

Everyday Saint Leader's Guide

Introduction

While studying *Everyday Saint*, your youth group will begin to grasp the meaning of holiness in a way that they have never experienced before. Jim Hampton explains holiness on a level which will be easily relatable to the whole group, and he explains it in such a way that it will spark applicable discussions among them.

Hampton uses four areas to discover what Jesus was like: Scripture, Tradition, Reason and Experience. Using these areas, Hampton leads readers to examine the concept of holiness and to apply it to their lives. *Everyday Saint* is not meant to be skimmed over lightly. Instead, it provides three sections of questions at the end of each chapter to aide the reader in soaking up the new information: "Questions to Ponder," "Emotions to Process," and "Actions to Practice."

"Questions to Ponder" allows readers to review the basic material found in the text, analyzing on a deeper level the information Hampton presents. The next section, "Emotions to Process," provides ways for the reader to share their feelings and emotions about what they have just read. Finally, "Actions to Practice" gives suggested activities to the readers so they can integrate the information into their everyday lives.

In addition to those three sections, this leader's guide will help you use this book to delve into the concept of holiness with your small group. Encourage your students to participate in the discussions, apply the information to their individual experiences, and ask

questions if they feel like they aren't quite grasping something. Take the opportunity to "redefine" the term holiness. Some of your members may have misconceptions about holiness as a *whole*, so use the time to explore with them and discover biblical examples of what holiness really means. God Bless you during your study!

Chapter 1: What Holiness Is and Isn't

Read Genesis 1-3, discussing the creation story and how God made man in His image.

After reading the scripture and working through the text in the chapter, discuss the following questions with your group:

1. Do you see yourself as holy? Before reading this chapter, did you have any misconceptions on the concept of holiness?
2. Are there particular areas of your life that hold you back from being holy? Do you feel that it's too hard to be holy, that it's impossible to be the image of God?
3. How does your need to be independent get in the way of being holy? Hampton said, "I want to suggest that what is wrong in this world, wrong in our relationships with each other and with God, is the direct result of our insistence on denying our absolute dependence on God" [p. 20]. What areas of your life are hardest to release so that you may have "absolute dependence on God"?
4. Hampton defines holiness as "Christ likeness" [p. 17]. Have you ever heard holiness described this way before? What new outlooks on holiness does this definition provide for you?
5. God has a perfect plan for each of our lives, and He is the ultimate guide. In the chapter there was a quote from Augustine which said, "Without God, we cannot; without us, God will not" [p. 21]. In what ways does this apply to your life? Do you find it easy to get caught up in an "I can do it on my own" mentality?
6. "Becoming holy people doesn't happen overnight" [p. 21]. Is it hard for you to remain positive even after you make mistakes? Do you feel pressure to get through the "bike ride" without "several skinned knees"? [p. 21]

7. Were the 12 disciples perfect? Did they have extraordinary accomplishments which qualified them to be followers of Jesus? In the chapter, Hampton said, “When He was with them, and they with Him, they were holy. Jesus is what made them extraordinary” [p. 22]. How does that make you feel? What implications does it have for your life?

Chapter 2: Undivided Loyalties—Loving God More Than Yourself

Read 1 Kings 17:1 and Mark 10:17-31 for an Old Testament and New Testament

example of loyalty before you begin discussing the second chapter.

1. Recall the illustration at the beginning of the chapter of being “tongue-swelling, cotton-mouth thirsty” [p. 27-28]. Have you ever thought about your need for Christ being as strong as the football players’ need for water?
2. What “competing loyalties” do you have in your life? What types of activities (high school sports, computer time, video games) compete for your loyalty to Jesus?
3. Hampton used examples of three teenagers experiencing “competing loyalties” [p. 28]. Do you have similar stories? Turn the Old Testament and New Testament examples (1 Kings 17:1 and Mark 10:17-31) into present day stories that you can individually relate to.
4. “God passionately desires our undivided heart. In fact, He won’t accept anything less than everything” [p. 34]. Does this strike a chord within your own life? In what ways are you becoming more aware that we are called to give God *everything*?
5. Discuss the example of the man and the red lizard from C.S. Lewis’s *The Great Divorce*, showing how sin is not the real truth [p. 34]. In what ways does the devil make us believe that the sin in our lives represents the truth?

Chapter 3: Breaking the Chains—Experiencing Liberation from Sin

Read Romans 7:17-24 before you begin working through Chapter 3. Think about our sinful nature as humans, and our desire to be good, but sometimes falling into the trap of sin.

1. At the beginning of the chapter, Hampton shared his personal struggle with sin [p. 38]. What sins are chaining you down in your own life? What are the ways that you use to overcome them?
2. Did you find it easy to relate to what Paul wrote to the Roman church (Romans 7:17-24) even though it was written so long ago? What are some examples of the way you relate in present day to what Christians struggled with long ago?
3. How do you experience the freedom that was bought with the blood of Jesus? Read Galatians 5:1. Do you feel like a slave to your sin, or free in Christ?
4. Hampton uses the term “freedom” throughout this chapter. What does the term freedom mean to you in terms of your relationship with Christ? In what ways does the culture in which we live skew this definition of freedom?
5. Hampton used an illustration taken from Chuck Swindoll about captured quails tied to a stick, each one walking around and around in circles. Even after the birds were released, they continued to walk in the same pattern [p. 42]. How can you relate this illustration to your own life of sin? Do you find yourself being released from the chains, but at the same time, being confined by them?
6. The example of the young slave being bought only to be set free was a powerful illustration. When the slave understood what was happening she cried, “All I want to do is to serve you—because you bought me” [p. 45-47]. Is that how you feel

about Jesus? He paid the ultimate price for you, and because of that sacrifice, is your main priority to drop your own selfish desires and serve Him?

7. The last paragraph on page 47 emphasizes the fact that it is possible to live without sin. Have you thought about this before? Do you believe in your own life, that it is possible to “allow the Holy Spirit to begin a spiritual reclamation project in our hearts, . . . [to] finally understand that we can live free as God intended us to be”?

Chapter 4: The Perfect Love—Responding in Obedience

Read how God is described as holy in Leviticus 11:44-45; Joshua 24:19; 1 Samuel 2:2; and Psalm 99:5.

1. Have you ever thought of holiness as more than doing what is right and following the rules and viewed it as a relational experience?
2. In Leviticus 11:44-45, God calls us to be holy as He is holy. Stop and discuss how you carry out God's command in your everyday life.
3. Read over Isaiah 6:1-6. Hampton said, "Isaiah's experience illustrates what is possible for us—we also will be cleansed and restored if we will allow ourselves to be confronted by the holiness of God, confess our sinfulness, and receive His cleansing" [p.55]. Isaiah confessed his sin and rebuilt his relationship with God. Are there times when it is hard for you to confess your own personal struggles and sins? Why do you think we want to hold back, regardless of the fact that He already knows what is going on in our lives?
4. How do you view perfection in terms of your faith? What comes to mind when you think of perfection and your relationship with Christ?
5. Hampton said, "Many are downright terrified of the concept of perfection, believing that they can never be perfect. Instead, we are quick to label ourselves as 'sinners.' Here, more than any other area of life, we are ready to expect *less* of ourselves rather than more" [p. 56]. Is this something that you deal with in your life? Do you believe humans can be perfect like Job, Noah, and Abraham who were perfect in the sense that they all walked with God, understood His law, and were completely open with Him?

6. What are some real life examples of “perfection of purpose” (our intention) and “perfection of performance” (how we put that intention into practice)? [p. 60]
7. In your life, do you find that you try to be holy but fail because of a lack of relationship? Why do you think that we want to be close to God, but we often push Him away?
8. Before reading this chapter, did you see holiness as more of a “journey” or a “destination”? What are ways that you see your own life growing and moving closer to God [p. 63]?
9. Describe an instance in your life where you’ve had to love your enemies in order to “be like God” which is to “love like God” [p. 64]. Have you had an experience where you didn’t show God’s love to your enemy, and in turn, it affected your relationship with God?
10. How do you view holiness: as legalistic or loving? How has this chapter opened your eyes to the fact that holiness isn’t rules that we don’t want to follow, but leading a life pleasing to God in order to show our love?

Chapter 5: Chasing Lions—Choosing to Love Others for the Sake of God

Read Isaiah 58:1-12 and Luke 10:25-37 and summarize, with your group, the meaning of each passage.

1. The beginning of the chapter recalls 2 Samuel 23:20 where Benaiah “went down into a pit on a snowy day and killed a lion” [p. 73]. Could you put yourself in Benaiah’s place and be as brave and courageous as he? What are times in your own life that you’ve been selfless and willing to go through tough situations in order to help others?
2. What are some ways that our culture goes against the idea that “holiness should always result in a life lived for others” [p. 74]?
3. Was it easy to understand Isaiah 58:1-12 in conjunction with personal experiences? Have you experienced “holy” people who put their needs before others so even their worship isn’t completely devoted?
4. John Wesley called wealth, “anything beyond the bare necessities of survival— food, clothing, and shelter” [p. 77]. Have you ever thought about wealth in these terms? Have you thought of the money you have as money that belongs to God which He is entrusting to us [p. 77]? If you think about it from this point of view, how would you handle your finances differently?
5. Think about the illustration of the woman in the airport on page 79. What are some worldly possessions that you tend to hold on to?

6. God calls us to be compassionate. Imagine you are called to be a missionary to a country to which you've never been. What would your reaction be? What types of feelings would you experience, and how would you make your decision?
7. Mother Teresa said, "I know that when I touch the limbs of a leper who stinks I am touching the body of Christ the same as when I receive the Sacrament" [p. 82]. How does this statement make you feel? Would you be willing to touch the limbs of a leper (or someone with AIDS or some other deadly disease)?

Chapter 6: Lions and Lambs—the Communities that Shape our

Character

Read Isaiah 11:1-10 with your group to learn what community should be like in their own lives.

1. Do you imitate God and find your personal identity in Him?
2. What are your feelings toward rules? Is it hard for you to follow rules that your parents and God have set? Read Leviticus 20. Do you find it easier to follow the rules when you know they were put in place for your protection?
3. Think about your Christian community. What are ways that they help you grow stronger in Christ? What needs have they met in specific situations?
4. Page 89 said, “The struggles of the Christian citizen must be faced within the fellowship of the believing community, for it is there that we discover what it means to be holy people.” How has your own community shown you what it means to be holy?
5. Hampton said, “We as individuals do not mature; rather the community of which we are a part matures, and we then are drawn into the growth of the community” [p. 89]. How is your own youth group maturing as a whole? In what ways does the maturing process bring you closer together?
6. In your own experience, does your youth group have a hard time with being exclusive rather than inclusive? What are ways that your youth group can overcome this issue and welcome all types of different individuals?
7. Do you feel like your community is a safe place as described in Isaiah 11:1-10? Is your youth group a place you can go for comfort if you’ve been wounded?

8. What “lion like” tendencies do you have in your own life? What are ways that your Christian community can help you improve in these areas?

Conclusion: Everyday Saints—Living as Holy People

Read Mark 10:30 and Matthew 22:39 to see in scripture the requirements needed to be a saint.

1. Before reading this book, who or what came to mind when you thought of a saint?
Has your view changed at all? Do you see yourself as a saint?
2. What do you think about Hampton's definition of a saint: "Saints are people who listen to God and try to do what he wants" [p. 98]?
3. How is the understanding of holiness "belonging-to-God-ness" [p. 98] a different way of looking at what holiness means to you? How has this book changed your outlook on the terms "saints" and "holy"?
4. What do you think about the two requirements to being a saint discussed on page 99? After this book, what does the term "everyday saint" mean to you?
5. "If we are utterly in love with Him, if we hunger for Him more than our next breath, He'll use us in spite of who we are, where we've been, or what we look like" [p. 100]. How does this contradict the "I'm not good enough" attitude that Christians often struggle with?
6. Is it easy for you to forget that "God is present in the everyday-ness of life"?
Have you ever thought about the fact that "every single thing we say, every thing we do, and each action we undertake is an opportunity to participate in God's life" [p. 101]?
7. What are some of the most important concepts that you have learned from this book? In what ways will your life change after doing this study?