

**General Topics :: Holiness, Truth and the Presence of God series****Holiness, Truth and the Presence of God series - posted by moreofHim (), on: 2004/6/6 16:47**

I am doing a series that will be a shorter version of "Holiness, Truth and the Presence of God" for my mailing list. I hope that it might be of some benefit to someone here at SI. It was the first book I read that really opened my eyes to my own lukewarmness. Enjoy!

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**Humility Precedes Holiness**

"The bigger I grow in God, the smaller I become."-Allen Bond

A Holy Man Is A Humble Man-

"Learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart"(Matt.11:29). The holiest, most powerful voice that ever spoke described Himself as "**meek and lowly in heart.**" Why begin a message on holiness with a quote concerning humility? Simply because 'holiness is the product of grace' and God gives grace only to the humble.

It is vital we understand that Jesus did not condemn sinners. He condemned hypocrites. A hypocrite is a person who excuses his own sin while condemning the sins of another. He is not merely "two-faced", for even the best of us must work at single-mindedness. A hypocrite therefore, is one who refuses to admit he is, at times, two-faced, thereby pretending a righteousness that he fails to live.

Indeed, the hypocrite does not discern his hypocrisy, for he cannot perceive flaws within himself. Rarely does he actually deal with the corruption in his heart. Since he seeks no mercy, he has no mercy to give; since he is always under God's judgement, judging is what comes through him.

We cannot remain hypocrites and at the same time find holiness. Therefore, the first step we truly take toward sanctification is to **admit we are not as holy as we would like to appear**. This first step is called humility.

At some phase in each of our lives, we all will be confronted with the impurities of our hearts. This is not to condemn us but to establish humility and deepen the knowledge of our personal need for grace. It is at this crossroad that both holy men and hypocrites are bred. Those who become holy see their need and fall prostrate before God for deliverance. Those who become hypocrites are they who, in seeing their sin, excuse it and thus remain intact.

Therefore, sanctification starts not with rules but with the forsaking of pride. Purity begins with our determined refusal to hide from the condition of our hearts. If we are not enlightened to the depravity of our old nature, we become "Christian Pharisees," hypocrites, full of contempt and self-righteousness. Did our Master warn of those who, 'trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and viewed others with contempt'(Lk.18:9)?

The humility we hope to find must go beyond the pattern of living proud lives, interrupted **momentarily by intervals of self-abasement. Meekness must become our way of life.** Like Jesus, we must delight in becoming "lowly in heart."

Anyone Can Judge, But Can You Save?-(personal note: here is where it gets hard for me!)

Hypocrites love to judge; it makes them feel superior. But it shall not be so with you. You must seek earnestly for lowliness of heart. Anyone can pass judgement, but can they save? Can they lay down their lives in love, intercession and faith for the one judged? Can they target an area of need and, rather than criticizing, fast and pray, asking God to supply the very virtue they feel is lacking? And then, can they persevere in love-motivated prayer until that fallen area blooms on godliness? Such is the life Christ commands we follow!

to be continued with: "Two Things, Two Things Only"

**Re: Holiness, Truth and the Presence of God series - posted by moreofHim (), on: 2004/6/10 9:35**

## **Two Things, Two Things Only**

There are so many things to occupy our minds: so many books, so many examples, so many good teachings that deserve our attention, that say, "here is a truth." But, as I have been serving the Lord these past years, He has led me to seek for two things and two things only: to know the heart of God in Christ and to know my own heart in Christ's light.

### **Knowing the Heart of God**

Jesus loves people-- all people, especially those society ignores. Therefore, I must know exactly how far He would travel for men, for it is the same distance He would journey again through me! I must know His thoughts concerning illness, poverty and human suffering! As His servant, I am useless to Him unless I know these things. If I would actually do His will, I must truly know His heart. Therefore, in all my study and times of prayer I am seeking for more than just knowledge; I am searching for the heart of God.

### **Knowing our Hearts**

At the same time, while I draw closer to the heart of God, the very fire of his Presence begins a deep purging work within me. In the vastness of his riches, my poverty appears. The psalmist wrote, "Who may ascend into the hill of the Lord? And who may stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who has not lifted up his soul to falsehood, and has not sworn deceitfully" (Ps. 24:3-4)

It is this upward call of God which we pursue. Yet the soul within us is hidden, living in a world of untruths and illusions. This is our inner man. Have you seen him, your inner person whom truth alone can free? Yes, we seek holiness, but true holiness arises from here, in the hidden place of our hearts. Indeed, it is truthfulness which leads to holiness! God, grant us a zeal for truth that we may stand in Your holy place!

Men everywhere presume they know the "truth", but have neither holiness nor power in their lives. Truth must become more than historical doctrines; it must be more than a museum of religious artifacts, mementos from when God once moved. Truth is knowing our own hearts in the light of God's grace.

Without realizing, as we search for God's heart, we are also searching for our own. For it is only in finding Him that we discover ourselves, because we are "in Him". "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my anxious thoughts; and see if there be any hurtful way in me, and lead me in the everlasting way"(Ps. 139:23-24)

Let us wash the cosmetics from our souls and look at the reality of our hearts. There may be errors inside of us that are actually ruling us without our awareness. Do we realize, for instance, how many of our actions are manipulated purely by vanity and the desire to be accepted by others? Are we aware of the fears and apprehensions that unconsciously influence so many of our decisions? We may have serious problems inside yet still be either too proud or too insecure to admit we need help. (((Concerning ourselves, we think so highly of what we know so little!))) Even outwardly, though we camouflage, most of us are ignorant of how we appear outwardly to others; much less do we know ourselves inwardly before God! Our fallen thinking processes automatically justify our actions and rationalize our thoughts.

Therefore, if we would be holy, we must first renounce falsehood. We need not pretend to be righteous. We need only to become truthful!

No condemnation awaits our honesty of heart. We have only to repent and confess our sins. We need merely to love and embrace the truth to be delivered from sin and self-deception. We need to know two things and two things only: the heart of God in Christ and our own hearts in Christ's light.

to be continued with "Holiness Proceeds Power"....