

Holy Spirit Holiness

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Unless otherwise stated Scripture quotes are from the NLT

Introduction:

Since you have heard all about him and have learned the truth that is in Jesus, throw off your old evil nature and your former way of life, which is rotten through and through, full of lust and deception. Instead, there must be a spiritual renewal of your thoughts and attitudes. You must display a new nature because you are a new person, **created in God's likeness-righteous, holy, and true.** (Eph.4:21-24)

What really is holiness in the eyes of God? What is it He is looking for in our lives that qualifies as holiness? There are a few Scriptures regarding this subject that must not be neglect! The spiritual implications are simply too great for us to brush holiness off as something out of date and irrelevant for the twenty first century.

1P. 1:15,16 - But now you must be holy in everything you do just as God-who chose you to be his children-is holy. For he himself has said, "You must be holy because I am holy."

We can't just ignore the word "MUST" is this verse! In our modern society some would try to convince us that there are no absolutes. Well that may be true in this world but it isn't true of the heart and Kingdom of God. Holiness is an absolute necessity of God's Kingdom! The Holy Spirit inspired writer of Hebrews confirms this fact. **Heb 12:14 - Try to live in peace with everyone, and seek to live a clean and holy life, for those who are not holy will not see the Lord.** Wow! This seems so very strict and rigid. There's no sense in avoiding the issue! It's too important. Too much is at stake! We can pretend it doesn't exist however we can't say it's unimportant to God! If we've read the Scriptures or heard the Word preached then we are accountable for that knowledge. We need to find out what holiness is and how it's spiritually attained. What do we need to do to experience and practice holiness on a consistent basis?

Holiness Is Often Misunderstood:

Holiness is often misunderstood to be the result of strict legalism. Let's remember that the Old Covenant made strict demands for holiness and the Scriptures tell us very clearly that no one is justified or made right in the sight of God through strict obedience to the Law. Israel couldn't gain or maintain holiness that stratified the righteous heart of God. The Law failed bring about salvation or holiness not because it's demands were wrong but because people born with the Adamic sin nature were powerless to fulfill the Law! It might say, "It just wasn't in them.

Gal. 2:16 - And yet we Jewish Christians know that we become right with God, not by doing what the law commands, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be accepted by God because of our faith in Christ-and not because we have obeyed the law. For no one will ever be saved by obeying the law."

The whole concept of being "Born Again" centres on the power of the Lord Jesus. To be "Born Again" is to be "Born from Above"! The New Covenant child of God is a new creation. Within the heart of the true Christian is the power of God, something the common Old Covenant Believer never had. To be "Born Again" is to have received from God the inner power do the will of.

Ph.2: 13 - For God is working in you, giving you the desire to obey him and the power to do what pleases him.

2P.1: 2 - May God bless you with his special favor and wonderful peace as you come to know Jesus, our God and Lord, better and better. ³ As we know Jesus better, **his divine power gives us everything we need for living a godly life.** He has called us to receive his own glory and goodness! ⁴ And by that same mighty power, he has given us all of his rich and wonderful promises. He has promised that you will escape the decadence all around you caused by evil desires and that you will share in his divine nature.

When ever we think of practical holiness we must do so in light of what God has done within us when we experienced our spiritual rebirth into the family of God. When we were born naturally into this temporal world we inherited the nature of Adam which just so happened to be in a fallen and spiritually powerless state. We could never please God, we simple did not have the spiritual resources within us to do so. However when we were "Born Again" Jesus by the Holy Spirit came to live with our spirit. This spiritual birth resulted in us receiving from God the power to please Him, the power to be holy. New Covenant holiness has nothing to with people digging deep within the human nature to some how find the capacity to do the will of God. It has everything to do with us looking to Jesus and trusting the power of His abiding presence within us is capable of causing us to do those things that ho nor and please the Father.

Col 1:27 - For it has pleased God to tell his people that the riches and glory of Christ are for you Gentiles, too. For this is the secret: **Christ lives in you**, and this is your assurance that you will share in his glory.

Eph.2:20 - Now glory be to God! By his mighty power at work within us, he is able to accomplish infinitely more than we would ever dare to ask or hope.

Holy Spirit Holiness:

New Covenant holiness is Holy Spirit Holiness. It's not so much about our ability but about Jesus' ability. The Apostle Paul seems to have understood this spiritual concept very well. He refused to trust in humanism of any kind and legalism fits into that category. Instead of trusting in human abilities he chose to trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. He believed that Jesus would do for him what he could never do himself. This is the key to true New Covenant holiness.

Ph.. 4:13 - For I can do everything with the help of Christ who gives me the strength I need.

Gal.2:20 - I myself no longer live, but Christ lives in me. So I live my life in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

What effect did kind of believing have in the Apostle Paul's life? More important is what effect will this kind of believing have in our lives today! Here is how it effect Paul. Ph. 1:20 - **According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death.** He fully expected to please God. How? By trusting in his own ability and strength? NO! He believed in and trust in the power of the resident Jesus within him. Yes it's time for us to look away from ourselves and to look to Jesus. It's there we find the glory and power of God. Jesus will do for us what we can never do for ourselves if we will let Him.

Practical Holiness

What does practical holiness look like? What does Spirit filled living look like? It is time for true Holy Spirit filled living. If there was ever a need in the Church for true holiness it is now! Without going

into deep theological terminology practical holiness is simply devoted, committed living for God. Holiness is separation from worldliness. It's a life lived in obedience to the Word of God through the power of the Holy Spirit. Can you hear the voice of God calling you? Can you hear His hearts cry for holiness today? Can you hear Him saying, "Therefore, come out from them and separate yourselves from them, says the Lord. Don't touch their filthy things, and I will welcome you." (2Cor.6:17) By the power of God we can live free from worldliness. We can be in the world yet not of the world!

Jms. 4:4 - You adulterers! Don't you realize that friendship with this world makes you an enemy of God? I say it again, that if your aim is to enjoy this world, you can't be a friend of God.

1 Jn. 2:15-17 - Stop loving this evil world and all that it offers you, for when you love the world, you show that you do not have the love of the Father in you. ¹⁶ For the world offers only the lust for physical pleasure, the lust for everything we see, and pride in our possessions. These are not from the Father. They are from this evil world. ¹⁷ And this world is fading away, along with everything it craves. But if you do the will of God, you will live forever.

It's time for us to rediscover the true will of God for our lives in the "here and now"! We are His witnesses! We represent Him and His eternal spiritual Kingdom! We represent His heart, his priorities, His standards! There is nothing about the Adamic nature that accurately represents the Lord! There is nothing about this present world that accurately represents Him either. We need to stop being afraid of be different than the unsaved and start in, a fresh Holy Spirit filled way, to do at all costs only those things that please the Lord. The Holy Spirit through the Apostle Paul said in Gal 6:15 *It doesn't make any difference now whether we have been circumcised or not. What counts is whether we really have been changed into new and different people.* Practical holiness will result in a life style that is very different from that of this world. In fact the chances are pretty great that if we allow God's Holy Spirit to control our lives then we will look as different to this world as Jesus did while He was here on earth. Eph 4:24 - *You must display a new nature because you are a new person, created in God's likeness-righteous, holy, and true.*

All around us the world is falling apart. The moral decline in Canada over the last 50 years is horrific and tragic. The greatest tragedy is how this has infiltrated the Church. How this grieves the heart of God! We must refocus on Jesus' purposes. Why did He come to earth? Why did He suffer and die on that cruel cross? It was so you and I could be freed from both the penalty and the power of sin. Jesus came to conquer the devil and his work of sin! 1Jn. 3:8 - *But when people keep on sinning, it shows they belong to the Devil, who has been sinning since the beginning. But the Son of God came to destroy these works of the Devil.* Every time we avoid sin we are choosing to live in agreement with the purposes of God! Jesus died so we could live free from sinning and be a people that honor God though their life style of Holy Spirit holiness!

Getting Holiness Working In Our Lives:

Practical holiness is actually quite simple! Not that it's easy but it is simple. So much depends on the Lord! He puts the desire in our heart and then He gives us the power to do the things that please Him! Now comes the hard part! It's the part that involves us. This is where we are called upon to make the right choice and obey the known will of God. There are some things that simply are not a problem to us on the other hand there are those temptations that make very heavy appeals to our old Adamic sin nature. To the former practicing alcoholic it means saying "no" to alcoholic beverages. To the liar it means choosing to speak only the truth. To follow through with the right choices often requires an immediate turning to the Lord in prayer. It can very serious prayer! But it works and the reason it does is because it's God ordained. It's the way He's purposed! Heb. 2:18 *Since he himself has gone through suffering and temptation, he is able to help us when we are being tempted.* He wants us coming to Him for help. Heb.4:14-16, *That is why we have a great High Priest who has gone to heaven, Jesus the Son of God. Let us cling to*

him and never stop trusting him. ¹⁵ This High Priest of ours understands our weaknesses, for he faced all of the same temptations we do, yet he did not sin. ¹⁶ So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it.

When it comes to temptations they can seem so severe and one can wonder if it's all too much to cope with. Let's be absolutely clear on this point. We need to see into the heart of God here. He loves us! He is for us! he is not out to make life difficult for us or to destroy us. **1Cor. 10:13 - But remember that the temptations that come into your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will keep the temptation from becoming so strong that you can't stand up against it. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you will not give in to it.**

God is faithful to His people. He will never allow the devil to tempt them beyond what God knows they can endure. With this in mind it's not difficult to understand why God expects holiness in our lives. Because of the power and commitment of the Lord. It's absolutely doable! Holiness is not extremism! It's supposed to be normal Christian living! In our generation it's time for practical holiness., It's time to look away from our selves and look to Jesus for the grace and power to be all that would accurately represent Him.

Looking Ahead:

Where we look effects where we go! This is evident through the life of Moses. He made some very quality decisions that for a person in his position could have been very difficult to make and maintain. There's something we can learn here! **Heb. 11:24 It was by faith that Moses, when he grew up, refused to be treated as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. ²⁵ He chose to share the oppression of God's people instead of enjoying the fleeting pleasures of sin. ²⁶ He thought it was better to suffer for the sake of the Messiah than to own the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking ahead to the great reward that God would give him. ²⁷ It was by faith that Moses left the land of Egypt. He was not afraid of the king. Moses kept right on going because he kept his eyes on the one who is invisible.** Moses saw beyond the "here and now" and chose to live separated to the Lord because he knew there was a better day coming.

We have a great need of being able to live here on earth with our feet on the ground while our heart in heaven. This is an act of true holiness. While here on earth we live with the consciousness that this is not our home. We are in fact pilgrims, foreigners and spiritual nomads here on earth. We're just passing through! Nothing about the present world system represents God and His kingdom. We discover from Hebrews 11 that God is not at all ashamed to identify with His people who have chosen to separate themselves from this world. **Heb. 11:13-16 All these faithful ones died without receiving what God had promised them, but they saw it all from a distance and welcomed the promises of God. They agreed that they were no more than foreigners and nomads here on earth. ¹⁴ And obviously people who talk like that are looking forward to a country they can call their own. ¹⁵ they had meant the country they came from, they would have found a way to go back. ¹⁶ But they were looking for a better place, a heavenly homeland. That is why God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a heavenly city for them.**

We are in great danger of becoming unfruitful in our spiritual lives if we choose to make life here on earth our priority. It's not long and we are caught up with striving to be like the Jones. Getting the bigger house and the news vehicle become time consuming goals. Success is calibrated by how many toys we've managed to collect. Here's what Jesus has to say about this. **Mk. 4:18,19 -The thorny ground represents those who hear and accept the Good News, ¹⁹ but all too quickly the message is crowded out by the cares of this life, the lure of wealth, and the desire for nice things, so no crop is produced.** The enemy of our soul strives to appeal to the old Adamic nature and lure us away from a life of holiness, a life of separation from this world system and dedication to the Kingdom of God.

By looking ahead to the future as Moses did it helps to keep things in right perspective. Lets never forget that this present world is temporal and therefore any investment into it is also temporal. All

our earthly things, our trophies, our achievements, our bank accounts etc. will pass away with it. The Apostle Peter looked at it this way. [2P. 3:11 - Since everything around us is going to melt away, what holy, godly lives you should be living!](#) This is one area where the law of sowing and reaping strongly applies! If we choose to live for God with our feet on earth and our heart fully in heaven it will reap eternal rewards. When life is over and we enter into the faze of life with God we will not be naked and ashamed but we'll be given the heavenly garments and welcomed into the Kingdom and presence of God.

Conclusion:

Is holiness in our generation too such to ask? Is it too much to expect? NO! Jesus has paid the price and given us His Holy Spirit power. Would God make unrealistic demands of His people? No He wouldn't! He's a God of love, compassion and understanding. He only expects what He has made possible. Some would say, "Well we're only human you know". This could honestly be said of the unsaved but not of a New Covenant Born Again Believer! We are not only human! We have the Holy Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ resident with us. That makes us totally new creations. Creations of God with the Jesus capacity to please Him! Is it any wonder God says that without holiness we'll never see Him. [Heb. 12:14 - Try to live in peace with everyone, and seek to live a clean and holy life, for those who are not holy will not see the Lord.](#)

Suggested Prayer: Father in heaven thank you for Jesus and all He has done for me. Help me to see beyond the "here and now"! Help me to have the same perspective on life as you do. Come in a fresh new way and enable me to experience more of your grace and power so that I will honor you with my life. I want my life style to be a, continues thank offering to you. I want true Holy Spirit holiness to be an integral part of my daily life while I'm still here on earth. In Jesus name! Amen.