

GOD REQUIRES HOLY LIVING

In many churches today, preachers focus their sermons on feel-good self-help messages with little substance. People are told that God loves them, which is true. They are told that God wants to bless them, which is also true. However, they also need to be told that God expects his children to live holy lives before him. Once we choose Jesus and become saved, we should not go on living a sinful life. As Christians, we are to live in accordance with a higher level of morality than those who are not saved. That way of life is called “holy and righteous living.” To be “holy” is to be sanctified and separated unto God for His use. The Bible tells us to be holy because God, our Father, is holy. Leviticus 11:44, 45, I Peter 1:16. The Apostle Peter wrote:

Therefore, with minds that are alert and fully sober, set your hope on the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at his coming. As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.” I Peter 1:13-16.

Peter explained that holy living involves being fully alert and prepared for God’s work. That means that we should have an active prayer life and that we should study God’s word so that all of our spiritual tools will be ready for action and for God’s work. We cannot be an effective witness and worker for Christ unless we live righteously.

In addition, we are to be sober-minded and disciplined. Sober-mindedness means avoiding things that can pollute our mind, such as hatred, pride, arrogance, lust, and greed. Rather than fill our mind with vulgar, inappropriate and violent movies, TV, books, video games and music, we ought to fill up on God’s word. The Apostle Paul said:

Finally brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Philippians 4:8.

Peter also tells us to set our hope “on the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at his coming.” This means we are to have unwavering faith and anticipation of the rapture and of the Christ’s eventual second coming. What a blessed hope we have that soon, indeed very soon, Christ will collect his people and return to Heaven. This blessed hope sustains us and motivates us to live holy so that we will not be left behind. (For more information about the rapture, see the Bible Study “What is the Rapture?” on the Bible Studies page).

Peter emphasized that as obedient children, we should not give in to the sinful desires that we had before we chose Jesus and were saved. Paul also made this point and explained:

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. Romans 12:1-2.

Both Peter and Paul understood that it is not easy to resist sinful desires. However, as we have been made new in Christ, and as we have the Holy Spirit living within us, we have the tools we need to be a “living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God.” By studying the Word and abounding in prayer, our minds will become Christ-centered rather than focused on the world, wealth, society and pop-culture. It is when we overcome the temptation to sin and instead do what is right in the eyes of God, that we are holy and pleasing to Him. Take some time to think about your life and what attitudes, actions, and habits you need to put aside in order to become holy because God your father is holy.

Lastly, Peter quotes the instruction God gave His people, “Be Holy, because I am holy.” God is our father and He is holy; therefore, our lives should be holy. We are able to attain holiness through the shed blood of Christ. Our sins have been forgiven. That does not mean that we should continue engaging in dishonesty, immorality, sexual impurity (including homosexuality and sex outside of marriage), drug and alcohol consumption, lying, gossiping about others, cheating and taking short cuts, being jealous, arguing and fighting, and all the other things we were doing before we repented. Of course, we will slip up sometimes, and when we do, we must ask for forgiveness, learn from our mistake, and move on.

Every minute of every day, we must make a choice to live a lifestyle based on holy and righteous living. Choose holiness! Choose Jesus Today!

God bless!