

Call to Holiness

In 2 Corinthians 6:3-10, Paul keeps encouraging the Corinthians to be reconciled to God. He presents a long list of hardships and triumphs to show what it means to be a follower of Christ and a minister of God. In short, he lists difficult situations (2 Cor. 6:4, 5), virtues of character (2 Cor. 6:6), equipment for ministry (2 Cor. 6:7), and vicissitudes of ministry (2 Cor. 6:8-10). After instructing the members in Corinth to be reconciled to God, Paul appeals for them to live a holy life, and to do

so by separating themselves from the harmful
influence of unbelievers and from unclean things
(2 Cor. 6:14-17).

**Read 2 Corinthians 6:11-7:1. According to
this passage, what does a holy life look like?**

2COR. 6:11-7:1-ESV

"We have spoken freely to you, Corinthians; our
heart is wide open. You are not restricted by
us, but you are restricted in your own
affections ("PITY OR SYMPATHY"). In return
(I speak as to children) widen your hearts also.
Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For
what partnership has righteousness with
lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with
darkness? What accord has Christ with Belial
(THE DEVIL)? Or what portion does a believer
share with an unbeliever? What agreement has the

temple of God with idols? For we are the temple
of the living God; as God said,

"I will make my dwelling among them and walk
among them, and I will be their God, and they
shall be My people.

Therefore 1)go out from their midst,

and 2)be separate from them, says the Lord,

and 3)touch no unclean thing;

then I will welcome you, and I will be a father
to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to
Me,says the Lord Almighty."

Since we have these promises, beloved, let us
cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body
and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in
the fear of God."

Paul emphasizes in this passage the
importance of affection and love within the
church (1 Cor. 6:11-13). The evidence that
people have been reconciled to God is that they

seek reconciliation with one another. Indeed, they become, as it were, agents of horizontal reconciliation.

7 APPEALS:

Next, the call to holiness is given by means of six appeals, namely, (1) "Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers" (2 Cor. 6:14, NKJV); (2) " 'Come out from among them' " (2 Cor. 6:17, NKJV); (3) " 'Be separate' " (2 Cor. 6:17, NKJV); (4) " 'Do not touch what is unclean' " (2 Cor. 6:17, NKJV); (5) "Let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit" (2 Cor. 7:1, ESV); (6) Make holiness perfect in the fear of God" (2 Cor. 7:1, RSV; emphasis supplied). These exhortations show that a holy God requires a holy life and separation from idolatry.

7 PROMISES:

On the other hand, the passage also brings
seven promises that highlight the role of the
Christian church as a holy temple: (1) " 'I will
dwell in them' "; (2) " '[I will] walk among
them' "; (3) " 'I will be their God' "; (4)
" 'They shall be My people' "; (5) " 'I will
receive you' "; (6) " 'I will be a Father to
you' "; (7) " 'You shall be My sons and
daughters' " (2 Cor. 6:16, 17, 18, NKJV).

Notice that the four promises in 2
Corinthians 6:16 are the basis for the three
imperatives in 2 Corinthians 6:17 (see the word
"therefore" at the beginning of
2 Corinthians 6:17). This demonstrates that
holiness is not the result of one's efforts but
the work of the Holy Spirit in the heart.
Although holiness results from God, believers
must do their part and reject idolatry and every
impure practice.

What do God's promises in 2 Corinthians
6:16-18 tell us about what holiness is?

HOLINESS IS A CLOSE AND MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIP
WITH GOD. IT IS A STATE OF BEING WHOLLY DEPENDENT ON
GOD.

