to be a butterfly.

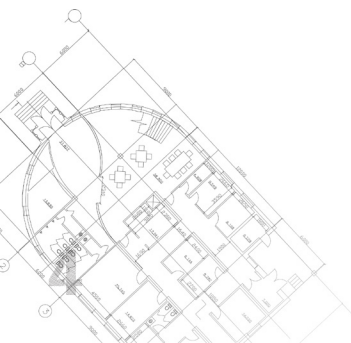
Discuss how we, as humans, transform as well. Show your baby picture and allow students to laugh at it with you. We change from babies, to children, to adults. We transform.

We can do this spiritually as well. God wants to transform us. It starts with our hearts and moves into our thoughts and actions.

Ask students to share how they might change spiritually, intellectually, and physically.

### Reflection

- **How does a caterpillar change into a butterfly?**
- **What are some physical changes we experience as humans?**



# Frame


## Early Elementary (1-3)


## Late Elementary (4-6)

### Memory Verse

"But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy" (1 Peter 1:15-16).

### Verse in Flight


Prior to class use the butterfly template (TRP)  to trace eight or nine butterflies on construction paper. Write the verse in marker, four or five words on each butterfly. Tape the butterflies to the walls.


Display the verse (TRP) . Play music while students pretend they are butterflies and fly around the room. When you stop the music at intervals, students walk to the paper butterfly closest to them. Students say the verse in order, but should only say the part on the butterfly closest to them.

#### Reflection

- **How do we know God is holy?**
- **How can we be holy?**

### Holy Hearts

Prior to class use the heart cutout template (TRP)  to make a white heart for each student.

Display and read the verse (TRP) . Then give each student a white heart cutout and crayons or pencils. Students write the memory verse on their hearts. On the back, students write or draw what they think *holy* means.


Tell students *holy* means, "dedicated to God, pure, and morally excellent."

#### Reflection

- **What does it mean to live a holy life?**
- **What does it mean to have a pure or holy heart?**

### Verse Race

Prior to class print the memory verse in a very large font with four or five words per page.


Display the verse (TRP) . Divide students into small groups. One group at a time, the group will race to find the verse in the Bible, read it, and then place the verse papers in order on the floor. Time students. The group with the fastest time is the winner.

Repeat as time permits.

#### Reflection

- **What does this verse mean to you?**
- **What does it mean to be holy?**

### Holy Hearts

Display the verse (TRP) . Students find partners and read the verse aloud together. Give each pair a heart-shaped posterboard or newsprint and markers.

Students work together and list sins on the back of the paper heart. On the front of the heart, students record holy actions or things that are pleasing to God.

Students compare and contrast holy versus unholy hearts.

#### Reflection

- **What does it mean to live a holy life?**
- **What does it mean to have a pure or holy heart?**
- **Can we have sin in our lives and still please God?**
- **Can people change? Why or why not?**
- **Who helps us change? Why and how?**

## Early Elementary (1-3)

### Bible Lesson: Peter's Heart Transformation (Acts 10:9–23)

Prior to class place the items that most kids would consider gross (broccoli, sardines, oysters, etc.) in a white tablecloth or sheet. Keep it closed by holding the four corners.

- **What is the most disgusting food you have ever eaten?** 


The enemy has a transformation process in store for you. It is not a pretty one. It will not bring you joy and peace. But God has an incredible process of transformation for each of us. Just like God has designed the caterpillar to transform into a butterfly, He has designed a transformation process for us called holiness.

God begins to work on our hearts and brings changes. We slowly become new creatures as time goes by. We will finally reach the end of our process when we get to Heaven. We go through this transformation process because God wants to do great things in our lives and take us to Heaven. We must never, no matter how old we get, stop allowing God to change us.

Someone in biblical times who experienced a life transformation was the apostle Peter. We read about his change of heart in Acts 10:9–23.

One day in Joppa, Peter was really hungry when he went up to the roof to pray. Maybe Peter was having a hard time focusing because he was daydreaming about pizza or chocolate cake.

- **Have you ever been really hungry with your stomach grumbling and begging you for food?**

Show Peter's Vision visual (TRP) . When Peter was finished praying and about to go eat something, he had a vision from God. Peter saw a tablecloth lowered from heaven right down to the ground in front of him. (*Bring out the tablecloth or sheet with items inside, holding the four corners.*) Maybe Peter's mouth started watering thinking about the heavenly treats he was about to receive.

When the tablecloth opened, Peter was shocked. There were all kinds of foods and meats that Peter and the Jewish people were not supposed to eat. (*Open your cloth for students to see the items inside.*)

- **Think of the most disgusting food you've ever eaten. Turn and tell your neighbor what it is.**

## Late Elementary (4-6)

That's what it was like for Peter. The foods he saw were not only gross to eat, but it was against the Jewish laws to eat them!

God told Peter to get up and eat. Rather than obeying God, Peter argued with God! Uh-oh, we shouldn't argue with God. God tried to change Peter's heart, but Peter was having a hard time. He had always eaten good food according to God's law. His heart was closed to change. God gave Peter the same instructions three times. Can you imagine arguing with God three times? God was trying to open Peter's heart to something new—the vision was about something more than food.

Peter was a Jewish preacher who preached only to Jews. Through this vision, God showed Peter that every person, not just Jews, could be cleansed and could be saved. As soon as Peter experienced a change of heart, and was transformed, God used Peter to go preach to a man named Cornelius. Cornelius was not a Jew. Because Peter allowed God to change his heart, he acted immediately and preached the truth to Cornelius and his family. This whole family was filled with the Holy Ghost and baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, right away.

These people would not have been saved if Peter's heart had not been transformed. Because Peter finally allowed God to change his heart, Peter's thoughts and then his actions were also changed. Because Peter changed his actions, all the disciples started preaching to every person. It did not matter the gender or culture. They preached to all people! They realized that God wanted to save everybody. God used Peter to start a brand new revival!

God wants to transform each of us, just like He did Peter. Allow God to change you from the inside out. Let Him change your heart and make it holy.

### Discussion Questions:

- **What happened to Peter when he was praying?**
- **What did God want Peter to do? Why?**
- **How was Peter changed or transformed?**
- ☆ **Why does holiness start from the inside out?**
- ☆ **How is holiness a transformation in our hearts?**
- ☆ **How are our hearts transformed by God?**

# Finish

## Early Elementary (1-3)

### Family Connection

Review the instructions for page two of the activity paper—Family Connection—and give students a chance to discuss how they will carry out this assignment. If your class has consistent attendance, consider offering a reward for those who return the Family Connection. Provide time in the class to discuss the activity.

### Activity Paper: *My Holy Heart*

Ask students to complete the dot-to-dot shape. Then in the center of the heart, students should draw a picture of how God changes a heart to be holy.

### Metamorphosis

Instruct students to pretend they are caterpillars in cocoons. Explain that you will walk around and tag them, and when you tag them, they are to act like they are breaking out of a cocoon. Once they have broken out of their cocoon, they are to shout a praise to God for changing their lives! Repeat until every student has a chance to thank God.

## Late Elementary (4-6)

### Activity Paper: *Transformed Heart*

On the blanks provided, ask students to write words or actions that identify an unholy or holy heart. At the bottom, they will write a sentence of what it means to have a heart transformed by God.

### Popcorn Praise

Instruct students to sit on the edge of their seats. Ask, "How have you changed since God touched your heart?" One word answers are fine. The goal is to have one student right after another stand up, speak, and sit back down. (I'm happy; I'm nice; I help others; I feel clean; and so on.)

# Selah

### Prayer

Pray with students. Give each student a sheet of paper and pencil. Students write or draw one thing they want God to change in their lives.

### Reflection

Students pray for one another and ask God to help them to keep their hearts holy.

### Create in Me...

Show students a glass filled with dirt and trash. Dump the contents of the cup into the trash and wash it in the bowl of clean water.

### Reflection

- **What are some sins that can make our hearts unholy?**
- **How does God clean our hearts and make us holy?**
- **How can we change our hearts and minds?**

### Changes

Brainstorm names of people in the Bible who had a big change in their lives. Write the names on the whiteboard. Students tell how each person changed.

### Reflection

- **Have you ever had a change-of-heart experience? Explain.**
- **Is it easy or hard to make changes in your life?**
- **What are some ways you change after God transforms your heart?**