

**THE PURSUIT OF HOLINESS**  
**NORTH RIVER CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
**EDGE 11/11/12**

*Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.*

—*Matthew 7:13-14*

*And a highway will be there; it will be called the Way of Holiness; it will be for those who walk on that Way. The unclean will not journey on it; fools will not go about on it.*

—*Isaiah 35:8*

There are two roads. This theme runs through all of scripture, from Genesis to Revelation. We must reject the temptation to identify the road with an institution—as did the people whom Jeremiah preached to around 600 BC (Jeremiah 7:4):

Matthew 7:13-14; Psalm 1:1-6; Isaiah 35:8

We are called to resist the world. We may be in the world, but we are not to be of the world.

1 John 2:15-17; James 4:4; John 17:16-17

God is holy:

Exodus 15:11; Psalms 96:9; Habakkuk 2:20

Likewise, we are to be holy:

Exodus 19:6; Leviticus 11:44; Luke 1:74-75; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Ephesians 4:24; 1 Thessalonians 3:13, 4:4,7; Hebrews 12:10,14-17; 1 Peter 1:15-16; 1 Peter 3:15-16; 2 Peter 1:3-7, 3:11

Areas of holiness are to include actions, words, and thoughts (Psalms 19:13-14), and have implications in such areas as business ethics, sexual ethics, attitudes towards wealth, attitudes towards politics, personal vanity, eating & drinking, scheduling, outreach, relationships, dating & marriage, what we view online, the books we read and the music we listen to, and many other matters.

We are to live purposeful lives:

John 15:1-17; *Romans 12:11*; *Revelation 3:14-20*; 2 Timothy 2:20-21; Titus 2:11-14

Worldly people will resist us. Resistance may come not only from without, but also from within—among God's people:

Numbers 16:3; Isaiah 30:10-11; 1 John 4:5

We must keep before us a vision of holiness. Such a vision fuels us, leading to service and worship:

Isaiah 6:1-8; Revelation 4:1-11

This is not impossible, but it is completely doable, practical, and simple, provided we focus ourselves and stop making excuses:

Deuteronomy 30:11-14; Psalm 138:2; Matthew 11:28-30; 1 John 5:3