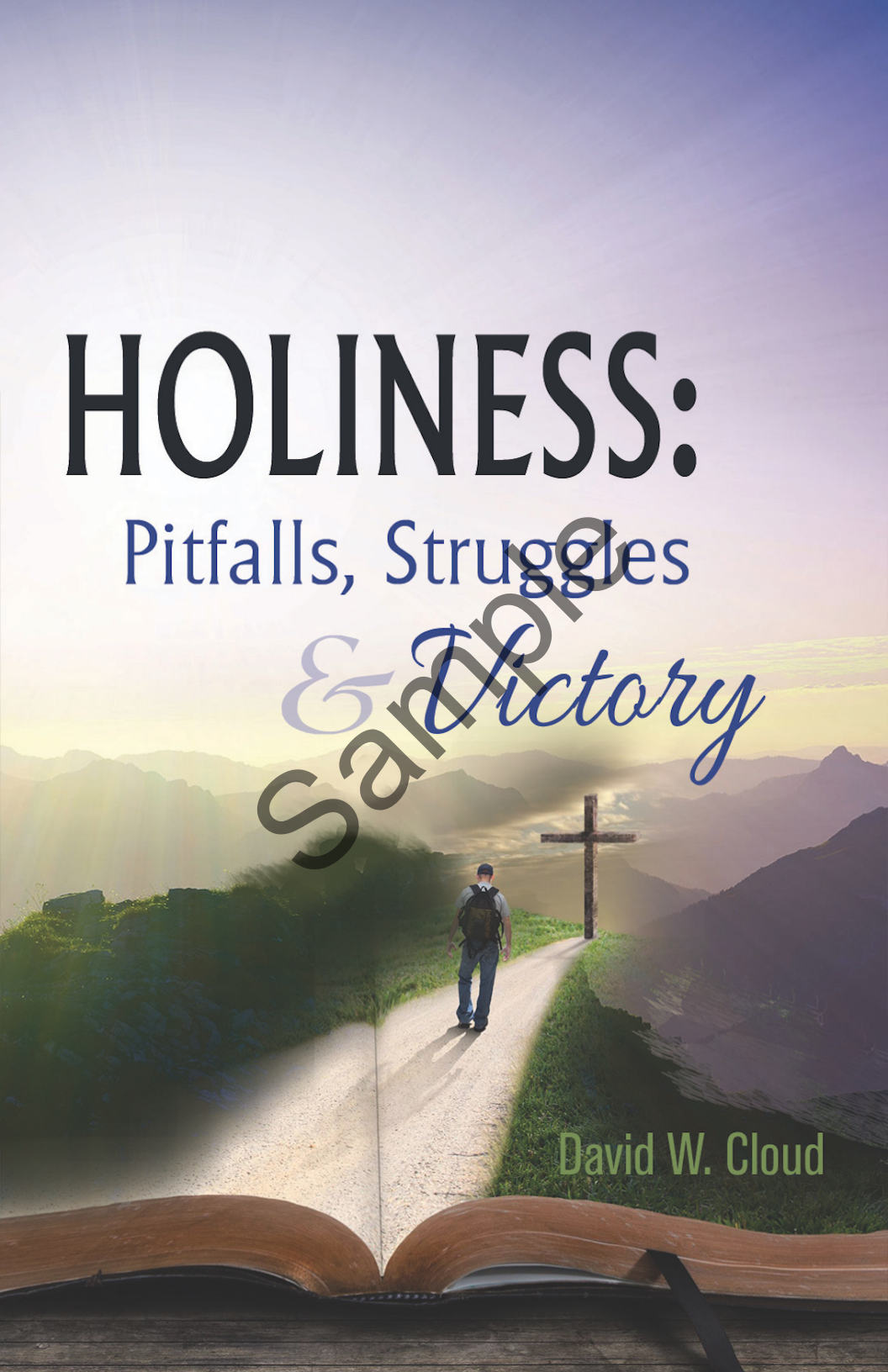


HOLINESS:

Pitfalls, Struggles

& Victory

David W. Cloud



Holiness: Pitfalls, Struggles, and Victory

Copyright 2016 by David Cloud

2024 edition (Feb)

ISBN 978-1-58318-216-1



Published by Way of Life Literature
PO Box 640368, Port Huron, MI 48061
866-295-4143 (toll free) - fbns@wayoflife.org
www.wayoflife.org

Canada:
Bethel Baptist Church
4212 Campbell St. N., London Ont. N6P 1A6
519-652-2619 (voice) - 519-652-0056 (fax)
info@bethelbaptist.ca

Printed in Canada by
Bethel Baptist Print Ministry

Contents

Introduction	7
A Definition of Holiness	8
False Doctrines of Holiness	10
Pentecostal Second Blessing	13
Deeper Life	15
Holiness: The False and the True	18
No One Key to Holiness	25
Position and Practice	32
A Regenerate Church Membership	39
The Law and the Gospel	47
Spiritual Growth	64
1 Peter 2:1-3	64
2 Peter 1:3-11	67
Pursuing God's Perfect Will	78
Surrender (Ro. 12:1)	79
Separation (Ro. 12:2)	80
Transformation (Ro. 12:2)	89
Ministry (Ro. 12:3-21)	93
Putting Off the Old and Putting On the New	116
Ephesians 4:17-32	116
Confession of Sin	132
1 John 1	132
Psalm 51	134
Understanding Suffering	139
2 Corinthians 1:3-11	139
The Whole Armor of God	143
The Enemy	144
The Battle	148
The Armor	150

God’s Chastening Program	169
Abiding in Christ and Submitting to Pruning.....	181
On Doubting Salvation.....	187
Biblical Repentance and “Lordship Salvation”	197
Eternal Security	201
Keswick Holiness.....	210
Revival Is Near	228
Holiness Affected by Background and Health	236
Depression and the Child of God	242

Sample

What does a holy Christian life look like?

It is life of first love for Christ (Re. 2:4), a life of abiding in Christ (Joh. 15), a life that is hot in works for Christ (Re. 3:15-16), a life of being controlled by the Spirit (Eph. 5:18), a life of surrender of one's life to the pursuit of God's perfect will (Ro. 12), a life of wearing Christ's yoke and learning of Him (Mt. 11:28-30), a life of putting off the old man and putting on the new (Eph. 4:22-24), a life of laying aside sin and growing by the Word of God (1 Pe. 2:1-2), a life of continual prayer and supplication with thanksgiving (Php. 4:6-7), a life of casting one's care upon God (1 Pe. 5:7), a life of walking in the light and confessing one's sins (1 Jo. 1:5-10), a life of living by faith and not sight (2 Co. 5:7), a life of seeking those things which are above (Col. 3:1), a life of dependance upon Christ as High Priest by continually accessing the throne of grace (Heb. 4:14-16), a life of rejoicing in the Lord alway (Php. 4:4), a life of serving the living and true God and waiting for His Son from heaven (1 Th. 1:9-10).

Right upfront, we will emphasize that the true Christian life is *not* a removal of the old man; it is not an absence of temptation, stress, fear, or spiritual attacks. It is having victory over these things day by day and hour by hour as they arise.

Introduction

Our subject is holiness: holiness in the personal Christian life, holiness in the Christian home, and holiness in the church.

Strengthening the churches in holiness is more important for America than all politicking and conservative talk. The fundamental problem with America is the apostasy and lukewarmness and worldliness of the churches. The greatest need of America is holy churches. We must not get sidetracked from the business God has given us. "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Matthew 28:18-20). The headquarters for the Great Commission is the New Testament church. It is "the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Ti. 3:15). A New Testament church is a holy church, and a holy church has spiritual power. It is not the size of the church that matters, it is the holiness of the church that matters.

Holiness is a major theme of the Bible. It is mentioned more than 800 times.

There is no holiness in ourselves and our fallen nature. If we look at ourselves, and if we trust in ourselves, we will be discouraged and defeated. Paul said, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing..." (Ro. 7:18). Salvation is 100% of God. It is 100% of God from the beginning to the end. Man's works have nothing at all to do with salvation. And that is also true for holiness. Man's works do not produce holiness. Only God can produce holiness.

Holiness is founded 100% upon the blood of Christ. Holiness is Christ in me the hope of glory. Paul described the life of holiness in Galatians 2:20, “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”

We must keep our minds and hearts focused in the Scriptures. Only here do we see God and Christ and the blood and all of the truths that can make us holy. We must stay immersed in the Scriptures. This is the fundamental of holiness. Holiness is the life of faith, and faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God (Ro. 10:17). To be holy requires that I be a serious, lifelong Bible student.

A Definition of Holiness

We can't practice holiness effectually until we understand what it is.

“Holy” means to be set apart for God's purpose, set apart as belonging to God (Le. 20:26; Nu. 16:5). The terms “holy,” “sanctify,” “hallow,” “consecrate,” “dedicate,” “sacred,” and “saint” are translated from the same Hebrew and Greek words. *Qados* (*qodes*) is Hebrew, and *hagios* is Greek.

Other than God, more than 50 things are called “holy.” There are holy men (Ex. 22:31), holy people (De. 7:6), holy brethren (1 Th. 5:27), holy women (1 Pe. 3:5), holy children (1 Co. 7:14), holy calling (2 Ti. 1:9), holy Scripture (2 Ti. 3:15), holy law (Ro. 7:12), holy commandment (2 Pe. 2:21), holy words (Jer. 23:9), holy promise (Ps. 105:42), holy covenant (Da. 11:28), holy priesthood (1 Pe. 2:5), holy nation (1 Pe. 2:9), holy habitation (De. 26:15), holy temple (1 Co. 3:17), holy habitation (Ex. 15:13), holy heaven (Ps. 20:6), holy city (Ne. 11:1; Re. 21:2), holy hill (Ps. 3:4), holy throne (Ps. 47:8), holy land (Zec. 2:12), holy place (Heb. 9:24), holy ground (Ex. 3:5),

No One Key to Holiness

Perfectionist and “higher life” teachings focus on one “key” or “secret” by which the believer can enter into an abiding experience of victory, blessing, and near perfection. Many “keys” have been proposed, such as the baptism of the Holy Spirit, a second touch or blessing, the crucified life, the abiding life, the resting life, and John Piper’s joy in God.

For example, Lewis Sperry Chafer said, “Romans 6:1-10 ... is the foundation as well as the key to the possibility of a walk in the Spirit (*He That Is Spiritual*, p. 154).

While Romans 6:1-10 is a very important passage, what about all the other passages about sanctification? What about the rest of Romans 6 and Romans 7 and Romans 8 and Romans 12 and Ephesians 4-6 and Colossians 2-3, etc.?

If there were such a key, the New Testament epistles would present that key very clearly and it would be described as the one necessary element in spiritual victory. Everything else would be superfluous.

For example, Paul instructed husbands as follows: “Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them” (Colossians 3:19).

If there were one key to holiness, Paul would have simply given it to the brethren at Colosse and there would have been need of nothing else, because everything else, such as bitterness toward one’s wife, would be taken care of.

Instead, though, we see a multiplicity of things that are taught in the Epistles in regard to sanctification. The apostolic churches had many sins and problems that are addressed in the Epistles for our instruction and edification, and there is no one “key.”

In the epistle to Ephesus, for example, Paul gives a lot of instruction about spirituality. In Eph. 1-3, there is the knowledge of one's position in Christ, which is essential to a holy life. Chapters 4-6 move on to many other things. There is walking worthy (Eph. 4:1). There is submission to the ministry of teaching, which refers to a sound church (Eph. 4:14-16). There is putting off the old man and putting on the new (Eph. 4:22-24). There is walking in love (Eph. 5:2). There is proving what is acceptable to the Lord (Eph. 5:10). There is having no fellowship with and reproving the unfruitful works of darkness (Eph. 5:11). There is walking circumspectly (Eph. 5:15). There is redeeming the time (Eph. 5:16). There is being filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18). There is singing psalms and hymns (Eph. 5:19). There is giving thanks always for all things (Eph. 5:20). There is walking in obedience and holiness in the home (Eph. 5:22 - 6:4). There is doing the will of God from the heart (Eph. 6:6). There is putting on the whole armour of God (Eph. 6:10-18).

Consider the epistle to the Romans: reckon yourself to be dead unto sin and alive unto God (Ro. 6:11); yield yourself to God (Ro. 6:13, 16); mortify the deeds of the body by the Spirit (Ro. 8:13); present your bodies a living sacrifice unto God (Ro. 12:1); be not conformed to the world (Ro. 12:2); transforming the life by renewing the mind (Ro. 12:2); exercising spiritual gifts in service to Christ (Ro. 12:3-8).

The same thing can be said about Christ's teaching in the Gospels. Christ taught the life of holiness in many different ways. He taught the necessity of abiding in Him ("Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you," Joh. 15:3-4). He taught the necessity of learning of Him ("Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me," Mt. 11:28-30). Christ taught the necessity of drinking the living water ("If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out

Position and Practice

A fundamental lesson on biblical holiness is the matter of position and practice.

There are two aspects of the believer's sanctification or holiness, and it is essential that the child of God understand this foundational truth. There is position and there is practice. There is sanctification as an unchanging position in Christ, and there is sanctification in a practical sense of growing in Christ in this present world. The believer can say, "I *am* sanctified in Christ, and I *am being* sanctified in Christ." Ultimately, the child of God will be completely sanctified at the resurrection.

By position, the believer is already perfect before God in Christ. In position before God, every true believer is holy and blameless from the day he is born again. God no longer sees that person as a condemned sinner, but as a saint in Christ. God looks at the believer through the blood of His Son and sees no sin. The Christian is not holy in this positional sense because he is good in himself, but because Christ has put away his sin and God has declared him righteous.

This is the theme of **Ephesians 1-3**.

The theme is "***in Christ***." This is repeated 12 times (Eph. 1:1, 3, 4, 10, 12, 20; 2:6, 10, 13; 3:6, 11).

The blessings are "***in heavenly places in Christ***" (Eph. 1:3). Heaven is where Christ is seated at the right hand of the Father (Eph. 1:20). Our calling is a heavenly calling (Heb. 3:1). We are pilgrims in this present world and are to set our affection on things above (Col. 3:1-4).

The blessings are by "***redemption through his blood***" (Eph. 1:7). Redemption means to purchase. Christ paid the full

price that God's law demands for our sin. The blood of Christ is priceless. We must understand the power of the blood.

The blessings are through "***the riches of His grace***" (Eph. 1:7). Salvation is 100% of God. Therefore, the believer's new position is sure and unchanging.

The blessings are great. The believer is blessed with all spiritual blessings (Eph. 1:3), accepted in the beloved (Eph. 1:6), forgiven (Eph. 1:6), redeemed (Eph. 1:7), in possession of an eternal inheritance (Eph. 1:11), sealed and indwelt by God's Spirit (Eph. 1:13-14), and seated in the heavenly places (Eph. 2:6-7). The believer is predestinated to be conformed to the image of Christ (Ro. 8:28-29). Complete sanctification is God's plan for every believer, and it is sure! Nothing can stop it. God's Word guarantees that we will bear the image of the heavenly, who is Christ (1 Co. 15:49).

God's eternal plan is to make a new creation centered in the Son, Jesus Christ (Eph. 1:9-11). The old creation sinned and fell with the first Adam (Ro. 5:12). It is under God's just condemnation. The last Adam (1 Co. 15:45) came at Christ's virgin-born Incarnation, lived the sinless life that God's holy law requires of man, pleased the Father in every detail (Mt. 3:17; 17:5), was victorious over every temptation at the hands of the devil (Mt. 4), then went to the cross and made the perfect once-for-all atonement to redeem man and the creation. He was in the grave on Saturday, the last day of the old creation, and He rose from the dead on Sunday, the first day of the new creation.

In His marvelous grace, God is giving the entire world of men an opportunity to repent and trust Christ and be born into the new creation. When an individual does that, he is born again. He is dead to the old creation and alive in Christ. This is what is pictured in baptism.

A Regenerate Church Membership

A regenerate church membership is the fundamental of fundamentals for a holy church.

It is supposed to be a Baptist principle. BaptistDistinctives.org - “Baptists believe in a regenerate church membership. This means the church membership is composed only of persons who have been born again.”

Consider the *Somerset Confession of 1656*: “In admitting of members into the church of Christ, it is the duty of the church, and ministers whom it concerns, in faithfulness to God, that they be careful they receive none but such as do make forth evident demonstration of the new birth, and the work of faith with power.”

Consider the *Charleston Summary of Church Discipline, 1774*: “The temple of the Lord is not to be built with dead but living materials, 1 Pe. 2:5. ... None are fit materials of a gospel church, without having first experienced an entire change of nature, Mt. 18:3. ... if their practice contradicts their profession they are not to be admitted to church membership. ... for which purpose candidates must come under examination before the church; and if it should happen that they do not give satisfaction, they should be set aside until a more satisfactory profession is made.”

Consider J.M. Pendleton’s *Church Manual Designed for the Use of Baptist Churches, 1867*: “Let it never be forgotten that the only suitable materials of which to construct a church of Christ, so far as spiritual qualifications are concerned, are regenerate, penitent, believing persons. To make use of other materials is to subvert the fundamental principles of church organization. It is to destroy the kingdom of Christ; for how can there be a kingdom without such subjects as the King

The Law and the Gospel

For holy living, it is essential to understand the law and the gospel.

The following major New Testament passages clarify the matter: Romans 3; Galatians 3; and 2 Corinthians 3.

Romans 3:19-24

1. The law of Moses or the Old Covenant was given to show men that God is a holy Judge and that they are condemned sinners (Ro. 3:19).

- Men naturally think that they are righteous. They compare themselves to human standards of righteousness and one with another rather than with God's perfect law. Men need to see that by God's standards we are all sinners because we have broken His laws.

- Take the Ten Commandments (Ex. 20:1-17). Men have broken all of these. We have put other gods before the one true God (Ex. 20:3). We have made idols and worshipped them (Ex. 20:4-5). We worship and serve ourselves more than God, thus making our own selves into idols. We have taken the name of the Lord in vain (Ex. 20:7). We have broken the Sabbath and treated all days the same, neglecting to set apart even one day for the worship of God (Ex. 20:8). We have dishonored and disobeyed our parents (Ex. 20:12). We have killed (Ex. 20:13). We have committed adultery (Ex. 20:14). We have stolen (Ex. 20:15). We have lied (Ex. 20:16). We have coveted (Ex. 20:17).

- The law of Moses requires perfect obedience (De. 27:26). To break one law is to break all (Jas. 2:10).

- Christ taught that God requires perfect internal obedience. Before God, to hate my brother is murder (Mt. 5:21-22), and to lust after a woman is adultery (Mt. 5:27-28).