

Thursday, April 9, 2026

This week's devotionals were written by Anneke de Jong, a member of Visalia CRC. A lifetime of studying the Bible has given me a deep love for God's Word and a heart for helping others grow in biblical literacy. My husband and I raised four sons, and we now enjoy watching their families grow. When I'm not with our grandkids, you can find me at our goat dairy in Hanford, CA.

As you come to your time with God today, pause for a moment of silence before beginning with this prayer:

*Holy, Holy, Holy are you Lord God Almighty - who was, and is, and is to come.*

*Open my eyes, that I may see you. Open my ears, that I may hear you.*

*Open my heart, that I may know you and love you more and more each day.*

*Amen*

Last fall, our pastors bravely led us through a sermon series on the book of Leviticus. You know - the book where everyone's "Read the Bible in a Year" plan fails? In those dusty pages, we discovered a holy God who was calling a people to be his very own - distinct, set apart, and holy.

One phrase showed up repeatedly:

"I am the Lord your God; consecrate yourselves and be holy, because I am holy...

I am the Lord, who brought you up out of Egypt to be your God; therefore be holy, because I am holy." (Leviticus 11:44-45)

The Lord said to Moses, "Speak to the entire assembly of Israel and say to them: Be holy because I, the Lord your God, am holy." (Leviticus 19:1-2)

*"Consecrate yourselves and be holy, because I am the Lord your God."*

*"You are to be holy to me because I, the Lord, am holy, and I have set you apart from the nations to be my own." (Leviticus 20:7&26)*

The entire book of Leviticus shows us that God is committed to making His people holy so they can worship Him, and He can dwell with them. An intricate system of sacrifices, rituals, and rules was established to demonstrate how seriously God regarded holiness. This sacrificial system was fulfilled in Jesus and the holiness He ultimately achieved for us on the cross.

Hebrews 10:10 assures us that "*we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*" As believers, we are holy in God's eyes.

But while holy is something we ARE, this repeated command in Leviticus reminds us that holy is also something we must BE.

Holiness is more than just a position. It is also a practice. We need to become holy people.

How do we do this? How do we become holy, as God is holy?

It's helpful to remember that salvation also means we've been adopted by God into his family. Just as children in a family resemble their parents, we grow to resemble our Father. I have seen this with my own sons. Though we adopted all four of them, there is no doubt they are ours. They have the same mannerisms, expressions, and ways of doing things, and the years they've spent with us are reflected in the men they have become.

The same is true for the children of God. To grow in holiness, we need to spend time with the Holy God. When we spend time with God in His Word, in prayer, in worship, and in communion with other believers. His Spirit *"makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image"* (2 Corinthians 3:18 NLT).

We also look to Jesus, our older brother, who is the *"visible image of the invisible God"* (Colossians 1:15). Jesus often went off by himself to pray and spend time with his Father. He walked this earth with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. He was perfectly obedient and modeled perfect forgiveness, all bound together in perfect love. Jesus is holiness in the flesh.

Not only should we imitate Jesus, we should also follow his teaching. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus interpreted the book of Leviticus for us, revealing the heart of God's holy laws and echoing that familiar refrain, *"Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect"* (Matthew 5:48).

Finally, holiness means becoming distinct and set apart from things that are not holy—ruthlessly eliminating any thoughts, words and actions that do not bring God glory. 1 Peter 1:14-15 says it like this: *"As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy."*

By the grace of God, through the blood of Jesus Christ, we have been made holy. Now, go and live like it!

In what ways are you growing in holiness? What do you find most challenging when you consider the way that Jesus lived?

Praise God for his holiness, and pray that His Spirit will help you grow in holiness so that more and more you will reflect the image of our Holy God.