

# The Pursuit of Holiness- Session 4- Chapters 5-6

## Chapter 6: "The Battle for Holiness"

### Small Group Discussion Questions + Leader Notes

This chapter emphasizes the *active*, lifelong fight against sin, the role of the flesh, Satan, and the world, and the believer's need for vigilance and dependence on the Spirit.

### **1. Bridges says the Christian life is a "struggle" and "battle." Why do you think some believers are surprised by how difficult holiness can be?**

#### Leader Notes / Potential Answers:

- Misunderstanding the Christian life as primarily peaceful or easy.
- Cultural Christianity offers comfort, not warfare language.
- Many think salvation eliminates struggle rather than beginning new conflict (Gal. 5:17).
- Surprise reveals unrealistic expectations about sanctification.
- Bridges wants believers to normalize struggle—not be discouraged by it.

### **2. According to Bridges, what are the three main enemies in the battle for holiness: the flesh, the world, and the devil. Which of these do you personally find most challenging, and why?**

#### Leader Notes:

- Flesh = internal desires opposed to God.
- World = cultural values and pressures that normalize sin.
- Devil = temptation, accusation, deception.
- Encourage participants to share examples.
- The goal is recognition, not fear or shame.

### **3. How does understanding the *flesh* (sinful nature) help explain why holiness requires ongoing effort and vigilance?**

#### Potential Answers:

- The flesh never improves or goes away in this life.
- It resists spiritual growth (Rom. 7).

- Believers feel this battle internally even with godly desires.
- Knowing the flesh exists prepares us to fight, not coast.

#### **4. Bridges writes that we must “assume responsibility for our sin.”**

##### **Why is honest ownership essential in the battle for holiness?**

###### **Leader Notes:**

- Without ownership, no repentance.
- Blame-shifting keeps sin hidden and unchallenged.
- Self-deception is one of sin's greatest strengths.
- Confession and accountability are crucial weapons in the battle.
- Encourage honest but not overly detailed sharing.

#### **5. What does it mean to “put to death” the deeds of the body (Rom. 8:13)? What does this look like practically?**

###### **Potential Answers:**

- Actively cutting off opportunities for sin.
- Confessing early, fighting early, not rationalizing.
- Putting boundaries around media, relationships, habits.
- Replacing sinful desires with righteous pursuits.
- Using Scripture in temptation (Matt. 4).
- Emphasize Spirit-led effort—not self-reliance.

#### **6. Why is holiness not simply about avoiding sin but about gaining victory in specific battles? How is this encouraging to believers?**

###### **Leader Notes:**

- Holiness is not perfection; it's faithful combat.
- Victory is incremental and specific.
- Every small win by faith glorifies God.
- Bridges wants readers focused on progress, not perfectionism.
- Encourages perseverance.

#### **7. How does Satan work specifically to undermine holiness? How can believers resist him biblically?**

###### **Potential Answers:**

- Satan deceives, accuses, distracts, tempts (John 8:44; Rev. 12:10).
- Strategies include Scripture, prayer, resisting lies, accountability, worship.
- James 4:7 — “Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”

- 1 Peter 5:8–9 — vigilance and steadfast faith.
- Encourage practical examples without breeding fear.

## **8. Bridges says the Christian must be both a “soldier” and a “runner.”**

### **What do these images teach about holiness?**

#### **Leader Notes:**

- Soldier → vigilance, courage, battle readiness.
- Runner → discipline, endurance, forward momentum (Heb. 12:1).
- Both images emphasize active, intentional pursuit.
- Holiness is warfare and training—not drift.

## **9. What “battlefield” is the Spirit highlighting in your life right now?**

### **Where are you most aware of the struggle between flesh and Spirit?**

#### **Potential Answers:**

- Impatience, pride, lust, fear, anger, greed, speech, addictions, complacency.
- Encourage participants to be personal and practical.
- Keep the tone grace-filled.

## **10. How does knowing Christ has already defeated sin and Satan give hope in our daily battle for holiness?**

#### **Leader Notes:**

- Victory is guaranteed (1 Cor. 15:57).
- We fight from victory, not for victory.
- Christ’s triumph gives confidence, not despair.
- The Spirit who raised Jesus lives in us.
- Encourages perseverance and joy.

## **Chapter 6: “Obedience — Not Victory”**

### **Small Group Discussion Questions + Leader Notes**

This chapter centers on Bridges’ key argument: our responsibility is *obedience*, not producing the victory. Victory belongs to God; our call is faithful, immediate obedience.

## **1. Bridges says the Christian’s primary calling is obedience, not achieving victory. Why is this distinction important?**

#### **Leader Notes / Potential Answers:**

- Removes pressure to “perform” spiritually.
- Victory is God’s job; obedience is ours.
- Prevents discouragement when results are slow or unseen.
- Encourages perseverance regardless of emotional state.
- Bridges wants believers to focus on faithfulness, not outcomes.

## **2. What dangers arise when believers focus more on “victory” than obedience? How have you experienced this personally?**

### **Potential Answers:**

- Obsession with results rather than faithfulness.
- Pride when doing well; despair when failing.
- Treating holiness like a competition or scoreboard.
- Looking for quick fixes instead of long-term obedience.
- Victory-focus often leads to discouragement, inconsistency, and legalism.

## **3. Why do you think obedience in the moment of temptation is more important than whether we “feel victorious”?**

### **Leader Notes:**

- Feelings fluctuate; obedience does not depend on emotion.
- Scripture commands action, not waiting for a feeling.
- Holiness grows through practiced choices, not inspirational moments.
- Bridges is combating the mindset that obedience has to feel victorious to count.

## **4. How does understanding that victory comes from God actually free you to obey more consistently?**

### **Potential Answers:**

- Removes pressure to succeed through willpower.
- Allows you to focus on the next step of obedience.
- Brings comfort when progress feels slow.
- Encourages humility: fruit is God’s doing (John 15:5).
- Produces joy rather than anxiety in obedience.

## **5. What does it look like to obey God in the “next right step,” even when your desires haven’t caught up yet?**

### **Leader Notes:Examples:**

- Turning off a screen
- Ending a conversation

- Leaving a tempting situation
- Choosing gentleness instead of sarcasm
- Confessing sin immediately
- Obedience trains desires over time (Gal. 5:16).

## **6. Bridges argues that we often wait for a sense of “victory” before we resist sin. Why is this backwards?**

### **Potential Answers:**

- Victory comes *after* obedience, not before.
- Feelings follow choices, not the other way around.
- Spiritual strength is built through battle, not before battle.
- Waiting for a feeling gives sin time to win.

## **7. How does Jesus’ own obedience—even unto death—shape your understanding of obedience as the heart of holiness?**

### **Leader Notes:**

- Jesus obeyed even when obedience brought suffering.
- He obeyed because He loved the Father (John 14:31).
- His obedience purchased our salvation and modeled our own calling.
- Holiness is Christlike obedience empowered by grace.

## **8. What role do small acts of obedience play in producing long-term holiness?**

### **Potential Answers:**

- Holiness grows through cumulative choices.
- Small decisions form habits; habits form character.
- Obedience is built like muscle—repetition matters.
- Bridges emphasizes that holiness is rarely dramatic—it is steady.

## **9. In your own battle with sin, where have you been waiting for “victory” instead of simply obeying the next clear command of God?**

### **Leader Notes:** Common areas:

- Lust, anger, procrastination, complaining, impatience, dependency issues.
- Encourage grace-filled honesty.
- Help participants identify small steps.

**10. What is one area where God is calling you to immediate obedience this week? What specific step will you take?**

**Leader Notes:**

- Keep this practical and Spirit-dependent.
- Encourage commitments like removing access to temptation, confession, initiating reconciliation, creating new rhythms.
- Avoid legalistic vows—focus on grace + obedience.