

## ***A Call to Holiness***

Picture the scenario. Your kids are uncontrollable and you've finally reached a breaking point. Something *must* change! You commit yourself to a fast for as long as it takes, and you embark on writing them a letter that more resembles a book. You sit at your computer, working day and night, tirelessly. Finally, after 40 days of fasting, praying and slaving over this manuscript that will serve as a legacy for your wayward children, you are done! Meanwhile, your kids have gone on with their lives, ignorant of your lack of food and heart-full of concern, and they've continued partying with friends. You plan a special meal that night where you will present this gift, and with it your heart and dreams for their new conduct. All of a sudden, as you are still typing your name, in walk the kids...girlfriends in tow and liquor on their breath. Their language is abhorrent and you feel sickened! With one swipe, you delete everything which you've poured blood, sweat and tears into for the last 40 days -- and it's gone! Hatred of the evil, even from the ones you love (and maybe especially from the ones you love) drives you to do what otherwise would seem unthinkable!

Does this story ring any bells? As I read the story in Exodus again for maybe the hundredth time, all of a sudden it clicked! Moses, especially after being in the presence of a Holy God for 40 days and nights, was so overwhelmed by the ugliness of sin, that he smashed to pieces all the instruction God had given and written with His own finger. In the story of the computer, who wouldn't be tempted to step away from the computer and do something a bit less drastic...that didn't "cost so much"? But passion for God and holiness needs to be consuming! It certainly was for Jesus when he overturned the tables of the moneychangers in the temple...and it needs to be for us!



### ***Fellowship***

1. Can you recall a time when your hatred for evil was overwhelming?



### ***Discipleship***

As we all strive towards lives of holiness, we can be assured of one thing: we will fail! We live with the wondrous promise that we *will* be like Christ...one day. But in the meantime, although we are being changed day by day into His likeness (if we are His children), the struggle is hard! One teenager went to her youth pastor and complained about the daily struggle she felt inside her...whether to live according to her old nature or

new one! She described this constant game of tug or war she lived with, likening it to two huge dogs in her body, fighting all the time. Her youth pastor asked her, “Which of the two dogs is stronger?” All of a sudden, she had her answer, and said, “I guess whichever dog I feed the most!”

Paul fully related! In Romans 7, he says he doesn’t understand why he does what he hates so much! He’s frustrated due to the same warring of the old and new natures. We feel the same thing every day, too, don’t we? We hear God tell us to hate what is evil and cling to what is good in Romans 12:9; and “to be holy because He is holy” in Leviticus 11:44. But we need help! But as Paul goes on to say in Romans 7:25, “Thanks be to God, who rescues us through our Lord Jesus Christ.” God does not give us commands He won’t help us fulfill! But first of all, His help has to be received. Do you already hate evil and are clinging to the good? Or do you still need to pray that God will give you abhorrence towards evil? We can’t secretly enjoy things that sadden God and then scratch our heads wondering why we still struggle with sin.

After praying for a correct attitude against sin, accept the help that God provides... however He chooses to provide it. It just may come in the form of a godly friend, like Moses had standing beside him as he came down from Mount Sinai -- Joshua. The scene that met Moses’ eyes must have been daunting! 600,000 men, not counting women and children, crossed the Red Sea...and as far as we are told, only Joshua and he were left standing faithfully for God! He was willing to go against nearly 1 million people and confront evil. Are we?

Lastly, put a guard over what you watch and subject your mind to. As the saying goes, “Garbage in, garbage out.” Our minds are like computers, and if the bad data never goes in, it won’t be able to come out. There’s no escaping all of the evil surrounding us, but we can surround ourselves with the Word, friends and encouragement from Him Who is passionate about *His* kids’ call to holiness!



## Ministry

2. Read the story of Moses’ righteous indignation in Exodus 32:15-29.
3. What, if any, chastisement did God give Moses for destroying His writings? Why do you think that was?
4. What keeps you from taking a stand against evil?
5. Read together Philippians 4:8--

*“Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable--if anything is excellent or praiseworthy--think about such things.”*

6. What form of media presents the biggest challenge to you?
7. What will you do this week to sensitize yourself to ungodly things?



## **Evangelism**

8. As a group, role play a situation where you are taking a stand against evil in the midst of extreme peer pressure.
9. What is the biggest challenge you face among your non-Christian friends?
10. Take time to pray for those who pose this challenge, that they would thirst for holiness and sense the difference in you.



## **Worship**

11. God loves to see his children getting along together and enjoying the gifts he has given them. In two weeks you get to set aside a night just for celebration again! Start making some plans now.
12. God is on your side, both when you stand against evil like Moses and Jesus did...and when you feel you can't stand but call on His name. Take time committing your week and walk to Him and praising Him for His love and help.