

Christmas is supposed to be Christianity's big day. For mainstream Christianity, it's supposed to be the holiest day of the year. We get called "legalistic" because we don't observe an annual religious ritual. A day off, trees, presents, midnight mass, unclean food. If you don't do that ritual on December 25, then you are the legalistic one. The components of this ritual are meant to make it holy. If you think about it, it is a day that's set apart by specific actions and even religious garb. The silly hats, the bright red and green, the wreaths. It's a religious experience. It's just all of it comes from the wrong religions. And if you don't play along with the specific rituals then you're legalistic. That's rich.

Pregame for the Chiefs. Just adding a Christmas soundtrack to what people normally do. THREE football games on Christmas. People doing what they normally do, just with presents and hats from some culture nobody even knows about. In reality, it was likely the most profitable day of the year for the NFL and it's affiliates. Not only did they not keep Christmas holy by taking the day off, they blended their normal work with elements of the Christmas ritual. Irony knows no bounds. People blending Christmas with secularism and commercialism. It's as if Christmas is meant to be blended. As long as you wear a hat and give a present, you're serving the god of that Holiday.

There was a commercial during the games where the eulogy of someone was a spoof on sports. Since we don't do Christmas, I had ZERO problem watching sports all day. Well, we did have one problem. The Chiefs have fallen apart. But it was just a normal day to us, just without having to work. The eulogy commercial was the genesis of today's message. A marketing department though it was a good idea and it made it to a paid ad on Christmas day to spoof a speech given when someone dies to make it about sports. It appears we have arrived at a place where nothing is sacred or holy, not even Christianity's ancient mistakes.

Since I learned the truth, I have wanted mankind to stop celebrating Christmas because they switch to Yahweh's Holy Days. I'm torn on mankind not holding anything holy. But we have become a secular society teetering on an atheistic one. Living in a world where nothing is holy is probably going to turn out to be a nightmare. So today, we are going to talk about real holiness, what it looks like, and it's foundation.

Slide 2 And so the heavens and the earth were completed, and all their heavenly lights. By the seventh day Elohim completed His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. Then Elohim blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because on it He rested from all His work which Elohim had created and made. (Gen 2:1-3)

## The Sabbath

Today is a sacred Name day. When speaking about holiness, I feel it's best to use the actual Names and titles of Yahweh and Yeshua. For those who may not be familiar, Yahweh is the Name of God in Hebrew. It means "self-existent one" and is the Name He used to introduce Himself to everyone at Mount Sinai. Yeshua is Jesus' Name in Hebrew. It means Salvation and is a triple entendre at times. When He was alive, this is what Mary and Joseph called Him. Elohim is the generic word for God in Hebrew. When the E is capitalized, it is referring to Yahweh. When it's not, it is referring to false gods.

In the scripture on the screen, the word sanctified is qadash, close to the word qodesh. It means holy or consecrate. Many say it means "set apart", which it does, but it means "set-apart for holy use." Just saying set apart doesn't really tell the story. Something could be set-apart for a bad use or because it was defiled.

This is the 7<sup>th</sup> day of creation and Yahweh made it holy. That's significant. Yahweh makes things holy. It's *entirely up to Him* what is holy or not. It is not up to mankind. Holiness is kind of a super-specialness. Do you have fine dinnerware for special occasions? A special suit or dress? Most people do. Those things are special and you set them apart for special times. Holiness is another level. It's when Yahweh calls something to be special. There can even be degrees of holiness, but today I'm just focusing on the simple foundation. Please do not lose this point in the details, though. Creation week was completed by the creation of holiness and showing us how to keep a day holy. Creation did not stop on day 6, it stopped after Yahweh rested on the 7<sup>th</sup> day, showing mankind how to keep the Sabbath holy.

The significance of holiness is on the verge of extinction. Just like with many things, it got confused and now is near meaningless. Let's start with the confusion: The Roman Catholic Church assumed the power of making things holy upon its foundation in 325 AD. Let's look at their definition of holiness:

Slide 3 But, what is holiness? Holiness is the plenitude of Christian life, the fullness of charity and of our condition as God's children. It is nothing but the work of God's grace in us and our correspondence to it to identify ourselves with His Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, living in, with, and for Him. Holiness consists in identifying ourselves with Jesus Christ and involves the struggle to think, feel, want, act and live like Christ did, with the help of God's grace. Holiness necessarily involves imitating and living the virtues Jesus Christ lived and taught during his life on earth, as well as the Beatitudes He taught at the Sermon of the Mount. All these cannot be possible without the help of God's graces we receive in prayer, sacraments and daily struggle or spiritual battle to live the virtues and renounce sin out of love for God and of our

neighbor. In short, holiness consists in being “other Christs, Christ himself” (alter Christus, ipse Christus) as St. Josemaria put it. To this all Christians are called, whatever state of life they may have: young, old, single, married, lay persons, clerics and religious. From <https://catholicsstrivingforholiness.org/what-is-holiness-catechism/>

You may be shocked to learn that this very nice assemblance of positivity doesn't define holiness. Well, it kind of defines holiness, or perhaps the result of personal holiness. If a person is called out of Babylon and accepts Yeshua as the Messiah, then they will emulate Him for real and attain a level of holiness, this is true. Emulating Yeshua is a wonderful way to experience holiness because He was of Judah and not a Levite. As a non-Levite Jew while on earth, His expectations for sinlessness, meaning following the Torah, would be the same as ours. His generosity and love for mankind is certainly something we should strive for. But is this the biblical definition of holiness?

Slide 4 Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Messiah Yeshua. As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; because it is written, "YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY." (1Pe 1:13-16)

This is probably the origin of the Catholic idea of holiness. The surrounding verses line up with their explanation on the last slide. Minus their stuff about the sacraments and made-up stuff, it was a nice sentiment and very positive if we apply true Christianity to their formula. In this case, we should do all these things of which Peter writes. We need to ditch the former lusts that we did in ignorance and be holy in all our behavior. But we have more. Peter gave us a clue with “it is written” and the NASB folks gave us another one with the ALL CAPS. We know to look at the original citation to figure out what Peter really meant. As it turns out, there are at least three verses that use this very language:

Slide 5 'For I am YHVH your Elohim. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am holy. And you shall not make yourselves unclean with any of the swarming things that swarm on the earth. 'For I am YHVH who brought you up from the land of Egypt to be your Elohim; thus you shall be holy, for I am holy.'" (Lev 11:44-45)

So the first place that comes up is Leviticus 11. Curious. Being holy has something to do with what we eat? Sure enough, to be holy we need to adopt the diet Yahweh prescribed for us. In order to be holy, we need to follow Leviticus 11. The word consecrate here is qadash, the same word used to sanctify the 7<sup>th</sup> day in Genesis. The first stop on our walk into defining holiness is based on our diet and understanding the separation of the clean and unclean. Did Yeshua eat anything unclean? No

way. Are we supposed to be like Him? Yep. So we're supposed to obey Yahweh's diet to be holy. What's next?

Slide 6 Then YHVH spoke to Moses, saying: "Speak to all the congregation of the sons of Israel and say to them, 'You shall be holy, for I YHVH your Elohim am holy. 'Every one of you shall reverence his mother and his father, and you shall keep My sabbaths; I am YHVH your Elohim. 'Do not turn to idols or make for yourselves molten gods; I am YHVH your Elohim.'" (Lev 19:1-4)

Well, well, well what have we here? Reverencing our parents is part of being holy? Sabbaths is plural so that means keeping the appointed times is part of being holy, too. The appointed times of Leviticus 23, not the man-made ones. No idols or molten gods, too. This is starting to look suspiciously like keeping the commandments might be how to be holy. Could it be that being holy is spelled out in the Torah? Do you think Yahweh might have told us precisely how to be holy?

Slide 7 "You are therefore to keep all My statutes and all My ordinances and do them, so that the land to which I am bringing you to live will not spew you out. 'Moreover, you shall not follow the customs of the nation which I will drive out before you, for they did all these things, and therefore I have abhorred them. 'Hence I have said to you, "You are to possess their land, and I Myself will give it to you to possess it, a land flowing with milk and honey." I am YHVH your Elohim, who has separated you from the peoples. You are therefore to make a distinction between the clean animal and the unclean, and between the unclean bird and the clean; and you shall not make yourselves detestable by animal or by bird or by anything that creeps on the ground, which I have separated for you as unclean. Thus you are to be holy to Me, for I YHVH am holy; and I have set you apart from the peoples to be Mine." (Lev 20:22-26)

Leviticus 20 is comprehensive. It contains much of the Torah commandments for the individual. I've just posted a snippet here. But the three direct references I found that Peter was referencing come from the book of Leviticus and are a comprehensive view of keeping Torah. Whether you read that to be holy as Yahweh is holy or to be holy as Yeshua is holy, the result is the same. Follow the actual commandments about being holy. There is no ambivalence. When the Catholics said to be like Yeshua to be holy, they were on to something. Yeshua didn't sin. He followed Torah perfectly based on His earthly status from the tribe of Judah. That means He was not beholden to the commandments reserved for the priests and the Levites. And He was not beholden to commandments for women. You see, we have delineations based on our situations. For you and I, adopted children of Abraham, we are to keep the Torah as Yeshua did in order to be holy. Yahweh has defined our requirements. And we should be holy like Yeshua was holy when He was on earth. He was the perfect image of His Father in Heaven. And it starts with the 7<sup>th</sup> day of creation.

Slide 8 And so the heavens and the earth were completed, and all their heavenly lights. By the seventh day Elohim completed His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. Then Elohim blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because on it He rested from all His work which Elohim had created and made. (Gen 2:1-3)

The foundation of holiness is Shabbat, the 7<sup>th</sup> day of the week. After the world was created. After mankind was created. Yahweh rested and blessed the 7<sup>th</sup> day of the week. He sanctified it and made it holy as an example for His creation. Holiness, at its core, is doing what Yahweh did when He decided to make something holy. It's not doing what we want to do and calling it holy. It's not doing what we would normally do and adding a soundtrack of Christian hymns. It's obedience.

Slide 9 "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. "Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath of YHVH your Elohim; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you. For in six days YHVH made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore YHVH blessed the sabbath day and made it holy." (Exo 20:8-11)

'Observe the sabbath day to keep it holy, as YHVH your Elohim commanded you. 'Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath of YHVH your Elohim; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter or your male servant or your female servant or your ox or your donkey or any of your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you, so that your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you. 'You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and YHVH your Elohim brought you out of there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; therefore YHVH your Elohim commanded you to observe the sabbath day. (Deu 5:12-15)

This is our weekly dose of holiness. I have both versions up because we seldom look at the commandment in Deuteronomy. Yahweh is about contrasts. In reality, we need contrasts to learn just about anything. Hot or cold, up or down, black or white. In this case, slavery and work versus rest and separation. Slavery was the extreme case, when the Israelites grew up in Egypt. But also when they got carried away into captivity. And also when the Romans smote them. But also when it was illegal for anyone to keep Shabbat by the power of the Roman church and government. That's defilement. That's treading down what Yahweh holds dear. He made the 7<sup>th</sup> day holy by resting on it. We need to do the same. For us to be holy and Yahweh is holy, we need to rest as Yahweh rested. Because the foundation of holiness was established in Genesis.