

Seek holiness only by believing in Christ and walking by Him and then act on your faith.

~Other Speakers S-Z: Victory Over Sin:

That you may seek holiness and righteousness only by believing in Christ and walking by Him in faith. Take encouragement from the great advantages of this way and the excellent properties of it.

Union and fellowship with Christ is by faith in Christ, as discovered in the gospel. This union is of free grace and not by the law or works. It can not exist by our old nature, or by thinking we have to get it before we come to Christ, to receive Christ by it. We must first apply Christ and His salvation to ourselves for our comfort, according to the new man in Christ, and not as in our old corrupted condition. Then we must use all the ways of holiness rightly for this end. Now, that this is an excellent advantageous way appears by the following desirable properties of it.

It has this ability, that it assists to the death of all flesh, and exaltation of God only, in His grace and power through Christ. And so it is agreeable to Gods design in all His works, and the end that He aims at and a fit means for attaining the end that we ought to aim at in the first place, which is the hallowing, sanctifying, and glorifying of Gods name in all things. And this ability of it is a great argument to prove that it is the way of God, and hath the character of His image stamped upon it. We may say that it is like Him, and a way according to His heart, as Christ proves His doctrine to be of God by this argument. And Paul proves the doctrine of justification and of sanctification, and salvation by grace through faith, to be of God, because it excludes all boastings of the creature. This property appears evidently in the mystery of sanctification by Christ in us through faith. It shows that all our good works, and living to God, are not by our own power and strength at all, but by the power of Christ living in us by faith. God enables us to act not merely according to our own power, as he enables carnal men above our own power, by Christ united to us and in us through the Spirit. All men live, move and have their being in Him. And by His universal support and maintenance of nature in its being and activity, they act. So that the glory of their acting as creatures belongs to God. But God acts more immediately in His people, who are one flesh and one spirit with Christ, and act not by their own power, but by the power of the Spirit of Christ in Them, as closely united to Him, and being the living temples of His Spirit so that Christ is the immediate principal agent of all their good works; and they are Christ's works properly, who works all our works in us and for us. yet are the saints works by fellowship with Christ, by whose light and power the faculties of the saints do act. So that we are to ascribe all our works to God in Christ, and thank Him for them as free gifts. God enables us to act, not by ourselves, but by Himself. The wicked are supported in acting only according to their own corrupt nature, so they act wickedly. But God enables us to conquer sin, not by ourselves, but Himself. Thus we are said to live, move, and have our being in God. And the glory of enabling us does not only belong to Him, which the Pharisee could not but ascribe to Him, but also the glory of doing all in us. And yet we work as one with Christ, even as he works as one with the Father by working in Him.

We live as branches by the juice of the Vine, act as members of the head and bring forth fruit by marriage to Him as our Husband, and work in the strength of Him as the living Bread that we feed on. He is all in the new man and all the promises are made good in Him.

It hath this property, that it consists well with other doctrines of the gospel, which contrary errors do not. It confirms us in the doctrine of real union with Christ, so plentifully held forth in Scripture; which doctrine some consider a vain concept, and cannot endure it, because they think it works not holiness, but presumption; whereas I have showed that it is absolutely necessary for the enjoyment of spiritual life and holiness, which is treasured up in Christ; and that so inseparably that we cannot have it without a real union with Him. The members cannot live without union with the head, nor the branches without union with the vine; nor can the stones be part of the living temple, except they be really joined immediately or immediately to the corner-stone.

It hath this excellent ability, that it is the never-failing, effectually-powerful, alone-sufficient, and sure way to attain to true holiness. They that have the truth in them find it, and the truly humble find it. People strive in vain when they seek it in any other way; therefore venture with the lepers, else you die. We cannot work holiness in ourselves. So that an humbled person finds it in vain to seek holiness by the law or his own strength, for the law is weak through our flesh. Seeking a pure life without a pure nature, is building without a foundation. And there is no seeking a new nature from the law, for it bids us to make bricks without straw, or telling a cripple to walk without giving any strength.

This is the only way we have a new and divine nature by the Spirit of Christ in us, effectually carrying us forth to holiness with life and love. It is the only way to have new hearts according to the law; so that we serve God heartily, according to the new nature and cannot but serve him. So that here is a sure foundation for godliness, and love to God with all our heart, might, and soul. Sin is not only restrained, but mortified; and not only is the

outside made clean, but the inside, and the image of God renewed; and holy acts surely follow.

It is a most pleasant way to those that are in it and that in several respects.

A. It is a most plain way, easy to be found to one that sees his own deadness under the law, and is so renewed in the spirit of his mind as to know and be persuaded of the truth of the gospel. The enlightened soul cannot think of another way when truly humbled. And when we are in Christ, we have His Spirit to be our guide in this way

B. It is easy to those that walk in it by the Spirit, though it be difficult to get into it, by reason of the opposition of the flesh or devil scaring us, or seducing us from it. Here you have holiness as a free gift received by faith, an act of the mind and soul. Whosoever will may come, take it, and drink freely; and nothing is required but a willing mind. But the law is an intolerable burden, if duty be laid on us by its terms. We are not left in this way to conquer lusts by our endeavors, which is a successless less work; but what is duty is given, and the law is turned into promises. **THE GRACE OF GOD TURNS THE REQUIREMENT OF THE LAW INTO A PROMISE OF GOD.** We have everything we could possible need to walk in all holiness now in Christ. How pleasant would this free gift, holiness, be to us, if we knew our own needs, inabilities, and sinfulness! How ready are some to toil continually, and macerate their bodies in a oppressive legal way to get holiness, rather than perish for ever! And, therefore, how ready should we be, when it is only, Take, and have; Believe, and be sanctified and saved! Christ's burden is light, by His Spirits bearing it. No weariness, but renewing of strength.

C. It is a way of peace, free from fears and terrors of conscience, that those meet with unavoidably who seek salvation by works; for the law works wrath. It is not the way of Mount Sinai, but of Jerusalem. The doubts of salvation that people meet with, arise from putting some condition of works between Christ and themselves; as hath appeared in this discourse. But our walking in this way is by faith, which rejects such fears and doubts. It is free from fears of Satan or any evil and free from slavish fears of perishing by our sins; faith laying hold on infinite grace, mercy, and power to secure us. The Lord is the keeper and shade on the right hand. Free and powerful grace answers all objections.

D. It is a way that is paved with love. We are to set Gods loving-kindness, and all the gifts of His love, still before our eyes; Christ's death, resurrection, intercession, before our eyes; which breed peace, joy, hope, love. You must believe for your justification, adoption, the gift of the Spirit, and a future inheritance, your death and resurrection with Christ. In believing for these things your whole way is adorned with flowers, and hath these fruits growing on each side. It is like walking through the garden of Eden, rather than the wilderness of Sinai. It is the office of the Spirit or Guide to be our Comforter, and not a spirit of bondage. Peace and joy are great duties in this way.

E. Our very moving, acting, walking in this way, is a pleasure and delight. Every good work is done with pleasure; the very labor of the way is pleasant. Carnal men wish duties were not necessary, and they are burdensome to them; but they are pleasant to us, because we do not gain holiness by our own carnal wrestling with our lusts, and crossing them, out of carnal fear, with regret and grief, and setting conscience and the law against them to hinder their acts. We act naturally according to the new nature, and perform our new spiritual desires by walking in the ways of God through Christ. Our lusts and pleasures in sin are not only repressed, but taken away in Christ. Pleasures in holiness freely are given us and implanted in us. We have a new taste and savor, love and liking, by the Spirit of Christ. We now look on the law, not as a burden but as our privilege in Christ.

It is a high exalted way, above all other ways. Unto this way the prophet Habakkuk is exalted, when, upon the failure of all visible helps and supports, he resolves to rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of his salvation; and making God his strength by faith, is confident that his feet should be as hinds feet, and that he should walk upon his high places (Hab. 3:18-19). These are the heavenly places in Christ Jesus that God hath set us in, being quickened and raised up together with Him.

A. We live high here; for we live not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, and Christ lives in us with all His fulness. We walk in fellowship with God dwelling in us and walking in us. And therefore our works are of higher price and excellency than the works of others; because "they are wrought in God" and are the fruits of Gods Spirit. And we may know that they are accepted and good by our gospel principles, which others have not.

B. We are enabled to perform the most difficult duties, and nothing is too hard for us. See the great works done by faith. These works are ones that carnal men think foolishness and madness to venture upon they are so great, and honorable achievements, in doing and suffering for Christ.

C. We walk in an honorable state with God, and on honorable terms; not as guilty creatures to get our pardon

by works, nor as bond-servants, to earn our meat and drink; but as sons and heirs, walking towards the full possession of that happiness to which we have a title; and so we have much boldness in Gods presence. We can approach nearer to God than others, and walk before him confidently without slavish fear; not as strangers, but as those who are of His own family. This prompts us to do greater things than others; walking as free men. It is a kingly way; the law to us is a royal law, a law of liberty, and our privilege; not a bond and yoke of compulsion.

D. It is the way only of those that are honorable and precious in the eyes of the Lord, even His redeemed ones, whose special privilege it is to walk therein; no unclean beast goes there. No carnal man can walk in this way, but only those that are taught of God. Nor would it have come into our hearts without Divine revelation.

E. The preparing this way cost Christ very dear. It is a costly way.

F. It is a good old way, wherein you may follow the footsteps of all the flock.

G. It is the way to perfection. It leads to such holiness as shall in a while be absolutely perfect. It differs only in the degree and manner of manifestation from the holiness of heaven; there the saints live by the same Spirit, and the same God is all in all; and have the image of the same spiritual man. here we have but the first-fruits of the Spirit. They live by faith, and not by sight, and are not full grown in Christ. Sanctification in Christ is glorification began, a glorification is sanctification perfected.