

THE BLESSING OF HOLINESS

Dennis smoked cigarettes for years. He was in his mid-fifties when he decided to kick the habit. It was not easy, but Dennis was a disciplined man and he did kick the habit, but it took him three years. He did not smoke during those three years, but it was a battle. For the first year, it was a daily battle.

Dennis smoked a couple of packets of cigarettes a day for forty years. Those forty years wore deep grooves of smoking behavior into his mind and his mouth. His body had become addicted to the habit of smoking and to nicotine.

The thing that caught Dennis off guard was the sudden and unexpected strong cravings he would get to smoke. These cravings came during these first three years, and they also came ten years later. After using cigarettes for forty years the body gets nicotine into its system, and it will remind you every now and then, "it would be nice to get some nicotine again."

During these strong nicotine cravings Dennis would remind himself of how much better his life was since he stopped smoking. He could breathe much better and he had much more energy. But the greatest blessing was his vision of the future. Dennis had grandchildren, and the thought of spending as much time with them as he could was a powerful motivation to resist the nicotine cravings.

Holiness is a blessing from God. Holiness begins by removing the old habits and behaviors that are unholy. Some of these habits and behaviors are deeply embedded in our hearts and minds, and some of these habits and behaviors are pleasurable; but it's pleasure that destroys us, our families and our relationship with God.

For some reason holiness tends to be connected primarily with the process of removing the old habits and behaviors, and their temporary pleasures. This has caused some people to view holiness as behavior that is empty of joy. Nothing could be further from the truth. To embrace holiness is to embrace life to its fullest. Holiness is to be all you were created to be and all that you have been redeemed to be.

Holiness is a blessing not a curse. Holiness is joy not a burden. To pursue and embrace holiness is to pursue and embrace the very purpose of our creation and the purpose of our redemption. We were created to be in a relationship with a holy God. We were redeemed to rejoin God's holy family.

Holiness is God's will for our lives, both today and for eternity.

Grace & Peace
Derek

Sunday Conference call:

To listen to our Sunday morning service live,
call 1-800-914-8405 followed by 4896244
YOU MUST MUTE YOUR PHONE

Family News & Notes

- **Danny Jackson** is home but still has several health issues.
- **Debbie Davis** had skin cell testing on Monday.
- Many of our members have been sick with colds and the flu.

REMEMBER IN PRAYER

HEALTH ISSUES: Joe Albritton, Cindy Caldwell, Herman Davis, Ken Joines, Misha Kimbell, Donna Meadows, Peggy McGowen, James Neal, Jerry Richardson, Jamie Vorhof

HOSPICE CARE: Betty Walker

REHAB: Margaret Whalen

SHUT-INS: Valeria Canada, Lorene Edge, Cora Epperson, FM Hylander, Evelyn Fowler, Sallye Giles, Irmagene Hall, Margaret Jones, Jackie Lorensen, Dot McEwen, Billy & Betty Moore, Dorinda Murphy, Louise Schmittou, Helen Weathers

FAMILY: Jeanette Barnes, Maxine Drewery, Mike Hasler, Zayden Huffman, Melanie Keffer, Judy Lee, Sandra Morris, Terrance Simmons, Ray Yearwood

SYMPATHY

Goodman Oaks would like to extend our sympathy to **Kevin Culley and family** at the passing of **Kevin's** mother, Katie Culley.

We also want to extend our sympathy to the family of **Robert Coleman** as they deal with Robert's passing. Robert's funeral was **Saturday, January 13.**



THE 66 CLUB

Our children in KFC (grades 1-5) have done an outstanding job memorizing the books of the Old and New Testaments. Many of them have already recited them and joined the **66 Club**. All members of the **66 Club** who are in 5th grade will receive a hoodie to wear. Now, the challenge for members is to memorize passages, for which they will earn iron on patches that they can wear on their hoodies. Would you like to encourage your child to learn God's word? Then help them join the **66 Club** and begin earning patches. Information is available in the KFC hallway.

INVITE A FRIEND TO WORSHIP

Reminders . . .

- ☞ The TLC'S will meet at Mike's Tuesday, January 17, for breakfast at 8:30AM.
- ☞ SHARE will meet Sunday, January 21, at 3:45PM.

2017 TAX LETTERS

- If you need a tax letter for 2017, please sign the list on the desk in the Visitor's Center or call the office.
- Contribution envelopes for 2018 are available on the desk in the Visitor's Center.

GETTING BACK INTO THE ROUTINE

The tree is on the curb. The lights are down. The elf has returned to the North Pole. Decorations are in the attic. The holidays are over. The children are back in school. Now it's time to get back into our normal routines of school and family, work and worship.

We live in a world of routine. We live in minutes, hours, days, weeks, months, and years. One routine that is key to our spiritual maturity is attending weekly Bible classes. We have seven adult Bible classes with capable teachers who spend much time in prayer and study as they prepare to bring God's Word to our classes. Scripture can transform our lives if we let it:

*The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul;
the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple;
the precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart;
the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.*

Psalm 19:7-8

It is difficult making new habits but once you develop a routine, you no longer need willpower or motivation. **You just do it.** Our dear brother Robert Coleman passed away last week. He was a man of habit. Every year for as long as his children can remember, Robert read the entire Bible. As long as he was able, he was always in Bible class. Even when he wasn't able, he told his family and friends not to call him between 10:00 and 11:15 on Sunday mornings. Up to the end of his life, Robert had a routine of listening to our worship service on his phone and he did not want any interruptions! Robert's firm grasp of Scripture and maturity as a disciple of Jesus were the results of his simple daily and weekly routines.

We'll be having Bible class at 9:00 every Sunday. If you are in the habit with us, keep it up! If not, we hope you'll make a habit of **Matthew**

YOUTH NEWS

AREA WIDE YOUTH EVENT

We will be going to the Area Wide Youth event at the Missouri Street Church of Christ in West Memphis, AR on **January 21**. If you would like to go please contact Jared before **Wednesday, January 17**.

MIDSOUTH GIRLS CONFERENCE

This all-day event is **Saturday, January 27**. The cost is **\$20**. If you would like to go please contact Jared before **Thursday, January 11**.

WINTERFEST

The last day to sign up is **Sunday, January 28**. Also, **all money is due Sunday, February 4**. There will be no late signups and no late payments will be accepted unless you have made arrangements with **Jared**.

