

2 Corinthians: Holiness in the Temple

[2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1](#)

In this passage, Paul cautions the Corinthians against over-identifying with the culture around them. He reminds them that as God's chosen people, they are holy and must represent God in every facet of their lives. As believers, we must also guard against finding our identity in the world, and instead, pursue completing our holiness in the fear of God.

Application

1. The Scripture commands us to engage the world (1 Cor. 9); however, we are also called to holiness. What is your response when the Scripture creates this kind of tension?
2. Paul explains that believers must be *in* the culture but not *of* the culture. We must consider these questions—What engages your affections? What captivates your imagination? What do you worry about at night or think of first thing in the morning? What do your answers reveal about your primary allegiance?
3. We must also consider our motivations. Why do we do what we do? Even “good” or “Christian” activities can be selfishly motivated. How can you grow in self-awareness around this issue?
4. Consider the two elements of practical holiness—cleansing and completing. What do you need to “cleanse” from your life? How can you take steps towards completing your holiness?

Key Points

- The Scriptures often pull us into tension. When there is a gap in our understanding, we must humble ourselves and accept God on his terms. God's Word can be trusted over our feelings.
- As believers, we are called to live in the culture but not of the culture. We must avoid entangling relationships wherein we are not free to obey Christ.
- Although it is not inherently wrong to have an earthly role (parent, spouse, American, etc.), we must guard against over-identifying with these roles. Instead, our primary identity should be in Christ.

- Holiness is not something that we earn—it is conferred on us by our Heavenly Father through the sacrificial death of Jesus.
- As believers, we are the temple of God. This should be clarifying to us—God so desired a unique and intimate relationship with us that he made the incredible sacrifice of his Son.
- The outworking of our holiness includes both the cleansing of sin and the ongoing work of perfecting holiness in the fear of God. We must constantly work towards completing the identity that has been conferred upon us.

Other Scripture References

[1 Corinthians 9:19-23](#)

[1 Peter 1:1-2](#)

[Deuteronomy 22:10](#)

[Romans 12:1-2](#)