

THE HOLINESS OF GOD

Revelation 4:8

Many years ago, a man named Leonard Ravenhill came and preached a message to a group of Bible College students entitled “Isaiah’s threefold Vision”. It was a truly remarkable sermon. Taken from Isaiah 6, it was not a sermon in the traditional sense but a Word (from God) in which you were led to believe you were brought face to face with a holy Deity. This is why the book of Revelation is so important. It does not contain the trivialities so often found in messages. It encompasses the broad sweep of history and on both ends of the story you find a great and majestic God.

Many men through the ages have written up papers on the Holiness of God. They attempted to lay out in clear and concise terms the definition of this most noble attribute of the Godhead. However, when we study the church in light of the work of Christ we see that the Holy Ghost best reflects the general nature of the Holiness of God; this too is mirrored for us in human terms through the person of Jesus Christ. One can never have any more of the “Holiness” of God than one is willing to give of one’s self to the Lord. It is not poured out through any kind of measuring cup. Holiness is directly related to God, and one’s relationship with God in Christ ensures that “our” holiness is not based on our own efforts.

For far too long people thought if they kept their hair ankle length and wore long Victorian skirts and maintained a ‘plain Jane’ appearance their holy status was secure. But to be truthful about it, if you genuinely surrender your heart and will to God, then appearance becomes a minuscule problem because as Jesus indwells your heart, his eternal life will affect your conscience and in time you will learn the appropriateness or inappropriateness of most cultural issues. A complete and thorough knowledge of His Holiness WILL affect your conduct. The apostle John understood the Messiahship of Jesus so well that this knowledge landed him in prison on the island of Patmos. But God is God on Patmos too!

Notice the phrase “Come up hither” in chapter four verse one. Had John not ascended and had his eyes open to divine things we would still be in the dark on the subject of the end of the age. Yet because of his faithfulness to record what he saw and heard the holiness of God is transmitted to us in ways unfathomable apart from the written witness.

John was full of memories. His life was a notebook of occasions in which Christ had demonstrated his uniqueness. Imagine what a broken life John possessed: knowing that he was a physical follower of the Galilee fisherman and of a remnant of people who still carry the memory of walking with Jesus, His death on the Cross and of His shed blood. The honor and dignity he felt was overmatched by the burden he carried in trying to live up to the worthiness of such a task. The shoes of Jesus are too large to be filled by any one man, so it takes a new and distinct body (of Christ) to be able to wear the resurrected robe of Jesus.

To read the stories of Jesus life is to stand in awe of Him. It is to bow the heart daily in accordance with the Spirit's alarming call to us to be holy as He is holy. John sat on this island with nothing but dreams and memories until one day, the man whom his soul loved so dearly, invaded his prison cell and told him not to be afraid. We all need the loving hand of Jesus to reach forth unto us and gently caress us while imparting strength to us so that we can once again stand upright. What is it in life that has knocked you down? Was it a failed marriage? Was it the death of a loved one? Did you backslide and now the guilt of it all is burdening you without end?

Whatever the issue is with you the answer remains to be found in the presence of Jesus. Your prison can become a place of transfiguration if you would only rise to the occasion. To get a glimpse of a risen Savior standing in the midst of your miry clay requires you to open your eyes and "see!" Your unclean position in sin is a cell but you can be freed from it by Jesus, just call on his name. He is a holy God and he is closer than even you can comprehend. If you want to move from unrighteousness to a state of righteousness it begins with a change of heart. Give up and give over to God and let him mold you into the holy person you were born to become in Jesus.

Holiness means many different things to many different people. To me it merely means taking a bath in the blood of Jesus daily. Simply put, repent everyday! We all fail God. We all strive to attain the Jesus model of life. Even so, we must remember that it is Him that worketh in us both to will and to do..

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