

Dear Heavenly Father,

Praise

You are the high and exalted One, the One who lives forever and whose name is holy. You dwell in a high and holy place, yet you also dwell with those who are contrite and lowly in spirit. You speak peace into their lives and give healing to their souls (Isa 57:15, 19). How wonderful to worship a God who loves and cares for His people! I exalt you today and bless your name! Praise the LORD!

Today in Your Word

Today you told me about Isaiah's call to holiness. Isaiah was faithful to condemn the people for their idolatry and hypocrisy, but he was also eager to show them how to live out your righteousness in their daily lives. 'It's not enough,' Isaiah said, 'to just go through the motions of serving God. You can fast and offer sacrifices and inquire of the LORD, but that's not what it means to be holy. Holiness is keeping your hand from doing any evil, humbling yourself before God, loosing the chains of injustice, setting the oppressed free, sharing your food with the hungry, giving shelter to the homeless, and clothing the naked. Holiness is practical and down-to-earth. Holiness is concerned with setting things right. Holiness is doing what God would do if He lived in your neighborhood, attended your church and worked at your job.' Isaiah was especially concerned with how the people treated your day of rest, the Sabbath. "If you turn back your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight and the holy day of the LORD honorable; if you honor it, not going your own ways, or seeking your own pleasure, or talking idly; then you shall take delight in the LORD, and I will make you ride on the heights of the earth; I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken" (Isa 58:13–14). Why the emphasis on keeping the Sabbath? Because in keeping the Sabbath, the people demonstrated their love for you (they respected and honored the day on which you rested) and their love for others (their obedience encouraged others to rest and refresh themselves). Perhaps no other commandment so beautifully weaves together the twin themes of the Law: loving God and loving others. That's what holiness is all about—loving you by obeying your commands (John 14:15) and loving others by treating them how I want to be treated (Matt 7:12).

Reflection

The people of Isaiah's day lived double lives. They would go to the temple and act delighted to learn about you, but when they left, they would fight among themselves and oppress each other (Isa 58:1–3). Do I act one way on Sunday and another way on Monday? Does my daily life testify that I'm a Christian?

Request

Father, keep me from having religion without relationship, form without substance, and appearance without power. Help me to live each day with holiness as my goal and righteousness as my ambition.

Thanksgiving

Thank you for the promise that you are coming as a Redeemer to Zion! You will put on righteousness like a breastplate and salvation like a helmet. You will wear garments of vengeance, and you will wrap yourself in a cloak of zeal. You will repay wrath to your enemies and give an eternal covenant to your people (Isa 59:15b–21). Hallelujah!

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Suggested Hymn: "[Beautiful Holiness](#)" – Barney E. Warren.

Meditation Verse: [Isaiah 56:7](#).