

# God of Holiness and Hope (Part 3)

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] As you know, for the past couple of Sundays, we've been in Isaiah chapter 6, now we're in Romans! chapter 12 to conclude this series of sermons about the holiness of God, how God is a God of holiness and hope, and how that is such a great thing for us to know and a great thing for us to keep in mind as we live our lives here in light of how good God has been to us. Next week, we'll go back to our study in John. We'll be back in chapter 12, but for right now, if you have your Bible and you're at Romans chapter 12, would you stand with me as I read verses 1 through 2?

I appeal to you, therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. May God add a blessing to the reading of His Word. Would you please be seated? So again, we've spent the past two weeks in Isaiah chapter 6 going through verses 1 through 8, and through those verses, we've seen how God is holy, how He makes us holy, and the hope that we have in Him because of those two things. Today, I want to focus on how we should respond to the holiness of God and how through faith in Jesus Christ, He makes us holy, who believe in Him. There are many verses in the Bible that I could have turned to today because it has so much to say about how we should live our lives in light of these glorious truths, that God is holy, and He makes us holy. But I think this passage in Romans is a great one for us to consider as we think about now the appropriate response that we should have to our God who is holy, and again, who through faith in Jesus Christ, His Son, has made us holy and continually works in our lives to make us more like Him, to make us holy. The Bible refers to Christians in the New Testament as saints.

In the New Testament, all the people of God enjoyed that title. To be a saint is to be, as the word is defined, a holy one. And so in Paul's letters to the churches in the New Testament, he often began by reminding them of the fact that they were saints, reminding them of their sainthood. But as you continue to read those letters, what you soon realize is that these people whom he calls saints struggle a lot with sin. They struggle a lot with all kinds of immorality. And that term saint doesn't seem to fit. It doesn't seem to match their sinful behavior. It doesn't seem to fit the way that we understand and the way that we use that term today at all. Because when we think of a saint, our minds conjure up images of great Christian heroes, people like Martin Luther or Fanny Crosby or Billy Graham, to us saints are those who belong in a higher category, a separate category of the super religious elite, people who devoted their lives to spreading the gospel through the words they wrote about God, spoke about God, or sung about God. When we think of saints, we think of missionaries and martyrs. We think also of older church members who have continually been generous with their tithes, their prayers, and their devotion to the Lord and to his church. We think about just about anyone else when we think about a saint besides ourselves. But the Bible calls all Christians saints.

It's not a rank reserved only for those who have prayed a certain number of prayers or who have read and memorized a certain amount of scriptures or who have shared the gospel and led a certain number of people to faith in Christ. It's not a badge that we receive because we've hit some kind of numerical mark. The saints of scripture were called saints not because they were already pure or because they had, again, performed a certain number of good works. They were called saints because they were set apart by God in salvation and called and enabled by Him to live a life that is marked by holiness just as you and I have been called by Him to do the same. And so from our study in Isaiah over the past couple of weeks, we know that that word holy is used to describe how God is other, how God is separate, how God is a cut above.

[ 5 : 48 ] It is used to describe His immaculateness. God is uncontaminated by sin, but we are not God. So we wonder, how can the Bible refer to us as saints or holy ones? In the Old Testament, if you remember, God called the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt and He made them a nation.

He set them apart. He called them His chosen people and they were. And He gave them a special commission. And He said to them in Leviticus chapter 11 verse 45, For I am the Lord who brought you up out of the land of Egypt to be your God. You shall therefore be holy for I am holy. So He's saying is that you shall reflect who I am to the world around you and to one another. But that call to holiness goes back further than God's choosing the Israelites and bringing them out of bondage in Egypt. This was the original assignment of our first parents, Adam and Eve. This was their original assignment. Mankind, if you recall, is created in God's image.

And that meant, among other things, that we are made to image God, to mirror and reflect His character, to shine forth His glory to the world. This is the chief goal of our existence.

This is the purpose for which we have been created. The Bible says that fulfilling this purpose is where our true happiness and satisfaction in life are recovered, having been lost as a result of the fall in the garden. And so I ask you this morning, do you feel happy? Do you feel satisfied?

Or do you feel unhappy? And do you feel dissatisfied? How you answer that question, I believe, depends on how well you understand and are currently pursuing your God-given purpose. And so in our text today, Paul appeals to Christians to pursue what they already are, to stop seeking pleasure in sin, which only leads you feeling unhappy in the end, and to instead pursue the kind of life that God, through His calling you and sealing you with His Holy Spirit and salvation and giving you His Word, has enabled you right now to live into experience. And so my prayer has been that through these sermons on God's holiness, that you would be reminded of the hope that you have in Christ, who has called you, who has set you apart, and who works in your life to make you holy. God is holy, and you were made to reflect His holiness and experience the everlasting happiness and satisfaction that comes with that.

[ 9 : 20 ] How do you do that? Where should you begin? Well, let me share with you this morning's main idea. The Christian life is a life marked by non-conformity to the world and Christ-like transformation in the pursuit of holiness. And so Christians, if you aren't already doing so, it's time for you to passionately pursue what you already are. You are a saint. You have been made holy. God has set you apart. Don't feast on the pleasures of this world that may be pleasurable for a moment but only end with increased unhappiness and increased dissatisfaction. God desires that you pursue holiness, that you pursue Christ's righteousness and experience the hope right now in Christ that you already possess. So why should you pursue this? Why should you pursue holiness? Why should you seek to no longer be conformed to this fallen world? Why should you seek Christ-like transformation instead?

Well, again, as I've said, you will find true happiness, and you will experience lasting satisfaction in it. And that is what the Lord has promised. But it comes with other results that you may not realize. I've been reading a book written by J.C. Ryle called Holiness, and two quotes that I've read really stuck out to me that I want to share with you this morning about what other results come from a Christian who pursues holiness that maybe you haven't thought of before. He said, And this I boldly and confidently say that true holiness is a great reality. It is something in a man that can be seen and known and marked and felt by all around him. It is light. If it exists, it will show itself. It is salt. If it exists, its savor will be perceived. It is a precious ointment.

If it exists, its presence cannot be hid. He continues saying, I believe that far more is done for Christ's kingdom by the holy living of believers than we are at all aware of. There is a reality about such living that makes men feel and obliges them to think it carries weight and influence with it that nothing else can give.

I desire to be that kind of person. I desire to be that kind of person. I hope that you desire to be that kind of person too. It's the kind of person that I know that God has called me to be, and I know that he's given me what I need to enable me to be that kind of person. The same is true for you.

And I hope that you will strive with me and us collectively as a church to be that kind of people.

Well, how does that happen? Romans 12, 1 through 2 provides us with two principles that lead to a life that is marked by holiness. The first principle is that the holy life is a surrendered life. Surrender your life totally to God. Surrender your life totally to God. Look again at verse 1. I appeal to you, therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. And so here Paul makes an appeal for the

Christians in Rome to be different from culture, to be different from the world. And he begins by making this appeal by referring to the 11 chapters that he's already spoken of, that he's already told them, everything he's already told them to this point regarding Christ and who he is and his saving work on their behalf. And so he makes his appeal to them with the word, therefore. Now, in [ 13 : 41 ] Scripture, whenever we see that word, therefore, we have to stop and we have to ask ourselves, what is this therefore, therefore? Because a therefore in Scripture serves as a link to what has previously been said and draws those previous statements to a conclusion. Paul is saying that in light of the justification by grace through faith that we have received in Christ, there can only be one reasonable conclusion for us to come to, and that is to present ourselves totally to God as living, breathing, walking, talking sacrifices. This thought, though, would have ran and did run contrary to what many believers, especially Jewish believers, understood about sacrifices and what they were for. In the Old Testament, in their worship of God, it's centered around the altar located in the temple. And there on the altar, that's where sacrifices were offered to God. For the most part, they were offered to atone for sins.

The sacrifices consisted mostly of various kinds of animals and various kinds of grains. In and of themselves, they were insufficient to completely atone for sins, and so they had to be continually offered by the people to God. But we understand, Scripture interprets Scripture, that their primary function served to symbolize and point forward to the one great sacrifice that God would offer Himself on the cross. His Son, Jesus Christ, the perfect Lamb of God, who through His death made these other, much lesser sacrifices totally unnecessary. Christ's sacrifice on the cross was perfect and complete. His death totally atoned for our sins. So there is no longer a need for us to present God with dead animals. To do so would be to insult the great sacrifice that He has made for us. Though the days of animal sacrifice are over, we see that not all forms of sacrifice offered to God today are abhorrent to Him. And so Paul calls here for a new kind of sacrifice, one that isn't dead, but is alive. A sacrifice that doesn't include an animal, but yourself. It is a different kind of sacrifice as well, because it's not a sacrifice offered to atone for sins. It's a living sacrifice of self, and it's offered to God as an act of thanksgiving for who He is and what He has done to save us. It's not offered to Him to divert His wrath, but given because we know that His wrath has already been diverted from us for our sins to Christ on the cross. At salvation, we know from Scripture that our sins are removed from us. They're credited to Christ's account, and we receive His righteousness, which is credited to our account. Look at 2 Corinthians 5.21 with me. For our sake, He made Him, God the Father made Him, God the Son, to be sin who knew no sin, that in Him we might become the righteousness of God. So this is not a sacrifice made to atone for sins.

[ 17 : 41 ] But we must ask, what does this living sacrifice look like? Well, to begin with, we need to understand that the sacrifices we make to God as living sacrifices aren't our lives for Him to destroy, but our lives for Him to refine. He refines our speech. He refines our thoughts. He refines our conduct.

He refines our desires and our goals and our hearts through conviction and repentance of sin. This refining comes as we continually surrender our lives to Him each day, each and every day, waking up in the morning, surrendering the day to Him, saying, Thy will be done, Lord. Whatever you ask of me today, my answer will be yes. And as I thought about that, it reminded me of an old hymn that I know we used to sing in church. I don't know that we've sung it here, but it's Yes, Lord, Yes. You know that song?

Yes, Lord, Yes. To Your will and to Your ways, I'll say, Yes, Lord, Yes. I will trust You and obey. When Your Spirit speaks to me, with my whole heart I'll agree. And my answer will be, Yes, Lord, Yes. Not, Lord, Maybe, or Lord, I'll pray about that and get back to You. It's, Yes, Lord, Yes. That song doesn't work any other way. And that's as close as you're ever going to hear me sing with a microphone.

I don't think Caitlin's going to come up to me after church and say, Hey, you really need to be in the choir. Paul says that our living sacrifices are to be holy sacrifices. They're living and they're to be holy. Under the old covenant, a sacrificial animal was to be presented to God that was without spot and that was without blemish. Again, the physical purity of the animal was a symbol. It symbolized the spiritual and moral purity that God requires of the offerer themselves.

[ 20 : 07 ] And so like that worshiper in Psalm 24, 4, we are to come to God with clean hands and a pure heart, seeking not to be used by Him. Seeking not to appease Him with something, but to

please Him with the very best of who we are. In Malachi, the Lord revealed His displeasure with those who were doing the opposite of that. They were presenting sacrifices to God to appease Him, just to do it.

But they were polluted sacrifices. What they were doing is they were keeping their best for themselves and they were giving to God sacrifices that really didn't require much sacrifice on their part.

Listen to the Lord's rebuke of them in Malachi 1.8. When you offer blind animals in sacrifice, is that not evil? And when you offer those that are lame or sick, is that not evil? Present that to your governor. Will he accept you or show you favor, says the Lord of hosts. See, those people were content to give God what was left over. Their worship of Him did not include their best.

And so the Lord says, this is a second-rate kind of worship. It doesn't do. It's not really sacrificial. You know, when I eat pizza, I'll often give my dogs the crust. And when I give them the crust, we have two. And I try to be fair, I'll rip it up in half, right? But when I go outside and, you know, and they're out there and they've been at the window just watching us eat pizza, and I go out there and I've got one for each of them, they are completely overjoyed at that offering. You know, what a great master. You gave us the dry, hard bread, the leftover parts of your pizza. They're content with that. But listen, God isn't content with the crust of your life. And why should He be? He's given us His best. Has He not? And He's not content with our leftovers. Because while He has saved you, again, He is working continually in you and in His church, making you and us better, preparing us right now for our forever home, releasing you from sinful desires for this world that are passing away, this kind of surrender gives true life, and it sanctifies.

[ 23 : 03 ] Christ. Ephesians 5, 26 through 27 speaks of the Lord's work to sanctify His church. There, and Paul's using the church as an example for a Christian marriage, but listen, it says, sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the Word, so that He might present the church to Himself in splendor without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. God has given us His best, and He continues to work giving us His best to present us to Himself without spot, holy and beautiful, the bride of Christ to His Son who has saved us.

He doesn't give us what's left over. However, like those in Malachi's day, many people today are perfectly willing to give God their second best. They're willing to give God the leftovers that mean little to us, and they mean even less to Him.

I read an article this week written by Jim Eliff, and the title is, Is Your Kid's Sports Involvement a Family Idol? And it punched me right in the stomach.

He writes that nothing outside of a change in your job has so much potential to turn the family schedule upside down as your kid's sports schedule. And I want to read to you what he wrote. He says, how does Baal become Baal, that God, that false God that the Jews were constantly devoting their attention to instead of the one true and living God? He says, when it controls you and you give it devoted worship, it is around your God that you order your life, that you can almost never say no to it. When the team says, we need you, we sacrifice to do it. But when it crosses the time allotted to spiritual edification and worship, the ruler of the universe is often sent to the bench. In the process, we teach our children that devotion to sports is more important than both devotion to God and loyalty to our spiritual family. I see that so much. But you know what? It may not be sports for you. It might be something else that you devote so much of your life to, that you alter your entire schedule around. It could be seeking to advance your career in whatever field you're in or where you're employed. It could be your physical fitness, sacrificing time from family and friends so that you can get that workout in in the morning or later out in the afternoon. It could be your children.

[ 25 : 59 ] You know, we have such a thing as trophy kids now. And you invest everything into your child, wanting and putting pressure on them to be this super great kid so that you can brag about them on social media and be proud of yourself because of their achievements. You can do that with your spouses as well. Or it can be a group of people who you just seek their approval and you desire that.

And listen, that can happen in the church. And so you'll do whatever it takes, make sacrifices so that you feel like you are a part of the in crowd and not being left out. It can be a number of different things. It can be a number of different hobbies that you have. You take your best time and you give the best of yourself to things that are not God. And again, some of these things may not be bad things in and of themselves. Sports isn't a bad thing in and of themselves. Physical fitness isn't

either. But it's when you make things, ultimate things, that you elevate them to become gods in your life.

But listen, no other God can truly satisfy like the one true God can.

And so I ask you another question. How devoted are you to the Lord right now? Is God truly at home in your life?

Does your life indicate that He is truly the master of your soul? That He is truly the captain of the ship?

[ 27 : 47 ] It's not Jesus take the wheel. Sorry, Carrie Underwood, right? Jesus has the wheel. It's we who need to keep our hands off of it, right? Are you trusting Him with that though?

Now, at Falls Creek, our speaker was great and he gave a great illustration that I want to share with you this morning about this very thing.

You know, he talked about when you invite someone over to your house, you say to them, make yourself at home. But you don't really mean that, do you?

Because if they truly made themselves at home and they went into your refrigerator and they pulled out whatever they wanted to, or, you know, they went into your master bathroom and took a bath or a shower or whatever, you would not feel comfortable with that guest in your house, would you?

When we tell someone, a guest in our house, to make themselves at home, what we really mean is that you can sit here in the living room in this chair or on this spot on the couch and I really don't want you to move at all.

[ 28 : 55 ] And if you do, I want you to ask permission, right? Don't wander around trying to find the bathroom. Ask me and I'll tell you where it's at. Or if you want something to drink or eat, ask me and I'll get it for you.

You just sit there in that spot. And so our speaker made a great point about that, saying and asking us, do we treat Jesus like that in our lives?

Like he's a guest in our house. And we're content to just give him his little corner, his little spot, but we don't want him moving around into those rooms, especially those rooms that we don't want our guests to see or those closets that we don't want people opening and looking through.

And so I ask you, like he asked us, are you content to give Christ just a small place in your life, a small spot on the couch and nothing else, thinking that he'll be content with that?

Oh, thank you. Thank you that you've given me a place to sit. Where's your bathroom? Can I use it? Jesus isn't content with that. A surrendered life is a Christ-centered life.

[ 30 : 23 ] And it should be reflective in everything that we do, that whatever we do, wherever the Lord has us go, we do it for him. Colossians 3, 23 through 24. Whatever you do, work heartily as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward.

You are serving the Lord Christ. So Paul says that a life totally surrendered to God is our act of spiritual worship as well.

And spiritual there in the Greek is *logikos*. It's a term from which we get our English word, logic. Our offering to God are certainly spiritual, but that's not the main point that Paul is speaking about here. *Logikos* can be translated as reasonable, as it is in the King James Version. And so what Paul is saying is that in light of all that we have received in Christ, grace, mercy, forgiveness, hope, eternal life, the only reasonable or logical response from us should be to present ourselves fully and totally to God, surrendering all that we are and all that we have to him.

And total commitment, listen, total commitment, that kind of total commitment, that kind of surrender has always been what Jesus has demanded of those who follow him.

[ 31 : 52 ] Matthew 16, 24 through 25. Jesus told his disciples, if anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.

For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

Surrender. Follow me. It requires everything.

You see, the Christian life begins with surrender. Salvation is not based on what you must do, but on what Christ has done for you. You and I can't measure up to God's perfect standard of holiness. If we are to be made holy, it must be God who makes us holy. And he has by sending his son Jesus, who lived perfectly, who died willingly on the cross to atone for our sins, and was raised from death to life on the third day.

The Christian life begins with surrender. It begins with confession. It begins with repentance. Turning from your sins. Saying, God, I cannot do it.

[ 32 : 57 ] I don't measure up. And then placing your faith in Christ completely, knowing that he has done what you could not do. Surrendering your life totally to him.

Those who come to Christ with self-renouncing faith receive true and eternal life. And so another question I ask you is, have you surrendered your life to Christ?

Are you living a self-centered or a Christ-centered existence? Like Isaiah in the presence of God, beholding his holiness, realizing his sinfulness, and receiving God's grace and mercy through the burning coal that cleansed him, that touched his lips, the only right response to a God so good and so great and so holy is to say to him, as Isaiah did, here I am.

Send me. I am yours. Do as you please. And we've got to understand that God doesn't ask of you to do anything that he hasn't already done himself.

If you find it hard to surrender your life to him, then all you need to do is to look to Jesus. Didn't he surrender his life to the Father's will?

[ 34 : 22 ] He gave his all to save others. He endured the shame, the guilt, the pain of your sin to save you from its consequences.

And in light of such truth, there can be no other appropriate response than to surrender your life totally to him. And trust me when I say that it is worth it.

That's the first reality. The second is that you should shape your life totally around God's word. How do we increase and grow in holiness? Shape your life totally around God's word.

Look at verse 2 again. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

So Paul here describes the surrendered life, the life of a living sacrifice, as one that is no longer conformed to the pattern of this world.

[ 35 : 29 ] He is talking about the necessity of our being non-conformists. And it is here, though, where we can too often stray if we aren't careful to understand by what he means for us to be non-conformists.

Because Christians are tempted to seek non-conformity through following a bunch of rules. Just give me rules. Give me boxes that I can check so I can think that I am being holy and living a holy life.

But listen, God is not primarily concerned with those outward signs of religious piety. He doesn't want us to go through the motions of just checking the boxes.

Remember who did that? The Pharisees. And Jesus rebuked them for doing that. He said that, look, on the outside you look clean, but on the inside you are dead.

You are dead. You are rotting. You are evil to the core. You can fool other people, but you cannot fool me. You cannot fool your heavenly Father.

[ 36 : 36 ] Externally they looked the part, but inwardly they were spiritually dead. And you know, such marks of outward piety can actually be evidence of inward impiety.

You see those people who are taking note of who hasn't been in church in a while. And when they see them come in, it's not, man, I'm so glad that you're here.

We're so happy to have you. It's, where have you been? You should be here. You haven't checked the boxes like I've been checking the boxes.

When we major in the minors, we are guilty of exchanging a cheap morality for a genuine one. We are ultimately called to be more than just non-conformists.

We are called to transformation. Conform and transform both contain the same root word, form. The difference between the two words, though, lies within their prefixes.

[ 37 : 49 ] Con means with. To conform is to be with the structures or forms. Trans, on the other hand, means across or beyond.

To be transformed is to rise above the forms and the structures of this world. We don't follow the world's leading on things. Rule-keeping is not any different than any other religion in this world.

The difference is seen in our transformation, which we experience having received God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ in salvation.

Our lives have been transformed. And with that, our minds are continued to be renewed by the gospel. And it's the word of God and the Holy Spirit indwelling us, which are working to continually

shape us, form us, renew us into the image of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

And so we need to read the Bible. We need to meditate on God's word. We need to allow it to shape us. Psalm 119:11, I have stored up your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.

[ 39 : 15 ] Colossians 128, Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom that we might present everyone mature in Christ. See, we use God's word to help not only shape ourselves, but to shape others.

Colossians 3.9-10, Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices and put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge. What's that knowledge? Where does it come from?

The word of God after the image of its creator. And our Lord said in John 15, 7-8, If you abide in me and my word abides in you, ask whatever you wish and it will be done for you.

God's word shapes our will to be His will. By this my Father is glorified that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. The renewed mind is one saturated and shaped by the word of God. And that produces holiness. That produces a life that is filled with hope. That results in a life that is not wasted. A life that is filled with purpose. A life that is filled with happiness and satisfaction and joy.

[ 40 : 26 ] D.L. Moody said, a holy life will make the deepest impression. Life houses blow no horns, they just shine. C.S. Lewis said, how little people know who think that holiness is dull.

When one meets the real thing, it's irresistible. And so, I don't know about you, but I want my life to count. I don't want to waste my life.

I don't want to waste my time. I want to be a blessing to everyone around me. I want to serve the Lord well.

And when I think of the Lord's holiness and my sinfulness and His goodness and grace to save me from my sins, it makes me want to be more like Him.

How about you? I want to be that kind of person that the Lord is working in and through. I want to be that kind of person who's a blessing to His family, to His friends, to His church, to His neighborhood, and to His community.

[ 41 : 39 ] And that happens by just surrendering everything to God, being in His Word and allowing it to shape my thoughts, my emotions, my feelings, my desires, my goals, and my purpose.

And I've never regretted it one bit. Surrendering my life to Christ and salvation, surrendering my life to Him in the call to ministry. I've had a, it's been a busy month, but it's been a month that I wouldn't trade.

I have been blessed to see God at work in mighty ways. I've seen people come to faith in Christ. I've seen people called into ministry. I've seen people surrender themselves completely and totally to Him. Yeah, it meant some early mornings and some late nights, but listen, it was worth it.

And I encourage you, I know the excuses, God is good. God is holy.

[ 42 : 51 ] God has called you. He has separated you. You say yes. You surrender. You surrender your day completely to Him every morning.

And I promise you, you won't regret it. Maybe today there's something that you know God has been calling you to do and you haven't surrendered to Him and I ask you to do so today.

Maybe you're not a believer and you've got to begin by surrendering your life to Him in salvation.

And you realize how unhappy and dissatisfied you are in life. Today is the day God is calling you to surrender to Him.

And in each case, I promise you that you will not regret it. Not one bit. You won't waste your time.

You won't waste your life. It'll be good and you'll be thankful. Three questions of application.

First of all, what does it mean to be holy and to live a holy life? I encourage you to just think about the past three weeks and the scriptures we've gone over and other ones.

[ 43 : 58 ] What does it mean to be holy and to live a holy life? Question number two, how are you trying to renew your mind?

How are you trying to renew your mind? And with this question, I would just ask you to take an inventory of how you spend your time. Where do you get your news from? How much time are you watching the news or on your phone and not in God's Word?

Those things have an effect on your mind, but only God's Word can renew it. And then third, in what ways do you need to grow in holiness?

So again, I encourage you to just get alone with the Lord and in prayer and ask Him to help you become aware of those things and then seek to grow and become more like Jesus Christ. I'm going to pray. We'll have an invitation hymn. If you have something that you need to pray about, something that you need to surrender to, I encourage you to come and do that and encourage others to come and pray for you as well.

[ 45 : 06 ] Right now, would you pray with me? Let's pray. Heavenly Father, we thank you for the hope that we have in Jesus Christ, our Lord. We're so thankful to know, Lord, that you have given us your best, that we have sinned against you, that sin has created an infinite separation from us and you who are holy, holy, holy.

But in your grace and mercy and love, you have provided a way for us to be saved, for that separation to be bridged.

And you sent your Son, Lord, who lived a life of complete surrender to your will, who followed your will completely and totally, who lived sinlessly and perfectly, and who willingly died on the cross to endure your wrath for the sins that we've committed against you, and who died, but who was raised three days later and ascended into heaven.

We anticipate his return. God, you have made the way. Father, I pray that we would follow the example of our Lord and Savior, that we would likewise live a life that is surrendered to you and to your will, that, Lord, we would be students of your word, that we would allow it to shape our thoughts, our feelings, our opinions, our actions, our goals, our desires, that, Lord, for each one of us here this morning, I pray that we would not waste our lives pursuing earthly treasures and being people of this world, but that, God, we would say you are the master of my life.

This life is yours. Every room belongs to you. Every closet belongs to you. You have the right to look through them and I invite you to because I want to live my life completely to you. I want it to count.

[ 47 : 05 ] May that be the goal of each one of us today. Use us, God, to make much of the name of Jesus Christ. In his name we pray. Amen. Amen. Amen.

you