

**BECAUSE IT IS WRITTEN, BE YE HOLY;
FOR I AM HOLY**

1Peter 1:16

This article has been written for the Faithchasers Network

Be Holy!

This is quite a statement and I am not sure that it is so easily comprehended as simply reading from scripture. In fact it is this very statement by God that directs our every action and every conversation we might utter to be in accordance with a divine plan He initially set out for the Children of Israel when they exited from Egypt by His mighty hand.

It was God's desire that the whole nation of the children of Jacob be a nation of holy priests and to be a witness of Him to the whole world; and even though the curtain has come down upon righteousness by the six hundred and thirteen laws given to Moses, our righteous relationship with God now exists through grace that by faith we believe in the Son of God as the Messiah to mankind, Jesus Christ our Lord and risen saviour.

God's desire that His righteous children be a nation of holy priests has not changed and through the giving of his Holy Spirit in this era of our risen Lord, the righteous become the living Royal Priesthood of Believers over whom we have our Lord and Saviour the High Priest forever (after the order of Melchisedec, King of Salem). It is in this capacity of being of the Royal Priesthood of Believers that God calls us to be holy.

So let's have a look at what this means.

Holy ¹ :	Hebrew [Qodesh]	Morally clean, consecrated, dedicated, hallowed, pure, sanctified.
	Greek [Hagios]	Sacred, pure, morally blameless, pious, consecrated, perfect, chaste, clean, right (intrinsic or divine character).
	English [Holy]	Consecrated, sacred, morally and spiritually perfect; belonging to, empowered by, devoted to, God; high moral excellence.

The word Holy occurs in scripture 654 times appearing in 586 verses. So we are not just playing around here with a mere whim of an instruction to be a good person; God is being very specific about every aspect of our lives in how we should conduct ourselves. And it is more than this again because it also goes to

¹ Occurrences: Strong's Hebrew References – H6944, H6918, H6942, H2623, H6922.
Strong's Greek references – G40, G3741, H39, G37.

what we are thinking, what our desires are and what our mind set is about serving in the Kingdom of God here on planet Earth.

Now I have been very specific in some wording here and I have done this to counter the Nay Sayers who deny the Royal Priesthood of Believers and that Jesus is our High Priest, and also that there is a literal Kingdom of God here, right now, in which we can live and walk. So let me say this. We can only be partakers in those things that we believe in; meaning that for Nay Sayers there will be no Royal Priesthood or literal Kingdom of God apparent to them. There is a great truth here about having faith and believing.

So why is it important that we should examine this word? God's call to all believers to be holy is given to us in several places in the scriptures, however as often happens we read passed the passage with something in our minds that says God is Holy, Jesus our Lord is Holy as he was also in the flesh, Angels are Holy, the Word of God is Holy - but it does not refer to me; that is, I don't have long white hair with a flowing white beard and dress in white robes with thunder and lightning bolts following – therefore I cannot be holy.

But how wrong is this thinking? Remember what we said in the previous paragraph about Nay Sayers, so please don't be one of those. Yes we can be holy, because even if for no other reason that God said we should be. And if I am hearing correctly, the next question is, "How?"

Well before we get to that question, let's look around for a minute or two and get a sense for the scriptural landscape overlooking us here. It is important that we all take these scriptures personally and earnestly endeavour to put off the old man of flesh and don that holy person who is acceptable to God.

Leviticus 11:45

For I am the LORD that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy.

Leviticus 19:2

Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, Ye shall be holy: for I the LORD your God am holy.

Leviticus 20:7

Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I am the LORD your God.

Leviticus 20:26

And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the LORD am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine.

1Thessalonians 4:7

For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.

Hebrews 12:14

Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:

1Peter 1:15-16

But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; (16) Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

1Peter 2:5

Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

1Peter 2:9

But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

Romans 6:19

I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.

Romans 6:22

But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

Rom 12:1

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

I cannot see that these commandments and exhortations can be anything but God's directive to all Spirit filled Christians to act and be holy in all of our day-to-day lives for to be acceptable unto Him. The shock value of God's

expectation for the Royal Priesthood to be holy is a double edged sword. Consider what the ramifications are if we are not holy and therefore are not acceptable to God.

2Corinthians 7:1

Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Hebrews 12:28

Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear:

Paul's letter to Titus is quite detailed about the behaviours that are expected of believers, or perhaps we should say the Royal Priesthood of Believers, of whom all spiritually renewed believers are inclusive within and under whom our Lord and Saviour Jesus is now the everlasting High Priest.

Recall that the hierarchical structure for God's nation of priests from the era of the Children of Israel under law positioned serving members from out of the tribe of Levi to serve the Hebrew community in Temple service and more particularly to undertake the higher duties of service to God in the sacred area of the Holy of Holies where God communed with Moses and the High Priests that were appointed in succession from time to time. This structure placed the High Priest in between God and the Levitical priests, and them in turn in between the High Priest and the people of the fledgling nation.

To accommodate this layering of higher service, the tabernacle in both its temporary form and the later fixed temple building(s) had two specific areas that could only be accessed by those in Levitical priestly service and thus the area for the populous from the other eleven tribes were only permitted in an outer court area. This formed a three-level tier where only the High Priest was permitted to enter the Holy of Holies where the Ark of the Covenant and the Mercy Seat with the Cherubim were placed. Next there were the courts where the Levitical priests would attend to temple duties concerning sacrifices and other matters leaving the third tier being the outer court for the people of the Hebrew nation.

With God giving us his only begotten son - sinless and without blemish, ie an acceptable propitiatory offering for a sin sacrifice, Jesus offered himself as the Lamb of God to atone for the sin of mankind; and having done so and that sacrifice being acceptable to God, the Levitical priesthood covenant, ie the Old

Testament Mosaic Law, was fulfilled or superseded with a better sacrifice; once for ever.

Jesus the risen Lord became the High Priest for ever over all believers and there are now no acceptable “middle” tier priests or priesthoods that can jointly also stand “as though they were equal to the Lord” between the Royal Priesthood of Believers and God. And to reinforce the evil of a structure dividing the believing souls into a man-made priesthood and laity and thus supplanting one’s self into a priestly role between the Lord and all believers is, as Paul so boldly puts it, (paraphrased) “they wrench Christ down from heaven and put him to the cross again because they do not believe that he is risen to the right hand of God and is the only God-ordained High Priest”. The Hebrew word is Mazel tov for those who present themselves at the final judgment seat before the Lord thinking they are equal to him.

This is why at the point of Jesus passing from his terrestrial human life into his eternal glorified form, the thick-set and very heavy curtain that divided the Holy of Holies from the priests courts was ripped in two – from top to bottom; a feat not possible by man. This was God’s sign that there was now a new covenant and all believers were to be priests unto Jesus our Lord, our Saviour and our eternal High Priest in heaven.

Now to return to the main theme, so we are called to be a priesthood of believers and to fulfil this role as a priest before the Lord Jesus our High Priest he expects us to be “Godly” in all of our doings. The letter to Titus becomes a very good guide to us all.

Titus 2:1-15

But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine:

(2) That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience.

(3) The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things;

(4) That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children,

(5) To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.

(6) Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded.

(7) In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity,

(8) Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.

(9) Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again;

(10) Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

(11) For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,

(12) Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;

(13) Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

(14) Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

(15) These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.

It is so easy to just read through this and go “ho-hum” and move right along without even trying to engage with the Holy Spirit. It is for us to move first and then will the Holy Spirit reinforce our endeavours as we go forward.

1Peter 1:13-21

Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

(14) As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance:

(15) But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;

(16) Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

(17) And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear:

(18) Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;

(19) But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

(20) Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you,

(21) Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.

1Peter 2:1-12

Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings,

(2) As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:

(3) If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

(4) To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious,

(5) Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

(6) Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.

(7) Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner,

(8) *And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.*

(9) *But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:*

(10) *Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.*

(11) *Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;*

(12) *Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.*

2Peter 3:2-11

That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour:

(3) *Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts,*

(4) *And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.*

(5) *For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water:*

(6) *Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished:*

(7) *But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.*

(8) But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

(9) The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

(10) But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

(11) Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,

In his writings, Peter is putting into a nut shell where we must look at ourselves and renew our behaviours under the guiding and empowerment of the Holy Spirit. These are the attributes of being holy ie,

Consecrated, sacred, morally and spiritually perfect;
Belonging to, empowered by, devoted to, God;
High moral excellence.

Holiness governs our relationship with God. Does that surprise you? Yes we can “believe” but if all of our other behaviours are corrupt and base, then quite clearly we are not holy by this definition. The other view of this is un-holiness also governs our relationship with God.

Holiness is the measure of mankind to sustain a righteous day-to-day relationship with God. Without holiness we will fail at the judgement seat as we stand before the Lord. Take the following examples given to us in scripture.

Romans 1:18-32

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

(19) Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.

(20) For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

(21) Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

(22) Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

(23) And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.

(24) Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:

(25) Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

(26) For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:

(27) And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.

(28) And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

(29) Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,

(30) Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,

(31) Without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:

(32) Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.

Jude 1:16

These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage.

Jude 1:3-16

Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

(4) For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

(5) I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not.

(6) And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.

(7) Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

(8) Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.

(9) Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.

(10) But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves.

(11) Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core.

(12) These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots;

(13) Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.

(14) And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints,

(15) To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

(16) These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage.

The Lord on the other hand taught his disciples the foundations for their souls upon which they should further build their holy relationship with their master. Commonly referred to as the Beatitudes, the Lord drew aside all of his disciples away from the multitudes and this is what he said to them. These words of God through Jesus are a key to how believers should frame their lives in their service to the Lord's good news message of salvation by faith.

Matthew 5:2-16

And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,

(3) Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

(4) Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

(5) Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

(6) Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for

they shall be filled.

(7) Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

(8) Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

(9) Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

(10) Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

(11) Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

(12) Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

(13) Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

(14) Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

(15) Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

(16) Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

Matthew 5:38-48

Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:

(39) But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.

(40) And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also.

(41) And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.

(42) *Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.*

(43) *Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.*

(44) *But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;*

(45) *That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.*

(46) *For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?*

(47) *And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?*

(48) *Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.*

Matthew 6:1-4

Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.

(2) *Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.*

(3) *But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth:*

(4) *That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly.*

Matthew 7:1-6

Judge not, that ye be not judged.

(2) *For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.*

(3) And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

(4) Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye?

(5) Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

(6) Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.

Matthew 7:12-14

Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

(13) Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

(14) Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

Matthew 15:17-20

Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught?

(18) But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man.

(19) For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:

(20) These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.

Romans 12:9-21

Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

(10) Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;

- (11) *Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;*
- (12) *Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;*
- (13) *Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.*
- (14) *Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.*
- (15) *Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.*
- (16) *Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.*
- (17) *Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.*
- (18) *If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.*
- (19) *Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.*
- (20) *Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.*
- (21) *Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.*

Romans 13:1-14

Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

(2) *Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.*

(3) *For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:*

(4) *For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.*

(5) *Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.*

(6) *For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.*

(7) *Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.*

(8) *Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.*

(9) *For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.*

(10) *Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.*

(11) *And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.*

(12) *The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.*

(13) *Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.*

(14) *But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.*

Romans 14:1-23

Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations.

(2) *For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs.*

(3) *Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him.*

(4) *Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master*

he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.

(5) One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.

(6) He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.

(7) For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.

(8) For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.

(9) For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.

(10) But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

(11) For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.

(12) So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

(13) Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.

(14) I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean.

(15) But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.

(16) Let not then your good be evil spoken of:

(17) For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

(18) For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men.

(19) Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.

(20) For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are pure; but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence.

(21) It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.

(22) Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.

(23) And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

Colossian 3:12-25

Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;

(13) Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

(14) And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

(15) And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

(16) Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

(17) And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

(18) Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.

(19) Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them.

20) Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.

(21) Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.

(22) Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God:

(23) And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;

(24) Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.

(25) But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.

2Thessalonians 3:6-15

Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.

(7) For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you;

(8) Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you:

(9) Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us.

(10) For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.

(11) For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies.

(12) Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.

(13) *But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing.*

(14) *And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.*

(15) *Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.*

2Titus 2:22-26

Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

(23) *But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes.*

(24) *And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient,*

(25) *In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;*

(26) *And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.*

James 3:1-10

My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation.

(2) *For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.*

(3) *Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body.*

(4) *Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth.*

(5) *Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!*

(6) *And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.*

(7) *For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind:*

(8) *But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.*

(9) *Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God.*

(10) *Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.*

James 4:1-7

From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?

(2) *Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not.*

(3) *Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.*

(4) *Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.*

(5) *Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?*

(6) *But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.*

(7) *Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*

If we truly believe in the Salvation and Holy Word that God has given to mankind through the Lord Jesus Christ, then it behoves us to pay attention and endeavour to follow the path that the Lord wishes us to follow him on. It was

no coincidence that Jesus was human. It was also no coincidence that He was tempted in the flesh in ways we shall never know and it was no coincidence that he died a most horrendous death. But I have asked myself the question often that if the Roman government and the Hebrew people of the day not only knew who Jesus was, but also that he spoke the literal audible words of God, would they have still conspired to his death? The answer may never be known.

Over the years I suppose most believers have made observations about how others in our congregations and other churches behave and I also think that we are all very aware of those who are contrary in their life and their behaviours. Now we need to be careful here vis-à-vis Paul to the Roman congregation:

Romans 14:13

Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.

But in a way our walk of holiness before the Lord in the Kingdom of God separates those who do not walk and live a holy life. Once again it is a double edged sword; un-holiness is not acceptable in a righteous relationship with God.

Romans 12:1

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

The message is clear that we present our physical bodies (ie behaviours) a living sacrifice where we no longer clothe and engage ourselves in the activities of raw worldly pursuits and behaviours that are contrary to what God has said to us through Jesus our Lord. Therein Paul is indicating to us that there is a division of acceptability for those who are holy before our Lord and Saviour and those who are not. Where Romans 14:13 (above) comes in is that the word to “Judge” is not about observing a contrary-to-scripture behaviour and addressing that with a congregant whether believer or not, but it means that we are not to pass sentence on another person (whether believer or not) thus condemning them to failure on their day of judgment before the Lord.² This is the real evil of judging/sentencing people to death in this world and we do not yet fully understand that by doing so how it plays out through the scripture passage in [1Corinthians 6:2]

² Judge: Strongs Concordance: Grk. [krinos] Properly to distinguish, that is decide (mentally or judicially); by implication to try, condemn and punish; avenge, conclude, condemn, damn, decree, determine, judge, call in question, sentence to.

Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?

Now do you see how it works? We are not to condemn anyone to death whilst they are living. Where would we be if Saul/Paul were judged and sentenced for his zealous pursuits and capital punishments of those in the messianic congregations that arose following Jesus' passing to heaven? Clearly we need to understand what this means because on one hand we must nurture our congregations as a whole and this means separating out the unruly and contrary souls who refuse or deny the authority of God's word, but we are not to pass sentence that would be binding in heaven that says that a person will "never" believe and turn to God anywhere in their future living. That is the evil we commit when we pass judgment on a fellow man.

However, there are churches that are confused over this and have not divided God's word correctly. This is most evident in their acceptability of those with contrary behaviours that have no Godly right to be worshipping at the Lord's Table. These need to be separated into a sinners forum where they cannot interfere in the worship of our God. That some of these contrary souls are also ordained into a church role under a Nicolaitan system is something we are not permitted to discuss. But under the general theme of this article this has been covered by the Word of God directly.

It is time to finish up this discussion. It is God who is saying to us to be holy and we can be assured that if it were not possible then God would not have told us so. We must believe we can be holy and what will follow our endeavours to achieve this will be the empowerment of the Holy Spirit that will bring about that change in our behaviour and our mind set.

What is your desire? To be holy as God has said? Then take the first step and don't look backwards.

May your endeavours be truly blessed by the Lord.

Geoff Rooke