

Holy and Blameless - Sunday, August 3rd 2014

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ,⁴ just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love⁵ He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, “ Ephesians 1:3-5

Beloved in The Lord,

God has chosen us to be Holy and Blameless before Him in love. What does this mean? What does it mean to be Holy and Blameless before God? If something is Holy, it means that it has been consecrated/blessed – set apart for God’s service. It is set apart to be used in God’s honour, for His work. For example this Church building is a holy place. It was consecrated for God’s service. That means that this building has been set apart for activities that relate to serving God. We do not use this building for parties or other worldly activities. This building is blessed, it is holy and dedicated to God’s service.

In exactly the same way, if we are in Christ, then we are holy. We have been separated from the world by baptism into Jesus, in order that we may serve God. When we are in Christ, then our life is a holy life. Our life should not be lived in a worldly way, with worldly fleshly views.

A little further in this same letter Paul writes:

“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them” (Ephesians 2:10).

We are God’s workmanship, created by Him for good works, that He has foreseen. Last Sunday we considered the truth that we are chosen by God. We saw that He created us with a purpose in mind. He is the one who called us and saved us so that we could be His children.

If, through faith in Jesus Christ we are His children, then our purpose in life is to live a holy and blameless life before Him in love. That is to say that we are to live a life that brings glory and honour to His Holy name. We are to live a life that pleases our Father and that is a testimony/a witness to others that our God is real and that He is indeed love.

I have shared this saying with you before, but it is worth repeating; *“You may be the only Bible somebody reads.”* You may be the only witness to God that somebody receives. That is why it is important that you live a holy and blameless life before God in love.

God commands us to live a holy life. To live a life that is separated from this world, from worldly thinking and behaviour. I have a little plaque in my office that reads: *“If you were accused of being a Christian, would the evidence be there to support it?”* This is a very

powerful reminder to me to take regular stock of myself. It is important to regularly stand before God's spiritual mirror and to assess how the light is shining. To analyse truthfully what your testimony is like. What do people see, hear and experience when you are around? What do your words convey? Remember that out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks... Do the words that proceed from our mouths during the week differ to those we utter on a Sunday? Do we give a good testimony to God's unfailing and unceasing love? It is important to regularly ask these questions.

It is vital to assess where God is in your life. David wrote:

"How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God!

How vast is the sum of them!

¹⁸ If I should count them, they would outnumber the sand.

When I awake, I am still with You" (Psalm 139:17-18)

How precious are God's thoughts to you? A good way to find out is to calculate how much time in a day you spend reading the Bible, praying, praising God, and how much time you spend reading the Newspaper, magazines, novels, listening to talk back or other radio, watching TV and so on. I am not saying that we shouldn't necessarily engage in these activities, but I am saying that the amount of time we allot to God and the amount of time we spend on other things is a clear indicator of where God is in our lives.

There is an old fable that says that within a person there are two beasts who are both very strong. One is good and the other is evil. The one who wins and manifests itself the most is the one that gets feed the most.

There is a very powerful truth in this old fable. If you continually feed your souls with earthly, fleshly things, that come to you via media, both printed and electronic than you will find that you are a very worldly person. This will be reflected in your life.

On the other hand, if you feed your soul with God's Word, and engage in regular worship and prayer, then you will be a spiritual person and your life will become increasingly more Holy and pleasing to God.

John wrote in his first Epistle:

"Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. ¹⁷ The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever" (1.John 2:15-17).

The interesting thing is that the more you focus on Jesus, and the more you feed your soul with God's Word, the less you love the world and the things of the world. The attractions of

the world become less attractive. You see things in a different light. Your thinking is transformed and your mind is renewed. You begin to see things from God's perspective.

There is a great song that states: *"Turn your eyes upon Jesus; look full in His wonderful face; and the things of earth will grow strangely dim, in the light of His glory and grace."*

It is like that. The more you look upon Jesus, the less you want anything else. When you begin to live a holy life, you discover how good it really is. God's blessings are poured out upon you, and you desire to go deeper and deeper with Him. You live life at its fullest.

Here is the paradox: When you do not love the world, or the things of the world, and you strive to put God first in everything, then you begin to love the world in a completely different way, and you live life at its very best. God helps you to experience life as He intended it to be.

Jesus said: "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly" (John 10:10).

The thief that Jesus is speaking about is the Devil. He lies, steals, kills and destroys. He keeps people enslaved and he steals their lives. Jesus said that He came that we might experience an abundant life. When we live for Jesus we do have an abundant life. We live the life that God intended for us and this life is a full life.

David wrote in Psalm 23:5 – ***"My cup overflows."***

This is truly the case when we live for Jesus and with Him in our heart. Our cup overflows. When we are united with Christ Jesus in faith, then He flows through us. Jesus spoke about Living Waters: ***"If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. ³⁸ He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.'" ³⁹ But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified" (John 7:37-39).***

You see, when our life is separated from the world and submitted to God in faith through Jesus Christ, then Living Waters flow through us. God The Holy Spirit flows through us. God Himself flows through us and the Bible tells us that God is Love. Therefore, God's very own love flows through us.

This is the aim. This is why we are to live a holy and separate life. We want the love of God to flow in and through us. To this we are called. For this reason we have been chosen.

Remember Jesus Words:

"nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lamp stand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven"(Matthew 5:15-16)

Do you recall what I said earlier? You may be the only Bible someone reads today. This is why it is so important that we make a commitment to live a holy life, separate from the world and live for God.

So much of the Christian Church today is so worldly that apart from the religious language and symbols you would be hard pressed to distinguish it from any other organisation. May God keep us from this.

In order to live a holy life and to be blameless before God, serving Him in love, we need to daily confess with Paul:

“I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me” (Gal.2:20).

Amen and Amen

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All Bible quotations taken from NAS Bible.