

Key Texts: Romans 6:22

“But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness (SANCTIFICATION), and the result is eternal life.”

HOLINESS DEFINED:

Holiness is a difficult concept to understand because of where the concept originates. It starts with the truth that God is Holy. (*Leviticus 11:44*) Because God is *transcendent*, which means beyond the limits of ordinary experience, we find ourselves at a loss for comparisons or helpful examples that capture all that the concept means. The Bible becomes our best source for any revelation on the topic of Holiness. Which is good because it has more to say about God’s “holiness” than even the topic of God’s love. Both are obviously important but it becomes apparent that God’s “holiness” is of “FIRST” importance. Focus on this: God **“IS HOLY”** which means holiness isn’t something God does. Being Holy is what and who God is. (*Isaiah 6:3; Rev. 4:8.*) *God is unlike and different from all things; nothing compares to God.* This makes God distinctly “other”.

The word “Holy” means “Set-apart” or “Awe-inspiring-distinction”.

When we think of God as Holy we should know that He is so morally pure & perfect that nothing impure can even be tolerated in His presence. (*Habakkuk 1:13; Psalms 24:3-4*)

This concept should make everyone a little more reverent of who God is.

The Bible teaches that Holiness is one of four moral attributes belonging to God which God wants to share with YOU.

These four moral attributes of God are: **Perfect Holiness, Perfect Righteous** (*Deuteronomy 32:4*), **Perfect Love** (*1 John 4:8,16*), and **Perfect Faithfulness**. (*Isaiah 25:1*). If we believe the Bible is God’s word then we must take the idea of Holiness serious. God has commanded us to “BE” Holy. (*1 Peter 1:16*). **How can a person be holy?**



**WHAT IMAGE DOES THE WORD
“HOLINESS” BRING TO YOUR MIND?
(i.e. the burning bush)**

“BEING” HOLY IS DIFFERENT FROM “DOING” HOLY

It is Jesus Christ who has made you Holy. You are now a new creation in Christ. (*2 Corinthians 5:17 & 1Th. 5:23,24* *May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. 1 Peter 2:9 “A Chosen People”, “A Holy Nation”*).

How a person becomes Holy always starts with Christ. Through faith in the grace of God, we become the property of God. It is also in your heart where you affirm God as your Lord. (*1 Peter 3:25*) Mark 7:15 also describes how being Holy is something that is an inward work and it must take place at the heart level. All this means that you are not Holy simply because you do something good or righteous. That said, if you are Holy you will produce fruit that is an outward evidence of your inward conviction. “Like God...Be holy in all your conduct...” 1 Peter 1:15. You have been called to be sanctified in Christ and the word for that is “Saint”. (*1 Corinthians 1:2*)

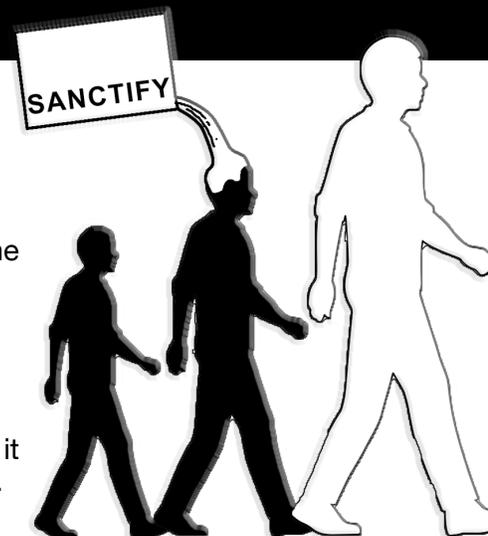
How do you view yourself, are you a SAINT?

ARE YOU A SAINT? WHY OR WHY NOT?

SANCTIFICATION IS PROGRESSIVE: 2 Corinthians 7:1

WHAT WAS STARTED WITH FAITH IN CHRIST NOW CONTINUES THROUGH SUBMISSION TO THE WORD AND THE HOLY SPIRIT. Now that you are a "Saint" it is God's plan or desire that you walk or behave like a saint.

- ◆ **This is progressive** and it requires your continued submission to the Word and the Holy Spirit. (2 Corinthians 3:18) You will not change all at once or overnight. You will learn to be more like Jesus in all that you do.
- ◆ **You are not alone in this process.** (Philippians 1:6 & 2:13) The Holy Spirit is at work inside your heart, He is helping you to desire and to do the things you should.
- ◆ **You will be taught.** (Ephesians 4:17-24) These passages show us how important it is to be taught the ways of God and to participate in the process of sanctification. You and I must choose to stop doing those things which are contrary to Godly behavior.



Remember those four main attributes of God that we are meant to share? Our life will be a lifelong education in becoming more like Christ in those areas. **Are there "saints" who don't act like "saints"? How do you explain that?**

THREE HISTORICAL INFLUENCES ON THE WAY HOLINESS HAS BEEN PERCEIVED:

ASCETIC HOLINESS = THIS IS PRACTICING SELF-DISCIPLINE IN VARIOUS WAYS. SUCH AS, DEVOTING YOUR LIFE TO PRAYER, TOTAL ABSTINENCE FROM SOMETHING, HARD LABOR, OR EVEN BECOMING A HERMIT. (Ecclesiastes 7:16; Matthew 6:1-7; Colossians 2:20-23)

MYSTICAL HOLINESS = IS THE FOCUS ON THE SPIRITUAL OVER THE PHYSICAL BODY AND THE WORLD. THE PRIORITY HERE IS PLACED ON ILLUMINATION OF THE SOUL. THERE IS ALSO A FOCUS ON ACTIVITIES LIKE MEDITATION, SENSITIVITY TO SIGNS/REVELATIONS AND MYSTERIES. (1 Peter 2:11; 1 Corinthians 2:1-16; James 2:14-17)

SACRAMENTAL HOLINESS = THIS IS WHEN PERSONS OR OBJECTS ARE CONSIDERED HOLY BY ASSOCIATION AND THROUGH CEREMONY. SOMETHING IS OFTEN CONSIDERED HOLY AFTER A PRIESTLY BLESSING OR AFTER IT HAS BEEN ANOINTED WITH OIL. (Luke 13:15; 1 Timothy 4:5; 2 Timothy 2:21; Exodus 40:9)

HOW ARE THESE PERSPECTIVES EXAGGERATIONS & DISTORTIONS OF BIBLICAL HOLINESS? IS THERE A POINT WHEN THE BEAUTY OF HOLINESS IS DIMINISHED AS A RESULT OF THESE INFLUENCES?



THE SECRET TO "HOLY" LIVING...IS LOVE & ADMIRATION FOR GOD

In our key text, there is a word that is used and it gives us a key for living Holy. The word is "Slave", which means "to be overcome and bound to something". Being a slave to God carries the benefit of sanctification or holy behavior. If you are wondering how you might experience this in your life...its simple. **You must experience God's love for you until it overcomes you.** Mankind seems to be controlled by and serve whatever overpowers his heart. Why not let Christ's perfect love be what overpowers and captivates your heart. (2 Peter 2:19 & 2 Corinthians 5:14) Think about it in another way. Individuals naturally begin adopting more of the characteristics of whom they admire and love. You might begin to dress alike or talk alike and eventually adopt many preferences of the person you admire & love. Now apply that to God. Admire and fall in love with God's attributes. Stop and think about what people are attracted to in life. The Bible mentions the "Beauty" of holiness. (Psalms 29:2 & 96:9) Who isn't attracted to beauty? If there is any beauty in the holiness of God it will be attractive to us and that same beauty should be reflected in the lives of saints.