

The Need for Holiness
Leviticus 11:1-12, 41-47

Review:

1. God's Old Testament people were to avoid animals that came into contact with death, because death is the punishment that all sin deserves.
2. Jesus could declare all foods to be clean because His blood alone can wash us and make us holy.
3. Just as God's Old Testament people avoided animals that were associated with death, we must pursue holiness, turning away from the sinful actions, thoughts and feelings that lead to death

Reflect:

1. Looking at Mark 7:21 and 22, what sorts of unclean thoughts or feelings do you wrestle with the most? How can you rely more on God and work harder to put these remnants of sin to death?

Go Further: Read Leviticus 19:19-37

1. According to 19:19, what three kinds of things were God's people not supposed to mix together?
2. According to 19:23, how long were God's people not supposed to eat fruit from trees they had planted?
3. What were they supposed to do with the fruit in the fourth year?
4. What were they allowed to do with the fruit in the fifth year? What is the reason given for this in verse 25?
5. What three things are prohibited in 19:26? What might these three things have in common?
6. What limitations were placed on the way God's people groomed themselves in 19:27-28?
7. Ritual prostitution was a common practice among the Canaanites, as they thought it would guarantee the fertility of the land. What does 19:29 forbid, and what is the reason given for this?
8. In contrast, how does 19:30 tell God's people they are to worship?
9. In 19:31, from whom does God tell His people not to seek advice?
10. In 19:32, whom does God tell His people to respect?
11. In 19:34, how does God tell His people to treat strangers, and why?
12. In 19:35-36, what does God tell His people about their weights and measures?
13. What does God tell His people to do in 19:37?

Summary and Application:

1. Verses 27 and 28 forbid God's people from mimicking certain folkways of their unbelieving neighbors: cutting oneself was practiced by false prophets (see I Kings 18:28) and tattoos were often used in those days to demonstrate devotion to false gods. How do you think God's people are called to fit in with the broader culture? How should we continue to distinguish ourselves from unbelievers?
2. Eight times in today's passage, God reminds His people that "I am the Lord." Why do you think God keeps reminding the people of His relationship to them? How does remembering your relationship with God reduce your inclination to sin against Him? How does it increase your desire to live the way He wants you to?
3. Thinking about all these laws, how do we express a close relationship with God by the way we treat other people?