

Hebrews 12:14 *Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:*

- God's Holiness is one of the essential and absolute attributes of His divine nature, and is set before us in the Scriptures as a matter of great importance:
 - (1) It is a special cause for our awe and adoration
 - (2) It sets the standard for all other holiness
 - (3) It will always remain higher than the highest holiness of men and angels
 - (4) It necessitates God's opposition to and condemnation of all sin
 - (5) It awakens and deepens man's consciousness of his own sin
 - (6) It sets before men their highest possible aspiration - to be holy as God is holy
 - (7) The whole tone of Scripture is in accordance with the weighty exhortation of our text!
- On the other hand, man appears in the Scriptures as a fallen being, by nature unholy and sinful.
- Created in God's image, he has lost one of the most essential features of that image – HOLINESS.
- The origin of the word "holiness" is Akkadian and Sumerian (earth's earliest cultures). The later Hebrew word "qodesh" and the Greek word "hagiosune" continue the meaning of "withdrawal." Therefore, scholars define holiness to mean "separate" and "apart."
- Being holy does not only mean withdrawing FROM something, it means withdrawing UNTO something. We are not separate or holy merely to make others look unholy!
- Rather, we WITHDRAW into man's original state of communion with God as we live holy lives.
- That is why in almost every place Paul refers to holiness, he does not refer only to CULTURE, but takes us all the way back to CREATION (the original state).
- Paul therefore calls for compliance in matters of "practical holiness" on the basis of CREATION, because WE WERE CREATED TO FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD IN HOLINESS.
- A.W. Post used to say, "Salvation is the most elastic word in the Bible." I was saved from the PENALTY of sin when I was justified, I am being saved from the POWER of sin as I am sanctified, and I will be saved from the very PRESENCE of sin when I am glorified. Salvation is a process!
- From God's perspective, the salvation process and the sanctification ("separation" or "holiness") process are one and the same. When we are justified, our sanctification is **POSITIONAL** for we have **IMPUTED** righteousness; when we allow God to lead us into holiness, our sanctification becomes **EXPERIENTIAL** for we have **IMPARTED** righteousness; when we are glorified, our sanctification will become **ETERNAL** for we will receive **IMPLANTED** righteousness.
 - **POSITIONAL sanctification** is just as complete for the youngest believer as it is for the oldest. It depends only upon **one's position in Christ**. A new Christian is as saved as any saint the moment they are born again, but they are only beginning to walk with God; they are immature.
 - **EXPERIENTIAL sanctification** is one's actual holiness of life, or **what one is through Christ**. It is imperative that believers allow God to lead them into sanctification ("separation"), for it is possible to eventually forfeit salvation altogether if they do not develop in holiness.

***Hebrews 6:1-9** ¹ Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, ² Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. ³ And this will we do, if God permit. ⁴ For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, ⁵ And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, ⁶ If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. ⁷ For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: ⁸ But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned. ⁹ But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.*
- **ETERNAL sanctification** will occur in believers at the rapture, when they are instantly and eternally transformed into a state of **complete conformity to Christ**.
- "Holiness, so far as it appears in man, is an outcome of God's gracious work in salvation and yet not without the proper exertion of one's own free will and the putting forth of strenuous effort." (Unger's Bible Dictionary, page 582)