



NEW HEIGHTS CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

"Our Heart is People, Our Message is Jesus"

Table Group Discussion Questions

Series: Words We Thought We Knew

Title: "Holiness" on June 7, 2026

Icebreaker / Getting Started (10-15 minutes)

1. When you were growing up, what did the word "holy" or "holiness" mean to you — or what image did it bring to mind? Where did that come from?
2. Have you ever been in a room where you felt like everyone was quietly evaluating each other — at church, at work, at a family gathering? What did that feel like, and what did it do to how you acted?

Digging into the Scripture & Sermon (15-20 minutes)

Read together: **Ephesians 1:4–5, 1 Thessalonians 5:23–24, Romans 5:5, and Matthew 6:1–6**

3. Ephesians 1:4–5 says God chose us to be holy *before the creation of the world* — before we did anything at all. What does it mean that holiness is something God chose for us before we existed? How does that reframe the way you think about your standing before God?
4. 1 Thessalonians 5:23–24 says God will sanctify us *through and through* — spirit, soul, and body — and that *he* will do it. What's the difference between God sanctifying you *for* you versus *in* you? Why does that distinction matter?
5. The sermon introduced the Wesleyan idea of entire sanctification — a second work of grace that purifies the deepest motivations of the heart so that love for God and neighbor becomes not just what we do but who we are. How does that land for you? Does it sound possible, intimidating, or something else?
6. Matthew 6 shows Jesus rebuking the Pharisees not for *what* they practiced — prayer, fasting, generosity — but for *why* they practiced it. What's the difference between doing the right things for appearance versus doing them from a transformed heart? How do you tell the difference in yourself?

Personal Reflection (15-20 minutes)

7. The sermon described three distortions of holiness: **perfection** (holiness as a grade from God), **status** (holiness as a badge over others), and **piety** (holiness as appearance). Which of those three hits closest to home for you — the one you're most tempted toward? What does it cost you when you live out of that distortion?
8. The sermon used the image of fine china or crystal sitting in a locked cabinet — beautiful, preserved, and completely useless. Is there an area of your life where your faith has become more about looking right than being genuinely useful to the people around you? What would it look like to take it off the shelf?
9. The sermon said that entire sanctification is not about flawless behavior but about the *purity of the heart's motivation* — who you love and what you live for. If you're honest, what's competing with God for the deepest motivation of your heart right now?

Action & Follow-Up (15-20 minutes)

10. The sermon ended with an invitation to a moment of consecration — not a first-time faith moment, but a going-deeper one. This week, find a quiet moment and pray this prayer honestly: "*Lord, I don't just want to be forgiven. I want to be filled. Sanctify me through and through.*" Come back and tell the group what happened — even if nothing dramatic happened, even if it felt awkward. The conversation itself matters.
11. Wesley said there is no holiness but social holiness — that a holy heart always moves outward toward others. This week, identify one specific person in your life who needs to encounter the love of Jesus through you. Not a project, not a program — a person. Name them out loud to the group and commit to one intentional act of love toward them before you meet again.
12. The sermon described holiness as an *inward reality with outward impact*. Think about your daily life — your workplace, your neighborhood, your family. Where is there one place this week where you can be genuinely useful rather than just presentable? Name it specifically and bring back a report.

Close in Prayer

The sermon closed with a communion response built around three exchanges. Use those same three as a framework for your closing prayer together:

Perfection → Grace: Lord, I release the pressure to perform. I receive your grace.

Pride → Humility: Lord, I release the need for status. I receive your humility.

Piety → Usefulness: Lord, I release the need to look good. Make me genuinely useful.

Close by reading **1 Thessalonians 5:23–24** aloud together as both a prayer and a promise — that the one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.