

How to Live and Give Holiness

by Arthur Vess

To live a holy life, you must be an example in your conversation, devotional life, business relations, and dealings with the opposite sex, and prioritize your ministry and souls over material wealth.

Scripture: Psalm 1:2, Matthew 15:14, 1 Corinthians 11:1, Philippians 4:8, 1 Timothy 4:12, 1 Timothy 4:16, Titus 2:7, Hebrews 4:11, 1 Peter 2:21

Topics: "Holy Living", "Spiritual Leadership"

Description

Arthur Vess emphasizes the importance of living a holy life to maintain the Holy Ghost and exert a positive influence, highlighting the need to be an example of believers in all aspects of life. He warns against hypocrisy and the dangers of unbelief, urging believers to follow the examples of the prophets and Christ Himself. Vess stresses the crucial role of pastors in leading the church towards heaven or hell, emphasizing the impact of their actions on the congregation and the world.

Transcript

You must live a holy life in order to keep the Holy Ghost, and exert a holy influence, without which all else is vain hypocrisy. "Be thou an example of believers, in word, in conversation (and conduct), in charity (love) in spirit, in faith, in purity." Let us labor therefore, to enter into the rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief." It is one thing to profess and preach holiness, but may be quite another to live holiness. "In all things, showing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine, showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity." "Take my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction and of patience." For even, Brethren, here unto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us. Leaving us an example that we should follow in His steps." The great, saintly apostle Paul said, "Follow me as I follow Christ." As goes the pastor, so goes the church, and as goes the church, so goes the world, to heaven or to hell. How many churches have been sold out by a compromise pastor? As goes the pastor, so goes the people. It has been estimated that a man runs a 50 per cent greater risk of losing his soul by becoming a minister. Local churches, conferences and denominations are led astray by their leaders. "If the blind lead the blind, they shall both fall into the ditch," -- Blind leaders and blind followers. "Capture the generals and captains, and you have captured the army," -- God's army. Every church dies at the head first. As goes the head, so goes the whole body. The head directs the body.

From the above, and other scriptures, we have many admonitions and instructions as to how to live a holy life, and exert a holy influence. Our influence is more important than our own soul, for it determines the

destiny of many souls, but both go together.

First, let us be an example in our conversation. Our words express our character and influence, the choices and character of others. Our words weigh, and one word may decide the destiny of many souls. "Let your conversation be as cometh the gospel of Christ." We preach in our daily conversation. "Let him show out of a good conversation his wisdom with meekness and fear." Let us read and practice James, three. "Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient (or desirable): but rather (instead) the giving of thanks." Foolish talking here comes from two Greek words: Moros and Logos, "talking like a moron," or an idiot. Preachers, how are our people impressed and influenced by our daily conversations.

Our own discipline states, "Be diligent. Be serious. Let your motto be "Holiness unto the Lord." Avoid all lightness, jesting and foolish talking. Speak evil of no man: because your word especially, would eat as doth a canker (or cancer). Keep your thoughts in your own breast until you come to the person involved." Preachers, how are others influenced by our daily conversations?

A shocking thing in our modern people is the way that they either carry on so much joking and silly talking, then turn to backbiting and unkind words. Is this not a sign of compromise and backsliding, both of which are the same? Our tongues express our whole personality and character.

Second, let us be an example in our devotional life. It is one thing to preach on prayer in the pulpit, and quite another to practice it in the secret chamber. If we do not practice what we preach here, our church will not follow our ministry, but our example. Our secret contact with God determines the unction, power and influence of our ministry in the pulpit and in the community. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." If we want to "dwell," we must first "abide," tarry. "When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut the door, pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy father which seeth in secret shall himself reward thee openly -" in all thy life and ministry. Praying preachers are the hope of the church and world. It takes supernatural power, contact and fellowship to face our drifting congregations, and dare to declare unto them, the whole council of God. We are not to amuse and entertain our hearers, but PREACH THE WORD: be instant (constant) in season and out of season: Reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine, or the time will (has) come when they will not endure sound doctrine. "They once enjoyed and endorsed it, but after (because of) their own lusts, shall heap to themselves teachers and preachers having itching ears" for praise and promotion, recalls, etc.

It takes a holy, dead to self preacher to proclaim the "Sound doctrine," so much neglected and so much needed in our days. We only get and keep this holy boldness in the secret chamber. Only one class does not like and endorse straight preaching, that's crooks. Which crowd do you belong to? O, my preacher Brethren, are we ready to meet our ministry at the coming of Jesus Christ, when all earthly interests have fled away forever? We must keep in contact with God if our contact with men is to mean anything good here and hereafter.

Third, let us be an example in our business relations and dealings. Let us not seek and boast about "bargains" at the other fellow's expense, then complain when they get a bargain off of us. If you cannot pay your debts and preach the gospel, pay your debts first. Do not leave old debts for the next pastor or evangelist to face and pay. Souls are our greatest "bargains." One is worth more than all the world. Do not sell out your ministry for a bigger salary or larger church. And do not build such big and expensive

churches that you will have to crowd out God and his old-fashioned saints. My church history teacher said, "When church steeples go up, spirituality goes down." It is nice to have nice churches, but only such as become holiness and despised and persecuted people. Live simple, godly lives, rather than sell out for the latest styles in your clothes, furniture and automobiles. We cannot take these to Heaven with us. 'Having food and raiment, therewith be content.'

Fourth, be an example in your relations to the opposite sex. There was never a time when there was so much looseness and laxness between the sexes. Everything from the billboards to the TV advertising business are based on the low sex appeal. "They were eating and drinking and marrying and giving in marriage until the flood came and took them all away; so also shall the coming of the Son of man be." We all say that He is soon coming, but how many of us feel like it, act like it, talk like it, and preach like it? "Watch therefore, for you know not what hour your Lord doth come."

Pastors, watch your relations to the women in your visiting, and in your church councils. Be especially careful about those wives who have ungodly, abusive husbands. Watch your handshaking, do not grip too tight nor hold on too long. "As for the pure, his word is right." "Keep thyself pure" if you want your ministry to endure. "Unto the pure, all things are pure, but unto the defiled (impure) and unbelieving, is nothing pure, but even their minds and consciences are defiled," murdered. When your mind and conscience is defiled, you can justify yourself and other sin all kinds of compromise and sins.

Summing it all up in Bible language, here it is, "Finally, my brethren, whatsoever things are honest; whatsoever things are just (fair), whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there is any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things." Our thought life controls all our outer lives and conduct.

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