

FELLOWSHIP NOTES ~ Sunday, April 25th, 2021

Spring Spiritual Growth Emphasis



Part 3: “The Highway of Holiness”

Isaiah 35:8-10; Psalm 24:3-6

For next Sunday, May 2nd: Study and pray through pages 31-37 in *Returning to Holiness*.

For Further Study – In Fellowship Café

Book: *We Will Not Be Silenced* by Erwin Lutzer

Book: *How to Develop a Powerful Prayer Life* by Greg Frizzell

Book: *The Pursuit of Holiness* by Jerry Bridges

Book: *Habits for Our Holiness* by Philip Nation

Articles/Reports in the Tower @ the Welcome Center

My Heart: Christ’s Home

Olive Tree Ministries News

The Equality Act – Threatens Both Fairness and Freedom

The Ungodly and Divisive Ideology of Critical Race Theory

The Question – Ps. 24:3:

Who is the person that has the right to be in the presence of holy God and to fellowship with Him?

The Answer – Ps. 24:4:

1.) The one whose life is characterized by _____ holiness (a pure life)

Ps. 24:4a

2.) The one whose life is characterized by _____ holiness (a pure heart)

Ps. 24:4b

The Promise – Ps. 24:5:

The blessing of being welcomed into _____ with God.

The Challenge – Ps. 24:6:

Will *WE* be a people who seek the face of God through _____?

Will *WE* become the _____ God wants to use?

Growth Group Study Guide

Getting Started

Group Discussion: What was the toughest hike or climb you've ever made? How did you prepare for it?

Digging Deeper:

On Sunday morning we talked about the highway of holiness described in Isaiah 35 and illustrated in Psalm 24 which asks a very direct question that we each need to know the answer to. What is that question (Ps. 24:3)?

Briefly review the other three points that we highlighted from this Psalm. What is the connection between internal holiness and external holiness according to Jesus? (READ the Scriptures below) _____

"A good person produces good out of the good stored up in his heart. An evil person produces evil out of the evil stored up in his heart, for his mouth speaks from the overflow of the heart." Luke 6:45

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! You clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence...First clean the inside of the cup, so that the outside of it may also become clean. You are like whitewashed tombs, which appear beautiful on the outside, but inside are full of the bones of the dead and every kind of impurity. In the same way, on the outside you seem righteous to people, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness." Matthew 23:25-28

The topic of holiness can often conjure up images of sour faces, rigid rules and self-righteousness. But seeking God and living with holy ambition is anything but dull! So what does it mean to be holy?

Holiness can be defined on two levels. *Positional holiness* is what God imparts to us when we become His children at salvation. Since God is holy and we are sinners, we are reconciled to God by the blood of Christ shed on the cross (Colossians 1:19-22). God imparts Christ's righteousness to us and makes us holy and blameless before Him. That's our spiritual position in Christ. We have been separated from sin and set apart to and for God.

Personal holiness is the outworking and fruit of positional holiness, evidenced in the way we think and live. Because we belong to God and His Holy Spirit indwells us, we are commanded and divinely equipped to live according to His will every day, in every way. Holy ambition deals with the personal holiness of each of us. All Christians are positionally holy. *Not* all believers are personally or experientially holy. Let's try to find out why.



1. Truth #1. Holy ambition (personal holiness, not positional holiness) is not a permanent condition.

How is this illustrated in the life of King Asa (Read 2 Chronicles 14:2-5, 9-13 and 16:1-9)? _____

What should Asa have done instead of what he did? What does this say about the condition of his heart? _____

2. Truth #2. Holy ambition is tested by God.

How did God “test” King Asa and what do you think was the reason behind that testing? _____

How do you think God “tests” us today in relation to our faith and the condition of our heart? What would be an example from your life or from someone you know of a situation where God brought testing? _____

3. Truth #3. Holy ambition is needed if we are to finish strong.

How did Asa not finish strong – what did he do or fail to do (Read 2 Chronicles 16:10-13)? _____

What does his finish say about his heart? _____

4. An interesting contrast can be made between King Asa and another Old Testament King, King Rehoboam. Rehoboam inherited the throne from his father, Solomon. In the midst of his reign, Rehoboam encountered trouble. Read 2 Chronicles 12:1-5.

Rehoboam’s heart was filled with sin and self. He had led the nation far away from God. The Lord raised up an enemy to punish Rehoboam for his rebellion. God wanted Rehoboam to understand why the nation was under siege, so he sent a prophet to explain. Read 2 Chronicles 12:6-7.

How did Rehoboam and the leaders of the people respond when they were confronted with their sin?

How did God respond when His people humbled themselves?

How did the whole nation benefit from Rehoboam’s humility?

In contrast to Rehoboam is his grandson, King Asa. We’ve already seen the many positive things about Asa and his leadership. For most of his life he was faithful and was considered a good king. But we’ve also seen that he too encountered trouble from foreign nations and we’ve seen how he responded. Even though Asa erred greatly he was given the opportunity to humble himself, acknowledge his wrongdoing, and receive God’s mercy. Instead, he allowed pride, not holy ambition, to fill his heart.

Rehoboam and Asa stand in contrast to one another. Which king began his reign in pride and rebellion but ended strong? _____

Which king began in humility and holiness, but ended in pride and rebellion? _____

Both men sinned. Both were confronted with their sin. One accepted this rebuke as God's way of cleansing their sin; the other received it as an insult and assault on his reputation. Humility restored Rehoboam; pride ruined Asa. The great pastor of the 19th century, C.H. Spurgeon said, "*Oh man, hate pride. Flee from it, abhor it, and do not let it dwell with you!*"

How do you typically respond when God uses others to point out areas of sin or failure in your life? Is your response more like that of Rehoboam or Asa?

Wrapping Up

Continue studying and praying through our companion book Returning to Holiness. This week work through page 37. Let's also continue to fast and pray together for our Road to Holiness Emphasis that God will continue to work in our hearts and lives in regard to sin, cleansing and holy living (use prayer requests on the back of the reading schedule).