

Observations - a Holiness Manifesto

by Charles William Butler

Charles William Butler preaches on the nature of holiness, emphasizing that it can only be attributed to responsible personalities with moral capacity and freedom of choice. He delves into the concept of holiness in God, angels, and men, highlighting its pure, active force that resists evil and embraces good. Butler discusses the importance of forming habits of holy thinking and doing, enabling believers to walk worthy of God in obedience and victory. He concludes by stressing that true holiness involves the highest level of fellowship between moral beings, ultimately leading to eternal fellowship with God through Christian holiness.

Description

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Transcript

observations-a-holiness-manifesto.pdf txtUrl:
 "/pdf-text/text/c/charles-william-butler---observations-a-holiness-manifesto.txt" thumbnailUrl: ""
 hasTranscript: true oneLinerSummary: "Holiness is a quality of free personality capable of exercise in approval of right and disapproval of wrong, and is immediately available to all true believers through faith."
 sermonType: "teaching" topics: - name: "Christian Holiness" slug: "christian-holiness" - name: "Sanctification" slug: "sanctification" bibleRefs: - text: "Isaiah 6:3" bookId: "ISA" chapter: "6" verse: "3" - text: "Luke 1:75" bookId: "LUK" chapter: "1" verse: "75" - text: "2 Corinthians 7:1" bookId: "2CO" chapter: "7" verse: "1" - text: "Ephesians 3:19" bookId: "EPH" chapter: "3" verse: "19" - text: "1 Thessalonians 4:7" bookId: "1TH" chapter: "4" verse: "7" - text: "Hebrews 10:14" bookId: "HEB" chapter: "10" verse: "14" - text: "Hebrews 12:14" bookId: "HEB" chapter: "12" verse: "14" - text: "James 4:8" bookId: "JAS" chapter: "4" verse: "8" - text: "1 Peter 1:16" bookId: "1PE" chapter: "1" verse: "16" - text: "1 John 3:3" bookId: "1JN" chapter: "3" verse: "3" outline: - heading: "Definition of Holiness" - heading: "Source of Holiness" - heading: "Nature of Holiness" - heading: "Application of Holiness" - heading: "Fellowship and Holiness" - heading: "True holiness involves the highest level of fellowship between moral beings" - heading: "Holiness seeks its own level for fellowship" faq: - q: "What is the definition of holiness?" a: "Holiness is

attributed to responsible personalities with moral capacity and freedom of choice." - q: "Where does holiness originate?" a: "God is the source of all moral qualities and values." - q: "What is the nature of holiness?" a: "Holiness is a quality of free personality capable of exercise in approval of right and disapproval of wrong." - q: "How can I apply holiness in my life?" a: "Holiness involves the absence of sin and the condition of unmixed good, and naturally imparts its quality to all that it does not oppose." - q: "Can I experience holiness now?" a: "Yes, holiness is immediately available to all true believers through faith." quotes: - "God is the source. All moral qualities are inherent in holiness." - "Holiness naturally imparts its own quality to all that it does not oppose and destroy." - "If by faith, then why not now?" applicationPoints: - "Holiness involves the absence of sin and the condition of unmixed good, and naturally imparts its quality to all that it does not oppose." - "You can experience holiness now through faith, and it will bring you to the level of fellowship with God forever." - "Make a conscious decision to choose holiness against every other consideration and value in your life." keywords: - "holiness" - "God" - "moral qualities" - "responsibility" - "freedom of choice" - "love" - "mercy" - "justice" - "fellowship" - "Christian holiness" ---

We observe, first, that whatever the moral quality expressed by the term holiness, it is something which can only be attributed to responsible personalities possessed of moral capacity and a measure of freedom of choice which renders them responsible for what they are and for that which they do. Mere things can be holy only in the sense of being dedicated by a responsible agent to a holy sacred use. Persons may be holy in actual quality of character and in conduct of life. Free, responsible beings are capable of this quality of character.

We observe, secondly, that the great evangelical prophet Isaiah uses the phrase "the holy one of Israel" twenty-five or more times in his great prophetic work. He designates Jehovah God, the recognized Creator of the universe and the sovereign Ruler of the order of nature, "the holy one of Israel." He further discovers to us this same sovereign God as coming into covenant and redemptive relationship with his creature, man. Of one thing in this second observation we may be sure: whatever moral qualities and values we may discover in this superlative moral term, they all have their origin in and are the direct output of the infinite God himself. God is the source. All moral qualities are inherent in holiness. It is a glorious white balance between the love-sacrifices and the justice which demands righteousness in the character of God. Its quality of mercy is balanced by truth. It is a quality of free personality capable of exercise in the deepest disapproval of wrong, and in the highest pleasure and approval of that which is right.

We may observe, thirdly, that since God is its source, it must in nature be like God's own holiness. Whether filling the infinite himself, who is possessed of limitless capacity, or one of his moral creatures whose capacity as to quantity is limited, it must be the same in its nature. Creatures whose capacity as to quantity may be limited are nevertheless capable of the moral quality of this likeness of God and of being harmonized with his own nature; yea, in the redemptive plan we may even be "filled with all the fullness of God."

We may observe, fourthly, that holiness in God, in angels, or in men, denotes the absence of sin and the condition of unmixed good. In quality it is pure. In its nature as an active force, it resists all that is evil and it embraces and unites with all that is good. It naturally imparts its own quality to all that it does not oppose and destroy. On the basis of this truth, our humanity may be permeated by this moral force until we will form habits of holy thinking, of holy doing, and of sustained holy activities. Do not conclude that we therefore end probation or move out of reach of being tempted and tried. Let us rather recognize that in the face of these facts which are incident to probation, we may so form habits of holy reaction and resistance as to be able to walk worthy of God in obedience and victory all the days of our lives. This

gracious objective harmonizes perfectly with the revelation of truth contained in the Abrahamic covenant: "The oath which he swore to our father Abraham, that he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life" (Luke 1:73-75).

Observation five -- The nature of true holiness involves the highest possible level of fellowship between moral beings. While holiness is the highest standard of separation, when possessed, it seeks its own level for fellowship. It is deeply social in its nature. The original, underived, eternal holiness of God gave birth to the whole realm of divine activity in creation, in both nature and grace.

God's motive or reason in all his works is ultimately to share his own infinite felicity and glory with others. His glory consists of the balance and perfect harmony of his moral perfections. He is absolutely perfect in all that he is and in all that he does. Christian holiness brings us to the level of this fellowship forever.

God in his perfect foreknowledge and wisdom saw that the only way he could ever inhabit a sinless universe with beings on this level of fellowship would be to create this present order, and endow man, his new moral creature with capacity to share his holiness, but with capacity for the opposite, and then empty himself in supreme, unspeakable sacrifice to win man to Christian Holiness, at the point of man's being won to a supreme moral choice in the obtainment of the restored image and likeness of himself provided for man in the realm of divine grace.

God created the present order, including man, his new moral creature in his own image and likeness, as an expression of his own perfections, but holiness as the first Adam possessed it involved the will of God. Christian holiness is different in this, that it involves two wills, the will of God, in the provision of grace, and the will of man, won to the highest moral choice of which he is capable. Created holiness characterized the first Adam, but he had nothing to say about it. A person who is made holy in the provision of grace has everything to say about it. He chooses it against every other consideration and value.

When the Christian race is finished and the crown of life won, those who enter his eternal glory will possess characters of the highest possible value, prepared to co-operate and associate with God forever on the level of final holiness. Glory to our Holy God. This experience is immediately available to all true believers, for it is received by faith; and as Mr. Wesley wisely counseled all believers, "If by faith, then why not now?" Amen.

Dear reader, make it now for yourself. In utter self-yielding, step out on the promise, and wait in faith until the gracious work is done. When you do truly receive by faith, it is yours, and God will add the witness of the Holy Spirit thereto.

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