

The Highway Of Holiness

What is holiness? How do we walk in the power of holiness? Holiness is to have the rule and reign of the Holy Spirit within, allowing Christ to live in and through us. It is an inward spiritual experience of resting and dwelling in the grace of God. Genuine holiness stems from the heart, mind and tongue that are yielded to Christ. It is far more than just conforming to some external and outward performance of good works. It is concerned with “being” instead of “doing.”

While good fruits and practical works will manifest when a person is holy, it is only a reflection and result of a living relationship with Jesus. If we are “trying” to be holy by practicing “good works,” it will not work, “Except the Lord build the house, those who build labor in vain; except the Lord guards the city, the watchman stays awake in vain” (Ps. 127:1). We are holy because of the finished work of Christ on the cross and we are resting in His grace through faith. It is not something we do, attain or work up for. Rather, it is something we believe in: that God accepts us as holy by virtue of the righteousness of Jesus and as we abide in and submit to Him by faith, “If the first portion of the dough *is* holy, the batch *is* also *holy*. And if the root *is* holy, so *are* the branches” (Rom. 11:16). This is righteousness through faith, not through human abilities.

Walking in holiness is the fruit of hungering and thirsting for the presence of Jesus in our lives. True holiness is about inner truth and purity, not legalism, law or bondage: “And be found in Him, not having my own righteousness which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is of God on the basis of faith, to know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if somehow I might make it to the resurrection of the dead” (Phil. 3:9-11). It is one thing to preach about self-denial, dying to the

flesh and the world, but the Good News is that we must also proclaim that the gospel has the power to enable us to live Spirit-filled lives when the resurrection power of Jesus fills our hearts!

One of the marks of holiness is that it brings us to a greater devotion and intimacy with Christ. Devotion to Christ is measured by our desire to grow in His likeness. It is concerned with the heart, “for out of it are the issues of life” (Prov. 4:23). Also, holiness is to have the fear of the Lord, which is to hate what God hates and love what He loves: “By mercy and truth iniquity is purged; and by the fear of the Lord men depart from evil” (Prov. 16:6). Jesus is the root of holiness; we are the branches of His holiness. But then He wants us to produce fruit. As we abide and yield to Christ, we are holy and then fruit will just “supernaturally naturally” be produced in our lives (and not that we must produce fruit to prove that we are holy).

The greatest joy of holiness, I believe, is to know that we are pleasing to God and are hearing His voice. While genuine holiness will produce the joy and favor of the Lord, I want to say that not everyone will rejoice with us walking in His ways. Following Jesus could also cause us to be despised and rejected by others who are probably jealous of God’s anointing, blessings, favor and grace poured over our lives. They desire the joy and favor we are experiencing, but because they have not known the truth of walking in holiness, they might sometimes persecute those who are godly. But my encouragement and exhortation is this, “And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all men, even as we do for you. To this end may He establish your hearts to be blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints” (1 Thess. 3:12-13).

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