

SUNDAY MORNING (November 24th) • HOLINESS

An Unholy World

If holiness is the renewal of God's image in us, obedience to God's commands, and Christlikeness, it makes sense that Paul would write what he does in Romans 12. He begins with an appeal to Christians:

Present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy, and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. (Rom 12:1-2)

Shortly thereafter, he commands: "Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good" (Rom 12:9). Take your time with those three phrases. What should we make of:

- Let love be genuine (*anypokritos*: sincere, without hypocrisy) –
- Abhor (*apostungountes*: loathe, be disgusted with) what is evil –
- Hold fast (*kollömenoi*: embrace, used for sexual union in 1 Cor 6:16) to what is good –

Why must genuine love for God hate evil?

When God refers to evil, what does he have in mind? Consider these lists of vices that characterize the wicked and the sort of people who will not enter the kingdom of God:

- Mark 7:21-22 –
- Romans 1:24-31 –
- Romans 13:13 –
- 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 –
- Galatians 5:19-21 –
- Colossians 3:5-9 –
- 1 Timothy 1:9-10 –
- Revelation 21:8 –