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2026 ANNUAL THEME: “Hope in Motion”➔

BIBLE STUDY
May 27, 2026

May 2026 Theme: Holiness of God

Weekly Lesson: **“Pressing For Divine Peace, Purity, and Presence”**
(Hebrews 12:14)

Topics

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Scripture Reference:

“Pursue peace with all people, and the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.” (Hebrews 12:14 NASB)

Opening Reflection Questions

- A. What does it mean to you personally to pursue or press for peace and holiness in your daily life?

B. Why do you think the writer of Hebrews connects seeing the Lord with holiness?

Important Emphasis

Delight in Discipline

The primary requirement of discipline is a longing after God (**Psalm 42:1-2**).

One of the hardest things, yet fulfilling things, in life is deciding to live a life dedicated to godly discipline. This type of life is focused, intentional, and purposeful. It is the bridge of basking in godly [holy] living.

Discipline usually refers in the Bible to moral training, which includes the positive aspect of instruction and the negative aspect of correction. The result of receiving discipline with humility is wisdom and a satisfying successful life **Proverbs 4:13; Proverbs 5:23; Proverbs 13:18**

We must train ourselves daily starting with the mind. The mind if it will affect the body with spiritual rich thoughts and actions must be bent toward God. **Psalms 63:1**

“Do not correct a fool, he will hate you. Correct a wise man and he will appreciate you.” (**Proverbs 9:8**)

Discipline is the word *yassar*, in the Hebrew it means to instruct, rebuke or warn. In the Greek the word discipline is *paideuo*, to instruct or correct. The Disciplines allows us to place ourselves before God so that he can transform us.

“Inner righteousness is a gift from God to be graciously received. The needed change within us is God’s work, not ours. The demand is for an inside job, and only God can work from the inside.” **Psalm 51:10**

Will power alone is incapable of bringing about the necessary transformation of the inner spirit. “As long as we think we can save ourselves by our own will power, we will only make the evil in us stronger than ever”.

Freedom from Sinful Thoughts ~ Heini Arnold

Jesus is the Example: Looking only at Jesus

The writer to the Hebrews exhorted his readers to be encouraged by God's discipline in their lives because it serves as the ultimate proof that God is indeed their father.

Looking only at Jesus, the originator and perfecter of the faith. We find ourselves dominated by our dust when we take Discipline of the Lord too lightly.

Love for the Disciples caused him to share the essential disciplines

- The profitability of discipline
- The spirituality of discipline
- The mutuality of discipline
(exchange of support)

Life without discipline- sin as a condition works its way out through the “bodily members,” that is the ingrained habits of the body **Romans 7:5** and there is no slavery that can compare to the slavery of ingrained habits of sin. knowing the mechanics of discipline does not mean that we are practicing the disciplines

Length of discipline- vs 10 Hebrews 12 The discipline of God is not tending it is focused on lasting training. **2 Timothy 2:4**

Liberating quality of Discipline - The purpose of the discipline is liberation from the stifling slavery to self-interest and fear.

Learn by way of Discipline - Following faith's fitness it is the **fruit of peace (Galatians 5:22)**.

Key Words and Terms

Accountability	Holiness	Pursue
Christlikeness	Holy Spirit	Pursuit of Holiness
Defilement	Hope	Relationship with God
Discipline	Intimacy with God	Repentance
Divine Peace	Obedience	Restored relationships
Divine Presence	Patience	Rule-keeping
Divine Purity	Peacemakers	See the Lord
Forgiveness	Peacemaking	Set apart
God's children	Personal Responsibility	Sons of God
God's grace	Prepared for Eternity	Spiritual growth
Grace (of the Saints)	Press	Unity
Harmony	Pure in Heart	Virtuous life
		Wholeness

Outline

- I. Press for Divine Peace
- II. Press for Divine Purity
- III. Press for Divine Presence

Introduction

In a world filled with conflict, division, and moral confusion, the call to pursue or press for peace and holiness stands out as both a challenge and an invitation. Hebrews 12:14 urges believers to actively seek peace with everyone and to strive for purity and holiness, emphasizing that without holiness, no one will see the Lord. This verse is not just a suggestion but a vital directive for every follower of Christ.

Today's study will help us unpack what it means to pursue or press for peace and holiness, why these qualities are essential, and how we can practically live them out. Through exploring related scriptures, insights from early church fathers, and contemporary Bible scholars, we will discover how this pursuit shapes our relationship with God and others.

Background and Context

The Book of Hebrews was written to Jewish Christians who were facing persecution and temptation to abandon their faith. The author encourages them to remain steadfast, drawing on Old Testament imagery and exhorting them to live lives that reflect their new identity in Christ. Hebrews 12 follows the famous "Hall

of Faith” in chapter 11 and calls believers to run the race of faith with endurance, fixing their eyes on Jesus.

Hebrews 12:14 is situated in a section focused on practical Christian living. The call to pursue peace and holiness is not isolated; it is part of a larger exhortation [encouragement] to live in a way that honors God and builds up the community. The verse highlights the inseparable link between our relationship with God and our relationships with others.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

I. Press For Divine Peace (Hebrews 12:14a)

Pursue peace with all people, ...

Hebrews 12:14 begins with the command to “pursue peace with all people.” Peace is not passive; it requires intentional effort and humility. Jesus said, “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God”

- A. **Divine Peacemaker**--The context of Hebrews shines clearly here, for peace is a reference to the Jewish concept of shalom, a peace that results in personal well-being. The original readers of the book, having come from a Jewish background, are well acquainted with this idea. This is not a peace in which hostilities are merely paused. Rather, differences and disputes have been resolved and laid aside for good resulting in total well-being and **wholeness**. The Old Testament teaches that this kind of peace ultimately comes from God (**Numbers 6:24-26; Psalm 29:11**).

- B. **Peacemaking (Matthew 5:9)** – Jesus calls us to actively create peace, not just avoid conflict. Peacemaking is a mark of God’s children and reflects His character. Paul echoes this in **Romans 12:18**: “If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.” This means we are responsible to do our part to live in harmony, even if others do not respond in kind. It involves forgiveness, patience, and sometimes letting go of our rights for the sake of unity.

John Chrysostom wrote, “Nothing is so characteristic of a Christian as being a peacemaker.”

Contemporary scholar *N.T. Wright* adds, “Peace is not simply the absence of conflict, but the presence of restored relationships.”

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

1. What are some practical ways you can pursue peace in your relationships this week?

2. How does being a peacemaker reflect the character of God to those around you?

EXPLORE THE TEXT

II. Press For Divine Purity (Hebrews 12:14b)

Pursue peace with all people, and the holiness

The second part of Hebrews 12:14 emphasizes *holiness*. Holiness means being set apart for God, living in a way that is morally pure and distinct from the world. The author of Hebrews knows that our behavior influences that of others; therefore, he couples the admonition for peace with all men to a call for holiness. This means we are to live lives that are above reproach so that we represent our holy God faithfully to our family and neighbors.

- A. **Called to Holiness**— God’s nature sets the standard for our lives. Holiness is not optional; it is the standard for God’s people. In **1 Peter 1:15-16**, Peter instructs early Jewish Christians to live holy lives, saying, “But just as He who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: ‘Be holy, because I am holy.’” Peter is quoting

from the Old Testament (**Leviticus 11:44, 19:2**), reminding believers that God’s own nature sets the standard for their conduct. Holiness means being set apart for God, living in a way that is **morally pure** and distinct from the surrounding culture. Peter’s instruction emphasizes that holiness is not optional for followers of Christ—it is a calling and a command.

Christians are to reflect God’s character in every aspect of their lives, allowing His holiness to shape their thoughts, actions, and relationships. This call to holiness is both a privilege and a responsibility, made possible by God’s grace and the transforming work of the Holy Spirit. (**Romans 12:2; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Galatians 5:22-23; Ephesians 4:22-24**)

- B. Cleansing Ourselves** (2 Corinthians 7:1) – Holiness involves ongoing repentance and spiritual growth. Paul instructs early Gentile and Jewish Christians in **2 Corinthians 7:1**, “Let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” This is a continual process of turning away from sin and growing in Christlikeness. Holiness is both a gift and a pursuit.

“Holy is the way God is. To be holy he does not conform to a standard. He is that standard. He is absolutely holy with an infinite, incomprehensible fullness of purity that is incapable of being other than it is. Because he is holy, all his attributes are holy; that is, whatever we think of as belonging to God must be thought of as holy.” ~ A. W. Tozer

“Remember that without holiness no man shall see the Lord, because without holiness no man has the evidence that he is, indeed, a child of God!” ~ *Charles Haddon Spurgeon*

“Holiness is not a condition we achieve, but a relationship we enter into by grace, which then transforms our conduct.” ~ *John Stott*

Jerry Bridges, in *The Pursuit of Holiness*, teaches that holiness is not automatic for the believer; it requires a conscious, daily commitment to obey God’s commands. He stresses the importance of recognizing both **God’s role and our responsibility**: while God provides the

power for holiness through the Holy Spirit, we must make deliberate choices to resist sin and **cultivate godly habits**. Bridges also highlights the need for discipline, accountability, and reliance on **God’s grace** as we pursue purity in every area of life.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

3. What areas of our lives is God calling us to greater holiness?

4. How can we rely on God’s grace in our pursuit of purity and holiness?

EXPLORE THE TEXT

III. Press For Divine Presence (Hebrews 12:14c)

Pursue peace with all people, and the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.

The final phrase, “without which no one will see the Lord,” points to the ultimate goal: experiencing **God’s presence**.

A. Pure in Heart– Purity leads to a deeper experience of God’s presence. (**Matthew 5:8**). Holiness is the pathway to intimacy with God, both now and in eternity. In **Psalm 24:3-4**, David asks the question, “Who may ascend into the hill of the Lord? And who may stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a **pure heart**...” Only those who are pure can enter God’s presence.

B. Prepared for Eternity– Our hope of seeing God shapes how we live now. John writes, “Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears,

we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is” (1 John 3:2-3). This hope motivates us to **purify ourselves** and live in expectation of seeing the Lord.

Dallas Willard writes, “Holiness is the condition of seeing God, not just in the future, but in the present reality of our lives.”

Jerry Bridges reminds us that the pursuit of holiness is ultimately about relationship—drawing near to God and experiencing His presence. Bridges writes that holiness is not just about **rule-keeping**, but about loving God and desiring to please Him. Bridges encourages believers to keep their eyes on the **hope** of seeing God, both now through spiritual intimacy and ultimately in eternity. This hope fuels our motivation to **persevere in holiness**, knowing that God’s presence is our greatest reward.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

5. How does the promise of seeing God motivate us to pursue holiness?

6. What does it mean to “see the Lord” in your daily walk with Him?

Life Application Questions

- What specific steps will you take this week to pursue peace and holiness in your life?

- How can you encourage others in your community to join you in this pursuit of divine peace, purity, and God's presence?
