

# A Heart Talk on Holiness

by Charles William Butler

*Charles William Butler reflects on encountering a man who professes grace but openly hates holiness, prompting a deep dive into the true nature of holiness and its importance in the Christian faith. He emphasizes that holiness stems from the character of God Himself, the basis of all moral values, and that true holiness is the opposite of sin, leading to a life of victory and devotion. Butler discusses the misconceptions that lead some to oppose holiness, clarifying that holiness is not about eradicating humanity but about freeing humans from sin through God's grace.*

## Description

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## Transcript

a-heart-talk-on-holiness.pdf" txtUrl: "/pdf-text/text/c/charles-william-butler---a-heart-talk-on-holiness.txt" thumbnailUrl: "" hasTranscript: true oneLinerSummary: "True holiness is a state of heart purity, perfect love, and freedom from sin, provided by the blood of Christ and obtained by faith." sermonType: "teaching" topics: - name: "Christian Holiness" slug: "christian-holiness" - name: "Godly Living" slug: "godly-living" bibleRefs: - text: "Psalm 99:9" bookId: "PSA" chapter: "99" verse: "9" - text: "Matthew 22:37" bookId: "MAT" chapter: "22" verse: "37" - text: "Romans 6:22" bookId: "ROM" chapter: "6" verse: "22" - text: "Ephesians 4:24" bookId: "EPH" chapter: "4" verse: "24" - text: "1 John 4:17" bookId: "1JN" chapter: "4" verse: "17" outline: - heading: "The Basis of Holiness" - heading: "God is holy and glorious in holiness" - heading: "The Bible is holy and reveals heaven and unfallen angels as holy" - heading: "Man was created holy but became sinful through rebellion against God" faq: - q: "Is it possible to hate holiness and still be a Christian?" a: "No, true Christians cannot hate holiness, as it is the opposite of sin and a fundamental aspect of the Christian faith." - q: "Is sin an essential part of human nature?" a: "No, sin is not an essential part of human nature, but rather a rebellion against God's will." - q: "What is the difference between legal perfection and evangelical perfection?" a: "Legal perfection is an absolute standard, while evangelical perfection is a state of being where love dominates and controls one's life, fulfilling the law." - q: "How can we achieve true holiness?" a: "True holiness is provided by the blood of Christ and obtained by faith,

leading to a state of heart purity, perfect love, and freedom from sin." quotes: - "Whatever more it is, it is absolutely and eternally the very opposite of sin. Indeed, the one and only thing which true holiness is against, is sin." - "Holiness is to sin what light is to darkness." - "I live in patience, in purity, and in the perfect love of God. He fills my soul with pure spiritual life, and keeps me altogether devoted to my Lord." applicationPoints: - "True holiness is a state of being that is opposed to sin and is a fundamental aspect of the Christian faith." - "Sin is not an essential part of human nature, but rather a rebellion against God's will." - "True holiness is provided by the blood of Christ and obtained by faith, leading to a state of heart purity, perfect love, and freedom from sin." keywords: - "holiness" - "sin" - "Christianity" - "God's character" - "true holiness" - "Christian perfection" - "evangelical perfection" - "legal perfection" - "faith" - "blood of Christ" ---

I met a man a few days ago who hates holiness. This man is Superintendent of a Sunday school in a fundamentalist unit of an independent work. He entered the room where I was seated having a conversation with his pastor. As he saw me his countenance clouded, but he made a quick adjustment so that by the time he faced me, he extended his hand in a fairly friendly way. His pastor who knew his attitude toward holiness noted this, and after his departure explained to me some facts I had not known before. This incident set me to thinking. I mused on what the pastor told me.

A man hating holiness yet a fundamentalist in faith, professing grace. I said to his pastor, perhaps he associates holiness with something which is not holiness at all. This is the most charitable conclusion one could come to, so as to respect his profession of grace at all while a pronounced and openly confessed hater of holiness. It is too bad that there has ever been associated with the profession of this beautiful grace anything so inconsistent with the fact and nature of true holiness as to give birth to the kind of deep prejudice which filled this man's mind concerning this truth.

Misinformation about anything, or anyone, may lead to utterly wrong conclusions. This in turn may lead to utterly wrong attitudes and even wrong conduct. It seems natural for people to say when they see extremes and inconsistencies in people professing faith to say, "Well, if that is Christianity, or if that is holiness, I don't want any of it." My friend, if what you see and judge as wrong, is as you see and think it to be, it is not holiness, nor is it true Christianity in any degree of its true reality.

When James says, "pure religion and undefiled is" -- he recognizes that there may be religion mixed with, and defiled by that which is untrue and mistaken or even false. I said to the pastor I was talking with, "I would like the privilege of sitting down alone with that man and talking with him for an hour or two." I believe I could disarm, and win any honest individual with the reality of truth regarding any part of our holy Christian faith.

Let us look at "true holiness" and see. The basis of all holiness is the character of God himself. God is holy. God is glorious in holiness. "Rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness" Psa. 99:9. He is "the Holy One of Israel." His holiness is the eternal standard by which all moral values are measured. Any holiness in angels or men grows out of and is based upon his original, underived, eternal holiness. Then too, we have a Holy Bible. His word is holy. This word reveals to us that heaven is holy. Also it reveals that all unfallen angels are holy. Angels are moral beings, God created all angels holy.

The devil was as God created him, an angel of light. God did not make the devil, sin transformed a holy angel into the devil. God created all moral beings holy, including man. Man was holy in his origin. It was

rebellion against the will of our holy God that made him a sinner. It follows as a necessary conclusion that sin destroys holiness and renders any moral being who chooses sin, a sinner and sinful.

Now let us analyze and define holiness. Whatever more it is, it is absolutely and eternally the very opposite of sin. Indeed, the one and only thing which true holiness is against, is sin. Holiness is to sin what light is to darkness. Light and darkness are mutually exclusive. Exactly so. So sin and holiness are mutually exclusive each of the other in the essential nature of each of these qualities. It follows that if we reject one of these elements the opposite is embraced. If we hate holiness we must love sin. The embrace of either of these alternatives necessarily excludes its opposite.

When rightly understood, no Christian can hate holiness. It is the most reasonable proposition thinkable, that the God who created man, and who has undertaken to redeem him, should provide as the supreme purpose of that redemption, the full moral recovery of man. Could a lesser moral objective motivate a holy God to make the supreme and unspeakable sacrifice for a lesser moral objective? Why think our infinite Creator and Redeemer, after making such a sacrifice to provide salvation for man, unable to create him anew "in righteousness and true holiness?" Eph. 4:24.

The holiness provided for in God's plan of redemption recovers man to a state of heart purity, and perfect love, which takes out of man's disposition all that rejects God's holy will, yea, all in man that is out of harmony with God's will and nature, so that we are freed from sin, (Rom. 6:22) and saved from all that causes fear of God in final judgment. I John 4:17, 18. This experience is rightly designated by Wesley as "Christian Perfection." It makes us just such Christians as we ought to be. It results in our power to keep the greatest commandment in the law, also the second greatest, which is like unto it, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind," and "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" Matt. 22:37, 39.

The experience of true Holiness not only frees us from sin, but empowers us to measure up to the standards of devotion and of living enjoined upon us by our Divine Lord. It is truly an empowering of our entire moral selfhood for the life of victory. I like one of John Wesley's definitions. It is to me especially fine because it presents the two sides of the experience, the negative and also the positive. "Holiness is an instantaneous deliverance from all sin, and an instantaneous power then given always to cleave to God." Bishop Asbury witnessed to this experience in the following language, "I live in patience, in purity, and in the perfect love of God. He fills my soul with pure spiritual life, and keeps me altogether devoted to my Lord."

There are two other reasons why some good but mistaken people oppose holiness. One is the fallacy of identifying sin with our humanity as if they were one and inseparable "until death do them part." Of course, if it is a sin to be human, then while we are human we can never be holy. But it is not a sin to be human. Sin is no essential part of our true humanity. If this proposition were true we would be compelled by logic of the situation to make God the author of sin, also to believe Christ was sinful. Dr. Edwin Lewis made this mistake in his great book, "A Christian Manifesto," and instead of following through in a true Arminian view in theology, and acknowledging holiness as God's remedy, he took refuge in the sovereignty of God, and declared, because God is sovereign he had the right to create. I do not wonder that he later swung to the awful error in a later book, a "Creativity versus DisCreativity."

No, dear reader, God did not create sin, but he did create man. He not only created man but he loved us as humans, and made the great provision of "Grace" not to save us from being human, but to save us as

humans from being sinful. John 3:16 assures us of this great fact.

The second reason I have in mind is the error of making every infirmity and limitation of our humanity sin. This error issues in a legal or absolute perfection, whereas holiness provided for believers, by the baptism of the Holy Ghost, brings us to an evangelical or Christian perfection, where "love is the fulfilling of the law" Rom. 13:10.

There is no moral quality in our infirmities, nor in our limitations. Sin is willful wrong. In it is the spirit of rebellion against the known will of God. From all of this true holiness delivers us, and centers our will in God's will, and purifies our affectional nature, so that love dominates and controls our lives We can live where we say with Jesus say, "I do always the things that please him." This is according to I John 4:17, 18. "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment," because, "as he is, so are we in this world." "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love." This most desirable experience is provided by the blood, and obtained by faith, praise the Lord.

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