

The Bulletin

Meeks Street Church of Christ

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“The Beauty Of Holiness ”

By Bobby L. Graham



Introduction: Read 1 Chron. 16:29; 2 Chron. 20:21; Psm. 29:2; 96:9. "In holy array" is the ASV rendering of this expression, while the NIV has it as "the splendor of His holiness."

Each passages is emphasizing the manner characterizing Old Testament worship – either the physical beauty observed in the priestly vestments (literal meaning), which itself portrayed the consecration that pertained to divine worship, or the holiness generally characterizing the entire system of worship appointed by God (figurative meaning). In either case, the effect for us serving and worshipping under the New Covenant is the same: all pertaining to our worship must accord with holiness.

This means that whatever we do in worship or service to God must be approved in His Word (we dare not generate our own plan for worship), and that we who worship must likewise have the consecration made possible by the Lord and described in the Scriptures.

The Old Testament Background of This Requirement

God made it clear that one be ceremonially clean and pure before he could approach God. Unclean foods, touching a dead body, and contact with a leper were forbidden, lest one become ceremonially defiled. Washing was then necessary for the unclean one to become clean – eligible to participate in the ceremonies of worship. These requirements had nothing to do with moral impurity.

Holiness in the Old Testament

God is holy, Dan. 5:11. Various attributes of His holiness are expressed in an interesting way: holy arm, holy name, and holy character. Both separation from all human and earthly and ethical holiness of character are meant by the word in different passages (Lev. 11:44).

Whatever is consecrated to God also is holy. We read of holy ground, the tabernacle and temple being holy, and holy sacrifices, ceremonial materials, utensils, Sabbath, priests and Levites, Nazirite, and Israel.

Holiness has both a positive (dedicated to God's service) and negative aspect (separated from common use).

Moral/ethical holiness appears in several Old Testament passages (Lev. 19:2). The "Law of Holiness" for the priesthood, found in Leviticus 17-26, obviously includes both ceremonial and moral elements of holiness.

While the tabernacle is sometimes said to be God's dwelling, the Old Testament also speaks of heaven as such, as well as the person having a contrite and humble spirit (Isa. 57:15).

Holiness as Seen in the Tabernacle and Temple

The holiness of these physical structures was to Israel a constant reminder of the presence of a holy God, who shared with glory with none other. He sometimes withdrew His presence when His holy people became unholy.

It consisted of the Holy Place and a Most Holy Place, where the priests and the high priest respectively ministered. Each of these restricted compartments stressed the awesomeness of the privilege of drawing near to God.

The laver in front of the tabernacle served the purpose of washing for the priests, that they might be holy for their service.

The ark of the covenant, concealed behind the veil, was symbolic of the presence of Jehovah and His willingness to accept propitiation for sins, that His people might be holy.

The high priestly garments were described as holy, and his turban was inscribed with "Holiness to Jehovah."

The Holiness Required of God's New Testament People

The purpose and point of God's Old Testament requirements pertaining to holiness seems to be to instruct His people in the holiness necessary for worship and service to be acceptable to Him. Not just anything chosen by man would please God. This point is also found in the New Testament in Romans 12:1-2. God has always made a distinction between the common and the holy.

Another Old Testament lesson – that those approaching God must be holy – is taught in the New Testament in Romans 12:1-2.

The holiness required by God of His people is gained in two ways. They initially become holy in obedience to the gospel, as the blood of Christ cleanses them (1 Cor. 6:9-11). They then are called saints. This would be an endowed holiness. As they grow as Christians, they must perfect holiness (2 Cor. 7:1; 1 Pet. 1:16). This would be a progressive holiness, by which they mold their character into the likeness of Christ.

Conclusion

Absolute holiness belongs to God alone; anything or anyone who would become holy is able to do so only by association with Him.

We today must exercise special care to offer to God what He has sanctified, not the common efforts and activities that He has not made acceptable. We also must maintain our holiness, lest we disqualify ourselves as holy priests, serving under our great high priest, Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 2:5).

Are you one of His holy priests, a saint set apart by Christ's blood for divine service? Are you progressing in holiness, as God desires of the maturing Christian?

HOW WE SHOULD TREAT OUR ENEMIES

By John Hines

What does the bible say about how we should treat our enemies? It does not say we do not have enemies, that is for sure. "Woe to you when all men speak well of you..." (Lk 6:26). A man who has no enemies has never dared to stand up for what is right. The Lord had enemies and if we walk by faith, we will too. So how do we treat them? Look at Matt 5:44-48.

"Love your enemies." There are not many commandments that are more difficult than this. The temptation is to retaliate, to avenge ourselves upon our enemies, but that is not what we are called to do. We are called to love those who are undeserving of our love. We are called to be agents of grace, agents of giving undeserved favor. What does it look like?

"Bless them that curse you." This is not "pray for them". We will get to that in a moment. This means "to speak well of them". Do not partake in gossip and slander of your enemies. Do not be antagonistic towards them just for the sake of it. Certainly, if they are sinning, they need rebuked, but even that, and especially that, would be a blessing to them. Bless them.

"Do good to them that hate you." Put love into action. Put faith into works. Do not just love in word, but love in deed. How many enemies would be enemies no more if they would learn this simplest of lessons! Speak well of them and do them good. Do not reserve your doing of good for family and friends only. Consider those who are enemies as well!

"Pray for them..." Go to God in prayer for them. Ask the Lord's blessings upon them. Pray the Lord be with them. Pray what you wish for yourself, upon them! Can a man curse his enemy after he has approached the throne of God, for his enemy? It sure is difficult, if not impossible. Pray for them. They are enemies for a reason, but you follow the Lord, and you are doing everything you can to get that person to follow the Lord too!

The Lord "sends the rain on the just and the unjust" our passage says. He blesses the wheat and tare, both the good and evil. Why? Because He is longsuffering "not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pet 3:9). The Lord is working to reconcile His enemies back to Himself. As we are a part of that working, we are "sons of our Father in heaven". We strive to be just like Him. Do you have enemies? Were you ever the Lord's enemy? How did He treat you? Do the same.

News and Notes: Sick and recovering: Tim Harris Sr, Tim Harris Jr, Chad Harris, Daniel Holloway, Debbie Keplinger, Sam Johnson, J F Dancer, Robbie, Sheila, Sherry Doles, Nannette and Derek Chancellor, Sandi Poole, Nathan Cox, Sandra Oliver, Aaron Posey (Phil Campbell), Danny Cottrell, and Wade Butler.

Jerry Trimble was in a bad accident last Tuesday.

LuAnne Parrish is at Tishomingo Manor for rehab after her surgery, Room: A3.
Bill Woodall. Mack Johnson.

Our Gospel Meeting- October 9-12.

NorthEast Church of Christ in Tupelo Meeting- October 2-5 Different Speakers

Those Who Serve:

Sunday Morning 9:00 A.M. Service:

Opening Prayer: Blake Briggs
Preaching: Brian Meade
Sermon #1: *"Scientific Foreknowledge Or Moses' Lucky Guesses?"*

Auditorium Bible Class: 9:35am:

Workbook: Fred Johnson
Ephesians (Chris Reeves)
Starting Page & Question: *Page #52, Question #5*

Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service:

Announcements: Paul Busby
Opening Prayer & Scripture Reading: Doug George
Philippians 3:12-15
Song Leader: Paul Busby
Lord's Supper: Jerry Kennemur
Assisting: — —
Preaching: Brian Meade
Sermon #2: *"Pressing Forward"*
Closing Prayer: Tim Harris Sr.

Wednesday Evening: 7:00 P.M.

September 21st:

Auditorium Bible Class: Paul Busby
Workbook: Jeremiah & Lamentations
(John Humphries)
Starting Page & Question: *Page #68, Question #8*
Invitation: Paul Johnson
Song Leader: Dan Cottrell
Closing Prayer: Brian Meade



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“Pressing Forward”

Lesson Text: **Philippians 3:12-15**. This Defines The Christian Life.

I. Forgetting Those Things Which Are Behind.

- We Cannot Obliterate Every Thought Of Our Past.
 - The Past Can Be Counterproductive To Our Goal.
 - Painful Moments Of Bad Experiences, Like Persecution By Others, Or Sin...
 - Paul Does Bring Up His Past To Timothy- **1 Timothy 1:12-16; 2 Tim. 4:14-15**.
- His Sins: **Acts 26:9-11; Acts 7:58**. His Persecutions: **2 Corinthians 11:24-27**.
 - But Paul Did Not Let The Past Dominate His Present Or Future.....
 - Paul Did Not Revisit These Events Every Day— *“Closed The Door...”*
 - This Prevents Brooding/Bitterness Or Overwhelming Guilt For The Past Deeds.
 - We Have To Remember: The Past Cannot Be Changed, But The Present & Future...
- We Ask God To Forgive Us & Accept His Forgiveness- **Heb. 8:12; 1 Cor 6:9-11**.
- We Must Forget Past Accomplishments And Associations- **Philippians 3:4-8**.

II. Reaching Forward To Those Things Which Are Ahead.

- To Not Be Mindful Of The Past, We Go Forward With God- **Hebrews 11:13-16**.
- The Christian Must Always Be Moving Forward:
 - Forward Thinking Versus Backward Thinking.... Growing Or Stagnation?
 - Forward In Our Growth Or Maturity- **Hebrews 6:1-2; Philippians 3:15**.
 - Forward In Our Knowledge Of The Scriptures- **Hebrews 5:12-14**.
 - Forward In Our Walk With Christ- **1 John 2:6**.
 - No Time To “Rest On Our Laurels” **1 Corinthians 15:58**;
 - No Time To Be Weary In Doing Good- **Galatians 6:9**.
 - No Time To Look Back- **Luke 17:32-33; Hebrews 10:37-39**.

III. I Press On, And I Press Toward The Goal.

- We Must Look At The Christian Life As A Race- **Hebrews 12:1-2**.
- The Goal Is The Finish Line- *“the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”*
 - Goals Give Us An Aim, Purpose, And Direction.
 - Goals Keep Us Focused On What’s Important.
 - Goals Provide Motivation.
 - No One Accidentally, Haphazardly, Or Aimlessly Reaches The Goal- **1 Cor. 9:26**.
- Press: to move quickly and energetically toward some objective— ‘to hasten, to run, to press forward, to press on.’ Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). In Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 208).
- We Must Run With Enthusiasm And Intensity; Usain Bolt.
- **Luke 13:23-24**