

HOLINESS SERIES

RIGHTEOUSNESS AND HOLINESS

I Pt. 1:15-16 *But as He who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in all your conduct; since it is written "You shall be holy, for I am holy."* I am sure one of the first things we hear as a Christian is that God is holy. And those who worship God must worship Him in spirit and in truth. But not many understand the true concept of what holiness means. Many times when we talk about holiness we think about freedom from sin. But holiness is not merely being sinless. The reason we think that was is because of our background. All of us were born in sin. When we were born again we have our sin washed away. We are grateful to God for washing our sin away. But holiness is more than that.

The Gift of Righteousness

The first thing we need to understand is holiness is different from righteousness. The bible brings in two concepts: a concept of righteousness and a concept of holiness. There is a relationship between holiness and righteousness. But the bible shows that they are on different areas altogether. Righteousness has to do with the law. The word *righteous* is from the Greek word '*dikios*' which means *uprightness, just, a just man*. And there are people who were considered righteous in the bible. What do you think of when you hear a statement *he is an upright person*. You think about a person's conformity to the law of God, that he or she has high morals in conduct. We think in terms of compliance with the 10 commandments. And that is exactly what righteousness speaks about. Righteousness has to do with being

perfectly conformed to the just requirement of the law, that's righteousness.

And the word holiness is from a different Greek word. Holiness comes from the Greek word 'hagios' which means to set apart, to dedicate something to the Lord. It speaks about a separation, a cutting away and being dedicated and separated onto something.

Righteousness means being conformed to the requirements of the law. We realized that nobody except Jesus Christ has actually conformed to the law perfectly. Only Jesus Christ has met all the requirements of the law and was found sinless. Everybody else failed. In the Old Testament all those men of God lived and were declared righteous based on what Jesus had done. In the New Testament all believers are declared righteous based on what Jesus had done. The only difference is that we in the New Testament look back to the finished work of the Cross whereas the Old Testament saints looked forward to the Cross.

King David speaks about it when he says blessed is the man whose sins are forgiven. So he is talking about looking forward. If they went by the Old Testament laws strictly David should have died. He committed adultery. But it is because they look forward to Jesus coming, in a sense they were saved on credit. In their time, Jesus had not died yet. When they died they went to a place called a waiting room. That's like taking a plane when you checked in they ask you to go to the departure lounge.

The bible says in Eph. 4 that He who ascended also descended. And when He descended to the depth of the earth He set the captives free. He set all the sins free and took them to heaven. So after Jesus had ascended on high every one who dies believing in Jesus does not go to the waiting room any more. For Jesus has paid the price for the salvation of all mankind for the seed of Adam with His precious Blood. Therefore the bible concept of righteousness is that righteousness is imputed. Righteousness is a gift based on the Blood of Jesus Christ. No one could be righteous Rom. 3 tells us that there is none righteous. Rom. 1 also says that there is none righteous. All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. No one could

meet the requirements of the law. We were all under the law, under condemnation. Jesus came and took the price for the condemnation for us. Paid for us with His precious Blood. The understanding of righteousness in the bible is that righteousness is a gift. It's a gift that comes from Jesus, it's a gift to come and stand before God free of sins.

The book of Romans chapter 6 speaks about righteousness as a gift. Rom. 6:23 *For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.* Notice he is talking about the gift of God is a gift of righteousness. The gift of being righteous is a gift; its not something you earned or worked for it's a gift of His grace.

Also notice in Rom. 5:17 *If, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ.* So there is such a thing as a gift of righteousness.

But have you notice that there is no mentioned of the gift of holiness. We are going to see in fullness what holiness means. This morning we are going to define holiness. Righteousness is perfect compliance with the laws, the moral requirements, the physical requirements, and the spiritual requirements of God. And through the Blood of Jesus we are considered justified. And that gift of righteousness is to those who believe in Him received by faith. Rom. 4:3 *For what does the scriptures say? Abraham believed God, and is reckoned to him as righteousness.* There you have the gift of righteousness. Verse 13 *The promise to Abraham and his descendants, that they should inherit the world, did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith.*

Paul brings forth the concept that we have been made righteous by faith. We have died with Christ, we have been buried with Christ Jesus, we are seated with Christ Jesus, and we are raised up with Christ Jesus in the heavenly place. That position of righteousness has to do certain things. Because of your position of righteousness you now have authority over the devil. As long as you are under sin you cannot

have authority over him. To be under sin means to be under Satan's domain and authority. So if sin is present Satan is lord. But Jesus washes us with His Blood breaks and cuts off any binding that Satan has over our lives and puts us in His position of righteousness.

II Cor. 5:21 says He was made sin that we might be made the righteousness of God. And when we were made righteousness in Christ, this enables us to take authority over Satan. Righteousness enables us to have the authority to command Satan and his demons and they shall flee; to lay hands on the sick and they shall recover; to exercise dominion, to command prosperity into your life. To render ineffective against you any curse of the law, any weapon of the enemy. For righteousness is your rock and your refuge. And because of this concept Paul talks about the fruit of righteousness.

Phil. 1:10-11 So that you may approve what is excellent, and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness which come through Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God.

What are the fruits of righteousness? Peace, love, joy, authority, dominion, health, healing are the fruit of righteousness. When Paul prayed that the fruit of righteousness might fill us, he is praying that we may exercise the dominion, authority and the freedom from all the curse of the law that God has given to us by the Blood of Jesus. Righteousness brings to you the benefit of the law while unrighteousness brings to you the curses of the law. When we were unrighteous under sin the curse of the law works. We were under its bondage and burden and Satan plays havoc with our lives.

Suddenly the Blood of Jesus comes and we are washed, we are cleansed. The curse and the judgement of the law cannot pass through the Bloodline. It stops where the Bloodline is. For when the Blood is seen the curse pass by. The curse comes around to different homes and sees the Blood and it passes by. That's the gift of righteousness. Thank God we don't have to earn it. Thank God that is free nobody could have paid that price. The only person who can pay that price is someone who

is righteous. And since no one is righteous, no one can pay the price. Therefore God send His only begotten Son to live the life here. Jesus was full of righteousness, died and pay the price.

Let me give an illustration of that. If you are in debt yourself, you cannot stand in guarantee for another person. You yourself have your own debt and it is heavy on your head. So how can you set another person free from debt when you are in debt yourself? It takes someone who is free from debt and who has abundance to come and say to you, "Are in debt? Let me help you." And pay all your bills settle it for you and bring you out of bankruptcy. See it takes someone who is free, someone who has the power, abundance, the materials to set you free.

The problem in the world before Jesus came was everybody was in debt. So who can pay for our sins? We cannot even pay our own price let alone pay for another person's sins. So God send Jesus Christ and let Him pay the price for us. He died who knew no sin. So whom did He die for? For us. And in His death His Blood was shed. And whoever looks to Him and the price that He paid receives the gift of righteousness. It's free the gift of righteousness. It's free not because it's valueless. It's free because somebody paid. You can get free things through 2 ways. Its either useless and nobody wants it and you get it free. Or its very expensive and someone paid for you and you got it free. Grace is free but it's not cheap. It's the most expensive plan of salvation that God has worked for us. He did not pay with silver and gold He paid with His life. Righteousness has to do with the perfect conformity to the law. And the wonderful thing about the law is this it's either good or bad. If you break the law then it is bad for you. If you keep the law you get the reward of the law. And none of us can get the reward of the law because everyone was breaking the law. Jesus came and kept the law and received all the rewards of the law and He gave it to us. And that's the gift of righteousness.

Holiness

The gift of righteousness is not holiness. Holiness is more than that. In many people's minds to be holy as the Lord your God is holy means being righteous.

They don't think about holiness. When I started to study holiness to see what it means, my heart began to tremble when I realized the awesomeness of holiness. It's far different from righteousness. It includes righteousness. See with holiness you will be righteous. But with righteousness you may not experience holiness in its fullness. There is no such thing as degrees of righteousness. Either you keep the law or you don't keep the law. You break one tiny command of the law you are unrighteous. But with holiness there are degrees of holiness.

In the Old Testament person you see degrees of holiness. You have the outer court, you have the holy place and you have the most holy place. So that tells us the concept of holiness is different from the concept of righteousness. Holiness is awesome. I got interested in that because when Jesus appeared to me a second time I saw a ball of light in my room and that ball of light spread out into the words *Holiness onto the Lord*. And it started coming towards me and it touched my forehead and I was in a different world. It always puzzles me to seek out what God means when He said I am holy. What is the fullness of that meaning? What is holiness? I want to please Him. If He is holy I must understand what is holiness. The first thing God began to show me is that there are degrees of holiness. There are degrees of holiness in the Old Testament person. The names of the different parts of the tabernacle tell us that there are degrees of holiness. And in studying the Old Testament law we see that God placed different requirements on what He calls holiness.

Look at Leviticus 21:1-3 *And the Lord said to Moses, "Speak to the priests, the sons of Aaron, and say to them that none of them shall defile himself for the dead among his people, except for his nearest of kin, his mother, his father, his son, his daughter, his brother, or his virgin sister {she is near to him because she has had no husband; for her he may defile himself}*

What God is saying here is that when one serves as a priest in the Old Testament person if anybody else died, his uncle, his aunt, his nephew, his niece died he cannot get involved. That is why I said holiness is different from righteousness. It's a higher concept. It speaks about consecration and separation and dedication. As human beings when we look at holiness it sometimes look cruel. Let me give you some examples where it looks quite cruel to us.

Here it says you cannot mourn, you cannot weep, you cannot defile yourself for any of your relation only your nearest one, your dad, your mum, your sister who is not married. All the rest you cannot because what God is saying is you belong to me. Your relationship is now with Him.

In verse 4-7 He shall not defile himself as a husband among his people and so profane himself. They shall not make tonsures upon their heads, no shave of the edges of their beards, nor make any cuttings in their flesh. They shall be holy to their God, and not profane the name of their God; for they offer the offerings by fire to the Lord, the bread of their God; therefore they shall be holy. They shall not marry a harlot or a woman who has been defiled; neither shall they marry a woman divorced from her husband; for the priest is holy to his God.

When we have a high calling God watch into everything.

Verse 8-9 You shall consecrate him, for he offers the bread of your God; he shall be holy to you; for I the Lord, who sanctify you, am holy. And the daughter of any priest; if she profanes herself by playing the harlot, profanes her father; she shall be burned with fire.

Now that is only the priests. There is a certain degree of holiness required of the priest that is higher than expected for the normal people. See we are all righteous in God by the Blood of Jesus. The priest has to be holy and separated more than the people. Holiness implies separation. And the high priest has an even greater demand made on his life.

Look at what the high priest is to do. In verse 10 *The priest who is chief among his brethren, upon whose head the anointing oil is poured.* There is only one person in the whole of Israel who received the anointing oil pouring down and that is the high priest. The other only have it dip on their ears, their hands and their toes. But the

high priest has it poured down on him. Since its something different, something more is required. That's holiness.

Verse 11 *He shall not go in to any dead body, nor defile himself, even for his father or for his mother.* Look at that he can't even attend any funeral service for his father or mother. If the high priest steps in his ministry and work, he becomes a high priest for life in those days. He is completely separated from his family. In other words he doesn't belong to his family any more. He has lost all flesh and blood ties. God makes a claim on the high priest.

You can see here that there are degrees of holiness. And when I saw the degrees of holiness I said Lord this looks even more complex than I thought that holiness is freedom from sin. It's more than that. And I began to study holiness. I found the bible talks about the beauty of holiness. You find it Psalms 29:2 and Psalms 96:9 worshipping the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

And the high priest he wears a special turban and hat and in front of it they put the words *Holiness onto the Lord*. The high priest has to wear it all the time. That you will find in Exodus 39 how they put it on Aaron's turban in the front *Holiness onto the Lord*. Now what would be your natural impression if you come across someone who is dressed like that? You said this is someone separated. He doesn't belong to you, he doesn't belong to anybody, he belongs to God, he doesn't even belong to his father and mother any more.

And in wrestling with this concept of holiness we need to understand how the New Testament conveys holiness onto the Lord. How does Jesus bring forth the same example? See everything in the Old Testament has a pattern and a shadow in the new. In the Old Testament holiness is separation from the family, and consecration onto the Lord. Everything in the Old Testament must have a New Testament fulfillment. What we want to have is the fulfillment and not to just absorb everything and go back to the old. The old is a shadow and if it's a shadow there is some real thing that is cutting that shadow. So in the old you see the requirements for the priests and the high priest. It's a very high degree of consecration from their

families.

What is the New Testament equivalent? Jesus spoke these words. Mk. 10:29-30 *Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions and in the age to come eternal life.*

So he talks about the degree of consecration to the gospel.

Matt.10: 37 *He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is no worthy of Me.*

Now that sounds very much like the Old Testament requirements of the priests and the high priest. Jesus said he who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. Only Jesus can have your heart. You cannot give your heart to anybody. Whether it's your father or mother or wife or husband. You have to tell them that Jesus is No. 1 and they are No. 2. See in the New Testament you and I are all priests and kings before God. That is found in Rev. 1 and I Pet. 1. And so Jesus puts the consecration requirements upon His disciples, which happens to be us. And that is the New Testament equivalent to the old.

Verse 38 *And he who does not take his cross and follow Me is not worthy of Me.* It is not easy to take things emotionally. The things of God are quite hard to take emotionally. It's just like in the Old Testament in the book of Leviticus when Nadab and Abihu who were sons of Aaron died. Moses told Aaron you cannot cry. His own sons died and Moses said you cannot cry because the anointing oil of God is on you.

Lev. 10:3 *Then Moses said to Aaron, "This is what the Lord has said, "I will show myself*

holy among those who are near Me, and before all the people I will be glorified." And Aaron held his peace. Verse 7 And do not go out from the door of the tent of meeting, lest you die; for the anointing oil of the Lord is upon you. Lets look at verse 6 too. Do not let the hair of your head hang loose, and do not rend your clothes, lest you die, and lest wrath come upon all the congregation.

That's not easy to take emotionally. When Jesus make a statement like you must love Him more than anybody. That's not an easy statement to understand and take from any perspective, if you are the father its not easy to take, if you are the son its not easy to take. Because we do love our father and mother, we do love our children. But Jesus says I must be No. 1. You have to sever your emotional ties and say I will love Jesus, He will meet my need, He will meet my emotional needs, He will be my friend, He will be my father, He will be my mother, He will be my everything.

Holiness is to love God with all your mind, your soul, your strength and all that is within. Righteousness has to do with the just compliance to the law. But holiness has to do with the conditions of your heart. In the bible it says the priest must separate himself. He must go further: his heart must be taken up by God.

When God revealed this concept of holiness to me I said to God, "Lord, that means everything else whether done in Christianity or in the name of the church that is not done with all our heart, mind and soul is unholy before God." What an indictment it was. I said, "God if holiness means the dedication of our heart 100% and putting You first, that means the moment we put You second or third everything else is unholy in Your sight."

Holiness is the full surrender of our heart to the Lord. That's how it relates to the word dedication, consecration, and setting apart. So to walk the holy walk when God says be holy as I am holy means that you are fully dedicated to Him and be as He is. Do you realize God is fully dedicated in what He is doing in love for the universe? He requires a degree of dedication to His purpose, to His call, to His ministry, to His will in your life. And Jesus Christ said this is required of all His

disciples. Now I understand why Ananias and Sapphira died. They lied and they kept back part of the proceeds of the sale and they said that was all of it. I cannot conceive how such a simple thing could cause them to die until Jesus said, "Either I have it all or I have none."

Did you know that if we ever give Jesus second place the bible says we need to repent? In Rev. 2:4 He speaks to the Ephesians church and says I know your work, I know what you do, I know that you have resisted all these other things. But He says you have lost your first love. Therefore He says repent. For when you do not love God with all your heart and if you do not do anything for God with all your heart, that is not holy. Its not dedicated or consecrated to the Lord.

The bible says worship Him in the beauty of holiness. Do you know what it means now? All that is within you is dedicated to only Him. No wonder in the Old Testament He has spoken many times, He says these people worship me with their mouth but their heart is far from me It's unholy before God. If you want to do some thing for God do it well. Don't do half a job with half your heart. If you do something for God as worship do your best. He deserves it; He is worthy of it. God calls us to love Him with such dedication. That's the definition of holiness. Holiness is a dedication of all that is within us to Him. If at anytime someone or some thing takes that first place in our heart, holiness is no more present. You may not have broken any moral law. You may have kept all the 10 commandments but you don't really love God with all your heart. Holiness has not resulted.

And the attitude of God is this as spoken to us in Rev. 3 He says to the Laodicean church I would that you be either hot or cold. He doesn't want half way. He says you either give Me your heart or you don't give Me your heart at all. And we are going to see in the bible an example of what is the different it makes to worship God with all our heart, which is holiness, or with half our heart.

In Genesis 4 speaks about 2 people Abel and Cain. Gen. 4:2-5 *And again, she bore his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep and Cain a tiller of the ground. In the course of time Cain brought to the Lord an offering of the fruit of the ground, and Abel brought of*

the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portion. And the Lord had regard for Abel and his offering, but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.

There were 2 things Cain failed to do. No. 1 it only says he brought an offering whereas Abel brought the firstling of his offering. No. 2 he brought of the produce of the ground, which was cursed, while Abel brought the sacrifice of blood. There you have a picture of God requirements for holiness and righteousness. See Cain worship God without blood. He was trying to come to God on the merit of his works. He has planted corn, grain, wheat and all the produce of the ground. And he harvested them took them to the Lord without blood. Your works are not accepted. All our righteousness is like filthy rags in His presence.

So Cain failed to come based on the merit of Jesus. He should know about it because Adam knew about it. God killed an animal and brought it to Adam and clothe them with the blood dripping. The blood was still dripping when He took the skin and covered them. And how did the Old Testament know about offering through them. God was saying to them from now onwards when you come to me blood must be shed. For the lamb points that you are depending on Jesus to come to me.

Look at what the book of I John says about Cain. I Jn. 3:10-12 *By this it may be seen who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil; whoever does not do right is not of God, nor he who does not love his brother. For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another, and not be like Cain who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother righteous.*

In the natural he was doing some thing good. He was bringing a harvest to God. That was what he did. He was bringing some thing to God but the bible says he is evil. And he is talking about the time before he even murdered Abel. You can never approach God without righteousness. That's why we need the Blood. But when we have the Blood we can approach Him. We need to approach Him with holiness. So

Cain approached God without the shedding of blood. The only Blood is the Blood of the sinless Lamb of God. Without His precious Blood your works are not accepted no matter how good they are in the eyes of man or in your own eyes. God will only accept only one sacrifice: the sacrifice of His Son and the precious Blood of Jesus Christ.

The other thing that we can see in the same picture of righteousness is from Abel side. What was Abel doing when he offered the lamb? The book of Hebrews tells us what he was doing. Heb. 11:4 *By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, through which he received approval as righteous, God bearing witness by accepting his gifts; he died, but through his faith he is still speaking.*

By faith Abel offered, faith in what? Faith in the blood. You have to exercise faith in some thing. Faith has a point of contact. You say I have faith, faith in what? Faith in God. See faith has an object. So it says *Abel by faith*. Abel exercised faith. And what faith was it in? Abel knew there was a revelation given. Don't be surprised that the Old Testament people have revelations. Enoch the seventh descendant from Adam saw the second coming of Christ as told to us in the book of Jude. And Abel as he brought that offering he knew that God will not accept anything without blood. And Abel looked forward to Jesus and he exercised faith in Jesus. The blood that represents the Blood of Jesus brought him into favor with God.

The reason that we see that the reason why Cain was considered evil was that there was no blood. If you have never been born again, you may have gone to church. Going to church does not make you a Christian. But being a Christian you do go to church. You become a Christian by being born again by accepting what Jesus had done for you and accepting His righteousness on your behalf. So Abel brought blood.

There are 2 brothers offering. But one offering had righteousness and holiness. The other had neither righteousness nor holiness. Having defined holiness look at it here carefully. That Abel brought the firstling. So what do we mean by holiness. Holiness is a complete dedication of our heart to the Lord. Where you will not share your

heart with anybody or any thing but the Lord Jesus. And Abel loved God so much that when he chooses an animal as the offering he said, "I must give God with all my heart. I must worship God with all my heart."

The Psalmist will say it this way I will worship God in the beauty of holiness. And he looked around all his sheep and he looked around for the best because he wanted to give God the best. He did not just give God of his flock. He gave the firstling implying also the best. That offering represented his heart. That offering represented his best. He was giving his heart in love to God. He killed that lamb for the Lord. That is holiness. But Cain only brought the produce of the ground. He should have brought blood and he could have also brought the first fruits.

See the bible has 2 ways. For animals you have the firstling. For the produce of the ground you have first fruits. I don't know what he did with the first fruits. He may have eaten them himself. He may have seen a lot of harvest. There were all kinds of produce of the ground, but he did not take the best. His heart was not involved in that offering. It was only an outward offering. And when your heart is not involved holiness is not involved.

We have to come to God with fear and trembling. If you come to God and sing a song without your heart your singing is without holiness. When you do anything for God and you don't do it with all your heart you are not doing it in holiness. That's the bible concept of what holiness means. Holiness means the full dedication of our first love to Him, the full dedication of our best to Him.

Let me tell you this God loves holiness. He will respond to holiness. When God sees any holiness He is pleased. In the book of Numbers you read about how the Israelites fell into sin. And in the midst of all those sin and unrighteousness with the people of Balak, there were people who were repenting because God rebuked them for their sin. And in the middle of their repentance somebody brought a foreign woman into the tent. The bible tells us Phinehas took a spear in anger and killed both of them. And God said I like that. He was acting on God's judgement. Because he loves God so much he cannot stand to see that unrighteousness. What

God saw was not just the action. He saw the heart and He said I will make Phinehas a priest.

Holiness has to do with the dedication of your whole heart, of your whole life to the Lord. We have defined holiness. Its time we examine our lives. If you have done anything for the Lord without all your heart, you have been doing it without holiness. Holiness is not just freedom from sin. That is just elementary; it's more than that. If I love God with all my heart, mind and soul there is no such thing as sin any more. That is elementary. We are talking about how to live for God, how to please God.