

Seek God First



March 7, 2010

Bible Background

New Testament writers penned Scripture from a basic Jewish concept—God is holy. The heathenism prevalent in that day did not promote holiness. The Gentiles' gods were examples of immorality and vile actions, promoting base thinking.

The call to the New Testament church to be holy required action. Peter said, "Be holy in all manner of conversation." *Strong's Concordance* defines the Greek word *anastrophe* (conversation) as "behavior," indicating that a godly people will exhibit holy behavior. Holy behavior stems from aligning oneself with a holy God; thus true salvation results in true holiness.

Before the Lesson

Mount the lesson's Bible point mini poster over the board.

- **Attention Getter:** Cut an old sheet into four sections (more or less depending on the size of your class). Collect cuticle scissors and nail clippers.
- **Activity:** Prepare three posterboards by writing the words "Sacred," "Secular," and "Sinful" on them, one word on each posterboard. Bring magazines and newspapers to class.
- **Prayer:** Print and cut apart the prayer sheets from the resource CD.
- **Memory Work:** Write the phrases of the Bible verses as diagrammed on large pieces of paper. "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." Wad up the papers and place them in a box or in a grocery bag.
- **Bible Story:** Prepare the objects for the lesson ahead of class and cover with towels or boxes. Write the following references on index cards (one per card): John 3:16; I John 1:9; II Corinthians 5:17; Acts 16:31; I John 5:1-4; Galatians 5:16.
- **Debriefing:** Cut apart the flesh/Spirit cards from the poster and place in a basket.
- **Next Week:** Print and cut apart the assignments for next week's lesson.
- **Option 1:** Cut apart the cards for the coded verses and place in an open container.
- **Option 2:** Practice the experiment at home.

WELCOME TO THE WORD

Welcome and Attendance

If students did not help decorate, briefly let them explore the room and then allow them to make name posters. Give each student a piece of cardstock. Provide markers. Allow five minutes for them to create a poster displaying their first name. Mount these throughout the room. Students sign in on the brick graffiti poster.

Attention Getter

Divide the class into four teams (adjust to accommodate the size of your class)—no more than four students per team. Give each team cuticle scissors, nail clippers, and a portion of a sheet or large piece of cloth. Tell them they have two minutes to cut as many 1-inch holes as possible in the sheet. Play high energy music as children work. Use the "holey" sheet to define the word "holy" and "holiness."

- **Would you say this sheet is holy? Or is it holey? Or is it wholly ruined?**
- **What do we mean when we say something is holy?**

Unit 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" (I Peter 1:15-16).

Scripture Text

Romans 8:2-8; Ephesians 2:8; I Thessalonians 4:7-8; Titus 2:11-12; 3:4-7; Hebrews 11:6; 12:14

Lesson Focus

Holiness is not a means of earning salvation but a result of salvation.

Bible Point

Holiness is a result of salvation.

Teacher Insight

Holiness is defined as "the state or quality of being holy; sanctity." The definitions of holy are "Belonging to, derived from, or associated with a divine power; sacred; living according to a religious or spiritual system; specified or set apart for a religious purpose." (Taken from *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*.)

Guidelines, definitions, and opinions are only valuable when aligned with God's holiness. Lack of knowledge often causes an improper view of holiness, such as:

"Great! Another set of rules!"

"If I attend church and wear the right clothes, then I'm holy."

"It's too hard to be holy!"





Some young Apostolics follow church guidelines and ignore holiness of the heart, basing their dress, talk, and actions on fitting in—and not on seeking God. Other young people completely reject the notion of personal holiness.


This generation needs to understand that a holy life provides liberty. Freedom from the habits and addictions of unholy activities and attitudes results in joy. Build this into your teaching. Pray that your students discover the privilege of being holy. Raise up a standard by encouraging your students to seek God first and learn to please Him!

Unit A: Attitude
Result of salvation

Unit Focus: Holiness is not a means of
earning salvation but a result of salvation.



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|  <p>Welcome to the Word</p> | <p>Welcome & Attendance Attention Getter Activity</p> | <p>cardstock, markers, timer sheet(s), cuticle scissors, nail clippers magazines, newspapers, posterboard, glue sticks, holiness poster from resource packet</p> |
|  <p>Open the Word</p> | <p>Worship Prayer Memory Work</p> | <p>no supplies needed prayer sheets from the resource CD, prayer poster from the resource packet Bibles, highlighters, paper wads, worship CD/CD player</p> |
|  <p>Reveal the Word</p> | <p>Bible Story</p> | <p>wrapped gift, bucket, soapy water, dirty jar, “newborn” doll, cutout letters F A I T H, a popular snack item, Bibles, index cards</p> |
|  <p>Do the Word</p> | <p>Debriefing Snack Time Student Paper Wrap Up Optional Activities</p> | <p>flesh/Spirit poster and character cards, container, Bibles snacks from story, drinks student papers posterboard, assignments for next week’s lesson <i>Option 1:</i> basket, coded verses poster/cards from resource packet <i>Option 2:</i> milk, food coloring, small plates, cotton swabs <i>Option 3:</i> SMP poster, Bibles, highlighters</p> |



Teacher Tip
This activity is a prelude to the lesson. Remain neutral and do not provide “correct” or “incorrect” answers for the vote. If the children ask which one is correct, respond that the answer will be evident during the Bible lesson.

Activity: According to the dictionary, holy is something set apart for a specific purpose, something associated with a divine power, or something sacred. Our Bible verse tells us to “be holy in all manner of conversation.” The word “conversation” in this text means behavior. So in everything we do we are to be holy. Is brushing your teeth holy? Is walking the dog holy? Is going to church holy? Is cheating on a test holy? Some things we do are holy or sacred. Some things some people do are not holy, like cheating on a test—that is sinful. Some things we do are neither sacred (holy) nor sinful; they are just necessary in the course of life. We call those things secular. Let’s see if you can identify what is sacred, secular, and sinful. Pass out magazines and newspapers to students. Point out the posterboards you have prepared. Ask students to cut out pictures or headlines from the magazines and newspapers of examples of sacred, sinful, and secular behavior or attitudes. When students have completed the activity, review the choices they have made. Depending on the students in your class you may have a variance of opinion on what is sacred, sinful, and secular. Do not agree or disagree with the choices they have made.

- How do we know what is holy and unholy?
- Who decides what is holy?
- Why should we want to be holy?

Let’s take a poll. Uncover the poster. Read this and vote on each point. Allow the students time to decide and then vote. After the vote, discuss each point, asking the preteens why they voted as they did.

Worship

“I Want To Live A Holy Life” by Mark Condon.

“Sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy” (Leviticus 11:44).

Sanctify = bless, purify, consecrate, make sacred
holy = sacred, consecrated, divine, righteous, godly
salvation = deliverance, rescue, escape from sin

OPEN THE WORD

Prayer

Select volunteers (see page 6) to help fill in the blanks on the prayer poster. Ask the class to find and read Leviticus 11:44. Volunteers (one or three) fill in the missing words. **What does sanctify mean?** Discuss. Write “sanctify” in the first equation blank. Provide a dictionary for a volunteer to find and read the definition and then write it on the poster. Repeat this process with “holy.”

God is holy. How do we sanctify—or consecrate—ourselves to become holy? Pray. **God wants us to be holy like Him, but we are sinners. We must realize we are sinners and then seek God for salvation. What is salvation?** Follow the above procedure completing the last equation on the poster. **Salvation is an escape from**

sin. It is deliverance from the punishment of sin. Salvation changes us and so we begin to live godly like Jesus. Holiness is a result of salvation. What helps us make this change to holiness? Prayer, Bible reading, worship, the Spirit of God.

Not all changes in our life are the same or made the same way. Even praying is not the same every time. Not every prayer request is alike. Not every prayer follows the same pattern. Distribute the prayer sheets. After the children complete them, lead in a moment of personal prayer, encouraging the children to read their prayer to the Lord.

Memory Work

What happens after salvation? Ask the class to read I Peter 1:15-16 aloud, then highlight the passage. **Holiness is a result of salvation. The Lord calls us to be holy. We want to be holy because we love Him and want to please Him. Our desires have changed.** Pair off the students (draw blocks) and let each pair read a phrase (between punctuation marks as shown on the poster), ending with the reference. Repeat the passage as many times as it takes for each pair to read at least two phrases.

Play this game to get students to moving around as they review the verses. Dump the prepared paper wads on the floor. Tell students they have one minute to unwrap the paper wads and put the words in order. Play high energy music as the children work. At the end of one minute ask them to read the verses as they have them laid out. If they are not in correct order, allow another minute of play. If you have more than eight students, prepare two sets of paper wads and let the students race against each other.

If time allows, let the students complete the memory work in the student paper.

REVEAL THE WORD

Bible Story

Place the objects and reference cards on a table. Number and then cover each with a towel or box.

Seek God First

Who knows the English alphabet? Ignore the snickering and ask again until everyone acknowledges the question. **These letters are the foundation for our language. What are some ways we use the ABCs?** To form words, sounds, lists, identification (groups/person), dot-to-dot, and so forth.

Hold up your Bible. **We also need to learn the ABCs of holiness** (point to each wall)—**A for attitude, B for behavior, and C for commitment.**

Earlier we voted on what holiness meant. Review the votes. **True holiness is pleasing God. We please God by being like Him. These other ideas may be part of holiness, but “being holy” is not the way to earn salvation. We are holy because we experience salvation. Holiness is a result of salvation.**

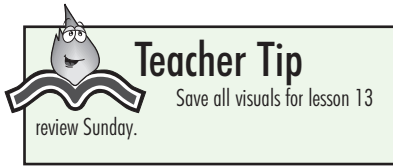
Ask a volunteer to uncover object 1 (the gift) and look up and read the verse (John 3:16). Pass around the gift. **Salvation is a beautiful gift from God. We cannot earn salvation by living a good life or giving money. Through repentance, baptism in Jesus’ name, and the infilling of the Holy Ghost, we receive God’s gift of eternal life.**

Uncover object 2 (soapy water and dirty jar). Ask a volunteer to read I John 1:9 and then step to the bucket. **Salvation comes from seeking God. He promises to cleanse us from sin.** Hand the dirty jar to the volunteer. **Would you like to drink water from this jar?** Response. **Why not?** Because it is dirty. **What can you do to make it useable?** Ask the volunteer to wash the jar in the soapy water and then rinse it. **After the jar is washed, it is prepared. We can fill it with a cool, refreshing drink. Once we repent and are baptized, we are ready to be filled with the power of the Holy Ghost. Salvation prepares us for a holy life. Holiness is a result of salvation. Our attitude changes.**

Ask a volunteer to uncover object 3 (newborn doll) and read II Corinthians 5:7. **Salvation makes us new. We escape sin. We want to be Christ-like. We take on a new attitude that says “I want to please Jesus.”**

To live a godly life, we must seek God to learn what true holiness is. He shows us how. Uncover the cutout letters. **These letters spell a word we need. What is it?** Allow two volunteers to unscramble the word. Ask one to read Acts 16:31.

1. A beautifully wrapped gift; index card John 3:16
2. A bucket of clean, soapy water, bucket of clean water, and a dirty jar; index card I John 1:9
3. A “newborn” doll; index card II Corinthians 5:17
4. Cutouts of letters F A I T H randomly secured to board with Plasti-Tak; index card Acts 16:31
5. A popular snack item (one per child); index card I John 5:1-4
6. Bible; index card Galatians 5:16



What do we need to believe on Jesus? Faith. Faith causes us to seek God. When we seek God, we learn what pleases Him. When we please God, we conform, or become like Him. What does our memory verse say? Let students read from the poster: **Salvation brings holiness. Our attitude changes. Our behavior changes.**

Ask another volunteer to uncover object 5 and then read I John 5:1-4. **I just love (snack item). Do you? Should I share these? Will you follow my instructions on how to receive this snack? Good! My instruction is take one and set it in front of you. Save it to eat later.** Distribute snack.

Everyone wants love. God's love is perfect. What did I John 5 say we should do if we love God? Keep His commandments. **Jesus has something to share with me—His holiness. By following His commands, I enjoy His love and holiness just as we will enjoy this snack later.**

Uncover the last object. Ask the children to read Galatians 5:16 aloud. **Holiness is a result of salvation. We cannot live holy without the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost is part of biblical salvation. We will not find salvation unless we seek God! However, once we learn the ABCs of holiness—Attitude, Behavior, and Commitment—we will try to please God. We will stay away from sin. We will live holy!**

DO THE WORD

Debriefing

This is the time where you determine if your students understood the lesson. What is holiness? Why is it necessary? Do I have to live holy? How can I live holy? Make life application with the Scripture.

If we are to be holy because God is holy, we must not only seek Him, but we must also be like Him. When we experience salvation, our lifestyle should change. **Holiness is a result of salvation.** Ask students to read Romans 8:4-6.

- What does it mean to be “after the flesh”? How can we live after the flesh and still be like God? We cannot.

- What are some things of the Spirit that we can follow?

Ask a volunteer to read Titus 2:11-12. **Soberly means wisely. What does righteously mean? The right way. We know that godly means like God. Think about every action or word so that you act and speak wisely, making right choices like God would make.**

Mount the poster of two characters. Let volunteers each draw a card from the jar and then attach it to the proper character. When finished, discuss the difference between the two characters.

- How can you tell which character is living a life of holiness?
- Which choices are wise, and which are not? Why?
- What made this character (point to Spirit) different from this character (point to flesh)?

Turn to Romans 12:1-2 and read it with me. What phrase follows “holy”? Acceptable unto God. **When we live holy before God, we are acceptable to Him. We please Him. He can then transform or change us so that we can prove to ourselves and to others what is God's perfect will. And what is His perfect will? Point to the memory poster. To be holy because He is holy.**

- Do you think preteens should be holy?
- At what age do you think someone should begin to live holy?
- If being holy means set apart for a specific purpose, what is our purpose?

Holiness does not just happen. We must dedicate effort, time, and resources to holy living. Our holiness is a result of salvation and wise choices. Are you living a life of holiness? You can make the wise choice to let God transform you. Let's pray.

Snack

Let students eat the snack you distributed earlier. Provide drinks.

Student Paper

Students unscramble the words relating to holiness and align with simple definitions.



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|--------------|---|
| GODLINESS | Devout, living by God's laws |
| SANCTITY | Sacred, godliness |
| CONSECRATION | Dedication |
| CONFORM | Agree with; follow the rules |
| CHRISTLIKE | Showing spirit of Christ |
| HOLINESS | Quality of being holy; freedom from sin |
| SALVATION | Deliverance from sin |
| ATTITUDE | Manner or position toward something |
| BEHAVIOR | Actions |
| COMMITMENT | Promise, devotion |

Wrap Up

Explain the Surprise Sunday concept. **It might happen as early as next week! Be sure to bring your Bible, your finished student paper, and be on time. You never know how you might be rewarded.**

Distribute the assignment slips to various students (make a list). If you have fewer than six students, assign each student one verse and you prepare the remaining passages. Tell students to study and then illustrate the passage (drawing, magazine pictures, rebus, and so forth). Provide posterboard. Midweek, contact the students by phone, mail, email, or in person to remind them.

A Look at Next Week

Let next week be a Surprise Sunday.

Find time to read the book, *In His Steps*, a novel about a pastor and five parishioners who each resolve to live his life according to the principles of Christ by asking, What would Jesus do? It is available for online reading at www.kancoll.org/books/sheldon/. Consider reading this book as a class project, either portions of it each week, or obtaining copies (www.cbd.com) for each student to read at home and discuss the next week.

Lesson 6 calls for each student to wear a pair of sunglasses. These can be bought in bulk through www.orientaltrading.com. Order this week to assure their timely arrival. Avoid the kiddie sunglasses. Consider the streamlined hair band sunglasses—very retro and cool (important to preteens).

Review Questions

1. Holiness is the result of what?
2. How can one earn salvation?
3. What does salvation cause us to do?
4. Why does God want us to be holy?
5. What does the word “salvation” mean?
6. Who must we seek for salvation?
7. What are the ABCs of holiness?

Optional Activities

Pick and choose which activities will work best for your students and remaining time frame. Perhaps one of these activities would work better for your students’ learning styles earlier in the lesson. Adapt the lesson and do what is best for your class.
Use inexpensive floor tiles whenever individual hard surfaces are needed.

Option 1

Mount the coded verses poster on the wall. Place the basket on the floor beneath the poster. Divide into two teams. At your signal, the first player of each team runs to the basket, draws out one card, and places it on the correct code symbol. He returns to his team and high fives the next player (who follows the same process) before running to the end of the line.

- **How do we please God?** By living holy. Discuss how these verses teach holiness.

Option 2

Color Changing Milk Experiment (Steve Spangler Science, www.stevespanglerscience.com/experiment/00000066, Color Changing Milk)

Materials: Milk (whole or 2%), plastic plates, food coloring (red, yellow, blue, and green), dishwashing soap, cotton swabs

Give each student a plate and two swabs. Provide several bottles of food coloring.

1. **Cover the bottom of each plate with milk.**
2. **Add one drop of each of the four colors close together (but not touching) in the center the milk.**
3. **Touch the tip of one cotton swab to the center of the milk, being careful to touch only, not stir, the milk. What happens?**

4. Now place a drop of dish soap on the tip of the swab.

Place the soapy end back into the middle of the milk and hold for ten seconds. What happens?

Milk is mostly water mixed with vitamins, minerals, proteins, and fat. When the soapy tip touched the milk, the chemical bonds that hold those items together were instantly changed and you saw a burst of color.

- **How is salvation like the soapy tip? When salvation “touches” us, we are changed. Salvation is the “soap” that makes us clean, resulting in a beautiful life of holiness.**

Option 3

Let students find and read aloud Psalm 1. **We do not know who wrote this psalm, but it shows a good contrast between the righteous and the wicked. One is blessed and the other will perish.**

- **What is another word for blessed? Highlight blessed.**
- **Highlight delight in verse 2. Another word for delight is love. Why would loving God’s law make you think about it day and night?**
- **The godly person is described as being like a tree. According to this description, what is the difference between a godly person and an ungodly person? Refer to verses 3-4. The godly prosper, and the ungodly are driven away.**