

Holiness: The Real Fruit of Grace

One of the fruits of grace is holiness, which isn't discussed much in our churches these days. I believe there are two reasons for this. Legalistic preachers have abused many who truly want to please God. These zealots have reduced holiness to a backward lifestyle and taken the joy out of living. This, of course, is far from God's heart. Thankfully a good number have found freedom from this tyranny; however, not without consequences. One of the most damaging results is that they now recoil at the mention of holiness.

The proverb "A scalded cat fears cold water" illustrates that once people have been burned by something, they will fear anything that closely resembles what burned them. How tragic, but this is exactly what has happened with so many who were scalded by legalistic "holiness." They now fear true holiness, which is greatly beneficial.

Secondly, true holiness takes effort on our part, which many are not willing to give. Because we must cooperate with God's grace to produce the fruit of holiness in our lives, many ministers will either unconsciously or purposefully avoid preaching it to avoid losing the appeal of the gospel. Many would rather have an easy gospel that requires no labor than the true gospel. Let's face it: You don't nonchalantly cruise into a Christlike life. Paul says, "We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22, NKJV).

True holiness is a very appealing and important topic. Jesus is not coming back for a contaminated, worldly church but a church "not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing." The church will be "holy and without blemish" (Ephesians 5:27, NKJV). So if it's a holy church Jesus will be returning for, then we should definitely walk in holiness.

*Marked by boldness and passion, **John Bevere** delivers uncompromising truth through his award-winning curriculum and best-selling books now available in over sixty languages. His newest book is Extraordinary: The Life You're Meant to Live. More information is available at .*