

GOD WANTS US TO BE HOLY

This week you'll need:

- A piece of butchers paper and textas
- A printed copy of the Scripture verses page (cut so that each verse is on a separate strip of paper)

CONNECT

Here are some questions to get your group started:

- If you were given \$1000 but needed to spend it all in a day how would you spend it?
- If you could try anything and know you would succeed, what would you attempt?
- What was the highlight of your week this week?

INVOLVE

Spend some time brainstorming the qualities you love most about God. Make a big list together. Once you've finished, spend some time praising and thanking God, specifically covering the things on your list.

DISCUSS

The word 'holiness' appears more than 1000 times in the Bible. It's pretty clearly important to God. This week we will focus on the command to be holy, and why God commands it.

Start the conversation by asking your group the following questions:

- What words come to mind when you think of holiness?
- What sorts of people come to mind (e.g. monks, the pope, church leaders, someone's grandma)

Ask for volunteers to read out the following Scripture verses:

- Romans 12:1
- Hebrews 12:14
- Psalm 24:3-5
- 2 Corinthians 7:1
- Ephesians 1:4.



INTRO TO HOLINESS



GOD WANTS US TO BE HOLY

QUESTIONS FOR NEW CHRISTIANS

- Do any of these verses surprise you? What stands out as unusual to you?
- Which verse speaks to you the most? What does it say to you?
- According to these verses, why should we be holy? Can you think of any other reasons why we should be holy?
- Have you ever thought seriously about whether you could be holy, pure or set apart for God to use?

Samuel Logan Brengle was a Salvation Army officer and a leading teacher and preacher on holiness. Read the Brengle quote together. (If your group struggles with the language, help them break it down.)

- Is this how you usually think of holiness?
- Which parts of this description have you experienced in your life?

QUESTIONS FOR ESTABLISHED CHRISTIANS

- What stands out to you the most from the Scriptures we just read?
- In these Scriptures, how many reasons can you find for being holy? (E.g. So we can spend eternity with him, it's a way of worshipping God, it was God's plan that we would be holy, because Jesus made it possible, so that we can be useful to God). Can you think of any other reasons?
- How comfortable do you feel to describe yourself as holy?

Have a volunteer read Brengle's description of holiness:

- How does this match up to how you usually think of holiness? Is there anything about his definition that surprises you?
- Have you experienced something that fits this description yet?
- Do you think it would be possible for someone to experience this by trying really hard?

APPLY

Now that we have established clearly that God wants us to be holy your group is probably hungry to know how we experience it!

In preparation for next week, give your group the list of Scriptures we will be studying and invite them to read and reflect on them in advance.

GOD WANTS US TO BE HOLY

WEEK 1 SCRIPTURE VERSES

Romans 12:1

And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him.

Ephesians 1:4 (Amplified Bible)

Even as [in His love] He chose us [actually picked us out for Himself as His own] in Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy (consecrated and set apart for Him) and blameless in His sight, even above reproach, before Him in love.

Psalms 24:3-5

- 3 Who may climb the mountain of the LORD?
Who may stand in his holy place?
4 Only those whose hands and hearts are pure,
who do not worship idols
and never tell lies.
5 They will receive the LORD's blessing
and have a right relationship with God their Saviour.

Hebrews 12:14

Work at living in peace with everyone, and work at living a holy life, for those who are not holy will not see the Lord.

2 Corinthians 7:1 (NIV)

Therefore, since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.

Quote – Samuel Logan Brengle

Do you want to know what holiness is? It is pure love. Do you want to know what the baptism of the Holy Ghost is? It is not a mere sentiment. It is not a happy sensation that passes away in a night. It is a baptism of love that brings every thought into captivity to the Lord Jesus (2 Cor. 10. 5); that casts out all fear (1 John 4. 18); that burns up doubt and unbelief as fire burns tow; that makes one “meek and lowly in heart” (Matt. 11. 29); that makes one hate uncleanness, lying and deceit, a flattering tongue and every evil way with a perfect hatred; that makes Heaven and Hell eternal realities; that makes one patient and gentle with the sinful; that makes one “pure ... peaceable ... easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy” (James. 3. 17); that brings one into perfect and unbroken sympathy with the Lord Jesus Christ in His toil and travail to bring a lost and rebel world back to God.

From ‘Helps to Holiness’ by Samuel Logan Brengle.



OUR SINFUL NATURE CRUCIFIED

This week you will need a printed copy of the Scripture verses page (cut it so that each verse is on a separate strip of paper.)

CONNECT

Here are some questions to get your group started:

- What's one thing you've learned about God this year?
- Who is one historic figure you look up to? What do you admire about them?
- Which pop star are you most like and why?

DISCUSS

Ask for volunteers to read Hebrews 9:13-14, Galatians 5:19-24, Colossians 1:21-22, Romans 6:6-11, Colossians 3:8-10.

QUESTIONS FOR NEW CHRISTIANS

- Which of these verses speaks to you the most? Why?
- Read Colossians 1:21-22. How does this make you feel? Do you believe it applies to your own life? Does it apply to everyone?
- Galatians 5:24 says that "Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to the cross and crucified them there". What do you think it means practically to 'nail our sinful nature to the cross'? Have you ever done that?
- Can someone who doesn't want to give up their sinful way of life be made clean?
- In Colossians 3:8-9 the writer Paul speaks about us taking off the sinful nature in the same way that we might take off a jacket. We have to make a choice to take off the old life and embrace the new one. Would you say that you have done this?

QUESTIONS FOR ESTABLISHED CHRISTIANS

- Which of these verses speak the most to you today?
- Do you ever fall into the trap of thinking you can become holy by trying hard?
- Romans 6:10-11 talks about us being dead to the power of sin – through Jesus. Do you live your life with this power in mind?
- Do you think anyone is disqualified from the promises in these verses?
- Have you ever made a conscious decision to 'crucify' your sinful nature? (To put it to death, turn your back on it, actively reject it). According to these verses, how important is this to our experience of salvation and forgiveness of sin?



INTRO TO HOLINESS



OUR SINFUL NATURE CRUCIFIED

INVOLVE

Create some space for people to reflect on what you have discussed tonight. Play some suitable music (E.g. Matt Redman's *Nothing but the Blood*) and/or give them each a copy of the lyrics below from The Salvation Army Songbook.

After they have had some time, ask whether anyone would like to make a fresh decision or be prayed for. Then pray for each other.

APPLY

What's one thing you will do differently this week based on tonight's discussions?

OR

Challenge your group to share with someone this week the good news that because of the blood of Jesus we can be cleansed from all sin and unrighteousness.

LEADER'S NOTES

SALVATION ARMY SONGBOOK SONG 306

1.
What can wash away my sin?
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.
What can keep me always clean?
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

Chorus
O precious is the flow
That makes me white as snow!
No other fount I know,
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

2.
For my cleansing this I see,
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.
For my pardon this my plea,
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

3.
Nothing can for sin atone,
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.
Naught of good that I have done,
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

4.
This is all my hope and peace.
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.
This is all my righteousness,
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.



OUR SINFUL NATURE CRUCIFIED

WEEK 2 SCRIPTURE VERSES

Hebrews 9:13-14

13 Under the old system, the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a young cow could cleanse people's bodies from ceremonial impurity.

14 Just think how much more the blood of Christ will purify our consciences from sinful deeds so that we can worship the living God. For by the power of the eternal Spirit, Christ offered himself to God as a perfect sacrifice for our sins.

Galatians 5:19-24

19 When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, the results are very clear: sexual immorality, impurity, lustful pleasures, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hostility, quarrelling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissension, division, 21 envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other sins like these. Let me tell you again, as I have before, that anyone living that sort of life will not inherit the Kingdom of God.

22 But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!

24 Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there.

Colossians 1:21-22

This includes you who were once far away from God. You were his enemies, separated from him by your evil thoughts and actions. Yet now he has reconciled you to himself through the death of Christ in his physical body. As a result, he has brought you into his own presence, and you are holy and blameless as you stand before him without a single fault. (NLT)

Romans 6:6-11

6 We know that our old sinful selves were crucified with Christ so that sin might lose its power in our lives. We are no longer slaves to sin. 7 For when we died with Christ we were set free from the power of sin. 8 And since we died with Christ, we know we will also live with him. 9 We are sure of this because Christ was raised from the dead, and he will never die again. Death no longer has any power over him. 10 When he died, he died once to break the power of sin. But now that he lives, he lives for the glory of God. 11 So you also should consider yourselves to be dead to the power of sin and alive to God through Christ Jesus. (NLT)

Colossians 3:8-10

Don't lie to one another. You're done with that old life. It's like a filthy set of ill-fitting clothes you've stripped off and put in the fire. Now you're dressed in a new wardrobe. Every item of your new way of life is custom-made by the Creator, with his label on it.



FULLY CONSECRATED

This week you will need a printed copy of the Scripture verses page, cut so that each verse is on a separate strip of paper.

CONNECT

Here are some questions to get your group interacting with each other:

- Have you ever been told you look like someone famous? Who? Ask the group if they agree.
- If you could be given one skill/ability that you don't already have, what would you ask for? (E.g. ability to dance/surf/swim/speak another language/cartwheel).
- Tell us something from your week that no one else here knows yet.

DISCUSS

When we get saved we experience complete forgiveness, we receive the Holy Spirit and are immediately adopted into God's family.

But we soon notice that we still sin. We still see some of the old nature at work. Brengle says:

"This will be done away with when he gets a clean heart, and it will take a second work of grace, preceded by a whole-hearted consecration and as definite an act of faith as that which preceded his conversion, to get it."

Over the next 2 weeks we will explore what these two things (whole hearted consecration and faith) look like.

Ask for volunteers to read out this week's Scripture verses: Colossians 3:3, Ephesians 3:16-19, Matthew 16:24-25.

QUESTIONS FOR NEW CHRISTIANS

- What stands out to you most from these verses? Why?
- Are there any areas of your life you struggle to let God control? Which ones?
- Has God ever asked you to go somewhere or do something you really didn't want to do? How did you respond?
- How do you know when God is telling you to do something?
- Do you think our experience of God's love and holiness will be richer if we give more control to him?



INTRO TO HOLINESS



FULLY CONSECRATED

QUESTIONS FOR ESTABLISHED CHRISTIANS

- Would you say that you allow God to control 100% of your life?
- Which areas do you find yourself still wanting to be the boss of? Why do you think these parts are harder to let go of?
- What do you think it means for our life to be 'hidden' in Christ?
- Read Ephesians 3:16-19 again. Have you experienced anything like this? Do you think the extent to which we experience this is affected by our willingness to trust him with our lives?

INVOLVE

Using Ephesians 3:16-19 as a guide, pray for each other.

OR

What's one area of your life that you struggle to let God control? Encourage and pray for each other about this.

APPLY

Ask your group to share one thing they will do differently this week based on what has been discussed.

LEADER'S NOTES

WEEK 3 SCRIPTURE VERSES

Colossians 3:3

For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.

Ephesians 3:16-19

16 I pray that from his glorious, unlimited resources he will empower you with inner strength through his Spirit. 17 Then Christ will make his home in your hearts as you trust in him. Your roots will grow down into God's love and keep you strong. 18 And may you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love is. 19 May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God.

Matthew 16:24-25

24 Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If any of you wants to be my follower, you must turn from your selfish ways, take up your cross, and follow me. 25 If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it.



PERSISTENT, BOLD FAITH

This week you will need a printed copy of the Scripture verses page, cut so that each verse is on a separate strip of paper.

CONNECT

Here are some questions to get your group started:

- Do you have any skills or talents most people in this group wouldn't know about?
- What's one thing you love about being a Christian?
- Rate this week out of 5. Why did you give it that score?

DISCUSS

Ask volunteers to read Luke 11:9, 13 and 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24.

QUESTIONS FOR NEW CHRISTIANS

- What about these verses jumps out to you?
- Look at Luke 11:13. Jesus himself points out that the father is good and loving and that he actually wants to give you this good gift. How does this make you feel?
- Have you ever asked the Holy Spirit to fill you and make you clean?
- Luke 11:9 emphasises persistence. What's the longest solid period of time you've ever spent alone, waiting for the Holy Spirit to fall on your life?
- How can we increase our faith so that our prayers are bold rather than wimpy?

QUESTIONS FOR ESTABLISHED CHRISTIANS

- Have you ever asked the Holy Spirit to fill you up?
- How often is it worth us asking the Holy Spirit to make us holy?
- During most of your Christian life have you believed that it is possible to be made fully holy? Why?
- Out of 5 how hungry would you say you are for the Holy Spirit to fill you and make you holy?
- Out of 5 how confident are you that he will do it for you?
- Read the following Salvation Army doctrine. Did you know that this was one of The Salvation Army's beliefs?

We believe that it is the privilege of all believers to be wholly sanctified, and that their whole spirit and soul and body may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.



INTRO TO HOLINESS



PERSISTENT, BOLD FAITH

INVOLVE

Have your group try this simple prayer exercise, known as 'spiritual breathing'.

When we breathe out we exhale the impure air. When we breathe in, we inhale pure air, rich in oxygen. Spiritual breathing is much the same; we breathe out our sins and breathe in the Holy Spirit.

[Note: once the Holy Spirit comes to live in a person, he does not leave every time the person sins. In this exercise we are not asking the Holy Spirit to return. We are just using it symbolically to help us stay open to the Spirit.]

** Exercise taken from 'Heart For God' by Commissioner Samuel Logan Brengle (edited by Major Peter Farthing).*

APPLY

What will you do differently based on tonight's discussions?

OR

Brengle told the following story:

A dear young fellow, a candidate for Salvation Army work, felt his need of a clean heart, went home from the holiness meeting, took his Bible, knelt down by his bed, read the second chapter of Acts, and then told the Lord that he would not get up from his knees till he got a clean heart, full of the Holy Ghost. He had not prayed long before the Lord came suddenly to him and filled him with the glory of God; and his face did shine, and his testimony did burn in people's hearts after that!

Challenge your group to a solid hour this week waiting on the Holy Spirit, praying fervently for a fresh infilling.

PERSISTENT, BOLD FAITH

WEEK 4 SCRIPTURE VERSES

Luke 11:9, 13

9 “And so I tell you, keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you

13 So if you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him.”

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

23 Now may the God of peace make you holy in every way, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ comes again. 24 God will make this happen, for he who calls you is faithful.

Samuel Logan Brengle:

Seek by prayer and watchfulness and study of your Bible and the honest improvement of every opportunity to be a perfectly free channel for the power of the Holy Ghost, who is now in you. Believe God, and do not obstruct the way of the Holy Ghost, that He may work through you. Ask Him to teach and guide you, that you may not hinder Him in His work. Seek to think His thoughts, to speak His words, to feel His love, and exercise His faith. Seek to be so guided by Him that you will pray when He wants you to pray, sing when He wants you to sing, and last, but not least, be silent when He wants you to be silent. “Live in the Spirit,” “Walk in the Spirit,” (Gal. v. 25), “Be filled with the Spirit” (Eph. v. 18).

From *Helps to Holiness* by Samuel Logan Brengle



WHY ON EARTH AM I STILL HERE?

This week you will need:

- A printed copy of the Scripture verses page (cut so that each verse is on a separate strip of paper).
- Textas/crayons and a blank piece of paper for each person.
- One copy of the promises a soldier of The Salvation Army makes for each person.

CONNECT

- Who is one older person you really admire or look up to? What's special about them?
- How would you describe your life at the moment in 3 words?
- What's one thing you've learned about holiness recently?

DISCUSS

Give out this weeks Scripture verses: Philippians 2:12-15, John 17:13-23, 1 Peter 1:13-17, 1 Corinthians 9:19-23, 1 John 2:15-17, and ask volunteers to read them out.

QUESTIONS FOR NEW CHRISTIANS

- Why do you think God doesn't just zap us up to heaven the moment we become a Christian?
- Do you influence your not-yet-Christian friends or do they influence you?
- Some Christians hide themselves away from the world for fear that they will get corrupted by the world. Do you think this is how God has called us live?
- 1 John 2:15 says don't love the world's ways. Do you think this means we shouldn't love the music, fashion or movies the rest of the world loves?
- Read John 17:13-23 again. In this verse Jesus is praying for us. What do these verses tell us about us being holy while we're still on earth? (Some possible answers...It's possible; Jesus sacrificed himself to make it possible; Jesus has asked God to protect us from the evil one while we're on earth).



INTRO TO HOLINESS



WHY ON EARTH AM I STILL HERE?

QUESTIONS FOR ESTABLISHED CHRISTIANS

- Which of these verses speaks to you most?
- In John 17:15 Jesus is praying for us and refers to the fact that we “do not belong to this world”. Again in 1 Peter 1:17 Peter refers to Christians who live on earth as “Foreigners”. Why do you think he says this? Is this how you think of yourself?
- Are there any places in the world where a Christian shouldn’t place themselves – even if they’re there to minister?
- Read 1 Corinthians 9: 22-23 again. Is evangelism a focus for you when you hang out with friends who don’t know Jesus?

INVOLVE

Give everyone a piece of paper and some crayons/textas. Invite them to draw a map/picture of the ‘world’ that is around them. Encourage them to prayerfully consider how God might be calling them to be a Godly influence in their world.

Ask each person to explain their picture to the group, then each pray for one another.

APPLY

How will your life look different as a result of what God has revealed to or done within your life during this series?

AND/OR

Give everyone a copy of the promises a Salvation Army soldier makes.

Ask them to prayerfully consider whether God might be calling them to become a Soldier of the Salvation Army. It’s a covenant – a commitment to God that lasts to eternity and a way to publicly commit to living a life fully devoted to God.



WHY ON EARTH AM I STILL HERE?

WEEK 5 SCRIPTURE VERSES

Philippians 2:12-15

12 Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, 13 for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfil his good purpose.

14 Do everything without grumbling or arguing, 15 so that you may become blameless and pure, “children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation.”[c] Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky

John 17:13-23

15 I’m not asking you to take them out of the world, but to keep them safe from the evil one. 16 They do not belong to this world any more than I do. 17 Make them holy by your truth; teach them your word, which is truth. 18 Just as you sent me into the world; I am sending them into the world. 19 And I give myself as a holy sacrifice for them so they can be made holy by your truth.

1 Peter 1:13-17 (NIV)

13 Therefore, with minds that are alert and fully sober, set your hope on the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at his coming. 14 As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. 15 But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; 16 for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.”[a]

17 Since you call on a Father who judges each person’s work impartially, live out your time as foreigners here in reverent fear.

1 Corinthians 9:19-23

19 Even though I am a free man with no master, I have become a slave to all people to bring many to Christ. 20 When I was with the Jews, I lived like a Jew to bring the Jews to Christ. When I was with those who follow the Jewish law, I too lived under that law. Even though I am not subject to the law, I did this so I could bring to Christ those who are under the law. 21 When I am with the Gentiles who do not follow the Jewish law,[a] I too live apart from that law so I can bring them to Christ. But I do not ignore the law of God; I obey the law of Christ.

22 When I am with those who are weak, I share their weakness, for I want to bring the weak to Christ. Yes, I try to find common ground with everyone, doing everything I can to save some. 23 I do everything to spread the Good News and share in its blessings (NLT)

1 John 2:15-17

Don’t love the world’s ways. Don’t love the world’s goods. Love of the world squeezes out love for the Father. Practically everything that goes on in the world—wanting your own way, wanting everything for yourself, wanting to appear important—has nothing to do with the Father. It just isolates you from him. The world and all it’s wanting, wanting, wanting is on the way out—but whoever does what God wants is set for eternity.





WHY ON EARTH AM I STILL HERE?

THE PROMISES OF A SOLDIER OF THE SALVATION ARMY

I will be responsive to the Holy Spirit's work and obedient to His leading in my life, growing in grace through worship, prayer, service and the reading of the Bible. I will make the values of the Kingdom of God and not the values of the world the standard for my life.

I will uphold Christian integrity in every area of my life, allowing nothing in thought, word or deed that is unworthy, unclean, untrue, profane, dishonest or immoral.

I will maintain Christian ideals in all my relationships with others; my family and neighbours, my colleagues and fellow Salvationists, those to whom and for whom I am responsible, and the wider community.

I will uphold the sanctity of marriage and of family life. I will be a faithful steward of my time and gifts, my money and possessions, my body, my mind and my spirit, knowing that I am accountable to God.

I will abstain from alcoholic drink, tobacco, the non-medical use of addictive drugs, gambling, pornography, the occult and all else that could enslave the body or spirit.

I will be faithful to the purposes for which God raised up The Salvation Army, sharing the good news of Jesus Christ, endeavouring to win others to Him, and in His name caring for the needy and the disadvantaged.

I will be actively involved, as I am able, in the life, work, worship and witness of the corps, giving as large a proportion of my income as possible to support its ministries and the worldwide work of the Army.

I will be true to the principles and practices of The Salvation Army, loyal to its leaders, and I will show the spirit of Salvationism whether in times of popularity or persecution.

I now call upon all present to witness that I enter into this covenant and sign these articles of war of my own free will, convinced that the love of Christ, who died and now lives to save me, requires from me this devotion of my life to His service for the salvation of the whole world; and therefore do here declare my full determination, by God's help, to be a true soldier of The Salvation Army.

