

The Importance of Holiness

Hebrews 12:14 HCSB Pursue peace with everyone, and holiness--without it no one will see the Lord.

Introduction:

The question asked today by many people is, "why is holiness so important?" Why do we talk about holiness and sanctification all of the time? Sadly, many have completely stopped preaching and teaching holiness as necessity; presenting it instead as merely a nice option. Much like a car salesman would say that a CD player and heated seats would be nice in the new car he's selling, but he would never demand that those options must be bought for fear of losing his sell. Many today preach and teach holiness as a nice option or a dream that you could try to obtain in this life, but you never will so why bother?

However, this morning I believe that there is more to holiness than that. I would like to present to you three reasons why holiness is so important.

1. Because Christ died for it.

- **Hebrews 13:12 HCSB** Therefore Jesus also suffered outside the gate, so that He might sanctify the people by His own blood.

Jesus Christ suffered and shed his own blood on the cruel cross that we may be sanctified! He did not just die so that we could be saved from our committed sins. He died so that we may be free from all of sin. He suffered outside the city, rejected by society, so that he may sanctify the people. By rejecting holiness we are in fact rejecting the point of his death upon the cross.

The reason he died was that we might be sanctified. If we reject this second work, we are rejecting him.

- **Hebrews 6:1 HCSB** Therefore, leaving the elementary message about the Messiah, let us go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, faith in God,

And then verse 6 tells us that if we don't go on into perfection we crucify Christ again. Holiness is important because Christ died of it.

- **1 Thessalonians 4:1-2 HCSB (1)** Finally then, brothers, we ask and encourage you in the Lord Jesus, that as you have received from us how you must walk and please God--as you are doing--do so even more. **(2)** For you know what commands we gave you through the Lord Jesus.
- **1 Thessalonians 4:7-8 HCSB (7)** For God has not called us to impurity, but to sanctification. **(8)** Therefore, the person who rejects this does not reject man, but God, who also gives you His Holy Spirit.

God's will is our sanctification.

ILL: Benjamin West, the great painter, speaking of Gilbert Stuart, a brother artist famed for his beautiful coloring, used to say to his pupils, "It's no use to steal Stuart's colors; if you want to paint as he does, you must steal his eyes."

When we are baffled in our efforts to live as Christ lived, simply reading the record of His life, however wonderful it is, will not enable us to be like Him. What we need is His heart, His nature. Only divinity within us can recognize divinity without. Without the Holy Spirit, we cannot know Him as God.

Until we are filled with the Holy Ghost and completely sanctified we are not all that Christ wants us to be. Jesus Christ died for our sanctification and this is the first reason why it is so important. Holiness did not begin with John Wesley or George Straub, Jesus Christ died for our sanctification.

2. Because the Carnal Nature drives us without it.

- **Romans 7:20-24 HCSB** Now if I do what I do not want, I am no longer the one doing it, but it is the sin that lives in me. (21) So I discover this principle: when I want to do good, evil is with me. (22) For in my inner self I joyfully agree with God's law. (23) But I see a different law in the parts of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and taking me prisoner to the law of sin in the parts of my body. (24) What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?

Paul wrote these verses describing his battle to do the whole law of the Old Testament. Yet, he recognized the sin nature in his heart and he battled with it to try to overcome it. So many today get tied up in this chapter of Romans but fail to finish the chapter and read the next one. Paul battled with the sin nature which was driving him to do things that he did not want to do, but with the inbred nature of sin in his heart he could not fully conquer sin. Paul was disillusioned and crying out for deliverance from his sin nature. It's a good thing that Paul did not go to many of our preachers today and ask if there was deliverance for he would have probably never found deliverance.

But in the next chapter it tells of how he was delivered in verses 1-6.

- **Romans 8:1-6 HCSB** Therefore, no condemnation now exists for those in Christ Jesus, (2) because the Spirit's law of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. (3) What the law could not do since it was limited by the flesh, God did. He condemned sin in the flesh by sending His own Son in flesh like ours under sin's domain, and as a sin offering, (4) in order that the law's requirement would be accomplished in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. (5) For those whose lives are according to the flesh think about the things of the flesh, but those whose lives are according to the Spirit, about the things of the Spirit. (6) For the mind-set of the flesh is death, but the mind-set of the Spirit is life and peace.

We must be delivered from that sin nature in our hearts.

ILL: The absolute necessity of the indwelling Spirit of God is demonstrated by the forester. Whitewashing and spraying never reaches the parasites hidden deep within the tree, so the forester bores into the very heart of the tree, and introduces chemical solutions which mingle with the sap and circulate through every branch and leaf. Thus is the old tree rendered absolutely safe from its foes.

Is this not exactly the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers--to so indwell them as to render them safe from their foes? His ministry is very much like that of the antiseptic. To be effective the antiseptic must come in direct contact with the putrefaction in the flesh. Just so the Holy Spirit must be permitted direct access to the innermost secret sins of the believer if there is to be real spiritual blessing.

The second reason why holiness is so important, is because our carnal nature must be removed because it will drive us back into sin if it is not gotten rid of. Holiness is important because it removes the sin nature from our heart.

3. Because our Celestial home-heaven demands it.

- [Hebrews 12:14 HCSB](#) Pursue peace with everyone, and holiness--without it no one will see the Lord.

Holiness prepares us for heaven. No sin can be allowed into heaven because heaven is holy place that can not tolerate any sin. This includes the sin nature in our hearts.

If we are not delivered from that nature then the work is not complete in our hearts. If God can not completely cleanse us from all sin, then that would imply that God can not completely defeat the power of sin. Thank God, that he has conquered the power of sin, and he has provided full salvation to those who desire it. He suffered without the gate that we may be sanctified and make heaven our home some day.

ILL: A minister told how one Sunday night when he was quarantined in his house because his child had diphtheria, he watched his church next door; his church that he could not now enter. He was the lights shining through the windows. He watched the people going in. Then the service started, and he listened to the music. At last he couldn't stand it any longer. Silently, like a thief, he stole out at his back door, and crept up close to the window and listened. Within all was bright; outside he stood in the chill darkness. "I realized for the first time in my life," he said, "what it meant to be shut out, what a terrible thing it meant to be shut out. And someday I should stand at the gate of Heaven. What a terrible thing if that door should be shut against me!"

God does not want that! Nor do you! But we must not neglect the only means of opening that gate, even the acceptance of him who suffered without the gate that he might sanctify you. Heaven demands that we be holy in order to go there some day and this is why holiness is so important. No one will make it to heaven without being holy.

Conclusion:

Holiness is so very important. "Holiness is our watchword and song". Holiness is what we are all about. We must sing it, shout it, loud and long! Holiness is important because Christ died for it, the carnal nature drives us without it, and our Celestial home-heaven demands it.

Holiness is essential. The Bible is a book on holiness; it tells of a holy God, a holy Christ and the Holy Ghost. God made a holy man, who lost his holiness through sin. The Bible reveals a plan of salvation that restores man to a holy state through a holy Christ; it tells of a holy heaven where nothing unholy can ever enter. It promises that man may dwell forever with a holy God and holy saints and angels.